



American Committee of Medical Entomology (ACME)

Official Subgroup of the American Society of Tropical Medicine & Hygiene

ACME Executive Council 2025-2026

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ACME at the Upcoming #TropMed26

NOVEMBER 18-22, 2026

ASTMH 2026 Annual Meeting

Gaylord National Harbor

National Harbor, Maryland USA (adjacent to Washington, DC)

In November 2026 in Washington DC

ACME will have a strong and vibrant presence at the Annual Meeting,

Highlights included:

- ❖ ACME Pre-meeting Course: Vectors on the Move: The Changing Landscape of Vector-borne Disease (Wednesday, November 18, 2026; at Georgetown Capitol Campus, Washington, DC)
- ❖ ACME Networking Session: Thursday, November 19, 2026, 1:15 pm – 2:30 pm
- ❖ ACME Symposium I: New Emerging Innovative Tools to fight Mosquitoes. Friday, November 20, 2026, 1:45 pm – 3:30 pm
- ❖ ACME Symposium II: Annual Business Meeting, Awards Ceremony, Hoogstraal Medal Presentation, and Networking Reception. Friday, November 20, 2026; 4:00 pm – 5:45 pm.
- ❖ Trainee networking events and participation in ASTMH speed networking. Friday, November 20, 12:15 - 1:30 pm
- ❖ The popular ACME booth, featuring the Vector Challenge trivia game, inflatable bugs, tattoos, bookmarks, and more!



Gaylord National Harbor, Maryland (adjacent to Washington DC)



ACME Council at TropMed 2025

Meet the Mentor and Mentee

Mentor: Sarah Hamer, PhD, DVM

Professor, Department of Veterinary Integrative Biosciences, Texas A&M University



Dr. Sarah Hamer is an internationally recognized veterinarian and epidemiologist whose research focuses on vector-borne and zoonotic diseases at the human-animal-environment interface. Through a One Health approach, her work integrates ecology, vector biology, and public health to better understand and prevent disease transmission. In this issue, Dr. Hamer shares what inspired her career, the accomplishments she values most, and her perspective on the future of medical entomology.

What inspired you to pursue a career in medical entomology?

My journey into medical entomology began unexpectedly during my master's research on American crows in Illinois. When many of the radio-tracked birds suddenly died, necropsies revealed West Nile virus, which had recently emerged in the Midwest. That experience led me to learn mosquito trapping, identification, and molecular diagnostics to investigate virus transmission. Working at the intersection of wildlife, vectors, and public health showed me how research could directly benefit animal conservation and human health. From that point on, I knew medical entomology was to be a focus in my career.

What accomplishments are you most proud of?

Mentoring the next generation of scientists has been the most rewarding part of my career. I recently hooded my 11th PhD graduate, and many of my former students now lead programs on zoonotic diseases and vector-borne pathogens. Seeing their contributions to science and public health is one of my greatest professional accomplishments.

What is the biggest challenge facing medical entomology?

The field must embrace emerging technologies while preserving foundational skills such as vector identification and community engagement. As climate change, shifting public health priorities, and expanding vector ranges reshape disease risks, multidisciplinary *One Health* collaborations that combine innovative tools with traditional approaches will be essential to protecting public health.

What advice would you give to early-career scientists?

Be prepared to pivot. A critical skill is learning how to ask important scientific questions and design rigorous studies to answer those questions. Disease systems, vectors, and public health priorities will continue to change, so building a broad, adaptable skill set will prepare young scientists to tackle emerging challenges wherever they arise. Being able to pivot may also help in securing research funding, which sometimes surges for timely issues with emerging vectors or diseases.



Reminder corner

Now is the time to be **ACME member!** When renewing your [ASTMH membership](#), please select the ACME subgroup 🟡. Also, don't forget to follow us on [LinkedIn](#) for the latest news and events!



Mentee: Rachel Busselman, PhD, DVM
Associate Research Scientist
Texas A&M University

Working in Dr. Sarah Hamer's Lab at Texas A&M University, Rachel studies Chagas disease through a One Health approach, investigating the interactions among hosts, vectors, and pathogens to develop practical strategies that protect both animal and human health.

Q: Can you tell us about your current research?

My research focuses on the ecology, treatment, and prevention of Chagas disease in naturally infected dogs and triatomine ("kissing bug") vectors. I work with government working dogs and privately owned pets while partnering with veterinarians and dog owners to improve awareness of Chagas disease. What excites me most is helping develop the first effective treatment for canine Chagas disease and evaluating host-targeted insecticides as a strategy to interrupt transmission of *Trypanosoma cruzi*.

Q: What inspired you to pursue medical entomology?

I've always been interested in zoonotic diseases and finding ways to interrupt transmission between animals and humans. Joining Dr. Hamer's lab introduced me to the complexity of vector-borne disease systems and reinforced the importance of a One Health perspective. The most rewarding part of my work has been partnering with dog owners whose experiences motivate me to pursue practical solutions that improve both animal and public health.

Q: How has ACME supported your professional growth?

ACME has provided a welcoming community of trainees and professionals with diverse research interests. Through trainee-focused webinars, networking events at the ASTMH Annual Meeting, and initiatives like the ACME Trainee Spotlight, I've gained valuable mentorship, expanded my professional network, and connected with colleagues who share a passion for medical entomology.

Q: What are your future research goals?

My long-term goal is to improve our understanding of zoonotic disease transmission and develop interventions that reduce the burden of vector-borne diseases in both humans and animals. I'm especially excited about the potential of host-targeted insecticides, such as isoxanzolines, which show promise for controlling kissing bugs and reducing Chagas disease transmission. I hope to contribute to developing effective treatments for canine Chagas disease and translating these findings into practical recommendations for veterinarians and public health professionals.

See you at #TropMed26!
Stop by ACME booth
Attend ACME Symposiums
And
Trainee networking sessions
"Grab lunch & Meet ACME
members"

