



## Algal Biomass Organization Annual Meeting Recap

The Algal Biomass Organization (ABO) held its first annual meeting of the membership on April 23-24, 2009 at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Washington, D.C. The two day meeting featured networking receptions, reports from various committees, a board meeting and a “field trip” to Capitol Hill to meet with policymakers, elected officials and their staffers.

The meeting began with a lunch reception on the 23<sup>rd</sup>, featuring remarks by Jim Walsh, a former Congressman from New York, who talked about the importance of communicating with congressional delegation and other policymakers on the potential for algae to be a significant renewable energy solution. He stressed that Capitol Hill is a fast-paced place, with much competition for mindshare among constituents. He warned ABO members against thinking that officials are aware of algae. Quite the contrary, he assured.

Following his remarks, members from law firm K&L Gates addressed the membership, giving them pointers on how to be effective in their meetings with legislators. There were three key requests made to elected officials. First, that the Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS) should be amended to either include algae, or to be technology neutral; second, that algae-derived fuels should receive tax parity with incentives for biodiesel and cellulosic ethanol; third, that Congress should make funding opportunities currently available to cellulosic biofuel producers similarly accessible to producers of algae-based products and processes. With that briefing complete, ABO members formed into groups and made their way to the Hill.

The day’s events closed with an evening reception at the Hyatt, where members reconvened to trade notes on their experiences with legislators, staffers and others. Overwhelmingly, people reported that it was great to be engaging with policymakers and educating them on the ABO and their particular company/organization efforts in the industry. Special appreciation was given to K&L Gates for organizing the afternoon and to Sapphire Energy, who sponsored the K&L efforts.

The evening reception featured presentations from Pam Serino, Defense Energy Support Center, Joyce Yang, DOE/EERE, and Mike McAdams of the Advanced Biofuels Association.

Friday morning, the members assembled for a series of presentations by the chairs of the standing committees of the ABO, including: Events, Membership Development, Peer Review, Government & Public Relations, Technical Standards and Bylaw/Governance Committee. In addition, Secretary Tom Byrne gave the Treasurer’s Report. Attendees heard presentations from Brice Freeman and Stephanie Shaw of the Electric Power Research Institute about opportunities with the utility industry.

Attendees were also introduced to the newly elected members of the board, including: Margaret McCormick of Targeted Growth, John Pierce of Wilson Sonsini Goodrich & Rosati, Dr. Ike Levine, University of Southern Maine and vice president of Biological Services, Inc., Elizabeth Willett, of Mars Symbioscience, a division of Mars, Inc., and Dr. Philip Pienkos of National Renewable Energy Laboratory, who was re-elected to a second term. The board also honored Tyler Krutzfeldt of Mont Vista Capital, a founding board member of ABO whose term expired, for his tremendous efforts and service for the ABO through a generous donation to the Everglades Foundation. Chairman Billy Glover adjourned the meeting following the presentation to Mr. Krutzfeldt.