



American Society of  
**Anesthesiologists™**

Central Line

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VOICEOVER:

Welcome to ASA's Central Line, the official podcast series of the American Society of Anesthesiologists, edited by Dr. Adam Striker.

DR. ADAM STRIKER:

Hi, I'm Adam Striker host and editor at Central light today. We're going to discuss the upcoming ASA annual meeting, Anesthesiology 2020. Joining me in that discussion are Dr. Meg Rosenblatt, the Chair of the Annual Meeting Oversight Committee, and Fallon Cryer, a key consulting partner from beedance Corporation. Welcome to both of you. Dr. Rosenblatt. You mind telling us just a little bit about yourself and your current role outside of the, uh, Committee Chair.

DR. MEG ROSENBLATT:

Sure, thank you Adam. Please call me Meg. I am currently the Site Chair of the Department of Anesthesiology Perioperative and Pain Medicine at Mount Sinai Morningside and West Hospitals in New York City and I have been involved with the annual meeting for more than two decades now. I started out on the (sic) Committee and chaired that for a while. I was on the original Panels Committee and then when everybody went to the, uh, track format, I was on the Fundamentals Track and chaired that for many years. And now I've been on the Annual Meeting Oversight Committee for the last four years.

DR. STRIKER:

Excellent. And Miss Cryer, do you mind giving us a little background on, on your current role?

FALLON CRYER:

Certainly. Hello Dr. Striker, and thank you for having me today. I'm the Co-Founder and Partner here at beedance, which is the consulting company that ASA is partnering with

to help bring Anesthesiology 2020 to life in a virtual environment. And please call me Fallon.

DR. STRIKER:

Excellent. Thank you both for joining us. We're going to dig into ASA's plans for this year's Annual Meeting, also known as Anesthesiology 2020, um, which is certainly going to look a lot different than it has in the past. I'm looking forward to learning more about what we should expect. I know you've both got some innovative ideas and illuminating information to share. So why don't we start with the basics. The Anesthesiology Annual Meeting previously scheduled for early October in Washington DC, is now going to be an immersive virtual meeting taking place from October 2nd through October 5th. I've gone to tons of ASA meetings in the past and I know this meeting is going to be significantly different. Fallon, why don't you give me the broad strokes of what we can expect of this one.

FALLON CRYER:

Absolutely. The first thing to know is that this is not simply a Zoom meeting. Members can expect a fully functional online conference. We've got a robust program with plenty of CME, spaces to connect with industry, broadcast quality special lectures, and even the ability to network face-to-face. It's, it's all in there. And so from the moment you enter the virtual lobby, you'll really see the difference and I hope that members are going to be blown away.

DR. STRIKER:

Fantastic. Um, we're going to dig into those specifics, cuz I really want to wrap my head around the plans. But before we get to that, Meg, I'm wondering if you can take us behind the scenes, tell us little bit about how this decision was made. I think all our listeners can understand why this was done given the current situation with COVID, but that certainly doesn't mean that was an easy call. And considering the logistical challenges with a meeting this size, I'm sure this decision did not come lightly or was not made easily. And perhaps more importantly, once you knew the in-person meeting wouldn't happen, what then?

DR. ROSENBLATT:

Well, as someone who's gone to meetings for decades, Adam, and you know that Anesthesiology is the largest annual anesthesiology educational event in the world. The current governmental guidance and mounting scientific evidence about the timing of a

cure or the possible vaccine for COVID-19 have made it clear that holding a meeting of this magnitude in Washington DC in early October will be absolutely impossible. Uh facilitating world-class education, breakthrough research and the latest innovations from the corporate sector all to advance knowledge and patient care are the priorities for the ASA, and for the ASA Annual Meeting committees.

Faced with the current pandemic, and after investigating various options, we've opted for this all-virtual format as it enables us to successfully bring the anesthesiology community together to share research, to network, and to discuss the latest findings in this specialty. We are continuously and continually fine-tuning what we are putting into this meeting format. And I think that Anesthesiology 2020 will be the most Innovative meeting that we've put together to date. With the shift to virtual, the Annual Meeting Oversight Committee has enjoyed reimagining what a meeting can be. And the way we've done this, is we've asked key questions. We have challenged each other to figure out how we can continue to provide exceptional educational value in a year where we have to social distance.

What is a sufficient number of CME credits without burdening people to be sitting in front of a screen for too many hours? How can we build a program with digital bells and whistles, a program that everybody's going to be excited about? We'll be providing many ways for attendees to engage with corporate partners. We're looking for ways to improve clinical practice as people consume cutting-edge resources and education that are driving changes in patient care and in pain management, as well. This year's educational program is very robust with an opportunity to participate in didactic and interactive sessions that cater to everyone's goals and interests.

DR. STRIKER:

Well, let's dig into the attendee experience a little bit. What will the attendees be able to do? How will it work? We obviously know that this is going to be different than previous meetings and there's, like any change of this magnitude, there's going to be advantages and disadvantages. But let's at least start with the details of how it will work.

FALLON CRYER:

Certainly, the good news is that all members will need is access to the Internet. So it's really straightforward. We've got an action packed program with loads of things to do at the Conference and members start by completing their profile and building a custom agenda. This gives them the freedom to personalize their experience and how they going to spend their time across those days. Aesthetically, the environment looks and feels like a conference center, with a beautiful airy lobby and clear signage that will

direct you to where you want to go. There's even networking spaces, exhibition halls, hundreds of (sic) abstracts, affiliate meetings, master class training. We're even proud to continue the partnership with Hope for the Warriors moving our run to be virtual this year. One of the big benefits that I think we're all proud of, and that we can provide in only this virtual experience, is that post-event lots of the educational recordings will be made available to be viewed for up to 12 months within the platform. So if you miss a session, you can return and watch it later.

DR. STRIKER:

Previously, the Anesthesiology Meeting has been available for purchase online for a period of 12 months, uh, for anyone that wants access to the entire meeting. Will this replace that, or will attendees have the ability to go back and watch lectures they were previously registered to attend?

DR. ROSENBLATT:

Everybody who's registered for the Meeting will have access to the educational content for 12 months on the platform. But if you want to get more CME credit than the 27 which will be allowed during the meeting time, then you will have to purchase access as we've asked in the previous years.

DR. STRIKER:

OK, got it. Fallon, going back to the environment you were describing when you, upon your registration, and what the user experience is, it sounds great. And are you worried that this will be confusing it all or will be attendees find this confusing, going about this process?

FALLON CRYER:

I'm not worried at all and neither should the members. The platform is very user-friendly and intuitive. It's just like navigating a website. It's also accessible from any device including tablets and mobile phones, so members can feel confident that a lot of time goes into designing the attendee experience. That includes ensuring that they're supported every step of the way. Even before the conference starts, they'll receive communications to help them prepare, so when they into the space, they will also be orientation videos detailing how to navigate the experience. In addition everything sign posted just like an in-person conference. And finally has a team of real humans including myself who work behind the scenes. We have many people who are available

throughout the event to answer any questions that you may have in the spaces and at a designated help desk.

DR. STRIKER:

So, fair to say, I think a lot of people might look at it as a hassle to set all this up initially, but in reality if you think about it, saving the time of trying to get ready for an in-person meeting, packing luggage, getting plane reservations, and going through all the travel. I imagine the way we can probably look at this is a, a significant time saver, actually.

FALLON CRYER:

Yeah, exactly. Virtual events offer a little bit of added convenience that's hard not to love. Attendees no longer need to travel, as you've mentioned. So we're not leaving our families or our practices, and you can have a really great experience woven into your daily life. And while, yes, there is absolutely a learning curve, it's not steep. Completing your profile and building your personal agenda doesn't take very long and it gives you the benefit of a better, more personalized experience. But it's also optional. The, the bit that's really exciting and new is the post-event experience. Because most content will be recorded and made available post-event, if you miss a session or you want to re-watch a lecture, you can come back at your leisure. This is something that doesn't often happen with an in-person conference.

DR. STRIKER:

I attended the ASA Legislative Conference virtually and that was the first time we had done that, as well. All the reviews that I had seen were extremely positive. It was a compressed meeting instead of a couple days worth, it was a few hours worth, but everybody that was involved loved the format. And one other key advantage was having an increased number of individuals be able to attend those lectures that otherwise wouldn't have been able to. Is that something we can expect with this one in your estimation?

FALLON CRYER:

Absolutely. There are a few benefits that I think are worth highlighting around this event and you've spoken to a number of them. In particular the efficiency, no need to travel means that the time you invest will be spent gaining value. And secondly, a virtual event creates that broader reach. People who may not have otherwise been able to attend, even in a year when we weren't facing these challenges, now they can. It's, uh, creating a world of new opportunity.

DR. STRIKER:

Is there any idea about how this is going to affect the Anesthesiology Meeting in the future, once everybody is comfortable with meeting in person again? Do you foresee this as changing the entire format going forward?

DR. ROSENBLATT:

This is really an opportunity in progress and we are going to take very seriously the evaluations we get from this meeting and what we hear, just on the street, and see how the, the, um, membership and the attendees respond to this format and move on from there.

DR. STRIKER:

Well, Meg, let's get into the specifics of the educational content. I know it's going to be top-notch. Can you just tell us a little bit about what's planned? I know they're still going to be breakout sessions, industry discussions, but let's just go over some of the, the details.

DR. ROSENBLATT:

Certainly. Anesthesiology 2020 is going to deliver sessions in formats that we've come to love and expect. That includes special lectures, general sessions, we'll have abstracts, medically challenging presentation as well. You're going to see content from all twelve clinical tracks, plus the special sessions as I've mentioned and late-breaking topics including COVID. General sessions are going to include refresher course lectures, panels, clinical forums and point-counterpoints.

We are going to have a robust scientific program. Much of it will be on the Monday, but you'll be seeing scientific presentations throughout all the days. They'll feature three categories of abstract presentations, along with their features and plenary sessions.

There will be a robust mix of general sessions on science and research. They'll be at least nine CME hours worth of journal-based activities. There will be educational and career development provided by FAER. Um, we will include sessions for the first time on quality improvement projects, which will be presented in an electronic poster format.

Uh, we will open up opportunities for sharing medical knowledge and learning how other anesthesiologists tackle challenges. Now, what's interesting is that some of the

educational sessions will be pre-recorded but they will be followed by live Q&A, and other sessions will be entirely presented in a live format.

DR. STRIKER:

So pretty much, most large categories that typically we find at the ASA Annual Meeting are going to be available in some format, correct?

DR. ROSENBLATT:

This year, the real challenge that we have, and, and we all will not be presenting is workshops. But we are looking into ways that we may be able to do those in a virtual format in the future.

DR. STRIKER:

Gotcha. Um, we, you talked about CMEs earlier in the conversation. Is there a limit to CMEs that people have the ability to obtain?

DR. ROSENBLATT:

Well, as I mentioned, there will be 27 hours of programming available during the three and a half days. And we mentioned that the lectures will be accessible on the platform after the meeting is concluded. Content will be presented in a variety of formats to meet the learning styles and preferences, and you'll be able to get CME in problem-based learning discussions, which will be held in little rooms with fixed numbers of people to have intimate discussions that we've been used to having for the last several years.

You'll be able to get CME from refresher course lectures, the panels, clinical forums, point-counterpoints, special sessions. So all the ways that we've been used to getting CME will be available in this format.

DR. STRIKER:

And I understand you've scheduled an impressive array of lecturers. Can you tell our listeners who will be there and what we'll be learning about?

DR. ROSENBLATT:

We've been planning for 18 months for these phenomenal lecturers to be able to speak to the membership and the attendees, and they include Francis Collins who's the

current Director of the National Institutes of Health, which is the largest supporter of biomedical research in the world. And he will open the meeting with a keynote address entitled “Exceptional Opportunity in Biomedical Research.”

We will hear from Matthew Weinger, who will present the Ellison Pierce Lecture called “Is Safety Becoming the Poor Stepchild of Quality.”

Beverly Orser will deliver the John W. Severinghaus Lecture on translational science, entitled “Anesthesiology: Resetting Our Sights on Long-Term Outcomes”, and she will be discussing how perioperative neurocognitive disorders represent a scientific field that’s ripe for discovery.

We’re thrilled to have Joanne Conroy deliver the Emery A. Rovenstine Memorial Lecture, “Vital Signs Transforming 21st Century Anesthesia Practice.”

We have Tony Yaksh presenting the FAER-Helrich Research Lecture, “Why is Pain Such a Tough Nut to Crack? A Mechanistic Perspective on Our Emphasis Upon Neuraxial Processing.”

So it sounds like our premier lecturers, our top-notch lecturers, will be addressing topics across the spectrum of our subspecialty practice.

DR. STRIKER:

No, that's great. That sounds fantastic. I'm looking forward to all of those. Um, let me play a little devil's advocate here. We mentioned earlier about networking and, I think that's probably, if I had to guess, most attendees' favorite part of the meeting, networking with their peers, new people, professional alliances. Will attendees really get the benefit of networking from their sofas or offices?

FALLON CRYER:

Handshakes might be off the table, but I really believe that meaningful connections are absolutely achievable. In fact, we know that virtual conferences can make networking relatively easy, and while nothing can replace in-person conferences, and we'll still miss running into people in the hallways, in a virtual environment there's a lot of work that goes into creating spaces that can encourage attendees to interact in a spontaneous

way, including text-based threads or groups, exhibitor spaces and video networking spaces. In addition, technology gives us the ability to move beyond that social art of in-person networking, where I mentioned it's quite spontaneous like seeing somebody in the coffee line, and we can add a bit of science into matchmaking.

This year, we're really excited to be offering an AI-powered matchmaking tool that facilitates face-to-face meetings. So whether you're reconnecting with an existing contact, or meeting somebody for the first time, our tool will help you schedule one-on-one brain dates or small group video meetings based on your profile and a chosen interest area. Behind the scenes, the matchmaking engine learns about who you want to meet based on how you interact with the recommendations and then it makes changes to improve in real time, before, during, and after the event.

So whether we're connecting med students with residency programs, or helping members connect with exhibitors or affiliates, this more targeted approach is a real benefit of going virtual. I think the most important thing to remember though, even when we have all of these tools at our disposal, is that to get the benefit you really need to make the time for it. So if I had one piece of advice it would be that when you're building your agenda, make sure you dedicate time to networking.

DR. STRIKER:

That's an important point. How will we be prompted to engage in networking?

FALLON CRYER:

I think it's a part of our communications pre-event. It should absolutely be something that we talk about, and when you're in the event, you will see that there are dedicated agenda items that make space for that networking in the top line navigation it's in very prominent positions, and they'll be lots of direction pointing you to take those steps to get those benefits.

DR. STRIKER:

OK, great. That's a great suggestion. And I think that's something easily when you're registering for an online meeting, as an attendee I could see overlooking completely.

DR. ROSENBLATT:

And let me jump in here for a second, Adam, if you don't mind, but Saturday night, may be an opportunity for institutions to arrange to have virtual receptions or other

subspecialty groups. As long as they request the space, we can provide a place for them to gather and uh, hopefully, uh, have their own virtual cocktail parties or meet and greets, so that people can reconnect or make new connections.

DR. STRIKER:

I'm glad you mentioned that, cuz that also is one of the favorite activities for many attendees just to reconnect and, and meet others from other institutions. So thanks for pointing that out.

Now, let's talk about corporate partners. We mentioned it earlier. Meg can give us a little detail as to how interactions with corporate partners will take place?

DR. ROSENBLATT:

Absolutely. Many of us haven't seen our corporate contacts in months, and, and really want to be able to connect with them. So we will provide a variety of ways for this to happen. Sunrise sessions will kick off each day and attendees can learn about new concepts, innovations and improvements in these morning sessions. We are going to have midday exhibitor showcase sessions where attendees can explore the latest industry innovations and experience new technology.

There will be opportunity for table talk networking, which will allow attendees to join topic-specific tables and to move around rooms and visit multiple sites. And our partners will host interactive afternoon and evening networking receptions, which will allow people to have one-on-one group chats to make sure they understand the products and the services that are being offered, and to be able to learn how to maximize what they already have.

DR. STRIKER:

And what about our future leaders, med students and residents? A significant portion of the attendance at the ASA Annual Meeting and a very important one. Um, some of them may be more comfortable in virtual environments already. But do you have any specific plans to engage them?

DR. ROSENBLATT:

Well, last year, there were 1,300 medical students who attended the Annual Meeting. Um, it's a must-stop shop for anybody who's thinking of an anesthesiology residency, so we are certainly going to encourage their attendance this year. We are offering a wide

range of educational sessions guaranteed to ignite their interests. Residents are going to want to go to topics that include things like handling crises and unique cases in the OR. They'll learn how to secure their first job as an anesthesiologist and including teaching them about contracts and negotiation do's and don'ts. They'll have the opportunity to learn the most-asked topics on their in-training exam and lessons not taught in residency. And our medical students will be able to catch sessions that teach them the ABC's of anesthesia, how to manage finances, how to shine in virtual interviews and how to (sic) residency programs despite the unknowns that are occurring during this pandemic. There will also be panel discussions on what they've always wanted to know about anesthesiology residency and training, um, and there will be opportunities for them to learn about research and the future of the field.

There's certainly going to be networking opportunities to connect with other participants, educators and industry representatives through the virtual interactive networking sessions, um, specifically aimed for residents and medical students.

And lastly, there will be that famous medical student virtual meet-and-greet session with residency program representatives. They'll be able to meet residency Program Directors in real-time, learn about their programs, have their questions answered, and, uh, help guide their residency match plan. There will also be the opportunity to connect with other medical students across the country and find mentors among ASA physician members. It's going to be an absolute robust and exciting resident medical student program occurring at Anesthesiology 2020.

DR. STRIKER:

That is, it's great to hear. It's a, a common thread through a lot of these podcasts is the importance of mentoring and teaching our students and our residents and allowing for opportunities for them to become leaders, and I, I am thrilled to hear, just on this part alone, about the robust offerings that we're giving to the, to the medical students and residents and our learners so that they can not only participate, but benefit from, from a meeting such as this.

My sense though, uh, from listening to all these wonderful offerings is the Association is going bold here, and they're taking some risks by pushing the boundaries. What drove ASA to make the investments in, and commitment to, this kind of cutting-edge digital event?

DR. ROSENBLATT:

The ASA is committed to providing the opportunity for members and attendees to fulfill their continuing medical education needs, as well as giving them networking and business opportunities. The physician leadership, the Annual Meeting Oversight Committee, the Administrative Council, the Executive Council and the ASA staff are all collaborating and working hard to design with our colleagues at beedance and prepare for an immersive experience that meets your needs and hopefully exceeds everybody's expectation.

DR. STRIKER:

Fallon, what about you?

FALLON CRYER:

I think that looking ahead, virtual meetings are here to stay. So whether it's a full virtual conference like we're exploring in this environment, or adding virtual elements to an in-person event in the future. As Meg says, it's a new medium and we believe that it will form part of any long-term strategy. And when I say we, I mean us at beedance. And this is an area that we really specialize in. The thing that I love about what's happening now is ASA is turning this challenge into an opportunity to innovate. They are leading, and beyond the Annual Meeting, it shows a real innovation, a commitment to bring the community together and providing value to members now and in the future. They're really moving with the times.

DR. STRIKER:

Well, this is obviously very different than what the ASA has done in the past. That's not a bad thing, necessarily. I certainly see a lot of benefits, things like less time away from our families and practices, just to name a couple. And just from listening to both of you talk, I'm actually excited to see how this plays out. I think there's a, a lot of interesting possibilities here, and things that I'm going to love about the meeting this time, as opposed to previous times.

Obviously, I am going to miss terribly connecting with colleagues from all around the world. But I, I think, uh, the one thing for instance that I know a lot of people have struggled with over the years with the ASA Annual Meeting is navigating such a large meeting. It's such a great meeting, but whenever I talk to people that attended, that's got to be, that that's the biggest complaint is, I just can't find things, or there's just too much. It's intimidating. And my suspicion is this actually might cater to those individuals a little more. And as I think about all these benefits are there things that the attendees will get from this that they might not expect?

DR. ROSENBLATT:

The biggest challenge for me when we sat down to plan this, is how do we keep people across time zones together? When we're at a single location it's very easy, nine o'clock Saturday morning to have a huge opening session with all of the attendings. It sort of grounds the meeting. And now, um, this meeting poses the challenge of working across four plus time zones. It has the ability to reach a global audience with numerous sessions running concurrently. If you can't make a session, or you have several sessions you'd like to attend simultaneously, you have the option of accessing our recorded content later and at your convenience. That's new, and a tremendous value to all participants.

DR. STRIKER:

Fallon, what about you? Anything that you can suggest of things that we might not expect?

FALLON CRYER:

We already heard from Meg around this great opportunity to bring these global communities together. Another one is around the access to education. We've got the program that's packed with continuing medical education, so that's been preserved. And it's important to recognize how difficult that can be in a virtual environment. And so it's really excellent with that we've been able to do that.

As you mentioned earlier, there's also that efficiency that we're gaining. The not having to travel means it all the time that you choose to invest will be spent in gaining the value through the access to education, connection with industry, networking.

And finally what I think is, is most important is that there a long-lasting networking opportunities. In a global community of tens of thousands of people and with a program that so large, how do you find those people that you want to talk to? We really believe that this will change how people can find their communities within the membership. We're creating a way to navigate more easily and more efficiently by going virtual. So people can get the information that they've come to receive, and make the connections that they're looking for. And what we really expect is a new engagement paradigm that will outlive this moment in time.

DR. STRIKER:

The affordable registration rate, paired with 12 month of access to the recordings, is, is an incredible value. I've already thought it was a great value previously at other Annual Meetings, purchasing the entire content for the year. Meg, can you talk about, in this instance, the specifics of what value we all can truly expect from this?

DR. ROSENBLATT:

Well, considering that we are not investing in our flights, in our meals, in our hotel, the savings are obvious. The price of the meeting is going to be \$99 for members, \$399 for non-members, and of course resident members and medical students are free. So we will be saving time and money and providing a world-class educational opportunity for our members and our attendees.

DR. STRIKER:

Let's talk about steps for success with the attendees. We all know that you get out of a meeting like this what you put into it. What are some key points that you'd both like to make to attendees of how to get the most out of this experience?

FALLON CRYER:

You're absolutely right, Dr. Striker. The key is to invest your time. You've got to commit to success by reading the pre-event communications as they become available. When you enter the space, watch the orientation video and make that time to set up your profile and personalize your agenda. You'll get the most value by not only attending the sessions, but by participating in things like live Q&A and chats, and then by spending time engaging in the exhibitor halls and joining the networking opportunities, you'll really bring the experience to life. Those who make the time will see the greatest benefits.

DR. STRIKER:

And, Meg, then what can you offer to the prospective attendees?

DR. ROSENBLATT:

Well, I promise that Anesthesiology 2020 will offer the same high-quality learning opportunities that our members and our attendees have come to expect from an ASA

Annual Meeting. Just the format will be different. And I hope that everybody will join us and experience all of this innovation, all of the education, the updates in knowledge, and everything that this new virtual format will provide.

DR. STRIKER:

This has certainly been an eye-opening conversation. I'm, I'm even more excited about the meeting after talking to the two of you. It's clear, this won't be anything like the typical Zoom meetings, and I can say from already my experience with the ASA Legislative Conference how great of an experience that actually was. Not just because of the lecturers, but that conference in its short format, actually allowed for some really fun and engaging interactions with, with colleagues live while we were listening to the lectures.

This is going to be much bigger than that, obviously, but already after listening to the two of you and coupling that with the previous experience we had with that conference, I, I am really excited about this.

I thank you both for talking with me and going through the details. I really think that this is going to be extremely helpful for any attendee, and perspective attendees to this meeting. I really am truly excited to see how this all shakes out because I think it's going to be a wonderful meeting. I think we all recognize just what an incredibly difficult task it is to put on a meeting such as this and I applaud you both and everybody involved with the meeting planning already because it would have been really easy to just cancel this thing. And to go the extra mile and try to prepare this so that as many attendees can get as great of an experience as possible out of this, is, is, is already truly remarkable.

And so thank you both. And I encourage everyone to come together to support the specialty, attend this meeting, October 2nd through the 5<sup>th</sup>. Please explore the full program and register now at [asahq.org/annualmeeting](http://asahq.org/annualmeeting).

Meg, Fallon, thank you so much for joining me today.

DR. ROSENBLATT:

Thank you for having us, Adam.

FALLON CRYER:

Thank you Adam.

DR. STRIKER:

Well, this is Adam Striker, thanking everyone for joining us again on ASA's Central Line. Please tune in next time.

(MUSIC)

VOICEOVER:

Don't miss out on the opportunity to interact with global leaders in the specialty and pursue new learning without stepping away from your practice. Join us on October 2nd through the 5<sup>th</sup>. Explorer the full program and register now at [asahq.org/annualmeeting](http://asahq.org/annualmeeting).

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