Preface


Gregory D. Fink, L. Gabriel Navar

As program chairs of the 2011 High Blood Pressure Research Scientific Sessions sponsored by the American Heart Association Councils for High Blood Pressure Research and Kidney in Cardiovascular Disease and the Inter-American Society of Hypertension (IASH), we are pleased to report that the meeting was an outstanding success. The conference was held on September 20 to 24 at the Walt Disney World Dolphin Resort in Orlando, Florida. A very special aspect of this year’s meeting was that, for the first time, it was cosponsored and co-organized by IASH. The program committees were combined, and the conference was organized as a fully integrated meeting with the overall important theme, “Bridging Basic and Translational Hypertension Research in the Americas.” This jointly sponsored meeting encouraged an even larger than usual participation of clinicians and researchers from Latin America in the excellent scientific program. The program covered the latest developments in our understanding of the causes of hypertension; its relationship to stroke, cardiac disease, and kidney dysfunction; and the most effective means for detecting, evaluating, and treating high blood pressure across diverse populations. The conference is widely recognized as the premier scientific meeting on hypertension in the world, and the mix of attendees reflected that fact: nearly 40% of the participants were from 30 countries other than the United States. We are particularly happy to report that overall attendance at the conference was 820, the largest in the history of the meeting and the largest participation by Latin American investigators.

In addition to the ample opportunities for free communications presented as talks and posters, the meeting was expanded to include multiple symposia and workshops replacing the single-topic workshop traditionally held on the first day. These covered topics such as “Renin: The Final Frontier”; “Genetics and Environment: Epidemiology of Hypertension in the Americas”; “Sympathetic Mechanisms in Hypertension”; and “Cardio-Renal Metabolic Syndrome.” In addition, a symposium titled “Global Hypertension Initiative: New Investigator Session,” was planned, organized, and conducted entirely by students, postdoctoral fellows, and early career scientists. We thank the International Society of Hypertension for sponsoring this first-of-its-kind symposium. Additional symposia were also scheduled as concurrent sessions throughout the rest of the 4 days of this exciting meeting.

The conference proper was kicked off by a thought-provoking, and entertaining, keynote presentation by Dr Julian F.R. Paton titled, “Cerebrovascular Dysfunction as a Cause of Neurogenic Hypertension.” The scientific sessions were composed of 547 presentations given as oral talks or posters. Virtually all of these were well attended and generated significant feedback and discussion by attendees. A particularly notable and encouraging feature of the sessions this year was the very extensive participation of trainees and younger investigators as presenters and discussants. Another unique feature of the conference this year was the breakfast “how-to” sessions. These provided detailed practical instruc-

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Figure 1. The Excellence Award in Hypertension Research Awardees for 2011. Dr Christopher Wilcox (left) and Dr Ernesto Schiffrin (right).
tions for novices on the successful use of techniques important in hypertension research, such as measuring reactive oxygen species and using recombinant viruses.

A major highlight of the conference every year is the opportunity to recognize outstanding hypertension investigators with prestigious awards, lectureships, and travel fellowships. This year we were fortunate to be able to recognize an outstanding, qualified, and deserving group of colleagues. Most of these are listed in the following pages, but special mention must be made of this year’s recipients of the Excellence Award in Hypertension Research (formerly the Novartis Award). This year the award honored 2 world-renowned clinician-scientists whose careers epitomize what is meant by the term “translational research,” Dr Ernesto Schiffrin of the Jewish General Hospital (Montreal, Quebec, Canada) and Dr Christopher Wilcox of Georgetown University Medical Center (Washington, DC; Figure 1).

The Lifetime Achievement Award is named in honor of Drs Irvine Page and Alva Bradley, who established the National Foundation for High Blood Pressure Research in 1945. That organization was the precursor of the High Blood Pressure Research Council (HBPR). The 2010 Page-Bradley Lifetime Achievement Award was presented to Dr Hiroko Nishimura (Professor Emeritus, Department of Physiology, College of Medicine, University of Tennessee Health Science Center, and...
The Harriet Dustan Award recognizes investigator role models who have made consistently important contributions to the field of hypertension. The award was established to honor the memory of Dr Harriet Dustan, an internationally renowned clinician-scientist who for many years was a major figure, and leader in the Council on High Blood Pressure Research and the American Heart Association. The 2011 award was given to Dr Chris Baylis (Professor of Physiology and Functional Genomics and Medicine, and J. Robert Cade Professor of Physiology at the University of Florida; Figure 3).

Recognized highlights of the annual High Blood Pressure Research Scientific Sessions each year are 3 lectures named after outstanding hypertension researchers whose careers had a formative impact on the field. The Lewis K. Dahl Memorial Lecture was established in 1988 by the HBPR in honor of his pioneering work on the relations among salt, the kidney, and hypertension and for establishing a widely used animal model of salt-sensitive hypertension. This year’s lecturer was Dr Jane Reckelhoff (Billy S. Guyton Distinguished Professor and Director, Women’s Health Research Center, University of Mississippi Medical Center; Figure 4). The Arthur C. Corcoran Memorial Lecture was established in 1977 in honor of Arthur Curtis Corcoran’s key leadership in the application of renal clearance methods to the study of hypertension in patients and experimental animals. The lecture was presented by Dr Jan Danser (Professor of Pharmacology, Head, Laboratory of Pharmacology, Erasmus Medical Center; Figure 5). The Donald Seldin Lecture, supported by the Kidney in Cardiovascular Diseases Council, honors the impact of the work of Dr Donald Seldin, whose research interests over a long and distinguished career...
included intensive study of the physiological regulatory mechanisms controlling acid-base and potassium balance, the osmolality and volume of body fluids, and the impact of renal disease on these regulatory processes. This year the Seldin Lecture was presented by Dr Sharon Anderson (Professor of Medicine and Chief, Medical Service, Portland Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Oregon Health and Science University; Figure 6).

A particularly important recognition given each year is the Harry Goldblatt New Investigator Award presented to a newly independent investigator doing research work related to hypertension that is judged to have already made a significant contribution to our understanding of the causes and/or consequences of hypertension. Finalists for this award are selected from ratings of the abstracts submitted for the meeting, as well as overall accomplishments, and the winner is selected by an awards committee based on oral presentations made by the finalists at the meeting. This year there were 3 excellent finalists: Dr Jussaro do Carmo (University of Mississippi), Dr Alejandro Chade (University of Mississippi), and Dr Romer Gonzalez-Villalobos (Cedar-Sinai Medical Center). The 2012 Harry Goldblatt New Investigator Awardee was Dr Alejandro Chade (Figure 7).

In addition, the IASH presented the Lifetime Achievement Award to Dr Luis Juncos, a well-known physician-scientist from the National University of Cordoba (Cordoba, Argentina). IASH recognizes individuals from throughout the Americas that have a lifetime of outstanding contributions to the mission of IASH, which includes investigations on prevention and treatment of hypertension and vascular disease, as well as activities that foster and nurture interactions among investigators from various parts of the Americas. Dr Juncos has served the IASH in many capacities and is an exemplary role model as an educator, scientist, clinician, and advocate for the society (Figure 8).

We received endorsements from the International Society of Hypertension, Latin American Society of Hypertension, American Society of Hypertension, Consortium of Southeastern Hypertension Control, and from numerous national societies relating to hypertension and cardiovascular diseases. Together with the HBPR, we were successful in obtaining a $60,000 grant from the American Foundation for Hypertension Research, which was awarded jointly to the IASH and HBPR to provide travel fellowships for new investigators and travel support for faculty. Overall financial support for the meeting was received from various sponsors as listed in the program, and we are grateful to them for supporting our educational activities. We were pleased this year to have the opportunity to support so many travel awards for a large number of trainees to attend the conference. Special thanks to the American Foundation for Hypertension Research, High Blood Pressure Research Council, the Kidney in Cardiovascular Disease Council, the HBPR Trainee Advocacy Committee, and Novartis Japan (for Japanese fellows) for sponsoring these travel awards.

We want to thank the members of the program committee selected from all of the sponsoring groups and including members from Latin America for all of their efforts in putting together an outstanding and truly integrated scientific conference. From this program, there were 121 submissions to the proceedings, with ≈20% being accepted.

We also acknowledge with pleasure the tremendous assistance and advice of Dr Rhian Touyz, Chair of the HBPR, in shaping all aspects of the planning and conduct of the conference and of Dr David Ellison, Chair of the Kidney in Cardiovascular Disease Council. We are very pleased that our vision for recommending a cosponsored conference led to this extraordinary meeting. Our sincere appreciation goes out to all who contributed to the success of this meeting, but special thanks are owed to Susan Kunish, Veronica Zamora, Melissa Ariate, and other American Heart Association staff members. It goes without saying that there would be no meeting without their efforts at the conference and throughout the year.
Sessions and the Inter-American Society of Hypertension Meeting
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