Council Update for 2015

It was happy to see that the AHA leadership approved our proposal for the Kenneth D. Bloch Memorial Lecture in Vascular Biology. This lecture, which we proposed in partnership with the BCVS Council, will honor a vascular biologist with a lecture during Scientific Sessions that will be sponsored by the two Councils on alternate years.

Along with the Dickenson W. Richards Memorial Lecture, these represent our Council’s two sponsored state-of-the-art lectures. Our Nominations Committee will soon be making the selection of the first awardee who will deliver a lecture at Scientific Sessions 2015 in Orlando, Florida. Send ideas and nominations to me or to Karl B. Ken, MD, Chair of the Nominations Committee.

At our annual dinner last November, in a room charged with emotions and memories, Warren Zapf, MD, and Fumio Ichinose, MD, PhD, who are both from the Department of Anesthesiology at Harvard, active Council members and Dr. Bloch’s collaborators and friends, spoke about his life and achievements. We had the largest attendance at that dinner for at least the last 15 years. Our Council continues to grow remarkably well, with a sustained momentum for several years in a row, starting with the years that Dr. Bloch was Chair.

More importantly, fresh blood is also being infused into our Council. During Scientific Sessions 2014, the early career investigator group came to life with several events including a special session on Nov. 15. The group organized the “How to Build a Roadmap for Your Career in Cardiopulmonary and Critical Care Research” session. The well attended session was the first direct contribution from the SCPR Council to the Saturday programming dedicated to early career investigators. You can read more details on this important new initiative from our Council in the summary prepared by John Ryan, MD, FAHA, in this issue.

Following our leadership committee’s unanimous recommendations, Council members confirmed our new Chair-Elect Mark T. Gladwin, MD, FAHA, Chair of Medicine at the University of Pittsburgh. Dr. Gladwin is an internationally recognized leader and pioneer in the field of pulmonary vascular biology. He will assume his Chair duties this summer following Ben Abella, MD. In addition, the Council appointed Dr. Ichinose as our new Chair of the SCPR Program Committee. Dr. Ichinose will be leading the team that works to bring the Sessions program to life. This is a transition time for AHA, as it works to simplify navigation of lectures and events during sessions, make programming more focused and more appealing to our members. Stay tuned. We’ll be sharing more information about these changes later this year.

One on One With Edda Spierekotte, MD

What role has AHA played in your career, and how did you get involved with SCPR Council?

Attending international AHA conferences as a young fellow and interacting with pulmonary hypertension researchers who came from all over the world motivated me to pursue a research career. The AHA, together with the Pulmonary Hypertension Association, awarded me a Postdoctoral Fellowship Award that allowed me to stay at Stanford University, receive excellent basic science research training and pursue my passion of becoming a clinician scientist. I just recently was asked to become a member of the SCPR Council, and I am very much looking forward to this new role.

Early Career Committee

Within the SCPR Council, we have made a concerted effort to promote and mentor early career investigators in the field of resuscitative science and pulmonary vascular disease. To this end, we have established a dynamic, energetic Early Career Committee under the guidance of Mark T. Gladwin, MD, FAHA.

At the annual Scientific Sessions, this group organized a high quality, well attended session on “How to Build a Roadmap for Your Career in Cardiopulmonary and Critical Care Research.”

The keynote speaker was Dr. Gladwin, whose talk, “How to Develop a Career in Pulmonary Vascular Research,” described his career and his role as a mentor offering insight into grant funding, manuscript preparation and networking. Sebastian Bonetti, PhD, FAHA, presented his work from Quebec detailing his experience in building a translational research program in PAH, highlighting the key constituents and support structure required to develop such a program. Eric Austin, MD, MSC, of Vanderbilt University, described his laboratory’s work on defining the role of sex hormones in PAH and again emphasized the role of careful collaboration and mentorship, an issue that the AHA helped significantly in. John Ryan, MD, FAHA, of the University of Utah, presented his group’s work on quality and outcomes in PAH and described the process he has used to build a clinical program while building a clinical research group in Salt Lake City. Vinicio de Jesus Perez, MD, of Stanford University, gave an inspiring talk about the path he has taken to develop the skills he has needed to increase our understanding of Wnt signaling in PAH. Finally Sarah Perman, MD, MSC, from University of Colorado and Co-Chair of the Early Career Committee, provided an excellent overview of the science behind therapeutic hypothermia in cardiac arrest and the role that AHA has played in her career and decision-making.

Developing the next generation of researchers and scientists is one of the core commitments of AHA. In the SCPR Council, we are proud to have developed an imaginative, hard working committee and look forward to what they achieve over the years and decades to come.

Edda Spierekotte, MD

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Mark T. Gladwin, MD, FAHA
University of Pittsburgh Medical Center Director

Vice Chair
Sarah M. Periman, MD, MSC
University of Colorado School of Medicine

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University of Utah
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