Recapping the BCVS Program

Scientific Sessions 2013 in Dallas offered plenty of BCVS programming, highlighted by an early career program, lectures in plenary sessions and a best of Circulation Research session. As a Council, we received numerous AHA awards. I know that many of you attended and saw first-hand how this was an outstanding forum of the latest and greatest in the field of cardiovascular biology and medicine.

A highlight of the first day of the meeting was the Early Career Investigator Program, which was well attended and offered trainees and junior faculty the opportunity to hear about the most exciting trends in extramural funding and to pick up key pointers to writing successful manuscripts and grants.

This year, we added talks on interviewing for that first faculty position and how to network successfully. Our Early Career Committee is chaired by Asa Gustafsson, PhD, FAHA, who continues to do an excellent job. If there is anything you would like to include next year, contact Gustafsson or me.

Each year at Sessions, the BCVS sponsors two separate scientific competitions to underscore the importance of young BCVS investigators. They are the Louis N. and Arnold M. Katz Basic Science Research Prize and the Melvin Marcus Young Investigator Award. After submitting manuscripts over the summer, five finalists are named to present their work for each competition on Sunday afternoon at Sessions. This year, we heard some outstanding talks, and each of the finalists for the Katz and Marcus Awards were champions. Congratulations are in order for the 2013 winners: Shinichi Oka, PhD, from the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey (UMDNJ), was the recipient of the Katz Award, and Dan Shao, PhD, from UMDNJ, received the Marcus Award. Both of these outstanding young scientists were mentored by Junichi Sadoshima, MD, PhD, FAHA. Congratulations to Sadoshima and his fellows.

BCVS also names the recipients of the George E. Brown Memorial Lecture and the Thomas W. Smith Memorial Lecture each year at Sessions. Carrying on the tradition of scientific excellence, two BCVS members presented these named lectures: Annaorsa Leri, MD, from Brigham and Women’s Hospital at Harvard Medical School, presented the Brown Lecture, and Steven Houser, PhD, FAHA, from Temple University School of Medicine, presented the Smith Lecture. Both Leri and Houser gave outstanding talks for these well-attended sessions.

Our Council was honored by receiving numerous AHA-wide awards this year. Roberto Bolli, MD, from the University of Louisville and editor-in-chief of Circulation Research, was named the recipient of the prestigious AHA 2013 Research Achievement Award. Jonathan Stamler, MD, of Case Western Reserve University, was recognized as a 2013 AHA/ASA Distinguished Scientist. Congratulations to Bolli and Stamler for these honors and for the recognition of the BCVS Council.

The BCVS presented two Research Achievement Awards. The BCVS Distinguished Achievement Award recipients for 2013 were Roger Hajjar, MD, from Mount Sinai School of Medicine, and Houser from Temple University School of Medicine. Hajjar and Houser exemplify the research excellence we support through BCVS. We also recognized other award recipients from BCVS including the 2013 Leadership Award that went to Junichi Sadoshima and the BCVS International Liaison Award to Xin Ma, MD, PhD, from Thomas Jefferson University.

A highlight of any Sessions is the BCVS Dinner. This year, it was held at Gilley’s in downtown Dallas. At the banquet, we presented awards and also approved the election of 42 Fellows of the American Heart Association. I welcome all of these new FAHAs and look forward to your continued involvement with the BCVS Council. We also approved the appointment of Rongh Liou, PhD, from Brigham and Women’s Hospital, as the incoming Vice Chair of the BCVS Council beginning July 1. Liao will serve under the incoming Chair Joshua Hare, MD, FAHA, who will take over for me July 1.

The true highlight of any BCVS Dinner is the after-dinner entertainment. Eric Olson, PhD, FAHA, from UT Southwestern Medical Centre, and his rock band “The Transactivators” were joined by Jay Schneider. They played to a full house at Gilley’s. The music was sensational, and we all marveled at how Olson could be such a brilliant scientist and a rock star! Schneider’s guitar playing was awesome. The energy was unbelievable and much fun and dancing went on. Overall, it was a fun night, and I welcome you to attend this event to find out first-hand how basic scientists relax.

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