Lifestyle Lecture Is a Sessions Highlight

At Scientific Sessions 2013 in Dallas, the Robert L. Levy Memorial lecture in lipid metabolism was delivered by Henry Ginsburg, MD, FAHA, professor of Medicine at Columbia University in New York City. This lecture was established in 2001 in memory of Levy, who was a distinguished lipid scientist at the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, vice president for health sciences at Tufts University and a leader in the pharmaceutical industry. Ginsburg's lecture was titled, "Regulation of Plasma Lipoprotein Levels in Humans — New Insights Using Methods Pioneered by Bob Levy."

Ginsburg's career overlapped with Levy in the 1980s at Columbia University. At that time, radioactive tracers were being used by Levy and Ginsburg to study the metabolism of lipid particles in feeding experiments with human volunteers. Ginsburg noted that this approach to human experimentation offered the advantage of thawing specimens at a later time and measuring new proteins as they were identified. The methods have evolved into the use of stable isotopes and modern versions of these experiments continue to be conducted.

Ginsburg shared his results from recently completed studies, as yet unpublished, with pro-glutathione, moprotein and CETP inhibitors, using stable isotopes in human volunteers. He related how it is important to study both the production and catabolism of lipoprotein particles.

Immediately after the Levy lecture, the early career investigator award finalists made oral presentations. Alex Chang, MD, from Johns Hopkins in Baltimore, presented "High Dietary Phosphorus Intake is Associated With All-Cause Mortality: Results From NHANES III" and showed results concerning phosphorus intake and risk of death in the NHANES study. When oral intake of phosphorus exceeded 1200 mg/day, the investigators noted an increased risk of death in this population database. A presentation on "The Association Between Diet Quality and Mortality in Incident Type 2 Diabetes, Women" was made by Hyun Joon Shin, MD, from Baylor Medical Center in Dallas and the Harvard School of Public Health, Boston. He reported that food patterns that have been associated with a healthy eating index were highly associated with lower risk for cardiovascular events in the Nurses' Health Study. A third presentation was made by Taro Narumi, MD, from Yamagata University School of Medicine in Yamagata, Japan. His presentation discussed the obesity paradox, the fact that obese persons with cardiovascular disease experience better survival than normal weight persons with CVD. He reported on data from Japan showing that obesity had differential effects on CVD risk in persons with and without the metabolic syndrome. The fourth finalist, and winner, Ian Neeland, MD, a cardiology fellow from UT Southwestern Medical School in Dallas, presented "Body Fat Distribution and Incident Cardiovascular Disease in Obese Adults," and results on the effects of different measures of obesity on CVD risk in the Dallas Heart Study participants who were obese at the baseline evaluation. He reported that visceral adipose tissue measured by CT scan was highly associated with greater risk for developing CVD during follow-up. Visceral adipose tissue was a better predictor for CVD than traditional measures of adiposity such as waist circumference or body mass index. Also, greater lower body subcutaneous fat was found to have a protective association for incident CVD.

Our former Council Chair Scott Grundy, MD, PhD, FAHA, delivered the Distinguished Scientists lecture. Grundy's lecture summarized much of his work over the years concerning intermediary metabolism and risk of CVD. He highlighted the collaborations and work of his colleagues at UT Southwestern concerning genes related to abnormal fat deposition, genes related to LDL function and to CETP. He also shared findings related to the increased prevalence of the metabolic syndrome and high risk for CVD in participants from the Dallas Heart Study, a probability-based sample of Dallas County residents age 18 to 65 years. These residents were initially surveyed 10 years ago with an extensive household health interview and have been followed since that time.

Early Career Corner

Scientific Sessions 2013 began with a full day of programming and activities specifically developed to provide direction and advice for early career investigators.

The faculty included a mix of both established experts and successful early career investigators who shared their experiences and recommendations on strategies for developing an independent research career.

Topics sponsored by the Council on Lifestyle and Cardiometabolic Health Early Career Committee included insight on getting involved with functional genomics and translational biology, clinical trials, and establishing a career with the large observational cohorts. Advice was also provided for submitting mentored career development awards, publishing papers in peer-reviewed journals, and areas in which the AHA can help early stage scientists advance their career.

With the spring conference on the horizon, the Early Career Committee has planned a variety of both lecture-style and interactive sessions based on the theme “Taking Shelter from the Storm: Strategies for Successfully Navigating These Difficult Funding Times.” Topics include discussions of the newly developed e-cohorts, strategies for maximizing the mentor-mentee relationship (with a focus on “difficult” situations), and how to decide between various academic, research and clinical positions when searching the job market. This year, the early career focus will include opportunities to interact with leading experts along with opportunities to network with other early career investigators who face many of the common challenges experienced by individuals new to the career track.

We look forward to seeing you March 19-22 in San Francisco for an exciting EPINPAM Scientific Sessions meeting.

Council-Sponsored Scholarship Winners Report on 2013 PAPH Course

Kelly Corinne Young-Wolf, PhD, and Andrea Ramirez, MD, the 2013 PAPH Council scholarship winners, wrote about their experience below:

Attending the 2013 CDC Physical Activity and Health (PAPH) course in Park City was a wonderful opportunity. We met worldwide experts in the fields of physical activity and public health research, and it was an honor to be part of such a valuable group.

The interaction with the faculty and participants was constructive, and we learned about emerging issues in domestic and international physical activity and public health research in various settings (clinical, community, epidemiological). We had opportunities to discuss our professional goals and interests, and we received fantastic feedback on our individual research projects and ideas.

We built a collaborative network with brilliant faculty who will help us to be more successful in our careers, and we greatly value the wonderful and high quality teams we were able to achieve with other young researchers. Having completed this training, we are now equipped with the skills required to address some of the major population health challenges.

2013 Distinguished Scientists Lecture. Left to right: Scott Grundy, MD, PhD, FAHA, and Francois Abboud, MD, PhD, FAHA.

2013 Distinguished Achievement Award. Left to right: Peter W.F. Wilson, MD, FAHA, and Barbara Howard, PhD, FAHA.

Robert Levy Memorial Lecture. Left to right: Peter W.F. Wilson, MD, FAHA, and Henry Ginsburg, MD, FAHA.

Lifestyle and Cardiometabolic Health Young Investigator Award. Left to right: Peter W.F. Wilson, MD, FAHA, Hyun Shin, MD, MPH, MS; Taro Narumi, MD; Ian Neeland, MD (winner); and Alexander Chung, BS, MD.

PETER W.F. WILSON, MD, FAHA

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

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