The 19th Annual Scientific Meeting of the Ontario Hypertension Society

By Robert Gros

The 19th Annual Scientific Meeting of the Ontario Hypertension Society (OHS) was held May 2-4, 2008 at the Nottawasaga Inn and Conference Centre in Alliston, Ontario. The meeting started on Friday afternoon with a well attended poster session, where trainees and faculty from the participating universities and research institutes presented their latest research findings.

Saturday morning kicked off with a Clinical Update in Hypertension which was presented by Dr. Sheldon Tobe from Sunnybrook Hospital in Toronto. This was followed by oral trainee presentations given by Yohan D’Souza (Supervisor: Brian Bennett, Queen’s University), Topher Morris (Robert Gros and Ross Feldman, Robarts Research Institute/University of Western Ontario), Augusto Montezano (Rhian Touyz, University of Ottawa), Stephane Bourque (Michael Adams, Queen’s University), Carlo Cifelli (Scott Heximer, University of Toronto) and Theodore Small (Geoffrey Pickering, Robarts Research Institute/University of Western Ontario). These proceedings were followed by what has now become an annual tradition: the Faculty vs. Trainee Basketball Challenge. For the first time, the long and heated battle ended up in a 50-50 tie.

The basketball game/free time was followed by dinner and the presentation of awards for most outstanding oral and poster trainee presentations. The competition was again very tough this year and this made judging the oral and poster presentations extremely difficult. The best-presentation award in the BSc/MSc category was a tie between Tina Maio (Queen’s University, supervisor Michael Adams) and Lisa Pritchard (Queen’s University, supervisor Donald Maurice). The best-presentation award in the PhD category was presented to Theo Small (Robarts Research Institute/University of Western Ontario, supervisor Geoff Pickering), and the best presentation in the post-doctoral category was presented to Augusto Montezano (University of Ottawa, supervisor Rhian Touyz). We thank all those who participated in judging the trainee poster and oral presentations for their time and effort and the interaction and discussion they provided for the presenting trainees.

Sunday morning saw the final State-of-the-Art Lecture, which was presented by Dr. Duncan Stewart from the Ottawa Health Research Institute and entitled “From Genes to Schemes: How Insight Into the Genetic Basis of Pulmonary Hypertension Can Lead to New Therapies.” This was followed by a workshop presented by Dr. Robert Gros (Robarts Research Institute/University of Western Ontario), entitled “Cell in Motion: Single Cell Assessment of Vascular Smooth Muscle Cell Contractility.” Following these Sunday-morning sessions, we bid our farewells over brunch.

This meeting would not have been possible without the continued educational support of the Principle Program sponsor, Pfizer Canada, and the Supporting Program sponsors AstraZeneca, Bayer HealthCare, Boehringer Ingelheim, and Merck Frosst. In addition, this meeting would also not be possible without the excellent organizational support provided by Kathy Christmas. Lastly, the planning for the 20th Annual Spring Meeting of the OHS has begun. The co-chairs for the meeting will be Drs. Ross Feldman and Robert Gros from the Robarts Research Institute/University of Western Ontario. Please watch for the announcement of the OHS annual meeting in early 2009, and we hope to see you there.

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