ACDP News

Association of Chairs of Departments of Physiology: Meeting Highlights

The Association of Chairs of Departments of Physiology (ACDP) held its annual meeting at RIU Palace Pacifico Hotel, Puerto Vallarta, Mexico, on December 5-8, 2013.

President Muthu Periasamy (Ohio State University) developed a program focused on issues being currently faced by department chairs, especially the impact of declining NIH funding on biomedical research as a whole and how it may affect scientists.

Research talks included the 7th Annual Arthur C. Guyton Lectureship given by José Jalife (University of Michigan) on "Searching For The Holy Grail: Upstream Therapy To Prevent Atrial Fibrillation Progression." The new chair research presentation was by J. Kevin Foskett (University of Pennsylvania). The 2013 ACDP Distinguished Service Award was presented to Allen W. Cowley, Jr. (from Medical College of Wisconsin). Cowley discussed his research and scientific career in a presentation.

Jalife receiving Guyton Award

On the national level, chairs heard from Mary Woolley, President of Research! America, on "The Impact Of NIH Funding Cuts On American Science." She challenged scientists to become advocates and champion their own cause.

Building on Woolley's talk but at an institutional level, Mark B. Taubman (Dean, School of Medicine & Dentistry, Vice President for Health Sciences, University of Rochester) gave a dean's perspective on "Supporting Research In Academic Medical Centers In The Era Of Health Care Reform And Fiscal Conservatism."

That was followed up with a discussion led by Muthu Periasamy (Ohio State University) on "Future of Biomedical Research in the USA," with the assistance of Harel Weinstein (Cornell University) and Marshall (Chip) Montrose (University of Cincinnati).

Martin Frank, APS Executive Director, updated the group on "Status and Initiatives of the APS."

On a more departmental level, Susan DeMesquita (American University of the Caribbean School of Medicine) led a discussion regarding "Digital Age of Medical Education." That was followed by a discussion led by Michael Sturek (Indiana University) about "Compensation Plans."

Officer elections were held with the following results. Michael Sturek (Indiana University) was elected president-elect. Elsa I. Mangiarua (Marshall University) was elected secretary-treasurer. Pieter P. de Tombe (Loyola University Chicago Medical School) and Janice H. Urban (Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine & Science) were elected to 3-year terms as councilors.

Chip Montrose (University of Cincinnati) was thanked for his service as past president. T. Richard Nichols (Georgia Institute of Technology) and Michael Sturek (Indiana University) were thanked for their service as councilors.

President-elect Nick Delamere (University of Arizona) announced the 2014 ACDP annual fall meeting will be December 4-7 at Gamboa Rainforest Resort in Panama. As details are available, they will be added to the 2014 meeting web page (***http://www.acdponline.org/***). The meeting will be called the ACDP Leadership Retreat and will be open to chairs of departments of physiology or related areas, graduate directors in physiology or related areas, and medical physiology course directors. The meeting will focus on leadership topics and other areas of broad interest to those audiences. ●

ACDP News

Cowley Honored at Annual ACDP Meeting

The ACDP's highest award, the Distinguished Service Award, was presented to Allen W. Cowley, Jr., Professor and Chairman, Department of Physiology, Harry & Gertrude Hack Term Professor Physiology, and James J. Smith & Catherine Welsch Smith Chair in Physiology, Medical College of Wisconsin, during the organization's 2013 fall meeting in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico. Muthu Periasamy (Ohio State University), President of the Association of Chairs of Departments of Physiology (ACDP), presented the award.

Cowley was selected to receive the ACDP Distinguished Service Award for his long and illustrious service as an institutional and national leader of physiology, and for his wonderful contributions to scientific discovery that have highlighted the importance and value of physiology research.

Cowley has been Professor and Chairman of the Department of Physiology at the Medical College of Wisconsin since 1980. He earned his doctorate in physiology from Hahneman Medical College in Philadelphia, PA, working with John Scott. He then joined the Department of Physiology and Biophysics headed by Arthur Guyton at the University of Mississippi Medical Center. Cowley rose to the rank of professor there before accepting his current position at the Medical College of Wisconsin as Chairman and Professor of Physiology in 1980.

Cowley has made seminal findings related to the role of the baroreceptor reflexes, the renin-angiotensin system, and vasopressin in both the short- and the long-term regulation of arterial blood pressure. His research has revealed the importance of the renal medullary circulation in sodium homeostasis and the long-term control or arterial pressure. He proposed the novel hypothesis and then demonstrated that small reductions of blood flow to medulla of the kidney can produce chronic hypertension. During the past decade, he has pioneered efforts to attach systems level biology to the genome, providing novel insights into the location of genes that underlie complex disease, planting the seeds for the field now referred to as "physiological genomics."

Cowley has served as President of the American Physiological Society (APS), the ACDP (1990 91), as well as President of the International Union of Physiological Sciences. He has received the Walter Cannon, the Ernest Starling, the Carl Wiggers, and Ray Daggs Awards from the APS. Cowley has been the recipient of the Novartis Award from the Council for High Blood Pressure Research of the American Heart Association and the Distinguished Scientist Award of the American Heart Association. His research has been continuously funded by the National Institutes of Health since 1971, during which time he has mentored over 50 fellows and students in his laboratory. Currently he directs two program project grants. One is focused on the kidney and the physiological mechanism of blood pressure control, whereas the second explores the genetic basis of salt-sensitive hypertension. He has over 325 publications in peer-reviewed journals and 38 book chapters.

Cowley's current research is focused on three areas: mechanisms controlling blood flow to the renal medulla, impact of arterial pressure on the production of oxidative stress and renal injury, and the renal medulla of hypertensive rats.

Because of his scientific endeavors, his dedicated service to the field of physiology, and his distinguished service to APS, ACDP, and other scientific organizations, the ACDP was proud to present its 2013 Distinguished Service Award to Allen W. Cowley, Jr. ●

ACDP President Muthu Periasamy presents Allen Cowley, Jr. with the 2013 Distinguished Service Award