

PASPCR

December 2008
Vol. 16 Number 3

Newsletter



The **PASPCR Newsletter** is published three times a year and is intended to serve as a regular means of communication for the members of our Society. Starting this year, the PASPCR Newsletter will be distributed via e-mail, in pdf format, on the first of April, August and December and it will continue to be posted on the web site of the society.

Be sure to check out the PASPCR Commentary page on the website, new articles are being added and if you miss it, you can find past commentaries there as well.

Preparations for the 15th Annual Meeting of the PASPCR, spear-headed by Andrzej Slominski, are progressing well. The meeting will be held in Memphis, Tennessee on September 4-7, 2009 and you can find a tentative schedule and more info about the meeting on page 7.

In this issue, we continue with our new series, "20 years on..." with a contribution from Vince Hearing and "Let me introduce...", which focuses on the IFPCS Women and Minority Scientists Committee.

We hope you enjoy this issue. We encourage you to send us your comments at our email address paspcr.newsletters@gmail.com. Let us know what you would like to see in the letters, suggest sections you think would be useful to include, and recommend any changes that you would like to see. We also encourage you to let us know about meetings that you think would be of interest to members of the society. If you attend a scientific meeting at which you heard about work which you think will be of interest to the membership of the **PASPCR**, please write a few paragraphs summarizing what was presented and share it with us. Also, keep us updated on any "Members in the News" so we can spread the word of your successes. This is **your Newsletter**, and we depend upon you to help us ensure it best serves the Society's needs. We look forward to hearing your

ideas and suggestions and to continue working together to compile the Newsletters for our society.

We have enjoyed our first year as the new PASPCR Newsletter Editorial Team and we would like to thank to all our contributors for their columns submitted to us for inclusion in the letters.

We wish you Happy Holidays and a great 2009!



PASPCR Newsletter Editorial Team

See Pages 4 and 5 for PASPCR Council
Nominations



Don't Forget to Vote

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The PASPCR Web Site can be found at:

<http://www.paspcr.org>

**The PanAmerican Society for
Pigment Cell Research**

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Greg Barsh

President-elect

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Secretary/Treasurer

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James Grichnik (2006-2008)

Marjan Huizing (2008-2010)

Ana Luisa Kadekaro (2008-2010)

Lidia Kos (2007-2009)

Sancy Leachman (2006-2008)

Caroline Le Poole (2007-2009)

Prashiela Manga (2008-2010)

Richard Spritz (2006-2008)

IFPCS Representative:

John Pawelek

(Past-President and IFPCS Representative)

Calendar of Events

2008

The 48th American Society for Cell Biology Annual Meeting

Date and place: December 13-17, San Francisco, CA, USA

Web site: <http://www.ascb.org>

2009

The 69th Annual Meeting for the Society for Investigative Dermatology

Date and place: May 6-9, Montreal, CANADA

Web site: http://www.sidnet.org/Annual_Meeting.asp

2009

The 3rd ASPCR Meeting

Date and place: June 11-13, Seoul, KOREA

Web site: <http://www.aspcr2009.org>

2009

15th Annual Meeting of PASPCR

Date and place: September 4-7, Memphis, TN, USA

Contact: Andrzej Slominski, M.D., Ph.D.

E-mail: aslominski@utm.edu

2009

XVth Meeting of the ESPCR

Date and place: September 20-23, Münster, GERMANY

Web site: <http://www.espcr.org>

2009

16th Annual Meeting of PASPCR

Date and place: September 22-26, Vancouver, British Columbia, CANADA

Contact: Youwen Zhou, M.D., Ph.D.

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The *PASPCR Newsletter* is published three times a year (April, August and December) by the PanAmerican Society for Pigment Cell Research. All views are those of the authors. For further information or to submit articles, please use the e-mail address paspcr.newsletters@gmail.com.

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Corporate Sponsors

By Andrzej Slominski

The PASPCR would like to acknowledge and thank our Corporate Sponsors; the list below reflects contributions made during the year of 2008. In the past, financial gifts from our Sponsors have allowed our Society to increase benefits to the membership far out of proportion to the actual dues collected from members. Money contributed by these Sponsors will be used to support the 15th PASPCR Annual Meeting to be held in Memphis, including the meeting travel stipends, scientific program and educational activity and any additional meeting expenses, and also for funding our Young Investigator Award program. We gratefully acknowledge the contributions as follows:

DIAMOND Corporate Patrons

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COMMITMENT TO BECOME GOLDEN CORPORATE PATRON for the 15th PASPCR Annual Meeting in Memphis
Unilever

We also thank for the \$1,000 donation from a contributor who wishes to remain anonymous.

We are happy to announce that The Methodist Healthcare (accredited by the ACCME) will jointly sponsor The 15th Pan American Society of Pigment Cell Research Conference. The conference has been approved to receive 26 AMA PRA Category 1 Credits.

PASPCR Members/Changes in contact info

By Andrzej Slominski

The PASPCR would like to welcome these new members to the Society:

Jeniffer D. Kubic

University of Chicago
Chicago, IL

Deborah Lang

University of Chicago
Chicago, IL

Joseph B. D. Mascarenhas

University of Chicago
Chicago, IL

Changes in contact info

New contact info: James M. Grichnik

UMHC/Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center, Melanoma Program
N.W. 12th Avenue, Loc. D-1
Miami, FL 33136

Cell phone: 305-458-6692

E-mail: jgrichnik@med.miami.edu

New email address: Greg Barsh

gbarsh@stanford.edu

Please inform the Secretary/Treasurer of any changes in your contact info that happen during the year so we could communicate them to the members through the Newsletter.

NEWSLETTER QUESTIONNAIRE

This year has been one of many changes for the PASPCR newsletter, new editors, a new format... As this is your newsletter, we invite you to give us some feedback on the changes and directions you would like to see us move in the next year.

PLEASE COMPLETE THE SURVEY AT:

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=oUcqlwkMSjHgekvhC99u3A_3d_3d

by the end of February, 2009. We will follow up regarding the results of this survey in our first number in 2009 to be released on April 1st.

Letter from PASPCR President

NOMINATION OF COUNCIL MEMBERS

A nominating committee is appointed by the President and consists of the President-elect, a Council member and three at-large members. These include:

Greg Barsh - President Elect
(Stanford University)

Lidia Kos - Council Member
(Florida International University)

Sergio Grando - at-large Member
(University of California, Irvine)

Thomas Hornyak - at-large Member
(Center for Cancer Research NCI-NIH)

Andrew Carlson - at-large Member
(Albany Medical Center)

Nominations to the Council were solicited from the Council as well as the broader membership. Eight nominees were put on the ballot and three are elected to the Council by the entire PASPCR membership for a three years term. Tom Hornyak who is on the nominating committee was also suggested as a potential Council Member by several members of the society and therefore is also a nominee. The responses show the vitality of our group.

Nominees for the Council (2009-2012) include:

Esteban Dell'Angelica PhD

was trained as a protein biochemist and a cell biologist. His interest in pigment cell biology dates back to his last two years as a postdoctoral fellow, when he worked on a project that led to the first example of Hermansky-Pudlak syndrome (HPS) caused by mutations in a well-known component of the protein trafficking machinery. Since joining the UCLA Department of Human Genetics, Dr. Dell'Angelica has been working on the products of genes mutated in all other forms of HPS, specifically in their assembly into protein complexes and their potential role in protein trafficking and organelle dynamics. He has been a member of PASPCR since 2003, and

views participation as a Council member not just as an honor but as an opportunity to contribute with hard work to the continued growth of the Society.

Gisela Erf PhD

is a longstanding member of the pigment cell community, who has been a faculty member at the University of Arkansas for nearly 15 years. Dr. Erf's research interest lies in the area of avian immunology and poultry health, with a specific interest in the pathogenesis of autoimmune vitiligo in Smyth line chickens. She has a number of awards for teaching and research (including the PASPCR Young Investigator Award in 1992), and is a strong advocate in promoting development of opportunities for women in science.

Tom Hornyak MD, PhD

obtained his A.B. in music from Princeton, his M.D. degree and Ph.D. degree in Biological Chemistry from The University of Michigan. He completed a residency in dermatology at New York University (NYU) Medical Center, where, as a post-doctoral fellowship in the laboratory of Dr. Edward B. Ziff at NYU, he studied factors regulating expression of dopachrome tautomerase/tyrosinase-related protein-2 expression, and transcription factors regulating melanocyte development during embryogenesis. For the last 6 years, Dr. Hornyak has been an investigator at the Dermatology Branch, National Cancer Institute. His research is directed at studying transcriptional programs that regulate melanocyte development and function using a combination of experimental mouse genetics and molecular biology. He is also interested in developing experimental systems for studying the pathogenesis of melanoma.

Jim Lister PhD

received his B.A. in Biology from Pomona College in 1990 and Ph.D. in Molecular and Cellular Biology from Harvard in 1997. He began studying pigmentation in zebrafish as a postdoc in David Raible's lab of at the University of Washington, where he identified zebrafish

orthologs of Mitf. Since 2004 he has been an assistant professor in the Department of Human and Molecular Genetics at Virginia Commonwealth University. His research focus continues to be the function of the Mitf genes in zebrafish neural crest and retinal pigment cell development, and in melanoma.

Miri Seiberg PhD

received her B.Sc. in Biology from Tel Aviv University, Israel, her M.Sc. in biochemistry from the Weizmann Institute of Science, Israel, and her Ph.D. in molecular biology from the Weizmann Institute of Science, Israel, in collaboration with Princeton University, NJ, USA. Following postdoctoral training at Princeton University she moved to the department of macromolecular structure of Bristol Myers Squibb, and then to the Skin Biology group of Johnson and Johnson. During the last 17 years she was involved in basic and applied skin research, with an emphasis on skin pigmentation. Today she is a Distinguished Research Fellow, heading the skin biology research efforts of the Johnson & Johnson Consumer Companies, directing scientific and applied research towards the developments of consumer and Rx skin care products. She has numerous scientific publications and patent applications in the areas of skin, hair, and pigmentation, and has received numerous awards, including the Johnson Medal, the most prestigious award given for research and development in the corporation, for outstanding science and technology relating to contributions to a specific product. Miri's research interests include keratinocyte-melanocyte interactions, melanosome transfer, the role of keratinocytes in the regulation of skin pigmentation, mechanistic understanding of ethnic skin pigmentary responses, post inflammatory hyperpigmentation, modulation of skin color in healthy skin and in pigmentary diseases, signaling pathways that affect human skin pigmentation.

Ranga Sarangaraja PhD

has been actively involved in pigment cell research for the past 11 years, and has been an

active participant of the PASPCR for the last 7 years. The focus of his research has ranged from regulation of pigmentation to environmental toxicology and currently involves melanoma research, a progression that recapitulates the expansion/transition and long term vision for the PASPCR over the past few years. The pigment cell society has been the most important platform in his professional research development. He would like to serve as a Council member of PASPCR as a means of giving back to the society, to work with members on activities to sustain and expand the vision of the society in all aspect of pigmentation related research.

Richard Spritz MD

has, for the past twenty years, studied the genetic basis of human pigmentation disorders and the homologous rodent abnormalities, including various forms of albinism, Hermansky-Pudlak syndrome, Chediak-Higashi syndrome, piebaldism, Waardenburg syndrome, and others. For over a decade, his group's work has focused on the genetics of vitiligo, the most common pigmentation disorder. Dr. Spritz recently organized VitGene, an international consortium of over 38 investigators in 20 countries, for the purpose of carrying out a genomewide association study of generalized vitiligo, involving over six thousand patients. They hope that the identification of genes underlying this important disorder will highlight key biological pathways, ultimately leading to new approaches to treatment and even disease prevention.

Blazej Zbytek MD PhD

received his training at the Medical University of Gdansk, the largest medical academic institution in Northern Poland. He is currently a resident at UT Memphis, working with Andrzej Slominski's group on neuroendocrinology of the skin. Dr. Zbytek has played the principal role in work over the last decade on the cutaneous melanocortin system, providing evidence that corticotrophic releasing hormone is produced by and acts locally in specific skin compartments to promote and regulate pigmentation and a skin stress response.

**Letter from PASPCR Treasurer and
Secretary**

I have been asked by Emilia and Prashiela to write this section as the secretary/treasurer of the society, since it has been almost a year since I took this position. First, I would like to thank everybody for the patience during this transition process when small errors were made, although they were immediately corrected upon requests. Also I want to salute Dr. Raymond Boissy for the enormous effort he contributed to functions of our society for several years. How monumental was this work I realized in January 2008 when I became the new secretary/treasurer. Ray thank you for your outstanding role and for your kind help and guidance during this challenging transition period. Here I would like to share with the members of the society that the secretary/treasurer does not have a secretarial help and perform all his duties (voluntarily) by himself including keeping records, collecting dues (this includes typing in the credit card numbers on to credit card machine), organizing teleconferences, inquiring additional support, etc. Fortunately, I have the strong support of our department led by Dr Charles Handorf, who allocated additional office space with a secure fax/phone line for messages containing confidential information. We also utilize the UT system for our monthly or bi-monthly teleconferences, and our department has the resources to carry on visual teleconferences over the internet; the opportunity that has to be utilized by our society.

Our society is moderate in size but active in different areas including research and education activity in pigment cell biology and related fields of science as well as in promoting an in-depth understanding of mechanism and implications of different types of skin color. As of November of 2008 we have 121 members including 13 student/trainees, 101 full members (with 68 members subscribing to the PCMR journal) including 2 members who have chosen our

society for second membership, and 8 honorary members, which represents an increase in comparison to 2007.

We are also working hard to prepare an outstanding the 15th PASPCR Annual Meeting to be held in Memphis, September 4-7, 2009. We have already assembled an outstanding set of speakers who will present topics relevant to the broad aspects of melanin pigmentation with important basic science and clinical implications. The tentative program and agenda have been prepared and they are attached. I thank the Local and National Committee members for enormous effort in preparation of the conference. I also thank the members of the Scientific Advisory Committee who agreed to serves as co-chairs of corresponding symposium, their suggestions and willingness to serve. The conference cannot be successful without proper funding and here I am grateful to Dr. Miri Seiberg and the Johnson and Johnson Consumer Companies for their diamond corporate support. I also thank Procter and Gamble, Co. (Silver support), Avon Products, Inc (Bronze support), Unilever (committed for Golden), and to a donor who wishes to remain anonymous. We are planning to apply for R13 grant to NIH and have also sent applications for grants to Pharmaceutical Industry. We will keep you informed on this subject. We are eagerly looking forward for your participation in the upcoming annual meeting.

Finally, I thank the PASPCR for selecting me for a prestigious award, the Aaron B. Lerner Lectureship for 2008 that was presented during the 20th IPCC and 5th MSR Meeting in Sapporo, Japan. The title of the presentation was "The neuroendocrine activity of the melanocyte". This recognition has an enormous value for me, since I am the student/trainee of Aaron Lerner.

Again greatly value your trust, friendship and support in my work as the secretary/treasurer of the our society. If have any coments, suggestions or criticism please do not hesitate to send an email.

With best regards, and see you in Memphis,
Andrzej Slominski, MD, PhD
Secretary/Treasurer
PASPCR

XVTH PANAMERICAN SOCIETY FOR PIGMENT CELL RESEARCH CONFERENCE –
“THE PIGMENTARY SYSTEM: SECURING A PLACE UNDER THE SUN”

UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE HEALTH SCIENCE CENTER
DEPARTMENT OF PATHOLOGY AND LABORATORY MEDICINE
HAMILTON EYE INSTITUTE

SEPTEMBER 4-7, 2009

The 2009 meeting of the PanAmerican Society for Pigment Cell Research and suggestively entitled “*The Pigmentary System: Securing a Place Under the Sun*” will be held in Memphis, TN to update investigators on the most novel findings in the field of pigment cell research and the clinical advances in skin disease treatment. The main objective of this meeting is to provide a forum for basic researchers and clinicians to meet and share data on the complex field of skin pigmentation with its wider implications in human health, environmental effects of solar radiation and racial diversity. We expect to achieve a better understanding of the process of melanin pigmentation at molecular, cellular and entire organism levels that might lead to more effective treatments for pigmentary disorders ranging from rare genetic pigmentary abnormalities to autoimmune disorders of pigmentation and skin malignancies. The 15th Annual Meeting carries the theme ‘The Pigmentary System: Securing a Place Under the Sun’ to address topics related to the mechanism by which pigmentation offers protection from the damaging effects of the sun and how pigmentation is affected in a wide array of pigmentary disorders. Recent advances in pigment cell biology interfacing with other areas of research such as dermatology, basic biology, neurobiology, endocrinology, immunology, photobiology, ophthalmology, pathology, biochemistry, chemistry, physics and cancer research will be presented. Importantly, realizing that pigmentation is also the basis for racial discrimination with an impact for the individual well being and for the society as a whole, the PanAmerican Society for Pigment Cell Research opens the necessary space for discussion on health and social issues. The program will encompass unique blend of basic, translational and clinical sciences. It is expected that new avenues in pigment cells research will be discussed and future directions proposed to place this field on the forefront of basic and life sciences.

AGENDA - TENTATIVE

National Organizing Committee

Andrzej Slominski, MD, PhD (Chair), Frank Meyskens, MD, Gertrude-Emilia Costin, PhD, Prashiela Manga, PhD, John Pawelek, PhD

Local Organizing Committee

Andrzej Slominski, MD, PhD (Chair), Barrett Haik, MD, Charles Handorf, MD, PhD, Peter Netland, MD, PhD, Barbara Frederick, BA, Deborah Trapp, BA

Friday, September 4

12:00 - 7:00 PM Registration

1:15 - 1:30 PM Official opening of the Meeting by Andrzej Slominski and short introduction by Barrett Haik on behalf of the local Organizing Committee

Session 1: Biochemistry, Chemistry and Biophysics of Melanin Pigmentation

1:30 - 3:00 PM Selected abstract presentations

Chaired by John Pawelek, PhD (Yale University), Gertrude-Emilia Costin, PhD (Institute for In Vitro Sciences), Vincent Hearing, PhD (National Institutes of Health)

3:00 - 3:45 PM Keynote lecture 1: Dr. Sergei Grando, MD, PhD (University of California Irvine)

Title: *Cutaneous cholinergic system: Lessons for skin pigmentary system*

3:45 - 4:00 PM Coffee/tea break

Session 2: Cell Biology of Melanin Synthesis

4:00 - 5:45 PM Selected abstract presentations

Chaired by Zalfa Abdel Malek, PhD (University of Cincinnati), Ana Luisa Kadekaro, PhD (University of Cincinnati), Marjan Huizing, PhD (National Institutes of Health)

5:45 - 6:00 PM Coffee/tea break

6:00 - 6:45 PM Keynote lecture 2: Michael F. Holick, MD, PhD (Boston University)

Title: *Shining Light on Skin Pigment, Vitamin D and Health.*

7:00 - 10:00 PM Cocktail party at Dr. Charles Handorf's residence

Saturday, September 5

8:00 - 5:00 PM Registration

8:00 - 8:45 AM Keynote lecture 3: Lawrence Pfeffer, PhD (University of Tennessee)

Title: *NF- κ B signaling: implications for skin cancer*

8:45 - 9:00 PM Coffee/tea break

Session 3: Malignant Transformation of the Melanocyte and Melanoma Progression

9:00 - 11:00 AM Selected abstract presentations

Chaired by James Grichnik, MD (Duke University), Sancy Leachman, MD (University of Utah), John Pawelek, PhD (Yale University)

11:00 - 11:45 AM Keynote lecture 4: Michael Kastan, MD, PhD (St. Jude Hospital)

Title: *DNA Damage Responses: From Molecular Mechanisms to Clinical Interventions*

11:45 AM - 1:00 PM Lunch/ Poster viewing

Session 4: Cell Surface and Nuclear Receptors and Their Ligands: Regulation of Melanocyte/Melanoma Behavior

1:00 - 2:30 PM Selected abstract presentations

Chaired by Prashiela Manga, PhD (New York University), Andrzej Slominski, MD, PhD (University of Tennessee Health Science Center), Zalfa Abdel-Malek, PhD (University of Cincinnati)

2:30 - 2:45 PM Coffee/tea break

2:45 - 3:30 PM Keynote lecture 5: Ralf Paus, MD (University of Lubeck)
Title: *Neuroendocrinology of the Hair Follicle*

Session 5: Melanocyte Maturation/Differentiation: Developmental and Cellular Biology

3:30 - 5:00 PM Selected abstract presentations

Chaired by Tom Hornyak, MD, PhD (National Institutes of Health), Youwen Zhou, PhD (Skin Care Center, Canada), Lidia Kos, PhD (Florida International University)

5:00 - 5:15 PM Coffee/tea break

5:15 - 6:00 PM Aaron B Lerner lecture: *author and title to be announced*

7:00 - 11:00 PM Entertainment

Sunday, September 6

8:00 - 5:00 PM Registration

8:00 - 8:45 AM Keynote lecture 6: Jack Arbiser, MD, PhD (Emory University)
Title: *Oxidative Stress, Melanocytes and Melanoma*

8:45 - 9:00 PM Coffee/tea break

Session 6: Oxidative Responses in Melanocytes and Melanoma Cells

9:00 - 11:00 AM Selected abstract presentations

Chaired by Frank Meyskens, MD (University of California Irvine)

11:00 - 11:15 AM Coffee/tea break

11:15 AM - 12:00 PM Keynote lecture 7: Russel J. Reiter, Ph.D., Dr.h.c.mult. (University of Texas, San Antonio)
Title: *Melatonin and Its Metabolites As Anti-Oxidants: Implications for Pigment Cell Biology*

12:00 - 12:30 PM Business Meeting

12:30 - 1:30 PM Lunch/ Poster viewing

Session 7: Solar Radiation and the Pigmentary System: Securing the Place Under the Sun.

1:30 - 3:30 PM Selected abstract presentations

Chaired by Andrzej Slominski, MD, PhD (University of Tennessee Health Science Center), Miri Seibeg, PhD (Johnson & Johnson)

3:30 - 4:15 PM Keynote lecture 8: Edwin Blalock, PhD (University of Alabama)
Title: *The Immune System as a Sensory Organ*

4:15 - 5:45 PM Posters Discussion with Coffee and Tea
Moderators: Youwen Zhou, PhD (Skin Care Center, Canada), Gertrude-Emilia Costin, PhD (Institute for In Vitro Sciences), Vijayasaradhi Setaluri, PhD (University of Wisconsin)

7:00 PM Gala Dinner

Monday, September 7

8:00AM - 1:00 PM Registration

8:00 - 8:45 AM Keynote lecture 9: Gregory Barsh, MD, PhD (Stanford University)
Title: *Novel Regulators of Melanin Pigmentation*

8:45 - 9:00 PM Coffee/tea break

Session 8: Pigmentary Disorders: Genetics, Etiology, Pathology and Therapy

9:00 - 11:30 AM Selected abstract presentations

Chaired by Caroline LePoole, PhD (Loyola University), Richard Spritz, MD (University of Colorado), Raymond Boissy, PhD (University of Cincinnati)

11:30AM - 12:15 PM Keynote lecture 10: Andrzej Slominski, MD, PhD (University of Tennessee Health Science Center)
Title: *Neuroendocrinology of the Melanin Pigmentary System*

12:15 - 1:30 PM Lunch

1:30 - 2:00 PM Keynote lecture 11: *author and title to be announced*

Session 9: Pigmentary System of the Eye

2:00 - 3:30 PM Selected abstract presentations

Chaired by Peter Netland, MD, PhD (University of Tennessee Health Science Center), Barrett Haik (University of Tennessee Health Science Center), MD, Charles Handorf, MD, PhD (University of Tennessee Health Science Center)

3:30 PM Official Closing of the Meeting by Charles Handorf, MD, PhD (University of Tennessee Health Science Center)

4:00 PM Farewell Party

20 years on... - Part 3

PANAMERICAN SOCIETY FOR PIGMENT
CELL RESEARCH. A VERY BRIEF HISTORY

By Vincent J. Hearing

The previous 2 installments of this series (by Profs. Jim Nordlund and Joe Bagnara) summarized the history of the International Pigment Cell Conferences (IPCC), the formation of the original International Pigment Cell Society (IPCS), the evolution of the European and Japanese Pigment Cell Societies (ESPCR and JSPCR) and the formation of the International Federation of Pigment Cell Societies (IFPCS) which pretty much mandated that the Americas form a regional Society or get left in the dust. That was accomplished in 1988, a year after the IPCC in Tucson, AZ which was concurrent with the birth of the journal Pigment Cell Research (PCR). The ESPCR, JSPCR and PASPCR worked jointly to design a consortium which would assure equal representation by the regional societies to organize future IPCCs, elect and rotate Officers and Council Members, sponsor the official journal, determine honors and awards, etc, and those efforts culminated in the formation of the IFPCS in 1990.

So what is left for me to consider in this third report in the series? I was a few years younger than many of the primary scientists involved in organizing the PASPCR and IFPCS, and thus I witnessed many of those events from a different perspective and can provide some insights (at least from my point of view) into why some of them occurred.

As Jim covered in part 1, the early IPCCs came about due to the increased interest in melanoma as a clinical entity, and most of those meetings revolved around that topic. There were no 'pigment cell' societies back in those days and meetings were organized primarily by those who had the funds, the time and the energy to do so. The basic researchers did not fare well in that milieu, and in those days, most of the major laboratories studying pigmentation were

Dermatology Departments in various Universities. Of the first 10 IPCCs held, 8 were held in the US and 6 of those were held in the Northeast US (New York and Cambridge). Thus the general perspective was that a broader international representation was needed, hence the formation of the IPCS. However, the IPCS got off to a shaky start at best, and within 10 years, there was a general consensus that it was not functioning as intended, and it was dissolved at the IPCC in Kobe in 1990. By that time, the regional pigment Societies had been formed, at least in part, to advance their own regional interests and to organize regional pigment cell meetings held between the larger IPCCs every 3 years. The IFPCS was formed as a Federation of those regional pigment cell societies to help coordinate their efforts. But in many ways, the IPCS *had been* effective in that it established the rotation of IPCCs among the various continents and it has regularly rotated among Asia, Europe and the Americas since that time. Further, the initial round of IPCCs determined by the IPCS was organized by the major international players in the field at the time, Makoto Seiji in Japan, Fritz Anders in Germany and Joe Bagnara in the US, and those leaders were key elements in ensuring that the scientific programs of the IPCCs had a fair balance of clinical and basic sciences, which has continued since.

When the PASPCR was originally formed in 1988, there was a conscious and very determined effort (at least in my opinion) to ensure that there was a balanced geographical representation of the Officers and Council Members as well as representation of various scientific disciplines, University and Corporate interests, etc. As one of the founding Council Members of the PASPCR, and later its President, I would have to say that another critical theme of the early PASPCR activities was to foster an environment that would encourage young scientists to join the Society, to attend our meetings and to establish active collaborations to further advance their careers and their science. I think this has been a stunning success and required an immense amount of work by the early PASPCR Officers and Council Members, including Dick King, Jim Nordlund,

Alistair Cochran, Walt Quevedo, Roger Bowers, Sally Frost, Joe Bagnara, John Pawelek, Zalfa Abdel-Malek, Murray Brilliant and Seth Orlow, among many others. There was an incredible amount of successful fund-raising early on which enabled the PASPCR to establish a very active program of Travel Stipends to allow young investigators to attend PASPCR meetings and IPCCs (>\$100,000 has been spent on this since 1988). Many of those early endeavors have stimulated similar efforts by our sister Societies and now even by the IPCCs. I don't need to tell any of you how successful the PASPCR has been in fostering interactions and collaborations among our members, as well as with pigment researchers internationally. A quick glance at the major journals nowadays, both clinical and basic science, show a regular flow of significant publications by our members, and frequently those articles are featured on the covers of those journals.

I would invite all of you to spend some time visiting the PASPCR web site (www.paspcr.org) and browse through the history of our group that can be accessed on the 'Information' page. The names of our Officers and Council Members are a literal Who's Who in the pigment research field, the organizers and locations of the 14 Annual Meetings held so far will bring back many good memories for most of us, and certainly, the names or those who have been awarded various honors by the PASPCR are worth looking through. Each cycle of newly elected Officers and Council Members has continued the important early themes of the PASPCR, and the society continues to grow and become more effective.

In sum, the PASPCR was founded with a strong emphasis on helping young investigators become established in the field and to achieve high levels of success in a very tough and increasingly challenging research environment. That emphasis continued into the 2nd decade of the PASPCR and is now going into its 3rd decade. I think we can all be proud of the impact the PASPCR has had on us, on our contributions to research in pigmentation and on science in general.

LET ME INTRODUCE...

The IFPCS Women and Minority Scientists Committee was established following the 1996 Anaheim IFPCS conference. The first forum organized by the committee was held at the Nagoya meeting in 1999 and has become a fixture at IFPCS conferences since. The forum held at the Sapporo meeting focused on women in industry and academics. Below is a review prepared by three of the presenters at the meeting.

A mini-review of my presentation at the Women and Minority Scientists' Forum at the IPCC 2008, Sapporo

By Toyoko Akiyama - Keio University, Japan

I introduced the present situation of Woman researchers based on a government report on gender equality in Japan 2007. The report tells us that the ratio of woman in basic science research positions in Japan remains at only 11.9 %. Although many active woman researchers are contributing members of the Japanese Society for Pigment Cell Research, the overall ratio in Japan is very low.

But the ratios of woman students in University and graduate course in Japan are 40.4% and 30.4%, respectively. So, the ratio of woman researchers in Japan should be increased in near future. Two main reasons are given by women to account for the situation. The first is the difficulty of continuing research during pregnancy, child care and nursing. The second is the insufficiency of support for women researchers in job hunting and the work place. Women researchers work primarily in universities, although there are still a small number of woman researchers in some fields. In 2006, women accounted for about 50% of scientists in medical sciences, 6.8% in technology, and 10% in natural sciences and agriculture.

In these fields, the ratio of senior positions occupied by women becomes lower. However, many universities have established an official section for gender equality and nursery schools for employee's children on campus. I hope these efforts will improve the situation.

Women scientists attending the forum were encouraged to continue their research activities. I appreciate the valuable information shared by the other presenters. I also thank very much the men who joined us at the forum because such men's support and understanding will be a great help for women and in developing support systems at Universities or institutes.

A point of view from Industry

By Miri Seiberg - The Johnson & Johnson Skin Research Center, USA

Corporate America is very different than academic institutions. Among many other differences, Industry does not have a tenure system, and employment, which is based on performance AND on Industry's needs, is evaluated (and could vary) annually. Therefore, there is no layer of "senior academic superiors", (mainly males, because of historical reasons), and there is a greater dynamic of changing positions and supervisors. This work environment, by itself, eliminates some of the unintentional bias towards women, as reported by IPCC colleagues from academic institutions around the globe. Additionally, Corporate America's need for highly qualified individuals, combined with early recognition of women's needs, led many corporations to create programs and provide solutions for working mothers and for other diversity needs.

The Johnson & Johnson family of companies, in which I work for The Johnson & Johnson Skin Research Center, has a robust commitment to women, including a supportive work environment, assistance with family needs, and special programs such as flexible work arrangements (telecommuting, job sharing) and on-site child care centers. Moreover, Johnson & Johnson companies sponsor the Women's Leadership Initiative, focusing on increasing the number of women in leadership positions and developing their leadership competencies. As a result, I see at my R&D site about equal numbers of men and women in leadership positions. Sometimes, we see more women than man at

bench positions. Our scientists joke that research is such a difficult task that only women can do it...

Challenges Faced By Women In Academics

By Rashmi Sarkar - Maulana Azad Medical College, India

In India, although an equal number of women are seen to enter undergraduate programs as their male counterparts in leading medical colleges, only about 20% of them are ultimately present in faculty positions, with only 2-3 % of them occupying top administrative posts. The reasons for this discrepancy are several, namely: balancing home with career, husbands in more demanding specialties, frequent moves and child rearing. In the 24 leading states of India, there is an average of one woman department head for every 10 males, the number of women heads being more in pre- and para-clinical subjects: dermatology, anesthesia, obstetrics and gynecology, ophthalmology, pediatrics, radiology and psychiatry. Surgical specialties are basically considered a man's domain.

According to leading women academicians of our country, the various reasons for women opting for lesser academic positions versus private practice could be dependent on: conditioning and attitude, choice of specialty-taking up lighter branches could reflect a laid back attitude, lack of leadership qualities, balancing home and professional life, selection bias and gender discrimination, type of support system at home including spouse, parents, parents-in-laws, household help, lack of networking with male superiors. However, there is no discrimination regarding salaries. The ways to tackle these problems may be to encourage women be more assertive and take on more active responsibilities, discussing these issues openly, recognition at institutional and government level of their supplementary role as homemakers in addition to academicians and concept of rotary leadership/chairmanship. Senior women in top faculty positions could serve as role models to younger women physicians.

Positions Wanted / Available

Postings for **Positions Wanted** will be open only to members of the PanAmerican Society for Pigment Cell Research or its sister societies (ASPCR, JSPCR and ESPCR). Postings for **Positions Available** will be open to all individuals and institutions so long as the position is related to pigment cell research. Please send postings to Bill Oetting at oetti001@umn.edu. The postings will remain on the **Positions Wanted and Available** section of the PASPCR Newsletter and on the web page for 1 year, unless other arrangements are made. Please provide an expiration date for any submitted posting if less than 1 year. Final decisions will be made by the Publications Committee of the PASPCR.

Positions Wanted

Postdoctoral Position Wanted

Postdoctoral level position wanted for a scientist with more than 3 years of postdoctoral experience with immunohisto/immunocytochemistry, microinjections, cell culture, nuclear reprogramming, developing transgenic fish models. Available to join immediately. Please respond to Ekaterina Bubenshchikova bubkatya@gmail.com.
Posted 01/08

Positions Available

Postdoctoral Position

Starting November 1, I have a vacancy for postdoctoral fellow with experience and interest in biochemistry and molecular biology. The Research project is sponsored by NIH and focuses on the novel steroidogenic/secosteroidogenic (vitamin D3-like compounds) pathway with functional implications in the skin and cancer (see recent papers: FEBS J 275, 2585-2596, 2008; J Invest Dermatol (27 Mar 2008), doi: 10.1038/jid.2008.62; Drug Discov Today: Dis Mech (2008), doi:10.1016/j.ddmec.2008.04.004). Some previous experience in biochemistry and molecular biology is required. For more details about the laboratory environment visit <http://www.utm.edu/pathology/Faculty%20pages/slominski.html>. If you are interested, please send CV and cover letter to Dr. Andrzej Slominski at aslominski@utm.edu.
Posted 07/08

Post-Doctoral Research Associate

Appointment: Research Associate, Department of Surgery, University of Cincinnati

Project performance site: Shriners Burns Hospital, Cincinnati, Ohio, USA

Position terms: 1 August 2008 - 28 March 2013;
Salary range: \$45-50,000 plus benefits

Project summary: An energetic and talented individual will fill a position for performance of preclinical studies with engineered human skin for wound treatment. Two aims are funded to develop pigmentation from melanocytes, and a vascular network from microvascular endothelial cells in the engineered skin. Melanocytes and endothelial cells will be selected for expression of integrins and extracellular matrix to promote survival and organization into functional components of skin tissue after transplantation. Comprehensive laboratories are available which provide facilities for cell culture, biopolymer fabrication, protein and nucleic acid chemistry, light and fluorescence microscopy, flow cytometry, media formulation, and support staff. Opportunities are available for development of independent research funding.

Minimum requirements: Ph.D. in cellular, molecular or developmental biology, or closely related field. Previous experience with tissue engineering, and cell transplantation preferred. Technical skills needed include: cell culture, protein and nucleic acid analyses, flow cytometry, transplantation and evaluation *in vivo* of engineered skin, MS Windows computer programs, and reporting of data in written and graphical formats.

Applicants should provide a Curriculum Vitae, letters of reference, and university transcripts to:

Steven Boyce, Ph.D.
Department of Surgery
University of Cincinnati
o, 513-872-6080
e, steven.boyce@uc.edu
Posted: 07/08