

## 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Scientific Meeting and Education Day

By Daniel Cahill, MD, PhD

We are only days away from the 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Scientific Meeting and Education Day of the Society for Neuro-Oncology, to be held November 18-21, 2010, in Montreal, Canada. Kudos to Dr. Ken Aldape and his team's efforts in their assembly of a comprehensive review of cutting-edge laboratory and clinical research in the field of neuro-oncology. The meeting promises to be a unique environment for the multidisciplinary exchange of ideas among neuro-oncologists, medical oncologists, neurosurgeons, neuropathologists, radiation oncologists, neuroradiologists, pediatricians, laboratory scientists, nurses and other specialists involved in the research, diagnosis, care and treatment of central nervous system tumors.

On **Thursday, November 18<sup>th</sup>** the pre-meeting will begin with a timely and relevant program for Education Day focused on Tumor Angiogenesis Research and Treatment and Quality of Life/Symptom Management.

On **Friday, November 19<sup>th</sup>** the formal meeting commences with Sunrise Sessions on microRNAs in Gliomagenesis, Toxicities of Anti-angiogenic Therapies, Molecular Epidemiology, and Leptomeningeal Metastasis. After the Official Meeting Welcome by meeting chair Dr. Ken Aldape, the Top-Scoring Abstracts will



This year's meeting will be held in Montreal, Quebec, Canada

be presented. These will be followed by concurrent sessions on Medical and Neuro-oncology/Epidemiology, "-omics" and Prognostic Markers, Medical and Neuro-oncology/Quality of Life, and Pre-clinical, Radiation, and Stem Cells. Friday will also mark the inaugural Victor Levin Award and Lecture, which will be given by Dr. Abhijit Guha (see the article on this new award on page 3 of this newsletter). The evening will be open for poster sessions, which always offer the opportunity for lively discussion and debate.

**Saturday, November 20<sup>th</sup>** Sunrise Sessions feature Surgery-Extent of Resection, Proteomics, Li-Fraumeni Syndrome, and Ependymoma. These are followed by an IDH1 minisymposium, Cell Biology, and concurrent sessions on Cell Biology and Tumor Models, Angiogenesis, Pathology and Surgery, Immunology, Immunotherapy, and Radiology, and Meningioma. The second poster session will take place after the oral sessions conclude for the day. That evening, the SNO Banquet promises to be a social highlight of the meeting.

**Sunday, November 21<sup>st</sup>** Sunrise Sessions include Stem Cells, Medulloblastoma, and Tumor Imaging Strategies. These are followed by plenary sessions in Pediatrics and Clinical Trials prior to the meeting adjournment.

We look forward to seeing everyone in Montreal for this exciting meeting program!

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## From the President

Dear Colleagues,

It has been a great honor and pleasure to serve as the President of the Society for Neuro-Oncology for the past year. This newsletter represents a new initiative, the goal of which is to provide our membership with biannual updates of activities, particularly committee activities, which should be of interest to SNO members. I hope that you find SNO News to be valuable and enjoyable to read. I thank Dan Cahill, MD, PhD, for accepting the charge of organizing this newsletter and for working diligently to bring it to fruition.



Frederick Lang, MD

As the first order of business in this inaugural newsletter, I would like to congratulate my predecessor, Susan Chang, MD, for her outstanding leadership as President for the past two years. Dr. Chang led SNO with aplomb, advancing many new educational initiatives, and adroitly navigating SNO through turbulent waters as our journal transitioned to its new publisher. She has been a model president and deserves our thanks.

This year has been an exciting one for our Society. Indeed, 2010 marks the 15th Anniversary of the founding of SNO! To celebrate this occasion, our newly appointed historians, Vinay Puduvalli and Abhijit Guha, along with SNO's founding president Victor Levin prepared a special brochure, highlighting SNO's history and successes. We hope that this brochure captures the growth and transition of SNO into the dynamic organization that it currently is. This keepsake will be distributed to all members as we commemorate this important milestone at our upcoming annual meeting.

For the first time, SNO sponsored a joint meeting with the Section on Tumors of the American Association of Neurological Surgeons and the Congress of Neurological Surgeons (AANS/CNS SOT) which was held in New Orleans, Louisiana from October 22-24, 2009, at the Hilton Hotel in New Orleans, Louisiana. With over 1000 participants, this event proved to be a success

and has paved the way for new initiatives with other like-minded societies. Therefore, in 2011, SNO will organize a pediatric basic and translational science meeting with the support of the Pediatric Brain Tumor Foundation. Likewise, SNO members will participate in a special joint session with our neuro-radiology colleagues at the American Association of Neuro-Radiologists Annual meeting in June 4-5, 2011 in Los Angeles, California.

This year's 2010 SNO Annual Meeting will be held in Montreal, Canada from November 18-22. Kenneth Aldape, MD, Scientific Program Chairman, has put together an outstanding program with multiple sunrise sessions, and a special symposium on IDH1. The pre-meeting Education Day will include a session on angiogenesis organized by Tracy Batchelor, Howard Colman, and Erwin Van Meir and a Quality of Life Session organized by Mary Lovely.

SNO continues to develop in other areas as well. We have initiated an overhaul of the Committees, including bylaw changes on the timing of appointments and term limits; we hope the changes will enhance membership participation. We have worked diligently to update and expand the SNO Website. Under the guidance of Erik Sulman, MD, our new Website Committee Chair, we have improved the website interface to better assist our membership. Lastly, our first International Fellowship supported by the American Brain Tumor Association and EMD Serono was awarded to Dr. Yi Lin of China. This fellowship will be awarded yearly and should help to expand our international outreach.

Overall, SNO remains a strong and vibrant Society with an active and continually growing multidisciplinary membership. I thank Vice President Patrick Wen, MD, Treasurer Michael Vogelbaum, MD, and the Board of Directors who have worked hard throughout the year to keep SNO on track. We all remain indebted to our Executive Director Chas Haynes and the SNO staff, Jan Esenwein and Linda Greer, who continue to work with untiring devotion to SNO. Enjoy the Newsletter!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Frederick F. Lang, MD". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Frederick Lang

## *The Victor Levin Award and Lecture in Neuro-Oncology Research*

The Victor Levin Award and Lecture was appropriately launched in our 15th anniversary year and is named in honor of SNO's founder, Dr. Victor Levin. This award will be given each year to an individual with a career commitment to neuro-oncology who has demonstrated leadership and, through scientific innovation, has made extraordinary achievements in neuro-oncology research. The award is open to all SNO members, from all disciplines and in any stage of their professional career. The Victor Levin Award winner will present at the SNO Annual Meeting and will receive \$5000 drawn from the Victor Levin Founder's Society Fund.

The Society for Neuro-Oncology is pleased to announce that the inaugural recipient of this honor is Dr. Abhijit Guha. In addition to his numerous clinical and scientific accomplishments, Dr. Guha is a past-president and longtime servant of our Society. Dr. Guha is the Co-director and Principal Investigator at the Arthur and Sonia Labatt Brain Tumour Research Centre and a Professor of Neurosurgery at the University of Toronto and holder of the Alan and Susan Hudson Chair in Neuro-Oncology. Dr. Guha will present his talk during the first plenary session at the annual meeting on Friday, November 19, entitled *Perspectives from a Neuro-Oncology Clinician-Scientist and a Cancer Patient*.



Abhijit Guha, MD

### **Communications Committee**

*By Daniel Cahill, MD, PhD*

The newly-formed SNO Communications Committee is charged with oversight of the semi-annual newsletter, and the Society News detailed in the journal *Neuro-Oncology*. Our newsletter aims to keep the members apprised of the various SNO committee activities and the highlights of our members' exceptional activities. Importantly, photographs from the various SNO activities are always welcome. Our goal with the *Neuro-Oncology* monthly updates is to provide a forum for timely dis-

semination of information for the SNO membership, working in concert with the SNO Website Committee. As such, we ask members to consider forwarding any news items, announcements of awards, fellowships, grant solicitations, and/or relevant meeting updates for inclusion in these publications.

Looking forward over the next year, any member wishing to volunteer and contribute their time and talents to the furtherance of the Communications Committee activities are encouraged to make contact with Dr. Dan Cahill during the upcoming 2010 SNO meeting in Montreal. Contact by email via [dpcahill@mdanderson.org](mailto:dpcahill@mdanderson.org).

## International Outreach

By Jonathan L. Finlay, MB, ChB

The International Outreach Committee (IOC) was established in 2006 as an outgrowth of the visionary leadership of Dr. Abhijit Guha, then President of the Society, and his recognition of the increasingly global perspective of the membership of the Society. Volunteer members to the Committee were recruited, from among whom one or two regional section leaders were appointed to each of eight global regions: Central & Southern Africa, China and Associated Countries, Eastern Europe, the Indian Subcontinent, the Middle East & North Africa, Central America, South America and Australasia.

Through our publishing relationship with Oxford University Press, *Neuro-Oncology*, the official journal of SNO, participates in several initiatives that make the publication available at a significant discount, and in some instances at no cost to qualifying institutions in developing nations.

Thanks to the support of SNO members, scholarships in the amount of \$1500 per person have been provided to physicians and scientists from low income countries to attend and participate in the annual SNO meetings. Since 2008, scholarships have been awarded to physicians from 11 different countries (see box).

With generous funding from the American Brain Tumor Association and EMD Serono, a specific scholarship fund to support the advanced training of physician/scientists from ``developing`` countries has been established. After a competitive review of many applications, Dr. Yi Lin of China was selected as the first recipient of the SNO International Outreach Research Fellowship (see sidebar). The second funding cycle is currently underway, and the next recipient will be announced by the end of the year.

The IOC will hold a one-hour lunchtime open session on Saturday during the Montreal annual meeting in November, at which it is hoped that several if not all of the Section Leaders, or others working and residing within each of the geographical regions, will briefly present achievements as well as persisting problems and disparities of care within their own regions.

By way of providing an example, as Chairperson of the IOC, and Section Leader for Central & South America, I should like to summarize my efforts over the last 2-3 years to assist in improving loco-regional efforts to improve the diagnosis and management of children, adolescents and young adults with brain cancer, with special emphasis on the role and support provided by SNO:

1. Three visits over the last 18 months to Asuncion, Paraguay, along with a Childrens Hospital Los Angeles Pediatric Oncology Fellow, Dr. Jackie Baskin, over which time we have continued to develop a model for improving diagnosis, referral to specialist centers, treatment within such centers, reduction of abandonment of care, and thus improved outcome for brain tumor patients throughout Paraguay. Ongoing educational efforts include 1-2 month observerships by Paraguayan oncologists, neurosurgical residents and pathologists from Paraguay to the Childrens Hospital Los Angeles. Most recently (August 16th 2010) we helped Paraguayan colleagues organize a Spanish language conference on brain tumors in Asuncion, attended by over 70 health care workers, with speakers from Chile, Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay and the USA, as well as participants from Bolivia and Uruguay. Judged to be a huge success, we plan to hold this meeting

every two years at different locations throughout South America, preferably in low income regions or countries. My own presentation, as the International Coordinator of the conference, included information on the SNO IOC efforts and support currently available. We believe the model we are developing in Paraguay will be exportable to other similar South



**To date, the SNO International Outreach Committee has awarded travel scholarships to the annual meeting to physicians from the following countries: China, Columbia, Cuba, India, Indonesia, Kyrgyzstan, Panama, Pakistan, Russia, Thailand and Venezuela.**

and Central American countries within the next few years. Publications on these ongoing efforts will be generated within the next year, with acknowledgement of the support of SNO.

2. Efforts are currently beginning, as an outgrowth of the recent Paraguay meeting, to form a South American Society of Neuro-oncology, hopefully as a Section of the Society of Neuro-Oncology.
3. Along with North American colleagues from St. Jude Children's Cancer Hospital in Memphis and the University of Toronto Hospital for Sick Children, I participated in the annual conference of the Latin American Society of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology (AHOPCA) in February 2010 in Nicaragua. We are specifically working with all of the Central American participating countries in the development of clinical trials for children, adolescents and young adults with medulloblastoma and low grade gliomas. We are providing expertise and experience - and most importantly training - in data management and clinical trial conduct. My own presentation at the conference included the SNO IOC efforts and support currently available. The next conference will be held in Panama City in February 2011, at which I shall again participate, as a representative of the SNO IOC.
4. A mini-symposium was organized by Dr. Hans Peter Wagner (Switzerland) and me during the last annual meeting of the International Society of Paediatric Oncology (SIOP) in São Paulo, Brazil, September 2009, on "Management Strategies for Improving Care of Brain Tumor Patients in Low Income Countries". Similar mini-symposia were held in Yokohama during the World Federation of Neuro-Oncology Quadrennial meeting in 2009 and, under the direction of Drs. Eric Bouffet (Toronto) and Stewart Kellie (Sydney), in Vienna during the International Symposium of Pediatric Neuro-Oncology biennial meeting in May 2010.

Clearly, many members of the Society are involved in collaborative efforts world-wide to improve the management of patients with brain cancer. The IOC would very much appreciate hearing from each and every one of you involved in such efforts. We need to learn from and share your experiences, both positive and negative, and we need to hear from you regarding how you would envisage increased contribution by the SNO IOC.

## SNO International Outreach Research Fellowship

By Jay-Jiguang Zhu, MD, PhD

Dr. Yi Lin obtained her medical degree at China Medical University, Shen-Yang City in Liao-Ning Province in 2001. After a two year surgical internship, she finished her neurosurgery residency at China Medical University, affiliated No 1 hospital, from 2003 to 2007. She then received her research fellowship training at Dr. Tao Jiang's lab in Beijing Neurosurgical Institute from 2007 to 2009 studying biomarkers in malignant gliomas. In a paper published in *Neuro-Oncology* in 2009, Dr. Lin and her colleagues have shown that plasma insulin-like growth factor-binding protein 2 (IGFBP-2) levels predict clinical outcomes of patients with high-grade gliomas.



Yi Lin, MD

As the first recipient of SNO International Outreach Research Fellowship, supported by the American Brain Tumor Association and EMD Serono, Dr. Lin will work as a clinical post-doctoral fellow in The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston and in Memorial Hermann Health System, under the supervision of Dr. Jay-Jiguang Zhu, associate professor and neuro-oncologist. She will continue to enrich her knowledge and experience in medical neuro-oncology. In addition to participating in weekly multidisciplinary brain tumor boards, observing clinical practice in neuro-oncology clinics, neurosurgery clinics and inpatient neuro-oncology consults, she will learn and experience the full spectrum of clinical trials in neuro-oncology. She will be exposed to regulatory policies at the national and local level, the financing of clinical trials, and the write-up and implementation of clinical trial protocols. She will meet key personnel and investigators from the cancer registry at Memorial Hermann, Texas, and consortium organizers in the United States. By invitation from Drs. Susan

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## Membership Committee

By Gregory Foltz, MD

SNO is the pre-eminent multidisciplinary neuro-oncology society dedicated to improving patient outcomes through state-of-the-art neuro-oncology research, education, and patient care. The success of SNO depends on the breadth, diversity and engagement of its membership. Currently, SNO has 1143 members which includes 972 Full members, 59 Associate members, and 112 Trainee members. This membership encompasses the diversity of disciplines that impact neuro-oncology with representation by neurosurgery (19%), neuro-oncology (18%), radiation oncology (10%), basic sciences (16%), medical oncology (8%), pediatric oncology (7%), pathology (5%), nursing (2%) and other disciplines including radiology, psychology, pharmacology, epidemiology, statistics and public health (each < 1%). The future growth and success of SNO will be dependent on reaching out to interested individuals in each of these disciplines to inform them of the advantages of SNO membership.

The Membership Committee is primarily charged with developing initiatives and recommendations for the Board of Directors concerning efforts to promote and increase membership in the Society. As part of its routine activities, the committee reviews all applicants for membership and occasionally evaluates member's professional conduct if requested by a majority of the Board of Directors. Currently, there are three levels of membership in SNO. Full membership

requires a doctorate-level degree and a commitment to neuro-oncology related practice or research. Associate memberships are available for those without doctorate-level degrees, and Trainee memberships are available to those in scientific or clinical training. Full or Associate memberships are \$200 per year and Trainee memberships are \$75 per year. Membership benefits include:

- Twelve monthly issues of *Neuro-Oncology*,
- Discount to the annual SNO Scientific Meeting and Education Day,
- Regular e-blasts and neuro-oncology news,
- Access to members-only section of the SNO website.

As we move forward, the Membership Committee will seek to enhance participation through outreach programs designed to raise awareness at professional meetings and through online affiliations with complementary professional societies. We would like to see increased participation by under-represented disciplines and encourage all members to reach out to their colleagues who are involved in the care of neuro-oncology patients to encourage their participation and make them aware of the benefits available to them through active membership. This personal effort by each of you to reach out through professional colleagues and networks will be the key to continued growth in our high-quality and engaged membership. We encourage anyone interested in more information about outreach programs or participation in Membership Committee activities to contact [linda@soc-neuro-onc.org](mailto:linda@soc-neuro-onc.org).

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## Audit Committee

By Gene H. Barnett, MD, MBA

The Audit Committee has been unusually active in the recent past because of two significant factors affecting the finances of the Society of Neuro-Oncology. First was the transition of publishing our journal, *Neuro-Oncology*, to Oxford University Press – this incurred a contractual loss which we believe will be more than made up for in the future with our arrangement with

Oxford. The second was the use of a new auditing firm – Durio & Company, P.C. These changes led to the Society's 2008 audit being finalized and presented to its Board of Directors on January 11th of this year. For 2008, the Society had total assets of \$1.41M with total liabilities of \$0.71M and total net assets of \$0.70M. We anticipate a substantial reduction in total liabilities in 2009 related to an unexpected profit by the Journal in its most recent year. In all, the Society's financial health is sound and expected to improve related to the change in publishers.

## Notes from the Future Sites Committee

By Lynn Stuart Ashby, MD

### Past, present, and beyond...

In 1996, fewer than 250 of us gathered in an historic hotel at the foot of the Sangre de Cristo mountain range in the Royal City of the Holy Faith of Saint Francis of Assisi. Sante Fe was founded in 1608 and is the oldest continually operating capital city in the United States. It was an inspired choice for the gathering of minds and talent that formed our first annual meeting of the Society for Neuro-Oncology.

Over the subsequent years we have been committed to preserving the same small group ambience that makes the SNO meeting so enjoyable. We feel this is particularly desirable because the neuro-oncology professional community is multidisciplinary and our own specialty groups have large annual meetings that are vast in scope and attendance, such as ASCO, ASTRO, AAN, AACR, and AANS/CNS. Due to the size of these groups the locations for them are restricted to cities such as Orlando, Chicago, San Diego, etc. and these venues are repeated over and over again.

Finding unique and interesting settings has become quite a challenge as the SNO membership and meeting attendance has grown. There are many factors that go into selecting appropriate and interesting sites including access via direct flights, ease of ground transportation, adequate conference space, proximity to local attractions, the right number of hotel rooms at the right price, and last but not least, contending with the weather fronts that blow across North America at the end of November! Here is a look at our future line up:

2010 Le Centre Sheraton, Montreal, Quebec

2011 Hyatt Regency, Orange County, California

2012 The Washington Hilton, Washington DC

2013 Marriott Marquis, San Francisco, California

*(in conjunction with the World Federation of Neuro-Oncology)*

We are eager to hear from you with ideas for possible sites for SNO. Please feel free to contact any of us with your suggestions. Until Novembre, à *bientôt!*

Lynn Stuart Ashby, MD (Chair)

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Jan Esenwein

Charles Haynes, JD

Jonathan Knisely, MD

Kevin Lillehei, MD

Adam Mamelak, MD

John Villano, MD, PhD

## Website Committee

By Erik P. Sulman, MD, PhD

This year the Society launched an entirely new version of its website at [www.soc-neuro-onc.org](http://www.soc-neuro-onc.org). After comparing features from several vendors, the chosen developer provides a state of the art content management system. The newly designed site homepage includes information on the annual meeting, current news and announcements, information on upcoming events, a link to the Society's journal *Neuro-Oncology*, as well as membership information and members-only features. At the "backend" of the site, membership and annual meeting registration have now been consolidated with this single provider, saving time and money and resolving some of the confusion members previously encountered on the site.

In the next month, the Society will launch a new component of the site "SNO Groups" which will facilitate collaborations and interactions between various interest areas within the Society. Members will be able to create public or private (invitation-only) groups, and each group's web page will include news items, upcoming events, forum messages, and shared files specific to that group. Potential uses include scientific collaborations, special interests (such as the Quality of Life group), or organizing of meetings to occur concurrent with the Society's annual meetings. New groups can be requested via the website. For further information, contact the SNO Website Committee Chair, Erik Sulman, MD, PhD, at [sulman@soc-neuro-onc.org](mailto:sulman@soc-neuro-onc.org).

## New Pediatric Conference

By Charles Haynes, JD

The Society for Neuro-Oncology is pleased to announce the launch of a new meeting entitled the Pediatric Neuro-Oncology Basic and Translational Research Conference. The meeting will take place May 19-20, 2011, at the Loews Hotel, New Orleans, Louisiana. This new meeting is being organized by the Society for Neuro-Oncology with the generous support of the Pediatric Brain Tumor Foundation.



James Rutka, MD, PhD

The conference will encourage the sharing of ideas and results, new collaborations, and will offer attendees a state-of-the-art update in the field of pediatric brain tumor research. To this end, the Scientific Program Committee, led by Dr. James Rutka, has been formed to create a highly informative and educational program. The program will feature popular and informative plenary sessions and informal poster sessions, as well as "Meet the Expert Sunrise Sessions", at which attendees can catch up with late breaking areas of research and controver-

sies in the field. Members are encouraged to submit their research to this important new conference.

**The abstract deadline is January 24, 2011**, and submission details are available at [www.soc-neuro-onc.org](http://www.soc-neuro-onc.org). Submissions will be considered for either oral (platform) presentations or posters. More information is available at [www.soc-neuro-onc.org](http://www.soc-neuro-onc.org).

### Pediatric Neuro-Oncology Basic and Translational Research Conference Scientific Committee

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Timothy Van Meter, PhD

*International Outreach Fellowship, continued from page 5*

Chang, W. K. Alfred Yung and Patrick Wen, Dr. Lin will visit the University of California at San Francisco, MD Anderson Cancer Center and Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, respectively, which will further enhance her experience in neuro-oncology in the United States.

Dr. Lin's goal after her fellowship training is to bring what she learned and experienced in neuro-oncology from the US to China, while adapting to China's health-care system and local population needs in order to improve the care of Chinese brain tumor patients. She will share her experiences with her colleagues, residents and medical students through department and hospital seminars/grand rounds, and at local and

national brain tumor-related conferences. With the improvement of hospital infrastructure which meets regulatory guidelines, she will initiate and conduct brain tumor-related clinical trials in her hospital and in other hospitals through collaboration and consortium groups. Dr. Lin will work with senior brain tumor neurosurgeons in China (Drs. Tao Jiang, Xue-Jun Yang, Liang-Fu Zhou and others) to establish clinical practice guidelines for managing patients with high grade gliomas and brain metastasis. Working with her Chinese colleagues and government officials, she will promote the establishment of cancer registries and neuro-oncology consortium in China.

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