Recap of the 20th Annual Scientific Meeting and Education Day of the Society for Neuro-Oncology

By Albert H. Kim

The 20th Annual Scientific Meeting and Education Day of the Society for Neuro-Oncology was held on November 19-22 in San Antonio, Texas. The meeting was a great success, with record attendance of over 2100 registrants from 46 different countries. We congratulate the Scientific Meeting Chairs, Tracy Batchelor and Gelareh Zadeh, for creating an exciting and comprehensive program, which highlighted innovative basic, translational, and clinical research. The meeting provided a collaborative environment for the exchange of ideas among clinical and laboratory scientists involved in the research, diagnosis, treatment, and care of patients with central nervous system tumors. Special thanks are also given to the Education Day Chairs, Gavin P. Dunn, Michael Lim, Hideho Okada, Michael Scheurer, and Jeffrey Wefel. The meeting was preceded by two well-attended pre-conference sessions: the SNO/SCIOP “Drug Delivery to the CNS” organized by Michael Vogelbaum, and the “Neuro-Oncology Review Course” organized by Maciej Mrugala.

The 2015 Education Day was entitled “Immunology and Immunotherapy,” with sessions focusing on immune system biology, psychoneuroimmunology, patient factors affecting cancer outcomes, immunotherapy, animal models and brain imaging, pediatric brain tumor survivorship, toxicities related to immunotherapy, and case discussions.

The main Scientific Meeting expanded on the traditional SNO meeting format, which included plenary talks, top-scoring abstracts, minisymposia, “meet-the-experts” sunrise sessions, and events for young investigators, by incorporating a greater number of sunrise and lunchtime educational sessions and a SNO meeting highlights session organized by the Scientific Meeting Chairs. On
SNO 20th Annual Meeting Abstract Award Winners

**Adult Clinical Research Supported by the Sontag Foundation**
Final analysis of the BELOB trial (A randomized phase II study on bevacizumab versus bevacizumab plus lomustine versus lomustine single agent in recurrent glioblastoma) and first radiology review results.  
*Martin van den Bent*

**Clinical Research – Adult CO-AWARD WINNER**
ReACT: Long-term survival from a randomized phase II study of rindopepimut (CDX-110) plus bevacizumab in relapsed glioblastoma  
*David Reardon*

**Clinical Research – Adult CO-AWARD WINNER**
Results of NRG Oncology/RTOG 9813 - a phase III randomized study of radiation therapy (RT) and temozolomide (TMZ) versus RT and nitrosourea (NU) therapy for anaplastic astrocytoma (AA)  
*Susan Chang*

**Basic Research – Adult CO-AWARD WINNER**
Refuting brain immune privilege: longitudinal multiphoton imaging through skull windows reveals the immune surveillance of brain metastases and its regulation by fractalkine  
*Felix Nwajei*

**Basic Research – Adult**
ATRX loss promotes tumor growth and impairs non-homologous end joining DNA repair in glioma  
*Carl Koschmann*

**Basic Research – Pediatric**
BCOR is a novel tumor suppressor gene in SHH-driven medulloblastoma  
*Nadja V Batora*

**Translational Research – Adult**
Therapeutic vulnerabilities and resistance mechanisms for the precision medicine of glioblastoma  
*Anna Lasorella*

**Translational Research – Pediatric**
Lipid metabolism reprogramming in glioblastoma and serving as promising target  
*Deliang Guo*

**Epidemiology Research – Adult**
Germline polymorphisms in MGMT increase ability to model temozolomide (TMZ)-related myelotoxicity risk in patients with glioblastoma (GBM) treated on NRG Oncology/RTOG 0825  
*Michael E Scheurer*

**Clinical Research – Pediatric**
ATRX loss promotes tumor growth and impairs non-homologous end joining DNA repair in glioma  
*Carl Koschmann*

**Quality of Life Research – Adult**
The impact of pregnancy on glioma patients  
*Jaqueline Stone*

**Young Investigator – Clinical Research**
ATRX and TERT assays provide non-redundant information in adult glioma patients: incorporating telomere markers into neuropathology practice  
*Kyle Walsh*

**Andrew Parsa Young Investigator Award for Basic/Translational Research**
Lipid metabolism reprogramming in glioblastoma and serving as promising target  
*Deliang Guo*

*SNO thanks the Awards Committee for their efforts to select the 2015 award winners. Chair: David Eisenstat. Committee Members: Melissa Bondy, Eric Bouffet, Sidney Croul, John Darling, Spencer Gibson, Cynthia Hawkins, Craig Horbinski, Normand Laperriere, Joseph Megyesi, Ingo Mellinghoff, Janusz Rak, Stephen Sands, Erik Sulman, Martin Taphoorn, Martin van den Bent, Magimairajan Issai Vanan, Kyle Walsh and Stephen Yip.*
Thursday evening, the 2015 SNO Meeting Welcome Reception was held at the Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center along with a concurrent Young Investigator’s Career Development and Networking Session.

On Friday the Scientific Meeting began with sunrise sessions, which included focused expert discussions on Quality of Life, Tumor Microenvironment/Heterogeneity, Brain Metastases, Clinical Guidelines, Genetic Predisposition in Pediatric Brain Tumors, and Neurofibromatosis Type I. After an official welcome by Drs. Batchelor and Zadeh, the first plenary session kicked off with a minisymposium on precision medicine followed by the top-scoring abstracts. After a diverse set of lunch sessions, concurrent sessions were held on Clinical Trials, Tumor Biology, and Brain Metastases. In the evening, a symposium on Immuno-Oncology was followed by a poster session.

On Saturday, sunrise sessions covered the following topics: Vaccine Therapy, Low Grade Gliomas, Glioma Stem Cells, Lymphoma, and Glioma Molecular Epidemiology. The plenary session featured a minisymposium on Immunotherapy and was dedicated to the memory of neurosurgeon-scientist Dr. Andrew Parsa. The Victor Levin Award was presented to Dr. Mitchel Berger. Dr. David Reardon then delivered his Presidential Address, which included presentations of the Lifetime Achievement Award to Dr. W.K. Alfred Yung and the Public Service Award to Jan Esenwein. After lunch sessions, the afternoon rolled out with concurrent sessions on Tumor Biology, Pediatric Tumors, Neuroimaging, Surgical Therapeutics and Drug Delivery, an update on RANO criteria for clinical endpoints, and Rapid Reports. The evening began with a poster session and ended with the SNO Gala Dinner at the Knibbe Ranch, which provided SNO members with an opportunity to socialize while viewing armadillo races and enjoying some Texas hospitality.

Sunday’s sunrise sessions showcased expert panel discussions on Molecular Pathology, Circulating Biomarkers, Surgical Delivery of Therapeutics, Cell Signaling-Based Therapies, Neuroimaging, and the Genome and Epigenome of CNS Germ Cell Tumors. Afterwards, concurrent sessions were held on Molecular Pathology, Quality of Life/Neurocognition, Tumor Biology, and other topics through Rapid Reports. The meeting ended with remarks by the Scientific Meeting Chairs and presentation of awards for best oral posters.

Society members are urged to make their plans now for SNO’s 21st Annual Scientific Meeting and Education Day, which will be held in Scottsdale, Arizona, on November 17-20, 2016.
care. The scientific chairs, Tracy Batchelor and Manish Aghi, and the Education Day Chairs, Manmeet Ahluwalia, Keith Ligon, Jaishri Blakeley and Kristina Hardy, are busy assembling another scientific program that is expected to also be highly informative and to challenge the presenters and the audience in their pursuit of the knowledge required to fight these cancers.

I also want to take the opportunity to thank Xing Fan and Khalid Shah who chaired the NeuroTumor Club at the American Association of Cancer Researchers (AACR) conference this year. It was a resounding success with close to 200 basic and translational scientists in attendance. Although this meeting has been held during the AACR conference for many years, we have been informed by the AACR leadership that we will not be able to offer this dinner meeting any longer. If this proves true, we will be working to come up with an alternative plan to keep this meeting alive, based on its historical success.

Over the last year, three new committees were established. SNO is increasingly being asked to review, recommend changes and/or endorse guidelines related to diagnosis and/or treatment of CNS tumors. A Guidelines Committee, chaired by Tracy Batchelor and Susan Chang, is charged with overseeing and recommending to our executive council and the Board these requests, and we have recently endorsed guidelines drafted by the American Society for Therapeutic Radiology and Oncology (ASTRO). SNO also is the voice of numerous groups of stakeholders, including doctors, allied health professionals, scientists, patients, and industrial partners. As such, SNO is increasingly at the forefront of public policy questions, issues and concerns and we continue to try and make the case for public attention to our quest against CNS Tumors. A new Public Policy Committee, chaired by Drs. Jann Sarkaria and Terri Armstrong, has thus been formed to help guide SNO through this process. Finally, our educational efforts and our challenge to properly train the next generation of CNS oncologists have prompted the formation of a new Fellowship Match Committee, chaired by Drs. John deGroot and Scott Plotkin, who are charged with helping to regulate the process of neuro-oncology fellowship matching. Recommendations and guidelines and monitoring for this process have already been drawn up and presented to the Board. These new committees join the other SNO committees in studying issues and providing recommendations for further board action.

This January, SNO leadership met over two days in a strategy session to discuss the growth of our Society. With over 2000 members it is not inconceivable that SNO is on pace to grow to a size that may require larger venues for its Annual Meeting, as well as an increase in the technologies that are required to cover the content of our educational programs. As strategic plans are being compiled, we continue to ensure that SNO retains the closeness and the nimbleness that has characterized its early years, while growing into a mature organization with the relevance and significance represented by its swelling membership numbers.

Please join me in congratulating Patrick Wen, editor-in-chief of Neuro-Oncology, who has led our flagship journal to increasing success as evidenced by the number of readers and its high impact factor. Similarly, Susan Chang, as editor-in-chief of our newest publication, Neuro-Oncology Practice, has done an excellent job guiding our sister journal to a very strong start.

In addition, please join me in thanking Chas Haynes and all the members of SNO’s administrative office who ensure that the Society remains successful and responsive to our members.

Finally, let me thank my new officers (Vice President: Terri Armstrong and Treasurer: Gelareh Zadeh), the members of the Executive Committee, the members of the Board, the members of the SNO Foundation, and our SNO partners.

We expect 2016 to be another great year for us!

E. Antonio Chiocca, MD PhD FAANS
President, Society for Neuro-Oncology
SNO Public Policy Committee Represented at Head to the Hill

Members of the SNO Public Policy Committee joined over 300 brain tumor advocates to participate in the annual “Head to the Hill” advocacy event that took place May 2-3, 2016 in Washington, DC. Organized by the National Brain Tumor Society (NBTS), “Head to the Hill” is designed to help our elected officials better understand the needs of the brain tumor community so they can develop policies that are vital to ensuring availability and continued funding of treatments and scientific research.

The issues that were the specific focus of the 2016 event included:

• Oral Chemotherapy Parity: Assuring Availability of Oral Chemotherapy for Brain Tumor Patients.
• Appropriations for Medical Research: Ensuring Support for Brain Tumor Research and Drug Development for the NIH and NCI.
• Childhood Cancer STAR Act: Expanding Research and Improving Treatment for Children with Cancer.

Guidelines Committee Endorses ASTRO Guideline on Radiation Therapy

SNO recognizes that other professional organizations may from time to time develop clinical practice guidelines that would be relevant to the membership of the Society. The newly formed SNO Guidelines Committee will consider endorsement of guidelines developed by other professional organizations when relevant and appropriate to the mission and interests of SNO and its membership. The full guidelines endorsement policy has been posted to the SNO website.

With the approval of the SNO Board of Directors, the SNO Guidelines Committee has officially endorsed the *Radiation Therapy for Glioblastoma: An ASTRO Evidence-Based Clinical Practice Guideline* which is due to be published shortly. In the coming months, the Guidelines Committee will be reviewing guidelines on brain metastases, as well as playing an active role in the development of neuro-oncology quality measures.

The SNO Guidelines Committee is chaired by Tracy Batchelor and Susan Chang, who can be contacted at their respective email addresses, tbatchelor@mgh.harvard.edu and Susan.Chang@ucsf.edu.

SNO Welcomes Carolyn Loch as Manager of Medical Education

SNO is delighted to announce that Carolyn Loch has joined the Society’s staff as Manager of Medical Education. In her new position, Carolyn will serve as the main administrative point of contact to the leadership of SNO’s various scientific meetings. She will also coordinate the abstract submission and CME components of SNO’s meetings, as well as participate in several SNO committees, including the new Guidelines Committee. Carolyn is a Certified Clinical Research Professional and comes to SNO with a strong oncology background, having previously served for eight years as an Oncology Research Nurse in the Department of Neuro-Oncology at MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston. Carolyn will be based in her home state of Colorado.
**Report from the 8th Annual Scientific Meeting for the Cooperative Trials Group for Neuro-Oncology**

In October 2015, the 8th Annual Scientific Meeting for the Cooperative Trials Group for Neuro-Oncology (COGNO) was held in Brisbane, Australia. COGNO is the main Neuro-Oncology trials group in Australasia and the meeting was held over two days and with the participation of three truly world class invited speakers (Prof. Martin van den Bent, Prof. Vinay Puduvalli, and Prof. Amy Heimberger) as well as many recognized national speakers. The theme of meeting was “Where the future lies” with a focus on grade 2 and 3 glioma, the changing role of pathology and pathological reporting, and a more personalized approach to brain metastases management.

This year’s COGNO ASM will be a combined event with the Asian Society for Neuro-Oncology (ASNO) and will be held in Sydney, Australia, from 11th -14th September 2016. This meeting will run over four days and invited speakers include; Prof. Roger Stupp, Prof. Mitchell Berger, Prof. Paul Mischel, A/Prof. Arjun Sahgal, Prof. W. K. Alfred Yung, Prof. Gregory Riggins, and Asst. Adj. Prof. Mary Lovely. A dedicated SRS Workshop will precede the main meeting. The theme for the meeting is “Neuro-Oncology: is the landscape changing?” It will be a great opportunity to attend a scientifically robust and topical meeting but also to enjoy the sites of Sydney in beautiful spring!

Members of SNO are encouraged to learn more about the 2016 combined COGNO/ASNO meeting by visiting www.asnocogno2016.org.au

---

**The Society for Neuro-Oncology congratulates the winners of the 2015 SNO meeting travel scholarships.**

Ten individual travel scholarships to attend the 2015 SNO meeting in San Antonio were awarded through a competitive process to applicants from developing nations. Applications were received from the following geographical regions: South America/Central America & the Caribbean, Central and Southern Africa, China & associated countries, Indian Sub-Continent, North Africa & the Middle East and Eastern Europe. Since the inception of this initiative in 2010, SNO has awarded travel scholarships to delegates from over 40 nations.

- **Srinivas Chilukuri, MD**
  Yashoda Hospital Hyderabad, India
- **Muhammad Tahir, MBBS, FCPS**
  Jinnah Hospital Lahore, Pakistan
- **Amancio Guerrero Maldonado, MD**
  Mexican Institute of Social Security Salatierra, Mexico
- **Esteban Jaramillo-Jiminez, MD**
  Instituto Neurologico de Columbia
- **Teddy Totimeh, MPhil, MBChB**
  Korle Bu Teaching Hospital Accra, Ghana
- **Elnaggar Mostafa Aly Hamed Ahmed PhD**
  Alexandria University Alexandria, Egypt
- **Ahmed Elbushra Ahmed Doomi, MD**
  Hamad Medical Corporation Doha, Qatar
- **Jayson L. Cho, MD**
  University of Santo Tomas Hospital Malabon City, Philippines
- **Jie Ma, MD, PhD**
  Shanghai Xinhua Hospital Shanghai, China
- **Emil Makimbetov, MD**
  National Center of Oncology Kok-Dgar, Kyrgyzstan
Recap of the Inaugural Wilkins-Barrick International Outreach Course

The Centre for Neuroscience Services & Research (P3 Neuro) Universiti Sains Malaysia was given the honour of hosting the first ever Wilkins-Barrick International Outreach Course in January of this year. This event was the result of an initiative led by Gelareh Zadeh, Co-chair of the SNO International Outreach Committee with the support of Mark Bernstein, the Greg Wilkins-Barrick Chair at the University Health Network, University of Toronto. Matching funds for the support of this course were provided by the SNO Foundation chaired by Mark Gilbert.

The symposium was successfully organized in Le Meridien Hotel, Kuala Lumpur. A total of 110 participants encompassing neurosurgeons, oncologists, radiologist and residents from all three specialities were in attendance. Faculty members consisted of both regional as well as international experts from Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand & Canada.

SNO was represented by Dr. Zadeh who spoke on the latest developments in the management of brain metastases as well as meningiomas. Dr. Bernstein who was also in attendance, shared his vast and invaluable experience in performing awake craniotomies. Local and regional experts shared their perspectives on the management of high and low grade gliomas, skull base tumours, paediatric brain tumours and spinal cord tumours. Oncological advancements in the fields of stereotactic radiosurgery as well as radiation induced complications were reviewed. Updates on developments in genetic assessment and biomarker usage in neuro-oncology were also included.

The expert panel discussion session at the end of the day was well received by the audience who posed many questions particularly pertaining to experiences with multi-disciplinary team based approaches to oncological treatment.

The organizing committee would like to thank the University of Toronto and SNO for this opportunity which has helped serve as a catalyst for the development of neuro-oncology in this region. We would also like to thank members of the neuro-oncology fraternity in Malaysia who supported this event.


Future Wilkins-Barrick International Outreach Courses Announced

Led by Gelareh Zadeh and Jason Huse, the SNO International Outreach Committee is pleased to announce that two Wilkins-Barrick International Outreach Courses will be organized in 2017. Selected through a competitive application process, these courses are made possible by the generous support of the University of Toronto and the SNO Foundation.

Host: Neurosurgical Association of Sri Lanka
Organizer: Ruvini Abeygunaratne
Columbo, Sri Lanka
January 21-22, 2017

Host: Moroccan Society of Pediatric Hematology and Oncology
Organizer: Laila Hessissen
Marrakesh, Morocco
April 5-7, 2017
New Neuro-Oncology Fellowship Match Committee Created

The SNO Board of Directors has approved the establishment of a Neuro-Oncology Fellowship Match Committee, which will be chaired by Drs. John de Groot and Scott Plotkin. The move to establish a Neuro-Oncology Fellowship Match was enthusiastically supported by the program directors at the 2015 SNO conference. The company San Francisco Match (SF Match) has been selected as the facilitator for the match process. SNO is excited to be the seat of this new endeavor, and to help to make the fellowship application process a more unified and effectively communicated experience.

A program director meeting has been scheduled for November 18th at the 2016 SNO Annual Scientific Meeting in Scottsdale, Arizona. The goal of this meeting will be to approve the Match guidelines and codes of conduct for both the programs and applicants. In the interim, SNO will work with SF Match to execute a sponsor agreement, which the programs will branch out from in the coming year. The first Match is expected to take place in mid-2018 and will fill slots for fellowship positions starting July 1, 2019. The Neuro-Oncology Fellowship Match is intended for applicants seeking a clinical fellowship with the intent of being a neuro-oncology practitioner upon graduation. The Match is inclusive of UCNS and non-UCNS accredited programs. It is the applicant’s responsibility to select which programs to apply for based on their own personal and professional criteria.

SNO members who wish to participate in the Fellowship Match Committee should contact either Dr. de Groot or Dr. Plotkin at their respective email addresses, jdegroot@mdanderson.org and splotkin@mgh.harvard.edu.

Key Benefits of Formal Match Process:

• Offer protection for fellows and programs through established and agreed upon guidelines, code of conduct, and timeline for recruitment.
• Unify programs by encouraging communication amongst program directors and sharing best practices for education.
• Encourage both applicants and institutions to fully explore “best fit” scenarios.
• Control recruitment and application costs.
• Further publicize neuro-oncology as a respected subspecialty field.
• Create a single place where all participating programs can be listed for potential applicants.
• Provide a secondary market for programs to explore candidates who did not match.
2016 SNO Committees

SNO Audit Committee
Chair: Gene Barnett

SNO Awards Committee
Chair: Gelareh Zadeh

SNO Bylaws Committee
Chair: David Schiff

SNO Communications Committee
Chair: Albert Kim

SNO Fellowship Match Committee
Co-Chairs: John de Groot, Scott Plotkin

SNO Future Sites Committee
Co-Chairs: James Perry, Mark Gilbert and Susan Chang

SNO Guidelines and Reported Outcomes Committee
Co-Chairs: Tracy Batchelor, Susan Chang

SNO International Outreach Committee
Co-Chairs: Gelareh Zadeh, Jason Huse

SNO Annual Meeting Committee
Scientific Meeting Co-Chairs: Tracy Batchelor, Manish Aghi
Education Day Co-Chairs Manmeet Alhuwalia, Keith Ligon
Clinical and Applied Neuro-Oncology Co-Chairs:
Jaishri Blakeley, Kristina Hardy

SNO Membership Committee
Chair: Gavin Dunn

SNO Public Policy Committee
Co-Chairs: Jann Sarkaria, Terri Armstrong

SNO Website Committee
Chair: Erik Sulman

SNO Young Investigators Committee
Chair: Monica Venere

Society for Neuro-Oncology
PO Box 273296
Houston, TX 77277-3296
www.soc-neuro-onc.org
(713) 526-0269
Email: office@soc-neuro-onc.org

© Society for Neuro-Oncology 2016