

ARO Member News

May 2014

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Greetings!

In this issue of the ARO Member News, Past President Jay Rubinstein reports on the highly successful ARO Midwinter Meeting that included an outstanding scientific program and many activities that kept attendees very busy. The spARO had another great year, as noted in Will Hamlet's report on the spARO programs and activities.

And, don't miss the very important announcement of the 2015 Award of Merit Recipient in this issue. Our congratulations to Thomas Friedman, PhD!

Do you have information that you would like ARO to consider including in future news updates? If yes, please email your content suggestions to headquarters@aro.org.

Sincerely,
Linda Hood, Ph.D., Editor ARO

Letter from the Past President

The ARO met for its 37th MidWinter meeting on February 22-26 in San Diego, California. We were blessed with mostly splendid weather and a record number of 1139 abstracts submitted. There was also a record number of registrants, 1679, just squeaking by last years' meeting by 18 attendees. I had the honor of chairing the Presidential Symposium on "First-in-man studies of neurotechnology", which was incredibly well attended and featured several fascinating presentations on cochlear, vestibular and retinal prostheses as well as human studies of brain-computer interfaces and auditory cortical work. The Program Committee chaired by Larry Lustig assembled a very satisfying program of symposia, podium sessions, and poster sessions. We continued with the two-hour symposium format from last year which seems to work well.

The Award of Merit this year went to Steven Colburn, who gave a memorable lecture on "Shoulders of Giants: A Personal Walk Through the Development of Ideas About Binaural Hearing". The lecture was preceded by a history of Steve's life and times and accomplishments given by Laurel Carney and Barbara Shinn-Cunningham.

This year was the 41st anniversary of the ARO's founding. It is hard to believe it already but in 2017, we will have our 40th midwinter meeting.

It has been my great honor and pleasure to serve as your president this past year. I have not studied it scientifically, but I believe I was the first ARO president to have started coming to the meeting as a student. Given the enthusiasm of our student members, I know I will not be the last. I am grateful for the support that I have received from the membership and, particularly, from the Council and from Talley Management. Our 38th MidWinter meeting is scheduled for February 21-25, 2015, at the Baltimore Marriott Waterfront. I look forward to seeing you all then.

Jay T Rubinstein, MD, PhD
ARO Past President

Save the Date

38th Annual
MidWinter Meeting
February 21-25, 2015
Baltimore Marriott
Waterfront
Baltimore, Maryland,
USA [Click here](#) for more
information.

2015 MWM Invited Sessions

Symposium:

Age-Related
Vestibular Loss:
Research Update and
Setting the 5-Year
Research Agenda

Binaural Processing
and Spatial Unmasking
for Bilateral, Bimodal
and Single-Sided
Deafness Cochlear-
Implant Users

Cellular Calcium
Signaling in the
Auditory System

Chromatin and
Transcriptional
Regulation of
Neurosensory
Development

Cortical Dynamics of
Human Auditory
Perception: Insights
from
Electrocorticography
(Ecog) Studies

Epidemiological
Perspectives on Age-
Related Hearing Loss:
Risk Factors and
Prevention

Mechanisms of Social
Hearing

Neural Substrates of Music Processing: From Perception to Cognition

New Perspectives on Sound Exposure and Subcortical Processing: from Environmental Effects to Damaging Sounds

Non-Coding RNAs in the Auditory System

Planar Polarity and Neurosensory Development

The Functional Organization of Human Auditory Cortex

The Hearing Restoration Project

The Transmembrane Channel-Like Family: Molecules, Mechanisms and Models of Mechanotransduction

Workshops:

Junior Scientist Poster Pitch Blitz Session

Mobile and Web Auditory Training Apps for Hearing Impaired Adults - Translational and Scientific Challenges

Tool Shop

Young Investigator Symposium:

Computational Modeling of Auditory Perception

Mechanisms in Binaural Hearing: from Synapses to Psychophysics

Quantifying the Influences of Internal Noise on Auditory Processing - from Neural Coding to Behavior

Post Meeting Questionnaire

2015 Award of Merit Recipient Chosen

Dr. Thomas B. Friedman has been chosen to receive the 2015 Award of Merit. Tom has had an exceptional career, helping to lead the enormous progress over the past 20 years in the genetics of hearing loss. Tom initially studied genetics of purine metabolism in *Drosophila*. Demonstrating both foresight and courage, he jumped into the genetics of human deafness with work on the PAX3 gene in Waardenburg syndrome, and at about the same time he moved to the NIDCD as Chief of the Laboratory of Molecular Genetics. Since then, he has contributed to work on a remarkable number of deafness genes; these include POU4F3, PDS, MYO15, GJB2, TRIOBP, HGF, TPRN, LRTOMT, MYO7A, ESRRB, TRIC, CDH23, Tmprss3, ESPN, CLDN14, PCDH15, TMC1 and DFNM1. Tom's work is especially noted for combining gene identification in human families using positional cloning with elucidation of protein function using a variety of cell biological approaches. For his comprehensive work on an important problem in human hearing health, the ARO is pleased to recognize Tom Friedman with the Award of Merit.

spARO Update from the 2014 MWM

At each ARO MidWinter Meeting since 2009, the Student, Postdoc and Medical Resident Chapter of ARO (spARO, pronounced 'sparrow') has engaged new trainees and facilitated career development through building a supportive and interactive network of colleagues. In addition to a successful student social and engaging discussion at the young investigator lunch, this year spARO has expanded their efforts to nurture burgeoning students, postdocs, and medical residents by expanding the mentoring programs and developing a journal club for young investigators.

One of spARO's aims is to improve the relationships between trainees and successful members of the scientific and medical fields. In the past few years, Professor Ruth Litovsky, spARO (represented by Ross Maddox) and the mentorship committee have had a mentoring program, where experienced and successful ARO members help guide trainees along their own path. As ARO realizes that our field can not only lead us to different professions, but also present us with unique problems, support continues for our mentoring program. There were 8 sessions from 12-2pm, Saturday through Tuesday. This year, topics ranged from "pros and cons of being a clinical scientist" to "transitioning from scientist to administrator" to "how to look for a job and start a lab". In the following year we will continue to provide a variety of different sessions to accommodate the vast range of interests spARO members have. Any spARO member is welcome to submit suggestions for mentorship session topics and themes; please email: sparo.ex.officio@gmail.com.

As expected the student social was highly successful in bringing the spARO community together. Between 150 and 200 attendees were able to enjoy over 300 free draft or bottled beers in addition to an array of different appetizers at Hennessey's Tavern, which was ideal for our purposes. It had plenty of nooks and crannies to settle into and indulge a profound discussion with a close colleague, as well as a large open space to bump into and mingle with people you haven't seen in a year. Complimenting the excellent food, drink, and conversation, there was also live music playing in an adjacent room, allowing us to enjoy lovely live music without having to shout at each other just to hold a conversation. We hope Hennessey's Tavern will be available for the 2016 ARO MidWinter meeting in San Diego.

above: spARO social event held at Hennessey's Tavern, downtown San Diego.

Each year spARO invites a past Burt Evans Award winner for the Young Investigator's Lunch and this year we were fortunate to have the distinguished Dr. Karina Cramer from University of California Irvine. Dr Cramer sat down with her audience and discussed her progression through academia. Having an interesting career that has seamlessly transitioned through a range of topics within neuroscience, she had little trouble reminding us that we are the designers of our own future. Additionally, her discussion was flexible and tailored to address specific concerns or questions the audience had. This event offered an excellent opportunity to gain insight into the issues, obstacles, and opportunities that may be encountered as members of the academic community.

Thank you to everyone who participated in our Post Meeting Questionnaire regarding the 37th MWM. We received an overwhelming number of responses. Your feedback is greatly appreciated and helpful as we plan the 38th MWM.

Congratulations to **Marc Meadows** for winning the raffle for a complimentary full-registration to attend the 2015 meeting in Baltimore, MD!

**In Memoriam:
Dr. Isamu Sando**

above: spARO Town Hall meeting.

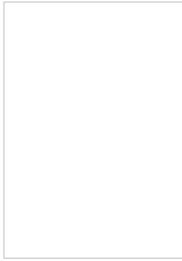
During the annual spARO town hall meeting, several new projects were proposed, including increasing outreach to sister professional societies and holding a "elevator talks" contest the following year. The new steering committee was also announced at the town hall: William Hamlet (ex officio), Anna Dienesch, Lukas Landegger, Ross Maddox, David Morris, and Nichole Foster.

The 2013 ex officio, Wei Zhou, and the entire 2013 steering committee (Becky Lewis, Ross Maddox, Jenny Thornton, and Ross Williamson) deserve many thanks for their hard work and planning for the informative, engaging, and exciting spARO events at the 2014 MidWinter meeting.

To view photos from the 2014 Midwinter Meeting in San Diego and to keep updated on the latest spARO activity, please join our Facebook group (<http://www.facebook.com/groups/spARO2012>), to keep our community ties strong, at least in cyber space!

Feel free to reach out to us by email (sparo.ex.officio@gmail.com) if you have questions, suggestions, requests, or if you would like to join our effort.

Yours sincerely,
Will Hamlet
ex officio, spARO



Dr.

Isamu Sando, Professor Emeritus, Department of Otolaryngology, University of Pittsburgh, passed away on Saturday April 12, 2014, at age 85.

Dr. Sando was a charter member of the ARO since 1973. He graduated from Nihon University Medical School in 1952. In 1962, he did his postdoctoral training in human temporal bone histopathology under the mentorship of the late Prof. Harold Schuknecht at the Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary and Harvard Medical School.

Dr. Sando joined the University of Pittsburgh in 1976, where he established the Otopathology Laboratory. During his 50-plus years of research, he completed numerous important studies concerning many ear diseases, including otitis media, Ménière's disease, and otosclerosis. He pioneered quantitative morphology in human temporal bone studies. He published over 200 publications and made over 260 presentations, many at the ARO MidWinter Meetings. He trained over 40 postdoctoral fellows during his career.

He is survived by Mrs. Yoko Sando.