

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the SNIP is to: promote research and serve as a reliable source of information in the pharmacology, immunology, and neuroscience of the neuroimmune axis; foster exchange of information and ideas on neuroimmune pharmacology by holding an annual SNIP Conference, maintaining a Society web site (s-nip.org), and supporting and promoting the Society journal, the Journal of Neuroimmune Pharmacology (JNIP); increase understanding of the etiology, prevention, and treatment of neuroimmune disorders; define the neuroimmunomodulatory properties of neuroimmune innervations and regeneration, and of endogenous and exogenous neuroimmunomodulatory substances, such as hormones, neuropeptides, neurotransmitters, cytokines, chemokines, and substances of abuse; promote translational research and a better understanding of the role played by infectious diseases, such as AIDS, and of inflammation and stress in disorders of the neuroimmune axis; encourage financial support from funding agencies, industry, and the SNIP membership to effect the SNIP mission.

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Report from Past President Sabita Roy on the 2013 Meeting in Puerto Rico

19th Annual SNIP Scientific Conference Conrad San Juan Condado Plaza, San Juan, Puerto Rico April 3-6, 2013

We had a very successful meeting with record number of attendance at the 19th Annual Conference of the Society held in Conrad San Juan Condado Plaza, San Juan, Puerto Rico. The society thanks Rick Noel, Loyda Menendez and the local organizing committee and the Co-Chair of the Ad-Hoc meetings committee, Drs. Shilpa Buch and Dr. Phil Peterson and all members of the ad hoc meetings committee who worked hard on making this conference a huge success.

This year's meeting focus was in line with the mission of the Society which is to foster interdisciplinary research bridging the fields of Immunology, Pharmacology, and Neuroscience with a special emphasis on how drugs of abuse and infectious diseases, such as AIDS, interact and modulate the neuroimmune axis.

With **over 230** registered participants, the meeting in Puerto Rico ranked as one of our best-attended conferences thus far. SNIP has always taken pride in their support of early stage investigators. In order to promote interest in the field of Neuroimmune Pharmacology and to recognize the excellent work being done by Early Career investigators in this field, the Society provides Early Career Investigator Travel Awards (ECITA) to graduate students and post-doctorate trainees. For the 2013 SNIP Scientific Conference, a total of 66 abstracts were submitted. From this pool, 22 pre-doctoral students and 13 post-doctorate fellows were given travel awards. Of these 35 awardees, 9 awards were conferred to students and post-doctorate fellows working in alcohol-related research and these awards were sponsored by NIAAA. The ECITA travel awards were divided into 3 categories: \$750+registration waiver, \$500+registration waiver, and \$500. In addition, 6 students who were among the top candidates were awarded with "Certificate for Excellence". Finally, the top 3 from each graduate student post-doctorate fellow categories were selected for symposium presentation.

We had a total of 86 posters to be evaluated for best poster awards. These posters included 56 ECITA applicant posters, and 30 additional posters from local PR and others who were eligible ECI (pre-doc and post-doc within 5 years of PhD). Each poster was judged by two judges and scores were tabulated and ranked from low-high scores.

The candidates with the lowest score in each category received the best poster awards for Arthur Falek Early Career Investigator (first and second places). In the pre-doctoral category there was a tie. The winners were Dionna W. Williams, Albert Einstein College of Medicine, Mentor: Dr. Joan W Berman and Lu Yang, University of Nebraska Medical Center, Mentor: Dr. Shilpa Buch. In the post-doctoral category the first place went to Dr. Amanda L Persons, Rush University, Mentor: Dr. Celeste Napier and the second place was awarded to Dr. Fnu Ashutosh, University of North Texas Health Science Center, Mentor: Dr. Anuja Ghorpade.

The annual SNIP Meet-the-Mentors Lunch on Thursday April 26, 2013 was attended by 90 trainees and 39 mentors. The lunch was supported by a generous donation from Drs. Nair, Wigdahl, and Singhal. Introductory remarks were given by Dr. Santosh Kumar (ECITA Chair) and sponsors (Drs. Wigdahl and Singhal). The lunch is designed to encourage interaction among pre-doctoral and post-doctoral trainees and scientists from academia and the NIH. In order to give the trainees a variety of perspectives, the mentors this year included junior, mid-career, and senior SNIP Investigators. Particular emphasis this year was to include female investigators.

The Early Career Investigator Symposium, which showcases the research accomplishments of the best SNIP trainees, was held on Saturday April 28, 2013. Presenters included the top ranked post-doctoral applicants and the top ranked pre-doctoral applicants in the Early Career Investigator Travel Award competition. The post-doctoral presenters were: Dr. Crystal Bethel-Brown, Dr. Fnu Ashutosh, and Dr. J Ma. The graduate student presenters were Mr. Ankit Shah, Ms. Yu Zhou, and Ms. Sarah Bertrand. The chair of the ECITA committee, Dr. Santosh Kumar, and Dr. Walter Royal, co-chaired the Early Career Investigator Symposium.

At the annual banquet the Wybran Award for outstanding contributions in the field of Immunopharmacology was presented to Dr. Kurt Hauser (Virginia Commonwealth University). Dr. Philip Peterson, University of Minnesota, received the Herman Friedman Founder's Award for his contributions to SNIP, and for his dedication to SNIP's continued development. Dr. Sylvia M. Kiertscher (UCLA) was the recipient of the Distinguished Service Award and the Outstanding Service and Support Award was awarded to Dr. Xu Wang, Temple University.

The Plenary Lectures were presented by Dr. Benjamin Chen, Mount Sinai School of Medicine, Dr. Thirumala-Devi Kanneganti, St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, Dr. Tariq Rana, Sanford Burnham Medical Research Institute, Dr. Bert t'Hart, Biomedical Primate Research Center, Netherlands, and Dr. Jon M. Lindstorm, University of Pennsylvania.

The major symposiums were as follows: Neuroimmune Activation Contributes to Addiction Neurobiology, Animal Models of HIV infection and Drug Abuse, Neuropathology of HIV-1 in an Aging Population, Recent Advances in Nicotine Research, Cannabinoids, HIV Pathogenicity, and other Infectious Disease Processes, Emerging trends in Substance Abuse, HIV Infection and Neuropathogenesis, Early Career Investigator Symposium. A special, Grant Writing Workshop was also held for Early Career Investigators.

The travel awards were supported by a NIDA funded R-13 awarded to Dr. Sulie Chang, Seton Hall University.



Photos courtesy of: Peter Gaskill, Michelle Kiebal, and Greg Sindberg.

We are extremely grateful to the following sponsors: National Institute of Drug Abuse - \$35,001 (ECITAs supported in part through R13 DA023184 conference award to SNIP, PI: Sulie L. Chang, Institute of NeuroImmune Pharmacology at Seton Hall University), National Institute on Alcohol and Alcoholisms - \$15,000 (To support Symposium #1; Neuroimmune Activation Contributes to Addiction Neurobiology, and Travel Scholarship to support young investigators involved in alcohol research), National Institute of Mental Health - \$7000 (Partial sponsorship of SYMPOSIUM #6: Neuropathology of HIV-1 in an Aging Population), Department of Surgery-Basic and Translation Division, University of Minnesota Medical School - \$6000 (Partial sponsorship of Reception), Dr. Madhavan Nair, Institute of Neuroimmune Pharmacology and Center for Personalized NanoMedicine, HW College of Medicine, FIU - \$5000 (Graduate trainee associated expenses), Dr. Brian Wigdahl, Drexel University, - \$5,000 (Early Career Investigator Lunch), Drs. Shilpa Buch / Howard Fox - \$5,000 (Bill Narayan Memorial Lecture), Dr. Pravin Singhal - \$3,000 (Early Career Investigator Travel Award), Drs. Tom Molitor / Sabita Roy - \$2,500 (Grants Writing Workshop Lunch), Dr. Jose Lasalde, Vice President for Research & Technology, University of Puerto Rico - \$2,000 (Program Book Printing), Dr. Richard Noel - \$1,000 (Early Career Investigator Lunch), Dr. Kenira Thompson, Dean for Research, Ponce School of Medicine - \$1,000 (Partial sponsorship of Early Career Investigator Lunch). We are extremely grateful for the following support Springer, graciously published the abstracts of the 19th SNIP Conference in the Journal on NeuroImmune Pharmacology (JNIP: Dr. Howard Gendelman, Editor-in-Chief), the official journal of SNIP. In addition, details of the 19th SNIP Conference and a listing of poster presentations are available on the SNIP website www.s-nip.org.

The 19th SNIP Conference was an outstanding success!!

Sabita Roy,
Past President of SNIP





**Welcome to the 20th Annual SNIP Scientific Conference
New Orleans, Louisiana
March 26-29, 2014**

On behalf of the Executive Committee, Council, and all the hard-working society committees, let me welcome you to attend the 20th meeting of the Society on NeuroImmune Pharmacology, to be held in New Orleans, March 26-29. This meeting will build on our continued growing success as a venue for learning, information exchange, camaraderie, new breakthroughs, new collaborations, and all around fun. Once again we have had an overwhelming response from Early Career Investigators, we look forward to their poster session, talks, and the mentoring and interactions with the next generation of scientists. In addition to the their poster session symposium, seven additional symposia span the interests of our society (Exosomes, Neurogenesis, Neuropathic pain, Neuroimmunology, Pharmacology and Signaling, Drugs of Abuse, HIV, Inflammation, etc.) with outstanding lineups of speakers. This will be complemented by plenary talks, an additional poster session, and new breakout sessions to foster increased collaborations. Full details can be found on our web site for the meeting, and of course information abounds on the city itself.

So after trips the last two years across the waters to islands, back in the mainland (but still on water, the lazy Mississippi) join us in The Big Easy for a productive and exciting time. Thanks to everyone's hard work (and a special shout out to Rick Noel, our meetings chair and Pat Molina, the local organizer) this meeting will be the most successful ever! See you soon!

Howard Fox,
President of SNIP



Local Organizing Committee for 20th SNIP Conference



Top left to right: Sophie Teng, Flavia Souza-Smith, Betsy Giaimo, Paige Katz

Bottom left to right: Stephen Ford, John Maxi, Jacques Mayeux

Contributions:

Local Conference Coordinator: Betsy Giaimo

Registration Staff and Poster Hostesses: Flavia Souza-Smith and Paige Katz

Information and Hospitality Desk: John Maxi and Jacques Mayeux

Entrance and Social Event Hostesses: Sophie Teng, John Maxi, and Stephen Ford

Current Research at LSUHSC Presented at the 20th Scientific SNIP Conference in New Orleans

Francesca Peruzzi, PhD, LSU Health Sciences Center, New Orleans, LA

A total of 12 abstracts from Louisiana State University were submitted for the 20th Annual Meeting of the Society on NeuroImmune Pharmacology in New Orleans, March 26-29, 2014. With the exception of one presentation from LSU - Pennington Research Center in Baton Rouge, all other presentations and posters are from investigators located at the LSU Health Sciences Center (LSUHSC) in New Orleans.

At LSU in Pennington, A. Bruce-Keller studies the effects of protease inhibitors (PI) on cerebrovascular homeostasis. She will present data obtained in collaboration with E. Sumarcz at Temple University in Philadelphia. The authors utilized a mouse model to study metabolic complications of cART, particularly protease inhibitors, and found that adiponectin therapy reversed PI-induced loss of adipose tissue and prevented PI-induced brain injury and cognitive impairment.

C. Parsons and F. Peruzzi are the most recent recruits to the LSU School of Medicine and they are members of the Louisiana Cancer Research Center (LCRC). C. Parsons is the director of the HIV Malignancies Program at LSUHSC and will discuss development of translational studies to define relationships between Kaposi sarcoma-associated herpesvirus (KSHV) infection, oxidative stress, and alcohol within a cohort of HIV patients in New Orleans. The same cohort of patients is the source of clinical specimens utilized in the translational study aimed at the identification of plasma microRNAs as biomarkers for HIV-associated neurocognitive disorders. This study, supported by the Louisiana Clinical and Translational Science Center (LACaTS) is presented as a poster by F. Kadri, an MD/PhD student in F. Peruzzi's laboratory.

The Comprehensive Alcohol Research Center (CARC) at LSUHSC is represented by the remaining presentations and posters. P. Molina, director of the CARC will open the Symposium discussing substance abuse its role in promotion of specific inflammatory pathways. She will present an overview of the impact of alcohol on SIV disease, including effects on various organs, including CNS, lung, liver, and immune system. Translational initiatives to adapt behavioral interventions to reduce alcohol abuse in HIV patients are also discussed.

The effects of alcohol-induced inflammation on skeletal muscles and hippocampal gene expression are detailed in two additional posters presented by students in Molina's laboratory. Three more studies emphasize the effects of alcohol-induced neuroinflammation and traumatic brain injury (TBI). N. Gilpin will present data showing that TBI increases alcohol consumption and promotes neuroinflammation in rats. Two more posters illustrate other aspects of alcohol usage and TBI using the same animal model. S. Edwards will present data indicating that systemic inhibition of soluble epoxide hydrolase (sEH) reduces excessive alcohol self-administration in rats. Edwards further demonstrates a beneficial effect of sEH inhibition in reducing the compulsive drinking observed in alcoholics.

Ongoing research on the interaction between cannabinoids, particularly THC, and SIV disease is represented by two studies. P. Winsauer will present data indicating that estrogen signaling in the brain counteracts the effects of THC, possibly modulating the effects of THC on SIV disease progression in females. Through assessment of the genital microenvironment in SIV-infected female macaques, W. Nichols presents data suggesting possible implications of THC administration on SIV transmission.

In summary, the School of Medicine, the LCRC, and federally funded programs like the CARC and LACaTS, support diverse and clinically relevant HIV research programs at LSUHSC.

Early Career Investigator Travel Award Winners 2014

In order to promote interest in the field of Neuroimmune Pharmacology and to recognize the excellent work being done by Early Career investigators in this field, the Society provides Early Career Investigator Travel Awards (ECITA) to graduate students and post-doctorate trainees (within 5 years of Ph.D.) working with a SNIP member and seeking funds to attend the annual conference of the Society on NeuroImmune Pharmacology. For the 2014 SNIP Scientific Conference, a total of 72 abstracts were submitted. Of which 29 graduate students and 18 post-doctorate fellows were awarded. The ECITA awards were made in 4 categories: \$750+registration waiver, \$500+registration waiver, only registration waiver, and "certificate of excellence". In addition, the top 3 from each graduate student and post-doctorate fellow categories were selected for symposium presentation. It is worth noting that this is the highest number of awards given to Early Career Investigators, which suggests a growing trend of the society. The ECITA committee thanks the SNIP leadership for this.

Pre-Doctoral:

ECITA Awardees	Mentor	University
Ande, A	Kumar, S	University of Missouri-Kansas City
Campbell, LA	Mocchetti, I	Georgetown University
Cantres-Rosario, Y	Melendez, L	University of Puerto Rico
Castaneda, JT	Roth, MD	University of California-Los Angeles
Cisneros, IE	Ghorpade, A	University of North Texas-Health Sciences Center
Festa, L	Meucci, O	Drexel University College of Medicine
Gangwani, MR	Kumar, A	University of Missouri-Kansas City
Gannon, P	Jordan-Sciutto, K	University of Pennsylvania
Gofman, L	Potula, R	Temple University School of Medicine
Harrison, EB	Fox, H	University of Nebraska-Medical Center
Jones, L	Maggirwar, S	University of Rochester Medical Center

ECITA Awardees	Mentor	University
Jones, ME	Lysle, DT	University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill
Kadri, F	Peruzzi, F	LSU Health Science Center
Lebonville, C	Lysle, DT	University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill
Liu, HL	Xiong HX	University of Nebraska-Medical Center
Liu, X	Kumar, A	University of Missouri-Kansas City
Martínez-Orengo, N	Noel, RJ	Ponce School of Medicine and Health Sciences
Midde, NM	Zhu, J	University of South Carolina-Columbia
Ngwainmbi, JK	Akbarali, HI	Virginia Commonwealth University
Nookala, A	Kumar, A	University of Missouri-Kansas City
Rotschafer, JH	Cheeran, MCJ	University of Minnesota, St Paul
Summers, LE	Dash, CV	Meharry Medical College, TN
Tong, H.T	Lu, YL	University of Hawaii
Torres, L.	Noel, RJ	Ponce School of Medicine and Health Sciences
Villeneuve, L, BS	Fox, H	University of Nebraska-Medical Center
Wang, F	Roy, S	University of Minnesota, St Paul
Wilshusen, RA	Mosley, RL	University of Nebraska-Medical Center
Yang, Lu	Buch, S	University of Nebraska-Medical Center
Zenon, F	Melendez, L	University of Puerto Rico

Post-Doctoral:

ECITA Awardees	Mentor	University
Anand, V	Roy, S	University of Minnesota, St Paul
Atluri, VSR	Nair, M	Florida International University
Dalvi, P	Dhillon, K	University of Kansas Medical Center
Dickens, AM	Haughey, N	John Hopkins University School of Medicine
Erickson, MA	Jordan-Sciutto, K	University of Pennsylvania
Fields, J	Masliah	University of California-San Diego
Hahn, YK	Knapp, PE	Virginia Commonwealth University
Koodie, L	Roy, S	University of Minnesota, St Paul
Moran, LM	Mactutus, CF	University of South Carolina-Columbia
Nesil, T	Li, MD	University of Virginia
Northrop, NA	Yamamoto, BK	University of Toledo College of Medicine
Persons, AL	Napier, TC	Rush University Medical Center
Richards, MH	Al-Harhi	Rush University Medical Center
Rivera, LE	Melendez, L	University of Puerto Rico
Sagar, V	Nair, M	Florida International University
Shah, A	Kumar, A	University of Missouri-Kansas City
Stauch, KL	Fox, H	University of Nebraska-Medical Center
Wen, H	Singhal, P	Hofstra North Shore LIJ Medical School

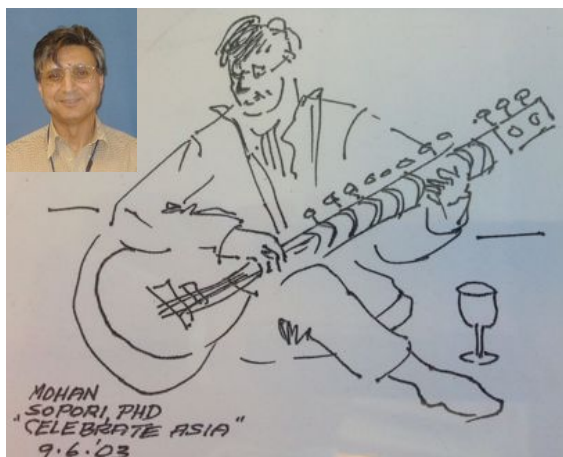
The SNIP recognizes the service of ECITA committee members (Drs. Kumar (Chair), Booze, Datta, Ho, Kiertscher, Meléndez, Molitor, Nonnemacher, Ramirez, Rivera, Tang, and Thangavel), and thank them for their wonderful job in reviewing the ECITA applications.



SNIP Members at “Work”

Sanjay B. Maggirwar, University of Rochester Medical Center, Rochester, NY.

I developed a strong liking for the art of theater during my college days. It was so magical to me that I completely ignored my studies and joined professional theater groups almost for full time. I performed numerous shows in every city in the State of Maharashtra, India, also participated in radio shows, TV shows, and Marathi movies. I received a formal degree in dramatics and worked in my career with many famous artists of India. I went on drifting like this until one day my father yelled at me and brought me back to senses. Long story short, here I am as a biomedical researcher continually enjoying occasional appearances on stage in Rochester, NY. This is me as an old man in a comedy show ‘Prema Tuza Rang Kasa’ broadly translated as ‘amazing colors of love’.



Mohan Sopori, Lovelace Respiratory Research Institute, Albuquerque, NM

In the Western world, sitar has become synonymous with Indian classical music and was popularized by the Indian music icon, the late Pandit Ravi Shanker. I received training in playing sitar when I was about 7 years old from my father who was a Professor of Music in Kashmir, India. I left Kashmir at a relatively early age and had to discontinue playing sitar for nearly two decades. I picked it up again in the USA when my brother presented me with a sitar and since then I have been occasionally dabbling with it. Besides at our periodic musical gatherings, I also play at some charitable events in Albuquerque. I find playing sitar very

relaxing and an enjoyable way to reduce the day-to-day stress. If I recall it correctly, some people from the University of New Mexico had arranged a silent auction to raise money for the university library. So in addition to free wine, we (I and a tabla player) were asked to play soft Indian classical to lower the resistance of big donors to part with their money. My award was this caricature of me drawn spontaneously by an unknown artist, and the handsome bounty we collected at this event.

Sanjay Maggirwar, SNIP Communications Committee Chair, and **Michelle Kiebal**, Research Assistant Professor, University of Rochester Medical Center, Rochester, NY