Our Concepción of the cellular stress response

Lawrence E. Hightower, Editor-in-Chief

Dear Colleagues

The cover image for this issue shows most of the 102 registered participants of the Fifth International Workshop on the Molecular Biology of Stress Responses held at the University of Concepción, Chile, 21–25 March 2006. Chairman Dr Antonio De Maio, University of California–San Diego, opened the meeting with a welcome in English and in Spanish. He expressed the hope that we would have an excellent and interesting scientific meeting and that we would enjoy the food, wine, and culture of Chile. All of his hopes were realized by the end of the meeting for about 70 participants from South America and 30 foreign scientists representing 17 countries. The success of the workshop was due in large part to the support of Vice-Rector Académico (Vice-Principal) Universidad de Concepción Mr Ernesto Figueroa and the hard work of Local Coordinator Dr Sandra Nicovani, University of Concepción, along with Dr Virginia L. Vega, University of California–San Diego, and her brother Roberto Antonio Vega Vargas. Dr Robert M. Tanguay, Université Laval, Canada, who rounded out the organizing committee, made important contributions to the organization of the meeting.

During the opening ceremony, Larry Hightower, Editor-in-Chief of *Cell Stress & Chaperones* journal, welcomed the participants on behalf of the Editorial Board and Managing Editor Helen Neumann. He observed that science and international scientific conferences are an important common ground and unifying force in a world in desperate need of such influences. He noted that scientists speak at least 2 languages, their native tongues and the language of science. This provides a foundation for interest and understanding when we come together. Few scientific societies appear to be holding workshops on a regular basis in developing countries and in parts of the world underserved by the international scientific community. Cell Stress Society International (CSSI) is one of those rare exceptions. Foreign scientists routinely pay their own air tickets and freely give their even more valuable time to participate in these workshops. Wolfgang

Schumann is organizer of the next international workshop, and he invited all participants to join him in Bangkok, Thailand, in 2008 to continue the tradition. It is very appropriate that Wolfgang should continue the tradition because, at the Concepción meeting, I learned that he had conceived the idea of an international workshop on cellular stress responses in 1996. The story of how this happened and the involvement of Subhash Lakhotia and others, which culminated in the first of these workshops in Varanasi, India, is presented along with digital images at the CSSI website.

Peter Csermely extended an invitation to all of the participants to attend the Third Cell Stress Society International Congress on Stress Responses in Biology and Medicine and the Second International Congress of Stress Research, which will be held concurrently in Budapest, Hungary, 23–26 August 2007. This congress will celebrate the centennial anniversary of Hans Selye, founder of the stress concept. Molecular chaperone pioneer John Ellis will receive the CSSI Medallion in recognition of his pioneering discoveries, and he will present the Keynote Address at the Opening Ceremony on the evening of 23 August. The meeting link is now active and can be accessed either directly at www.stress07.com or through the CSSI website. More than 600 colleagues have already preregistered for this meeting.

Antonio De Maio and Gabriele Multhoff have provided an excellent summary of the Chile workshop in an article titled “Stress down south: meeting report of the Fifth International Workshop on the Molecular Biology of Stress Responses” published in this issue. I would like to draw the reader’s attention to several special events that occurred at Concepción. A number of speakers arrived early and conducted a teach-in for the South American students attending the workshop to help prepare them for the research sessions to follow. In addition, each lunch break, which is a very civilized 2 hours in Chile, was organized at a local restaurant, with students seated at tables with the speakers to facilitate exchanges of information and ideas. These events worked so well that we plan to repeat them at future workshops. Digital images taken at the workshop are available at the CSSI website, www.cellstress.uconn.edu.

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