

Osteoarthritis Research Society International Selects New Board and Presents Awards at 2009 World Congress on Osteoarthritis

At the 2009 World Congress on Osteoarthritis held recently in Montreal, Quebec, the Osteoarthritis Research Society International (OARSI) announced its newly elected board of directors and presented several osteoarthritis professionals with awards.

OARSI's board of directors is comprised of leading scientific experts and renowned individuals in the field, including new board members

- **Timothy McAlindon**, MD, MPH, of Tufts-New England Medical Center in Boston;
- **Ingrid Meulenbelt**, PhD, of LUMC in the Netherlands; and
- **Wim van den Berg**, PhD, of Radboud University in the Netherlands.

OARSI's board officers remain the same, including:

- President Francis Berenbaum, MD, PhD, of Hospital Saint-Antoine in Paris;
- President-Elect Linda Sandell, PhD, of Washington University School of Medicine in Missouri;
- Secretary General Thomas Aigner, MD, DSc, of Leipzig University in Germany;
- Treasurer Virginia Byers Kraus, MD, PhD, of Duke University Medical Center
- Steven Abramson, MD, of New York University School of Medicine.

OARSI Honors Osteoarthritis Leaders

Also during OARSI's 2009 World Congress, several individuals were recognized for their achievements to the osteoarthritis field:

- **Kenneth Brandt**, MD, Clinical Professor of Medicine, at the University of Kansas Medical Center, received the **Lifetime Achievement Award**. A graduate of the University of Illinois School of Medicine, Dr. Brandt has long held an interest in articular cartilage biology and osteoarthritis. His research focuses on the relationship of joint pain and inflammation to articular cartilage degeneration in osteoarthritis, the efficacy of pharmacologic and non-pharmacologic measures, the mechanopathobiology of osteoarthritis and methods to assess joint breakdown. OARSI honored him as the recipient of its Prize for Clinical Research in 2005.
- **Alice Maroudas**, PhD, received the **Lifetime Achievement Award** for her seminal contributions to the field of cartilage biology. Her work has focused on research into the properties of cartilaginous tissues, with a particular focus on its physicochemical properties and the turnover of macromolecules. In 1988 she was awarded the Carl Nachman International Prize for Research in Rheumatology, and in 1999 was awarded OARSI's Prize for Osteoarthritis

Research. She earned her degree in Chemical Engineering in South Africa, and later a PhD in the Chemical Engineering Department from Imperial College, University of London.

- **Leena Sharma**, MD, a graduate of the Medical College of Wisconsin, received the **Clinical Research Award**. Dr. Sharma is widely known for seminal work in identifying the role of local mechanical factors in the natural history of knee osteoarthritis. She is a principal investigator on three active National Institutes of Health (NIH) grants, one of which is a competing renewal. She is a project principal investigator for the third cycle of the NIH-funded Multidisciplinary Clinical Research Center in Rheumatology and co-investigator on other NIH-funded research grants.
- **Amanda Fosang**, PhD, received the **Basic Science Award** for her work with articular cartilage, a dynamic tissue in which carefully balanced anabolic and catabolic processes maintain a high content of aggrecan, and an intact collagen matrix, that is essential for the weight-bearing properties of healthy cartilage. Increased catabolism is a feature of highly destructive osteoarthritis that leads to irreparable cartilage damage and the need for joint replacements. Her principal research objective is to identify the enzymes that degrade cartilage and to understand the processes leading to cartilage erosion. She is a Principal Research Fellow of the Australian National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC), and she heads the Arthritis Research Group at the University of Melbourne, Department of Paediatrics and the Murdoch Children's Research Institute.

Eleven Young Investigators received travel awards for the highest rated abstracts. They included Nahid Akhtar, David Bear, Sebastian Cotofana, Odile Gabay, Shozo Itoh, Sarah Lancianese, Maxim Moreau, Joanna Peterson, Blandine Poulet, Daniel Tonge and Veronica Ulici.

OARSI would like to congratulate this year's award winners and thank them for their dedication to the osteoarthritis field.

2009 World Congress Highlights

The 2009 World Congress was an overwhelming success, attracting 870 professionals from 40 different countries to hear world-renowned speakers present the latest developments and research findings on a wide spectrum of topics related to osteoarthritis.

Plenary sessions focused on biomarkers, intrinsic versus extrinsic cartilage repair and aging. Sixteen concurrent sessions highlighted a range of topics related to osteoarthritis including: bone, epidemiology, immune system activation, measurement of outcomes, genetics and epigenetics, muscle, proprioception, imaging, aging, pain, inflammation, adipokines surgical treatment, psychosocial

influences, post-traumatic osteoarthritis, signaling pathways and cell matrix interactions.

The Congress closed with the Year in Review in which six internationally renowned research leaders summarized progress in genetics, imaging, cell biology, clinical trials, biomarkers and biomechanics.

Breakfast workshops, which allowed a limited number of attendees to meet experts in specific areas of basic or clinical science, encompassed various aspects of osteoarthritis research including: biomechanics, immunohistochemistry, confocal microscopy, clinical trial design, mesenchymal stem cells, gait analysis and animal histopathology.

New for 2009

The OARSI Young Investigator Committee, a newly formed subcommittee of the OARSI Outreach Committee aimed at increasing student and young investigator participation in OARSI in order to create new and strengthen existing research efforts, collaborations and mentorship opportunities in both clinical and basic science studies of osteoarthritis, was featured at the Congress. During the Young Investigator Reception, young investigators (aged 40 and younger) had the opportunity to meet each other and the OARSI Board.

To view photos from OARSI's 2009 World Congress visit www.oarsi.org.

Save the Date: Next year's Congress will be held in Brussels from September 23-26, 2010. Abstract submissions open in February.

OARSI Mission

OARSI is the premier international organization for scientists and health care professionals focuses on the prevention and treatment of osteoarthritis through the promotion and presentation of research, education and the worldwide dissemination of new knowledge.