

Message From The President August 2018



Dear All:

Twenty-five years ago when I first became a member of this society I could never have imagined that I would ever be given the honour of serving as President of PNIRS for 2018-2019. Having said that I am indebted to those who have preceded me in this role. My thanks go to Past President William Banks for his outstanding presidency and for his role in coordinating the fabulous meeting that was held in June 2018, in Miami Beach, USA. As President Bill worked tirelessly with the organising, executive and scientific committees to put in place a number of exciting initiatives aimed at growing our membership and keeping PNIRS a society renowned for cutting edge research and a collegial and supportive environment for early career scientists.

Our past meeting in Miami was a great success with 116 abstracts submitted and 193 registrants in attendance. We enjoyed fantastic weather, hot days cooled off by afternoon storms, and great opportunities for sightseeing, food and entertainment. The meeting was highlighted by great science and was marked by the celebration of our 25th Anniversary. A big thank you to Bill who donated the eye catching PNIRS T-shirts with the challenge now in place for us to be wearing them at our 50th anniversary!

A very big thank you to Susan Solomon, our executive Director, who as always plays a key role in assisting the local organising committee in negotiating accommodation deals and keeping an eye on all those details that only someone with the legacy of many conferences under her belt can know. Our thanks also to Jackie Newman whose tireless efforts keep the society on track and whom also managed to

ensure the meeting went off without a hitch. Thanks also to Karl whose assistance in supporting Jackie in her role, helping out with the website, manning the registration desk and attending to all the odd jobs that needed doing was greatly appreciated.

Many thanks to the hard work of the executive committee, the local organizing committee, the scientific committee and the communications committee for contributing to the great program and ensuring we had tweets and social media reporting on the exciting work being presented. The trainees were well looked after by Teresa Reyes who chaired a wonderful Mentoring Colloquium and Christopher Rummel who led a workshop on networking for junior scientists. Our newest special award lecture in honour of Ron Glaser was presented this year and was given by Annamaria Vezzani. This award will continue the tradition of focusing on cutting edge research. The Norman Cousin lecture was given by Rod Johnson, the Robert Ader award lecture was presented by Peter Grace and the George Solomon memorial lecture was given by Michael Irwin. Bill Banks hosted an exciting presidential symposium on the blood brain barrier.

An exciting initiative showing steady growth is the PNIRS-Asia Pacific engagement. Keith Kelly and Chris Coe have been instrumental in driving this important initiative and it was great to see the interest from PNIRS members who attended an information session highlighting activities of the PNIRS-Asia Pacific group. Plans are underway for several meetings in 2018 and 2019, this first of which will be the 8th Mind-Body Interface (MBI) International Symposium in Taiwan at which PNIRS will be represented.

As we look forward now to the upcoming year I am excited to see planning well under way for our meeting in Charité Berlin Germany. The conference will be held in partnership with the German Endocrine Brain Immune network (GEBIN) (www.gebin.org) at the Langenbeck-Virchow-Haus. The meeting will host a Featured Speaker Lecture in addition to our regular award lectures. The welcome reception will be held in the magnificent Natural History Museum. The program is evolving to be exciting with activities for early career scientists, an educational short course and a new initiative to support our mid career academics. As a demonstration of our commitment to equity, this year we will implement a new criteria, assessing how all submissions promote diversity. In addition, PNIRS is committed to encouraging equity diversity and promoting inclusive excellence. PNIRS is committed to encouraging equity, diversity and promoting inclusive excellence.

Finally, as current President of PNIRS, I am excited by the opportunity to work with the Executive Committee of Susan Solomon (Executive Director) Julie Bower (President-elect), Bill Banks (Past-president), and Staci Bilbo (Secretary Treasurer), the Board of Directors, and all members of the PNIRS who provide service on committees as we continue to grow as a vibrant collegial and stimulating research community.

Deb Hodgson

PNIRS President 2018-19