

## Message From The President July 2009

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Welcome to the PsychoNeuroImmunology Research Society (PNIRS) website. Whether you are a visitor, a candidate member (trainee or regular), or a long-term participant, you will find a wealth of information here that will be of interest and will offer insights into the unique expertise of the PNIRS.

I am greatly honored to serve the Society as the next President and to succeed Andy Miller. It is great fun to participate in this Society at a time when brain-endocrine-immune interactions in health and disease are on the radar of attention for so many areas of medicine and society. The success of this subdiscipline is best demonstrated in the Society's own Journal Brain, Behavior & Immunity, which recently reached a strong position in the list of immunology / neuroscience journals (with an Impact Factor of 4.9).

We are living in an age of momentum, and of progress and innovation, where the keys to success lie with the ability to create new knowledge and discover new ideas. For more than two decades, the PNIRS has invested in interdisciplinary research and education at the intersection of Psychology / Psychiatry/Neurology, Endocrinology, and Immunology. These disciplines were the core fields of our research due to their systemic nature. In this society, members have outstanding capabilities of lateral thinking. Now, the PNIRS includes people from psychology, neurosciences, immunology, pharmacology, psychiatry, behavioral medicine, infectious diseases, endocrinology, rheumatology, dermatology, tumor biology, and many other fields.

Thanks to the vision of our founders, the PNIRS opened a new door to interactive science. That vision is realized today. Now, many go through this door to enter an exciting world of science. We communicate. We collaborate. We promote scientific interactions, and we coordinate exchange of information and material between different groups of interdisciplinary researchers. We educate students and scientists from within and outside the field.

This Web site also illustrates that education, which is one of the best investments anyone can make in today's scientific world, is an important goal of the PNIRS. For many years, the percentage of trainee attendees at our meetings has been in the range of 25%. We have a relatively high turnover rate of members (20% new members per year), which is a highly positive sign: Attendees get infected by interdisciplinary ideas, are cross-pollinated, take up new information, and carry the interdisciplinary facts to their home universities or companies. We think that this leads

to a substantial spreading of the PNIRS ideas, concepts, and philosophy.

Our goal is to educate the leaders of tomorrow in a wide range of fields, and we are deeply committed to education. We have an accessible faculty of PNIRS experts dedicated to teaching. This group is blessed with talented teachers whose curiosity, energy and passion for improving our science are truly inspiring.

Our last conference in Breckenridge (June 2009), its collection of topics, and the enthusiastic discussion that they generated, were extremely stimulating. I want to commend all who worked hard to make it happen. The multidisciplinary nature of the field and the necessity for cross-pollination of ideas from different realms of PNI research are well-known fact that is always seen at our meetings and was clearly highlighted in Breckenridge.

I hope you attend our next meeting in Dublin, Ireland, June 2-5, 2010. Come partake of, and participate in, the many wonderful ways in which we foster the interactive process. Enjoy the historic venue at Trinity College with the famous "Book of Kells" (800 Current Era). Most importantly, take the time to meet and talk with members of our PNIRS community. Old-timers will share science and good spirit with friends as we always do, while newcomers will enjoy getting to know our society.

I look forward to working with all members of the PNIRS community, and beyond, to realize and enhance the impact as well as the growing potential of this invaluable heritage of interdisciplinary research.

Rainer H. Straub

President