2016 Cassen Prize Awarded to Strauss

H. William Strauss, MD, a pioneer in the field of cardiovascular nuclear medicine, was awarded the Benedict Cassen Prize on June 13 during a special plenary session at the 2016 SNMMI Annual Meeting in San Diego, CA. This award is given every 2 years by the Education and Research Foundation for Nuclear Medicine and Molecular Imaging (ERF) to a living scientist or physician–scientist whose work has led to a major advance in basic or clinical nuclear medicine science. “It has been a thrill to work at the interface of cardiology and nuclear medicine,” said Strauss. “One of the best parts of this adventure has been the opportunity to learn from dedicated colleagues and students from around the world, people who are willing to teach and hungry to learn. I want to thank my wife for putting up with many late nights and missed dinners—and the ERF for recognizing the importance of cardiovascular nuclear medicine to our field.”

Strauss presented the Cassen Lecture, asking “Quo vadis cardiovascular nuclear medicine?” The lecture described contributions by major investigators to cardiovascular imaging, recent studies on the role of microcalcification in cardiac events, new applications in heart failure, and the evolving roles of multimodality imaging with MR and PET.

Internationally recognized for his work in cardiovascular nuclear medicine, Strauss is an attending physician emeritus in the Molecular Imaging and Therapy Service at Memorial Sloan–Kettering Cancer Center in New York (NY). He joined the Memorial Sloan–Kettering/Cornell faculty and staff in 2001, after 30 years of faculty, clinical, and research appointments in nuclear medicine at Johns Hopkins (Baltimore, MD), Harvard/Massachusetts General Hospital (Boston), and Stanford University (CA). For 2 years in the early 1990s, he served as vice president for diagnostic drug discovery at Bristol–Myers Squibb Co. In 2002, SNM honored him with the Georg Charles de Hevesy Nuclear Pioneer Award.

McDougall Receives 2016 de Hevesy Award

On June 13, Ross McDougall, MBChB, PhD, professor emeritus of radiology and medicine at Stanford University (CA), was presented with the Georg Charles de Hevesy Nuclear Pioneer Award for his contributions to nuclear medicine. The award was given at the SNMMI Annual Meeting in San Diego, CA. “The de Hevesy Award means an enormous amount to me,” McDougall said. “I spent more than 45 years in the field of nuclear medicine using tracers for diagnosis and therapy. I have been a colleague of 3 previous winners and have interacted with many others, all of whom I looked up to as giants in the field. I was shocked and stunned when I received notice of the award—and now, added to these sentiments, I am greatly honored and humbled. I hope over the years I did my very best to advance the specialty by teaching residents Strauss is a past president of SNMMI and a former editor of The Journal of Nuclear Medicine. He is a life member of the American Board of Nuclear Medicine, as well as a fellow of the American College of Nuclear Physicians and the American College of Nuclear Medicine. He was among the first group to be inducted into the newly organized SNMMI fellowship at this year’s meeting. Strauss is the author of more than 560 peer-reviewed and invited articles and more than 70 book chapters. He is the author of the Atlas of Cardiovascular Nuclear Medicine: Selected Case Studies (1977) and Cardiovascular Nuclear Medicine (1980).

The Cassen Prize honors Benedict Cassen, PhD, whose invention of the rectilinear radioisotope scanner—the first instrument capable of making an image of radiotracer distribution in body organs of living patients—was seminal to the development of clinical nuclear medicine. Strauss is the 14th individual to receive this prestigious $25,000 award from the ERF since 1994.

“The Cassen Prize Committee selected Bill Strauss as the 2016 recipient in recognition of his seminal studies in cardiovascular nuclear medicine, which have greatly advanced nuclear medicine science and have had exceptionally high clinical impact,” said ERF President Hazem H. Chehabi, MD.
and fellows listening to patients. My deepest thanks to the society.”

McDougall received his medical degree from the University of Glasgow (Scotland). He passed the membership examination of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons in Glasgow in 1971 and subsequently became a fellow of that body and of the Royal College of Physicians in London. He received 2 Carnegie Scholarships, one in 1964 to investigate DNA patterns of adrenal tumors at the Glasgow Royal Infirmary and a second in 1965 to investigate the lymphatic anatomy of adrenal glands at Howard University (Washington, DC). He was awarded a doctorate in 1972 for clinical and radiobiological studies of 125I in the treatment of thyrotoxicosis, with important work published in the *Lancet* and the *New England Journal of Medicine*.

In 1972 McDougall was awarded a Harkness Fellowship to conduct research at Stanford, where he remained for 36 years as a faculty member. In 1989, he took over directorship of the thyroid clinic. He held numerous clinical and administrative positions, including as president of the medical center—the first faculty member elected to that post. He was director of the Nuclear Medicine Residency Program for 25 years. Since retiring as director of the thyroid clinic in 2008, he has been an active emeritus professor. He published more than 160 peer-reviewed papers and 110 book chapters, reviews, and editorials. He authored or coauthored 3 textbooks on thyroid disease. He was appointed to the American Board of Nuclear Medicine and served as board chair for 2 years. He was vice chair of the Residency Review Committee in Nuclear Medicine, a governor of the American Board of Internal Medicine for 3 years, and president of the Western Regional chapter of SNMMI.

Multiple honors have been awarded to McDougall for his contributions to nuclear medicine. From the University of Glasgow, he received the Ure Prize and Cullen Medal for Pharmacology, the Captain Rankin V.C. Prize for Pathology, the Ure Prize and McFarlane Prize for the Integrated Year of Medicine and Surgery, and the William Hunter Medal in Clinical Surgery. From Stanford, he received the Robert Reid Newell Award, the Arthur Bloomfield Award, the Alwin C. Rambar Award, and the Albion Walter Hewlett Award. He received the Distinguished Scientist Award from the SNMMI Western Regional chapter in 2006.

“I was fortunate to train under Dr. McDougall while I was a resident at Stanford University in the mid-1990s,” said SNMMI President Hossein Jadvar, MD, PhD, MPH, MBA. “He is an exceptionally caring physician and a superb diagnostician. He exemplifies the true meaning of a gentleman and scholar.”

Each year, SNMMI presents the Georg Charles de Hevesy Nuclear Medicine Pioneer Award to an individual for outstanding contributions to the field of nuclear medicine. De Hevesy received the 1943 Nobel Prize in chemistry for his work in determining the absorption, distribution, metabolism, and elimination of radioactive compounds in the human body. His work led to the foundation of nuclear medicine as a tool for diagnosis and therapy. SNMMI has given the de Hevesy Award every year since 1960 to honor groundbreaking discoveries and inventions in the field of nuclear medicine.

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**Conti Recognized with Aebersold Award**

Peter S. Conti, MD, PhD, professor of radiology, pharmaceutical sciences, and biomedical engineering and director of the Molecular Imaging Center at the Keck School of Medicine, University of Southern California, Los Angeles (USC), was presented with the Paul C. Aebersold Award on June 13 at the SNMMI Annual Meeting in San Diego, CA. The SNMMI Committee on Awards selects the recipients of this honor, which recognizes outstanding achievement in basic science applied to nuclear medicine. The award, first presented in 1973, is named for Paul C. Aebersold, PhD, a pioneer in the biologic and medical application of radioactive materials and the first director of the Atomic Energy Commission Division of Isotope Development. “It is an incredible honor to receive this recognition from the society and my peers,” said Conti. “Passion, hard work, and perseverance are critical factors in achieving success, but so too are having great mentors, collaborators, students, and, of course, a supportive family. I have been very fortunate to have so many talented and caring people in my life, and for that I am truly grateful.”

Conti received his medical degree from Cornell University Medical College (New York, NY) and his doctorate in biophysics from Cornell University Graduate School of Medical Sciences, Sloan–Kettering Division (New York, NY). He completed his residency in diagnostic radiology (Continued on page 20N)
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