

# Annual Business Meeting Features Nuclear Medicine Highlights and Awards

**M**embers of the Society of Nuclear Medicine (SNM) met on Saturday, June 3, in St. Louis, MO, for the annual business meeting, which featured a number of awards and the installation of a new president. The meeting was opened with a survey of events from the past year and included comments by out-going SNM president Robert F. Carretta, MD; Cynthia S. Wharton, CNMT, president of the SNM-Technologist Section (SNM-TS); and William J. Bertera, SNM Executive Director. Jonathan Links, PhD, incoming SNM president, and Kristin Waterstram-Rich, CNMT, incoming president of the SNM-TS, spoke about the year ahead. Highlights of the SNM's outreach activities to international members followed, along with acknowledgments of attending international nuclear medicine Society leaders.

Among the honors presented were the President's Distinguished Service Awards, the 2000–2001 SNM-DuPont Fellowship for Research in Women's Health, and the 2000 Loevinger-Berman Award. The meeting concluded with the installation of Links as the new president of the SNM.

## President's Distinguished Service Awards

The SNM President's Distinguished Service Awards are presented at the discretion of the SNM president and recognize singular achievement on behalf of and contributions to organized nuclear medicine. International achievement was recognized for the first time this year. One President's Distinguished Service Award was presented posthumously to Dov Front, MD, PhD, the Israeli physician whose death earlier this year ended a brilliant career as a nuclear medicine clinician, teacher, and researcher. Accepting the award on behalf of Front's family was his colleague Ora Israel, MD (Haifa, Israel).

Other honorees included:

**Terence (Terry) Beven, MD** (Baton Rouge, LA) was recognized for his years of tireless service as a member of the SNM Board of Directors, as chair of the SNM Government Relations



Committee, and for his representation of the interests of nuclear medicine as a delegate to the American Medical Association (AMA) House of Delegates.

Beven, who joined the SNM in 1971, has held many appointed and elected positions within the organization. He currently chairs the Section Council of Nuclear Medicine of the AMA House of Delegates and is a former Vice President of the Louisiana State Medical Society. Beven has practiced nuclear medicine at Our Lady of the Lake Regional Medical Center in Baton Rouge since 1965 and has held the post of Director of Nuclear Medicine there since 1989. He is the author of numerous medical papers and has given frequent scientific and socioeconomic presentations on nuclear medicine.

"The SNM could not have asked for a more dedicated or talented individual than Terry Beven to lead our government affairs efforts and represent the interests of nuclear medicine before the AMA," said Carretta. "He has been with the Society through thick and thin in our dealings with both the regulatory and legislative branches of our government, and Terry has made sure that the voice of nuclear medicine physicians has been consistently heard loud and clear before the AMA."



**Yasuhito Sasaki, MD, PhD**, the former Chairman of the Board of the Japanese Society of Nuclear Medicine and a pioneer in the international nuclear medicine community, also received the President's Distinguished

Service Award. In presenting the award, Carretta praised Sasaki's efforts to forge closer ties between the SNM and the Japanese Society. He was also recognized for his ongoing activities to promote the practice of nuclear medicine in Japan and throughout the Asia.

“Dr. Sasaki is Japan’s ambassador for nuclear medicine to the world,” said Carretta. “His dedication to our profession, his tireless efforts to promote the use of nuclear medicine for diagnostic and therapeutic purposes, and his devotion to the global nuclear medicine community and its continuing evolution are without a match.” Carretta added that, “Yasuhiro Sasaki has helped to bring our Society and the Japanese Society closer together, allowing us to share common issues, solve common problems, and strengthen the special ties between our two organizations.”

Sasaki, a member of the SNM since the late 1960s, has held numerous posts within the Japanese Society of Nuclear Medicine, the World Federation of Nuclear Medicine and Biology, the European Association of Nuclear Medicine, as well as on the SNM’s *Journal of Nuclear Medicine*. He currently serves as Director General for the National Institute of Radiological Sciences in Chiba, Japan, and continues his activities as a teacher and writer on a wide range of nuclear medicine issues. His career of almost 30 years as a nuclear medicine physician includes positions in some of the most prestigious medical centers in Japan and the United States.



**Robert W. Burt, MD** (Indianapolis, IN), was awarded the President’s Distinguished Service Award for his contributions as Associate Chair of the SNM Scientific Programs Committee, on which he served for more than 10 years. In the capacity of Associate Chair he was in charge of the Categorical Course program. “It is in large part due to Dr. Burt’s extraordinary efforts that our scientific presentations are of outstanding quality,” said Carretta. “The dramatic increase in attendance at our meetings and the continued growth in the numbers of international visitors are direct evidence of his dedication and hard work.” Dr. Burt is Director of Nuclear Medicine, Indiana University Hospital.



**William H. Blahd, MD, and Mitzi Blahd** (Pacific Palisades, CA) were honored with the President’s Distinguished Service Award for their contributions to the founding of the SNM Education and Research Foundation (ERF). The Blahds and their

efforts on behalf of nuclear medicine will be profiled in an upcoming feature on ERF annual award winners.

### 2000 Loevinger-Berman Award to Dandamundi Rao, PhD



**Dandamundi V. Rao, PhD**, professor of medicine at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey (Newark, NJ), was presented with the Loevinger-Berman Award by Wesley E. Bolch, MD (Gainesville, FL),

on behalf of the Medical Internal Radiation Dose (MIRD) Committee. The award was established in honor of Robert Loevinger, PhD, and Monas Berman, MD, who had primary responsibility for the development of the MIRD schema used nationally and internationally for calculating absorbed radiation dose. The award recognizes excellence in the field of internal dosimetry.

Rao was cited for his numerous outstanding contributions to radiation dosimetry over the past 25 years. His original research, which has received national and international attention, has had a major impact on dosimetry and radiobiology of internal radionuclides. In the 1970s, he was among the first to investigate the biologic effects of Auger electron emitters and suggested for the first time that conventional organ dosimetry was inadequate to measure these effects. After these early findings, Rao continued to lead his group to vigorously pursue the dosimetry and radiobiology of Auger electron emitters.

His team at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey also made substantial contributions toward novel dosimetry modeling approaches that address nonuniform activity distributions at the cellular, multicellular, and macroscopic levels. More recently, Rao and his colleagues focused on modeling radiobiologic effects and treatment planning in radioimmunotherapy, using the time-dose fractionation and linear quadratic models. They also made substantial contributions to radiation protection modeling, with a method to calculate the equivalent dose to tissue from internal Auger electron emitters that takes into account the microscopic distribution of radioactivity in the organ. This method recently was adopted by the American Association of Physicists in Medicine. Rao has published more than 80 articles, several  
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book chapters, and 3 textbooks and has chaired numerous scientific sessions at national and international meetings. His commitment to serve the nuclear medicine community and aid the technological progress of underdeveloped nations has led him to serve as an International Atomic Energy Agency technical expert in Ghana and Kenya for several months each year.

### **Lori Bray Croft, MD, Receives SNM-DuPont Pharmaceuticals Fellowship**



At the same meeting, **Lori Bray Croft, MD**, a clinical instructor in cardiology at Mount Sinai Medical Center (New York, NY), was formally awarded the second annual SNM DuPont Pharmaceuticals Fellowship for Research in Women's Health. Carretta, along with representatives of DuPont Pharmaceuticals of Wilmington, DE, presented Croft with the \$30,000, 1-y fellowship for her winning research proposal, "The Detection of Abnormal Myocardial Flow Reserve in Women." Croft's research proposal, selected by the Society's Committee on Awards from a number of innovative submissions, focuses

on the diagnostic uses of nuclear medicine in better understanding the unique and often complex issues surrounding women's cardiovascular research and the special challenges facing physicians in properly diagnosing chest pain in women.

A native New Yorker, Croft graduated from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute with honors and received her doctor of medicine degree from Albany Medical College, where she received commendations for scholastic excellence. She completed her internship, residency, and fellowship in cardiovascular medicine at Mount Sinai Medical Center.

"The SNM takes an enormous amount of pride in this research fellowship, because helping to find the causes of heart disease in women is one important example of the future of nuclear medicine and all of its yet-to-be-discovered applications," said Carretta. "This is possible because of DuPont Pharmaceuticals steadfast support of research and willingness to make fellowship opportunities available to talented individuals such as Dr. Croft." He added that DuPont Pharmaceuticals has been an important member of the SNM family for many years and that the society is grateful for the company's continued dedication to fellowship programs and efforts to help the profession of nuclear medicine to grow.

### **2000 Georg Charles de Hevesy Nuclear Pioneer Award Goes to Mathew Thakur, PhD**



Mathew Thakur, PhD (Philadelphia, PA), was presented with the Year 2000 Georg Charles de Hevesy Nuclear Medicine Pioneer Award at the Society of Nuclear Medicine (SNM) Plenary Session on Sunday, June 4, in St. Louis, MO. In presenting the award, Carol S. Marcus, PhD, MD, noted that Thakur was being honored for his extraordinary accomplishments as a radiochemist and radiopharmaceutical scientist.

The Georg Charles de Hevesy Nuclear Pioneer Award recipient is chosen by the SNM president. This annual award is presented to an individual for outstanding scientific achievement using radioactive material in nuclear medicine. The award

is named for Georg Charles de Hevesy, a founder of nuclear medicine, winner of the 1943 Nobel Prize in Chemistry, and author of seminal books and papers on radiochemistry.

Thakur is Professor of Radiology, Jefferson Medical College of Thomas Jefferson University, and Director of Radiopharmaceutical Research, Division of Nuclear Medicine, Department of Radiology at the Thomas Jefferson University Hospital, both in Philadelphia, PA. His accomplishments include the production and isolation of many medically useful reactor- and cyclotron-produced radionuclides, including  $^{111}\text{In}$ -oxine and the  $^{99\text{m}}\text{Tc}$  anti-CD15 antibody used for imaging of infection. He holds a number of patents as a result of his work, has published numerous papers, and is recognized for his organizational abilities in both directing symposia and planning publications related to the field.