

Young Researchers' Day 2011

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The annual Young Researchers' Day was held on Thursday September 1, in parallel with this year's joint annual meeting of the Swiss Pediatric Society, the Swiss Pediatric Surgery Society, and the Swiss Society for Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and Psychotherapy. The aim of this year's meeting was to combine the opportunity for young researchers to present their data, together with some mentoring by an exemplary clinician-scientist keynote speaker and a forum to discuss good presentation skills. The meeting was organized in five parts: 2 abstract sessions, 1 keynote lecture, the presentation forum, and the awards ceremony.

Abstract selection was performed in the following way. Thirty-one abstracts were submitted anonymously over the annual meeting's website. These abstracts were reviewed by 5 researchers selected by the pediatric A Clinic's department heads. Each «referee» had a standardized scoring sheet giving points (0 to 4) for the originality of the study, the methods, the results, and the general interest and conclusion of the study. If the reviewer had a conflict of interest, he/she did not score the abstract. The

highest scoring ten abstracts were selected anonymously for an oral presentation. Their geographic origins were distributed in the following way: Geneva (2), Basel (3), Bern (1), Lausanne (2), and Zurich (2). Presentations were then assessed during the day by the moderators and experts in the room, using an objective, numeric scale. The two highest scoring abstracts (1 basic science and 1 clinical science) were awarded the Nestlé-sponsored prize for best presentations.

The morning session was essentially composed of clinical (and translational) papers. First, **S. Meier** presented the data from the Geneva group on response to H1N1 vaccination. They conclude that while one dose of vaccine is enough in healthy children, most immunocompromised children respond to two doses. Next, **F. Singer**, from Bern, outlined a novel method to discern early ventilation inhomogeneity in cystic fibrosis (CF) patients, on behalf of the groups in Bern, Basel, and Skövde, Sweden. This was followed by **S. Beglinger** from Basel whose work examined satiety hormone levels in lean and obese adolescent subjects. Her presentation generated an

animated discussion querying whether the differences observed were causal or secondary. **R. Ha-Vinh Leuchter** then presented the results of a multicenter study investigating the neuroprotective effects of EPO in preterm infants by MRI. This presentation was also followed by an enthusiastic debate on the mechanism underlying her exciting results. Finally, to conclude this session and set the tone for the afternoon, **E. Giannoni** from Lausanne presented very convincing results on the effect of estradiol and progesterone on inhibiting cord mononuclear cells' ability to respond to infectious triggers. The compelling results of this study are far-reaching and are inviting for several collaborations.

The audience was then regaled with an emblematic bench-to-bedside lecture by Darius Moradpour (CHUV). First, in keeping with the mentoring theme, D. Moradpour shared both some milestones in his own academic development, and some pearls for the junior investigators in the room. Then, he delivered a beautiful 45-minute presentation illustrating how understanding basic molecular mechanisms in viral replication and virulence can pave the way to targeting therapies against HCV. His meticulous efforts to unravel the mechanisms of HCV biology are a beautiful illustration both of creating an academic niche and building an accomplished academic career. His remarkable ability to explain events at the sub-cellular level to a scien-



Darius Moradpour leads the discussion after one of the morning Young Researcher presentations.



Sara Meier, Geneva, giving her presentation on immunity following H1N1 vaccination in healthy and immunocompromised children.



The winners of the 2011 Young Researcher's Prize, sponsored by Nestlé. On the left, Dr Elisabeth Kieninger winner of the basic science prize. On the right, Dr Eric Giannoni, winner for the best clinical paper.

tific audience not necessarily versed in virology, and to connect that with potential therapeutic implications and the burden of HCV disease worldwide, was a serendipitous foreshadowing of the afternoon's session on presentation skills.

After the lunch break, the day resumed with an afternoon session rich in basic science papers. First, **S. Chip** presented data on behalf of the groups in Basel and Zurich on the role of the RNA binding protein RBM3 in hypothermia-induced neuroprotection. Second, **M. Bianchi** shared compelling data on the effect of NADPH oxidase gene therapy on NET-Calprotectin mediated anti-aspergillus defense in human chronic granulomatous disease. Third, **E. Kieninger** of Bern gave a masterful presentation of her data on deficient antiviral controls in cystic fibrosis airway epithelial cells upon virus infection, on behalf of her collaborators in Clermond-Ferrand and London. This highly relevant data should pave the way to advancing the care of patients with CF. The next paper by **A. Bärenwaldt** and colleagues from Basel and Lausanne demon-

strated a role for IL-7 in the formation of tertiary lymphoid organs (TLOs), an important response to inflammatory conditions which is associated with response against self and non-self. Finally, **A. Mühlethaler-Mottet** from Lausanne presented her work on the role of caspase-10 isoforms in the initiation of death receptor-mediated tumour cell apoptosis.

Following the young (but well-seasoned) investigator's excellent presentations, we, the chairs, presented a «good cop, bad cop» 30-minute session on how to effectively present your results in 10 minutes. This lively happening drew a large crowd and was well received. Participants stated that it was a useful occasion to ask and answer questions about presentation skills.

Finally, to close, the prize for the best clinical presentation was awarded to Eric Giannoni, and for the best basic science presentation to Elisabeth Kieninger. We are grateful to Nestlé for their support of this worthwhile effort. These Young Researchers' Days are a platform for young investi-

gators to present, and mingle. Importantly, it is also an opportunity for the Swiss pediatric community to appreciate the caliber of research going on in Switzerland and in collaboration with European partners. Focusing on the mentoring aspect of these events would be a constructive way to further encourage the development of future physician-scientists in Switzerland, in keeping with the Swiss National Science Foundation agenda.

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