



The Society for Cardiovascular Angiography and Interventions

President's Page

SCAI: Home of Interventional Cardiology

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2014-15 SCAI President

Throughout my year as SCAI President, I have often talked about “the new era of healthcare” and the “emerging challenges” facing Invasive/Interventional Cardiology. I have felt the pressures of the 24-hour news cycle and the need to be in frequent communication about the range of issues SCAI is addressing. As my term draws to a close, I have been thinking about my mentor, Dr. David Greene, who was SCAI’s sixth president. David was very like today’s SCAI members in that he was passionate about quality, but of course the concerns he grappled with during his presidency were different from those we face today.

Or so I thought.

Then I re-read the opening pages of Dr. Harry Page’s *SCAI History Book*. [1] I had to smile upon reading that, on March 8, 1977, a small group of angiographers met at Caesar’s Palace in Las Vegas, Nevada, because they were concerned that the young field of invasive cardiology, which they had been instrumental in establishing, needed *its own separate representation* within cardiology. In his notes, Dr. Page recorded the group’s concerns about quality and about government agencies establishing standards for medical issues of which they had little knowledge. Dr. F. Mason Sones asked whether there was a need for a certifying board. Dr. William Sheldon worried about training standards for cardiac catheterizers.

A little over a year later, this group had organized the society now known as SCAI and hosted its first annual meeting. They outlined “. . . an ambitious program [that] will benefit all laboratories and persons involved in the field of catheterization and angiocardiology, and especially the patients to whom they are responsible.” [1]



DECADES LATER

Thirty-six years later, my presidential year began at Caesar’s Palace during the most successful SCAI annual meeting to date. On every metric, SCAI 2014 broke records: highest attendance in every registration

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category, unprecedented numbers of abstract submissions and exhibitors, unrivaled feedback on the excellence of the educational program, incomparable engagement in a wide variety of new initiatives and palpable excitement about the future of SCAI.

At SCAI 2014, we officially launched a nationwide search for a new executive director. Since selecting and welcoming aboard Dr. Lisa Olson in October, our top priority has been to update SCAI's Strategic Plan, and to chart an ambitious direction for the future.

How appropriate to be at the same place with similar purposes as we were in the 1970s. SCAI's founders encountered similar challenges, mapped a plan and implemented it over years, growing the profession and its Society. In 1978 and in 2015, the purpose of SCAI was, and still is, responsibility to our patients. Our core values remain constant.

THE HOME OF INTERVENTIONAL CARDIOLOGY

SCAI's continued commitment to the values of education and quality has supported growth in all of its mission areas. Advances make it possible for us to treat patients of all ages who have more diverse and complex conditions than ever before. We have at our fingertips diagnostic and therapeutic tools that were unimaginable four decades ago.

SCAI's growth has paralleled the growth of our field in large part because we have kept our society focused solely on invasive and interventional cardiology. This is what all SCAI members do, and it is what SCAI does well. With adult and pediatric invasive / interventional cardiologist members in 70 countries, SCAI has become the home to one specialty, *our specialty*. This year, in opening SCAI's membership to cath lab nurses, technologists and administrators, we continue our commitment to focusing on invasive/interventional cardiology by strengthening SCAI with the expertise of the whole cath lab team. Together we will continue our decades-long commitment to improving patient care so that our patients live longer with better quality of life.

OUR VOICE

As an advocate for Interventional Cardiology, SCAI is now at its strongest and most influential. In recent years, SCAI's advocacy team successfully represented interventional cardiology in California, New York, Oregon and Washington, in each case working with local members and collaborating with partners to address policies that would have limited patients' access to interventional cardiovascular care and clinicians' ability to deliver optimal treatments.

SCAI led the effort to successfully petition the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to grant Interventional Cardiology specialty status.

As of January 2015, Interventional Cardiology is no longer categorized as a subspecialty of Cardiology but rather a specialty in its own right, alongside Electrophysiology, Cardiology and Internal Medicine. One of the more significant advocacy accomplishments in the last forty years, this designation will support improved reimbursement for our practices while resulting in fairer evaluation of our resource utilization, performance and patients' outcomes. This SCAI effort will support our field's growth and potential for years to come. *I urge each of you to review the information on SCAI.org that answers the key questions regarding this important designation and work with your coding staff to switch your designation.*

For more than a year now, dissatisfaction with the new maintenance of certification (MOC) process by American Board of Internal Medicine (ABIM) has been voiced throughout all of medicine and most loudly and clearly by Interventional Cardiology. SCAI has strongly advocated to the ABIM for significant reform. Our voice has been heard and ABIM recognized the need for change. While changes are being implemented, more work is needed. SCAI will continue to work to effect change while considering all of the viable alternatives to best represent our membership, support lifelong learning, and eliminate needlessly onerous obligations that detract from our patient care responsibilities.

OUR HOME

From SCAI's earliest days, Drs. Sones and Judkins focused the Society on quality and education. These main priorities continue as strong as ever today, as evidenced by the variety of educational programs and quality tools available to SCAI members in all stages of our careers. Center stage is the SCAI's annual meeting, which has become *the* home for all members of the cath lab team to learn together about all aspects of interventional cardiovascular care, including quality metrics and economic/service line issues highlighted in SCAI's Cath Lab Leadership Boot Camp. For early-career clinicians, SCAI's Fall Fellows Courses and the FIT Portal, which was launched in 2014, provide focused education and tools designed by leaders in the field to support launching a successful interventional career.

In the last year, SCAI's quality-improvement library has grown to include a wide variety of new documents, new and updated apps for risk assessment and AUC calculations, and tools focused on pediatric

interventional cardiology. SCAI members are examining their own experiences and anticipating the resources and applications needed for us all as we strive to deliver optimal care.

OUR FUTURE

As it was in the late 1970s, this is another critical time for interventional cardiology – a time of growth requiring a single, recognized society representing us. With your support, SCAI is leading the way. SCAI President-Elect Jim Blankenship and I, with the Board of Trustees and a group of members from across SCAI's committees, are crafting the Society's Strategic Plan for the next three to five years. We look forward

to your input throughout the process and to your participation as it is executed.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve as SCAI President for the 2014-15 year. It has been an honor I will always cherish, for so many reasons, chief among them the privilege of working with so many dedicated volunteers who generously contribute their time and talents to enhance our profession and grow our Society. I look forward to seeing all of you at the SCAI Scientific Sessions – Interventional Cardiology's Meeting – for many years to come.

REFERENCE

1. Available at: <http://www.scai.org/About/History.aspx>. Accessed on February 17, 2015.