

The Society for Cardiovascular Angiography and Interventions

SCAI President's Page

Return to Chicago – The 29th Annual Scientific Meeting of SCAI

Gregory J. Dehmer, MD, FSCAI
Professor of Medicine
Texas A&M School of Medicine
Director, Cardiology Division
Scott & White Clinic
President
Society for Cardiovascular Angiography
and Interventions



I hope many of you had the opportunity to attend the 29th Annual Scientific Sessions of the Society for Cardiovascular Angiography and Interventions (SCAI). The meeting occurred May 10-13, 2006, in Chicago a fitting destination because the first four meetings of the Society were also held in Chicago. While the size and scope of the meeting have grown over the years, the Society's fundamental goals have not, thus the overall flavor of our most recent meeting likely bears considerable similarity to those initial meetings held in Chicago. Both then and now, our annual meeting has focused on excellence in education, "news you can use," and close colleague-to-colleague interaction. A wonderful historical account of the early history of the Society and its annual meetings from 1977 through 1996 was prepared by Dr. Harry Page and can be found on our website (www.scai.org) [1].

Approximately fifty physicians attended the first meeting of the Society in June 1978. In contrast, attendance at the recent 29th Scientific Sessions broke all previous records with 1300 attendees. This included 1100 physicians and scientists with approximately 100 international physicians. (Fig. 1) Over 340 scientific

abstracts were submitted for presentation (also a new record), a reflection of the stature our meeting has achieved. (Fig. 2)

Attendance at our annual meeting has continued to grow steadily in recent years (Fig. 3), presenting both opportunities and challenges for the future. In smaller medical meetings, attendees have many opportunities for close interaction with the speakers and other experts assembled. This has been an important characteristic of our national meeting since its inception, and continues to be deeply valued to the present. As the size of a meeting grows, close interaction with speakers becomes progressively more difficult, if not impossible.

Correspondence to: Gregory J. Dehmer, M.D., FSCAI, Professor of Medicine, Texas A&M University School of Medicine, Director, Cardiology Division, Scott & White Clinic, 2401 South 31st Street, Temple, Texas 76508. E-mail: president@scai.org

DOI 10.1002/ccd.20911

Published online 4 August 2006 in Wiley InterScience (www.interscience. wiley.com).

Profile of 2006 Meeting Attendees

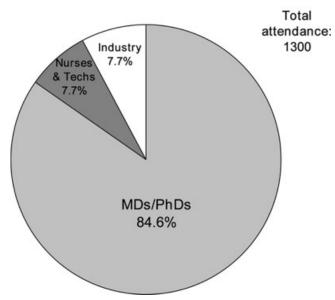
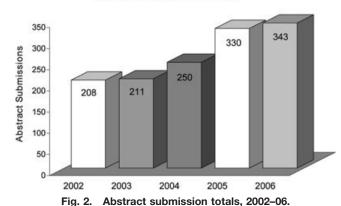


Fig. 1. Meeting attendance, 2006, by category.

Abstract Submission Growth



As our meeting continues to grow, our challenge for the future is to preserve the intimate and collegial atmosphere that fosters interaction between attendees and speakers. Feedback from our membership and meeting attendees emphasizes this is one of the most important aspects of our national meeting, and must be preserved.

An Excellent Educational Program

Physician education is at the core of SCAI's mission. Although the Society's educational offerings have grown, the annual meeting is our flagship event. Our annual meeting continues to include many successful programs each year and we continue to add new, innovative offerings. This year, two new sessions deserve

Annual Meeting Attendance

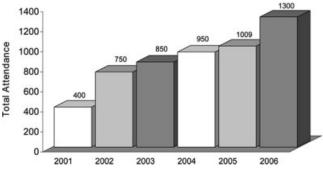


Fig. 3. Annual meeting attendance, 2001-06.

special mention. The Hemodynamic Symposium (chaired by Dr. Zoltan Turi and co-chaired by Dr. Mort Kern) complemented the always-popular Judkins Imaging Symposium (chaired by Dr. Warren Laskey) on Wednesday. Both were very popular and frequently "standing-room only." (Our promise to you: next year, more seats!) Combined, these two sessions are what meeting Chair Dr. Ted Feldman calls our focus on the "fundamentals" of interventional cardiology education. This demonstrates an important point fundamental to our Program Committee's goal: the Committee is committed to provide a balanced program featuring both the latest innovations in interventional cardiology and the fundamentals of our profession that every interventionalist must master to provide excellent patient care every day.

Another highly successful new addition at this year's meeting was the Third Annual Complex Coronary Complications (C3) Summit, chaired by Dr. Jeff Popma. Previously an adjunct to another meeting, the C3 Summit is now offered to interventional fellows just before completion of their training. The C3 Summit provides a venue where fellows present their most challenging cases to an expert panel in an open, candid forum. This intellectually rigorous, honest exchange provides a unique opportunity for physicians to learn how thought-leaders in the field would approach these real-life challenges in the catheterization laboratory. Many of these cases include serious complications and provide valuable "lessons learned" to the audience. This offering highlights the intimate nature of the meeting and provides an important contribution to the education of the next generation of interventionalists, immediately before they begin their practices. The Society is grateful to the Cordis Corporation, a Johnson & Johnson company, for the generous educational grant that provided eligible fellows-in-training the resources to participate in the C3 Summit and the entire SCAI annual meeting.

	Mean Rating For Each Statement	(Scale 1–5)
Statement	SCAI Member	Nonmember
Overall quality of information was excellent	4.5	4.5
Overall objectivity of speakers was high	4.5	4.4
What I gained from attending was worth the cost	4.5	4.4
Topics presented are important to me	4.5	4.5
My knowledge/skills were updated	4.5	4.5
I would recommend attending SCAI's 2007		
annual meeting to my colleagues	4.5	4.5

TABLE 1. Mean Ratings of Attendees for the Overall Assessment Statements

Also central to the educational mission of the Society, the Interventional Cardiology Training Directors' Symposium (chaired by Dr. Joe Babb, and co-chaired by Drs. Michael Lim and Karen Smith) continues to provide a valuable opportunity for training directors to interact regarding the challenges faced running a training program. Perhaps even more important, this event enables the training directors to express their opinions with a single voice. This year's symposium provided a forum for discussion with officials from the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME), Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (ECFMG), and the American Board of Internal Medicine. For those involved in training our next generation of interventionalists, this meeting alone iustified the trip to Chicago.

Designing a 3½-day educational program and assembling a world-class faculty are huge, time-consuming tasks, but year after year, volunteers from SCAI's membership and our dedicated staff do a fantastic job. Our congratulations and thanks go to the entire 2006 Program Committee, led by Drs. Ted Feldman and David Kandzari, for the superb job this year. We owe a special thanks to the entire faculty, especially those who traveled from Europe, Asia, and South America to participate in our meeting. Their time and support of the Society are greatly appreciated.

My gratitude and compliments also go to

- Drs. Ziyad Hijazi and Carlos Ruiz, who chaired the Congenital Heart Disease Interventional Program;
- Dr. Warren Laskey, who chaired the Judkins Imaging Symposium (with Dr. Al Raizner as co-chair);
- Drs. Zoltan Turi and Mort Kern, who organized the new and very successful Hemodynamic Symposium;
- Dr. Jeffrey Popma for running the C3 Summit, another new and well-received offering; and
- Drs. Joe Babb, Michael Lim, and Karen Smith for chairing the Interventional Cardiology Training Directors' Symposium at the Society's annual meeting.
- Finally, my personal thanks to Mr. Rick Henegar, SCAI's Director of Membership and Meetings, and

the entire SCAI staff who worked long hours to make the meeting a success.

So, How Did We Really Do?

One could argue that the President might be just a bit biased in his opinions of the meeting. Without any embarrassment, I accept this criticism. For this reason, it is important to collect objective data to assess meeting quality and better define the educational needs of the attendees. We collect these data in two ways. First, you completed a comprehensive evaluation form before collecting your CME certificate. This is a requirement at all meetings in order to maintain our ability to award CME hours. This information is used to determine whether our educational goals were accomplished and help plan next year's meeting. Second, you may have been approached by SCAI staff conducting brief interviews to collect more detailed opinions about the program and its value to practitioners. Data from this year's meeting indicate the Program Committee achieved its goals of presenting high-quality, objective education that is relevant to your practice of interventional cardiology. As Table 1 indicates, both member and nonmember attendees rated the meeting very high and considered it relevant to their daily practice.

In the Company of Friends

If you have ever attended an SCAI annual meeting, I suspect you have experienced the ubiquitous feeling of community both in and out of the meeting rooms. Even as our meeting has grown, we have tried to maintain the collegial and intimate feel that has become a hallmark of the Scientific Sessions. As a result, there are many opportunities to connect with old friends and to develop new ones. This year's meeting brought together physicians, nurses, and technicians from all over the world. Even in the hallways, the meeting was buzzing with energy and enthusiasm. This atmosphere continued through the social events, such as the President's Reception, and the Annual



SCAI Spans Generations. Society Past Presidents and Founding Fellows Dr. Frank Hildner (left) and Dr. Harry Page (right) welcomed new Trustee Dr. Michael Lim (center), who cochairs the Society's Interventional Career Development Committee. For more photos from the meeting, go to the Society News column on pages 504–505.

Banquet at the Chicago Field Museum of Natural History (a very special event in a spectacular setting).

Our annual meeting is now an international gathering place for our specialty. This year we welcomed faculty and registrants from all over the world, including a strong contingent of our friends from Latin

America, led by our distinguished Governor for Latin America, Dr. Adolfo Cosentino. Another example among many: we were honored that Dr. Igor Pershukov traveled from Russia to participate in our meeting. We were pleased to welcome Dr. Pershukov as a new Fellow of the Society. He was one of about 300 physicians who became SCAI Fellows in Chicago. I extend my personal congratulations and welcome to all of our new Fellows and members.

To new and long-time members alike, I extend two invitations. First, please consider this page as a personal invitation to join us May 9–12, 2007, for next year's 30th Anniversary Annual Scientific Sessions in Orlando – mark your calendar today! Second, please send your thoughts and ideas for the meeting to me at president@scai.org. I would be grateful to hear from you and will respond to every message. The 2007 Program Committee, again under the leadership of Ted Feldman and joined by co-chair Dr. George Dangas, is already working on the program. They had barely left Chicago before starting to plan next year's meeting. They have set the bar high, but I know they will raise it again next year. See you there!

REFERENCE

1. http://www.scai.org/PDF/SCAI%20History%20Book.pdf