

The Society for Cardiovascular Angiography and Interventions

SCAI President's Page

Small Was Good, Will Big Be Better?

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The Society for Cardiovascular Angiography and Interventions

SCAI was founded in 1978 by an illustrious group of physicians led by Mason Sones and Melvin Judkins. The mission of the founders can be summed up in a word: "quality." The Society was-and continues to be-dedicated to maximizing the quality of procedures and minimizing their risks. The latter is illustrated by numerous guidelines developed and updated by the Society on prevention/treatment of anaphylactoid contrast reaction, infection control in the cath lab, imaging quality, and many other topics important to quality of care. At the Society's inception, the specialty of "interventional" cardiology was unknown. Invasive cardiology at the time was limited to diagnostic cardiac catheterization, a more challenging undertaking than today because of increased procedural risk and limitations in X-ray equipment, data acquisition and archiving.

Membership in the Society was at first small. At its founding the number of members was forty-two, with modest increases annually during the Society's formative years. This small size encouraged personal interac-



tion between faculty and attendees at the national meeting and stimulated friendships among members. In fact, the national meeting was often as much a social as an educational event. For a young interventionist (as I was at one time), such interactions with the "stars" were of special value for me.

With Andreas Gruntzig's development of balloon angioplasty and subsequent developments, the scope and activity of the "invasive" cardiologist has greatly increased. However, the primary mission of SCAI has

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¹For a complete list of SCAI's founding Fellows and other historical information, see: http://www.scai.org and click on "Legends in Cardiology."

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remained the same. Quality is the watchword, but its meaning has broadened. The Society has worked hard to accomplish its added goals.

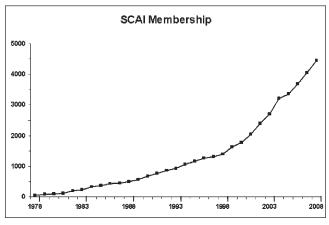
In 2000, the Society took the important step of developing its own administrative organization (Table I). This organization has facilitated the Society's growth and influence, and works for YOU—contact them anytime you need assistance. The Society in 2005 has well over 3300 members (Fig. 1) and is likely to continue to grow if SCAI effectively represents its members and addresses the needs of the interventional community.

That being said, and as a member for thirteen years during a period of "smallness," managing growth in a way that melds the best qualities of a small organization with the demands of a larger one is a challenge—and an opportunity. Put another way, SCAI's goal must not be growth for its own sake. Rather, our goal should be growth in a manner consistent with our founding principles, service to our patients and our members.

To that end, four years ago, the (then) incoming president, Joe Babb, convened a planning session with the Society's leadership to chart the course for the next few years. The subsequent Presidents, Ted Feldman, John Hodgson and Mike Cowley, have to a great extent followed that course with much success. The plan served us well, but much has changed in the interim.

It is time to do it again! The growth in the Society over this period has been nothing less than explosive or, as Ted Feldman once put it, "like riding a speeding bullet." Examples:

- The Society has become a leader in advocating the interests of the interventional cardiologist. The Society currently has an experienced advocate, Wayne Powell, as a member of its administrative staff, working closely with Drs. Joe Babb and Carl Tommaso.
- Our annual meeting has tripled in size and promises to grow further, thanks to the dedication of several Annual Scientific Session program committees.
- We are an accredited CME organization, have sponsored many CME programs, and have developed Soci-



2005-2008 are Projected Number

Fig. 1. Society membership has grown rapidly in the recent vears.

ety-initiated courses within the last year, thanks to Dr. Ted Feldman and his CME Committee colleagues.

- Dr. Bonnie Weiner has led efforts to revamp our website, now a major educational and communication benefit to members.
- The need to provide an organization for congenital/ pediatric interventional cardiologists has been reflected in sessions at the national meeting, articles in CCI and increased advocacy in this important arena, with Dr. Ziyad Hijazi and many colleagues leading the way
- Our journal, *Catheterization and Cardiovascular Interventions*, continues to gain in stature and influence, thanks to Editor-in-Chief Dr. Chris White.
- The Society has recognized the global nature of interventional cardiology, and has continued to work to integrate international interventionists and interventional societies, working with Drs. Hans Bonnier, Raoul Bonan, and many other international colleagues.
- Quality standards remain a central focus of the Society, through committees chaired by Drs. Charles Chambers and Lloyd Klein, as well as several ad hoc working groups. Recently, the Society spearheaded the development of guidelines for compe-

tency in carotid stenting [1] and ethical standards for interventional cardiologists [2].

This rapid growth has occurred, by and large, without losing sight of our role as a representative, participatory organization and remaining within our fiscal limitations. Now, it is time to plan for the next few years. To that end, SCAI's leadership and other selected members will hold a strategic planning meeting this summer in Washington, DC, to prioritize the Society's goals and develop specific strategies to accomplish these goals.

I need your help! Take a moment — right now — and email me your answer to the following question: What do you believe should be SCAI's SINGLE MOST IMPORTANT GOAL during the next three years, and how can we best achieve that goal? My email address is president@scai.org

I would love to hear your thoughts, and I will respond to every comment. More broadly, I encourage all members to become involved in the activities of our uniquely participatory Society. One of the best ways is to join individual Society committees of interest to you. For information about those committees,

contact our Executive Director, Norm Linsky, at 1 (800) 992-7224 or nlinsky@scai.org

Finally, I'd like to end my first President's Page by thanking the membership for providing me the opportunity to serve as President. It has been a great privilege for me to serve the Society in various roles over the past decade. This Society welcomes participation from anyone who wants to be of service to the interventional community and its patients. I look forward to working with you over the next twelve months.

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