



Swiss Society for Neuroscience

www.swissneuroscience.ch

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Editorial

Dear SSN members,

At the SSN annual meeting March 14, 2009 in Fribourg I took over the mandate of President of the SSN from Stephanie Clarke. Stephanie Clarke served as President for the SSN from 2007 to 2009 and was in charge of the organization of the FENS Forum taken place in Geneva in July 2008. I would like to give my gratitude on this occasion for her extraordinary work in this organization. Also during her mandate the number of SSN members significantly increased passing the number of 1'000!

I would like to take the occasion to acknowledge the great support and contribution of the SSN council officers, Christoph Michel as Secretary and Egbert Welker as Treasurer, who both agreed to keep their mandate for another 2 years. This allowed us to pass the responsibilities and duties smoothly. As a new President-Elect Esther Stöckli from Zürich was elected.

Nicole Schaeren-Wiemers
President SSN

Elections of new SSN Council Members - March 2009

Five new members of the SSN council have been elected on the occasion of the general assembly business meeting of the SSN, taking place in Fribourg on March 15th.

The five new members will replace Josef Kiss, Christian Lüscher, Andreas Lüthi, Anne Zurn, Stephanie Clarke, leaving the SSN council at the term of their mandate.

The following five candidates were elected:

- **Pico Caroni** (Basel)
- **Micah Murray** (Lausanne)
- **Thomas Dierks** (Bern)
- **Denis Jabaudon** (Geneva)
- **Daniel Kiper** (Zürich)

A new President-Elect has been elected. The SSN members have elected the following candidate:

- **Esther Stöckli** (Zürich)

SSN Annual Meeting: Saturday 14th March 2009 in Fribourg

The 2009 Annual Meeting of the Swiss Society for Neuroscience took place on Saturday March 14th 2009 at the University of Fribourg.

Our past year's annual meeting featured a new format, including two plenary lectures by world-renowned experts, a data blitz session for graduate and postdoctoral students' presentations, the traditional poster session and three parallel specialized symposiums that covered the breadth of neuroscience research conducted in Switzerland.

Details of the program including data blitz presenters and abstracts of poster presentations can be downloaded from our web page.

The morning plenary lecture was given by Professor Roger Lemon, Director of the Institute of Neurology at University College in London. Dr. Lemon discussed his work with experimental primates and humans on the control of skilled hand movements by the brain, and how this fundamental knowledge can be applied to facilitate treatment and recovery following stroke or spinal injury in humans.

The students' data blitz session was followed by the poster presentations. 173 posters were presented, and lively discussions during this session were evident. In the afternoon, three specialized symposiums with topics covering fundamental neuroscience, clinical neuroscience and computational neuroscience took place. In retrospective, we are very satisfied that all three symposia had a high attendance, and the feedback was that this new format may be considered to be kept in future.

The afternoon plenary lecture was given by Professor Andrea Volterra, Director of the Department of Cell Biology and Morphology at the University of Lausanne. Dr. Volterra, a pioneer in the study of astrocytes, discussed his work on the role of astrocytes in synaptic transmission, and how fundamental knowledge of the structure and function of these, too often neglected, cells can contribute to our understanding and possible treatment of several brain disorders.

Following the success of last year's meeting in Geneva, we were happy to see around 400 participants at this meeting.

SSN Honorary Member 2009: Prof. Ann C. Kato

Ann C. Kato took her Ph.D. degree from McGill University in Montreal, Canada and from 1974 to 1977 she did her post-doctoral training at the College de France, Paris. In 1977 she joined the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Geneva where she was Professor in the Department of Basic Neuroscience. Her field of research is related to diseases of the motor system particularly amyotrophic lateral sclerosis and in 2003, she received the Bruno and Ilse Frick Prize for ALS research in Switzerland. She was Vice-president and then President of the Swiss Society for Neuroscience from 1996 to 2000. From 1997 to 2004, she organized the "Brain Week" at the University of Geneva; she is the founder of the Lake Geneva Innovation Society, an honorary member of the European Dana Alliance for the Brain and was an elected member of the Western European Chapter of the International Brain Research Organisation (IBRO) (2003-2008). She was President of the Swiss Committee for organising the 2008 Federation of European Meeting of Neurosciences (FENS) in Geneva and she is President of the Scientific Advisory Board of the Foundation AETAS for ageing.

We thank Ann Kato for her contributions for the SSN throughout all the years and wish her for her retirement all the best.

Best Publication Award 2010

The SSN gives every year a prize to a student-member working towards a pre-doctoral or a doctoral degree for a best publication.

Submit applications to this more and more prestigious award, aiming at distinguishing an outstanding publication of a young neuroscientist member of the SSN (Ph.D. Student, young post-doc) published between December 1 2008 and November 30 2009. This award amounts

to **CHF 4'000.-** will be presented on the occasion of the SSN Annual Meeting on March 13 2010 in Lausanne. Guidelines for application are available on the website of the SSN. Deadline for submission is **December 5 2009**.

FENS initiative: National Scientific Highlights of the Year

FENS started in 2007 a new initiative, which allows each national society to propose a Scientific Highlight of the Year, which will be then posted on the FENS website. The SSN council wishes to honour young scientist in this way and **to link the Swiss National Scientific Highlight to the Best Publication Award** (see above for application).

SSN-IBRO Fellowship 2010

The SSN council is pleased to announce that the Swiss National Science Foundation once more accepted to finance, for 2010, the SSN IBRO fellowship, which provides a one year salary for a foreign post-doctoral fellow to conduct a research project in a Swiss laboratory (basic or clinical research). The amount of the grant has been increased and is now CHF 55'000.-. Detailed information (guidelines) is available on the SSN website. The deadline for submitting an application is January 15th 2010, to be sent to the President of the SSN, Nicole Schaeren-Wiemers (see address on the SSN website).

SSN Travel Fellowships 2009

For 2009 the SSN offers travel fellowships to attend international scientific meeting. The following fellowships were already given:

- 5 fellowships for international meetings between January and June.
- **For the Society for Neuroscience Meeting, 17-21 October 2009, Chicago** (application deadline was **May 30 2009**), we received many applications of which 10 will be chosen.
- 5 fellowships will be given for an international meetings between July and December 2009 (application deadline **3 months before** the meeting)

The fellowships are CHF 700.- for meetings in Europe and CHF 1500.- for meetings outside Europe.

Please submit your application via e-mail, in a **single pdf file, and a hard copy** to the President, Nicole Schaeren-Wiemers (see address on the SSN website).

SSN Annual Meeting in 2010:

Joint Meeting with the Swiss Society of Sleep Research, Sleep Medicine and Chrono-biology (SGSSC)

The SSN annual meeting in 2010 will take place in Lausanne at the EPFL on March 13th, in collaboration with the “Swiss Society of Sleep Research, Sleep Medicine and Chronobiology”. Further information will follow in the next issue of the SSN Newsletter.

The 7th FENS Forum of European Neuroscience

will take place between July 4-7 2010 in Amsterdam, The Netherlands

For more information, see forum.fens.org/2010.