



American Committee of Molecular, Cellular and Immunoparasitology (ACMCIP) Newsletter January 2015

Happy New Year to all! Thank you for your continued membership of the ACMCIP sub-group, which aims to keep the flame of basic parasitology at ASTMH burning brightly. As you renew your ASTMH dues, we thought it might be useful to summarize ACMCIP activities and plans for the future.

Your ACMCIP Council

Listed below are the current members of the ACMCIP Council and our website. We welcome all ASTMH members with interests in basic parasitology to join our subgroup and contribute to this its programs. If you have any questions regarding ACMCIP, please don't hesitate to contact us.

President	Julian Rayner (Wellcome Trust Sanger Institute); jr9@sanger.ac.uk
Immediate Past President	Manoj Duraisingh (Harvard School of Public Health); mduraisi@hsph.harvard.edu
Secretary/Treasurer	Niraj Tolia (Washington Univ.); tolia@wustl.edu
Councilor	Rick Fairhurst (NIAID, NIH); RFairhurst@niaid.nih.gov
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Councilor for trainees	Amy Bei (Harvard School of Public Health); amy.bei@gmail.com

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ACMCIP Officers, Councilors and Guests – November 2014

Recap of the ACMCIP activities at the 63rd Annual Meeting of the ASTMH

Basic and applied research in molecular, cellular and immunoparasitology was well represented at the ASTMH 63rd Annual Meeting held November 2-5, 2014 in the “Big Easy” city of New Orleans. Despite a State of Louisiana Health Department ban on meeting participants who had been in Ebola-stricken West African countries three weeks prior to the meeting, there was an all-time record-breaking attendance of 4461 registered participants in New Orleans. A big draw this year was the Key Note address given by Microsoft co-founder Bill Gates who addressed the challenges and advances in the struggle against global disease threats to an overflow audience.

ACMCIP was very active throughout the meeting having organized/coordinated a Basic Science Pre-Meeting Course, the Annual ACMCIP Symposium and a diversity of other specialized symposia and oral paper sessions. Here are some of the highlights of our participation.

Pre-meeting Course in Basic Science: “Advances in Metabolomics and Proteomics: Towards Dissecting Host-Pathogen Interactions”

The Pre-meeting Course in Basic Science is one of the most prominent ACMCIP activities at the conference. This year, seventy-two registered attendees were treated to series of excellent and informative presentations covering state-of-the-art approaches to investigating metabolites and proteins expressed by parasites, mainly emphasizing protozoan pathogens and their vector hosts. The course was co-led by Drs Manuel Llinas and Scott Lindner (Penn State University), and featured presentations covering the application of these novel technologies to a wide range of parasites. Many thanks to Manuel and Scott for organizing this exciting course, and to the following scientists for their contributions:

Michael Urbaniak, Lancaster University; Edwin Lasonder, Plymouth University; Akhilesh Pande, Johns Hopkins University; Michael Barrett, University of Glasgow; Kyu Rhee, Weill Cornell Medical College.

12th Annual ACMCIP Symposium “Origins of Parasitism and Parasitic Diseases”

Another highlight of ACMCIP’s activities at the conference is the organization of a high profile symposium. This year’s symposium featured four outstanding presentations that addressed the central question of how parasitism and parasitic diseases may have originated, and how that emergence is influenced by environmental conditions or interactions with co-occurring pathogen population. The symposium was organized by Drs. Julian Rayner and Manoj Duraisingh, ACMCIP’s current and immediate-past presidents, respectively, and was very well attended. Topics and presenters included:

“Ape origins of malaria and HIV”, Beatrice Hahn (Univ. of Pennsylvania)

“Humans, helminthes and the hygiene hypothesis”, P’ng Loke (New York Univ.)

“Origin and extent of zoonotic *Plasmodium knowlesi* infections, Balbir Singh (Univ. of Malaysia)

“The evolution of RNAi and virulence in *Leishmania* species”, Stephen M. Beverley (Washington Univ.)

Award Winners!

Certificates of recognition were presented at the ACMCIP Council Meeting to the award winners from the 2014 Woods Hole Molecular Parasitology and Immunoparasitology conferences. Awardee and their presentations are listed on the last page of the Newsletter. All award winners presented their research in various ACMCIP Scientific Session during the week. Please see the [attached PDF](#) highlighting all of our awardees and their presentations. Congratulations to all and we hope to see you again at next year’s ASTMH meeting.



A sampling of Molecular Parasitology and Immunoparasitology Conference winners receiving their awards at the 2014 ACMCIP Council Meeting. David Pena (left), Monica Mugnier (center) and Josh Beck (right)

Other Symposia, Paper Sessions and Poster Presentations

In addition to the above featured activities, research in molecular, cellular and immunoparasitology was presented in four other organized symposia (17 presentations covering high-throughput sequencing in infectious diseases and surveillance, drug targeting of epigenetic elements, and reducing the high global impact of anemia), five scientific paper sessions (35 presentations), a poster session and one session of late breakers. All sessions were very well attended and presenters represented their work, institutions and the ACMCIP with distinction.

Plans for 2015

We are already in the process of planning for 2015 ASTMH Annual Meeting in the city of friendship and home of the Liberty Bell, Philadelphia, PA. This meeting already is shaping up to be an excellent one for the ACMCIP. The topic of the Pre-Meeting Basic Science Course will be “*In Vitro* and *In Vivo* Models of Parasitic Diseases” to be organized by Drs. Christine Petersen and John Adams. “Epigenetics” will be the focus of the 13th Annual ACMCIP symposium, and we are now in the process of lining up a slate of outstanding experts for the program.

If you have ideas for future Pre-Meeting or ACMCIP Symposium topics please let us know as continue to actively soliciting ideas for these and other symposia we sponsor.

In addition to these regular activities, the ACMCIP Council is discussing instituting student training and travel awards, as well as a high-profile award in Basic Parasitology. More details will be revealed in a newsletter in 2015.