I hope that this message finds you well. The Council on Basic Cardiovascular Sciences (BCVS) is strong and continues to support fundamental and translational scientific investigation. The Council has organized what looks to be another outstanding summer conference that will focus on “Technological and Conceptual Advances in Cardiovascular Disease.” The conference will be held July 19–22 in beautiful Rancho Mirage, Calif., just outside of Los Angeles.

This summer conference gives cardiovascular scientists an opportunity to come together to share their latest findings and has grown in popularity over the past few years. The quality of the science is unmatched, Drs. Gerald Dorn and Peipei Ping have been the lead organizers and have done a great job attracting new investigators and topics. It is also time for all of us to prepare our new work for presentation at the AHA’s Scientific Sessions in November in Chicago.

The BCVS is a strong advocate for American Heart Association support of cardiovascular research. These have been trying times for AHA fund raising, but the organization is strong and we will make our way through this difficult period. AHA remains committed to the support of cardiovascular research, with an emphasis on new investigators. Many of us began our careers with an AHA grant, and this support is critical to the health of our field. This spring, BCVS members have been actively involved in the review of AHA grants. The support coming from these grants will launch many new cardiovascular scientific careers. I want to thank all of the volunteers who gave of their time and energy to review these grants.

I had the opportunity to participate in the AHA Lobby Day in Washington, D.C., this spring. I was among a group of volunteers who lobbied the Congress to urge support for the NIH budget. The AHA arranged for us to speak with many in the Senate and House of Representatives. As a Pennsylvanian, I had the opportunity to meet with the senior staff of Sens. Arlen Specter and Robert Casey and a few Philadelphia congressional representatives. AHA had us well prepared and I hope we had a positive impact. I urge all of you to be politically active. We must continue to advocate for science and for NIH support. I applaud the AHA’s efforts to help us explain what we do and the impact of our work on society.

In closing, I hope your laboratories are thriving and that your science is moving in new, productive directions.

The BCVS Council would like to congratulate Roberto Bolli, MD, who received the prestigious AHA Award of Meritorious Achievement on June 23. This award is bestowed to individuals who have rendered an important service to the Association, rather than for local accomplishments which are recognized through affiliate awards. Recipients of this award are selected primarily for a specific significant accomplishment or project for the national AHA. Dr. Bolli was selected for his development and implementation of the AHA Distinguished Scientist Award to recognize outstanding CVD/stroke scientists.
BCVS Updates

Early Career Committee

The BCVS Council is focusing on establishing an Early Career Committee. The new chair will be Asa Gustafson and the senior advisor will be Ivor Benjamin. As the committee grows, an early career representative will be assigned to each of the Council committees. We look forward to the enthusiasm and energy new Early Career members will bring to the council.

International Mentoring Update

The American Heart Association International Mentoring Program was established in 2006. Its main goal is to provide international members with networking opportunities and advice that is helpful in their professional development. The objectives are: 1) to help young physicians and scientists in other countries to develop their professional careers, 2) to increase collaboration in basic and clinical research in cardiovascular disease among scientists in the United States and foreign countries, and 3) to promote cutting-edge science and clinical practice in cardiovascular disease throughout the world.

The AHA has recruited one member from each Council to assist in organizing this program. The duties of these volunteer members include: 1) review the applications of all mentors and mentees, 2) assign each mentee with a mentor whose interests would match each other, and 3) follow up on the progress of the interactions between the mentee and the mentor. Hossein Ardehali, MD, PhD, was assigned as the BCVS Council member to organize the International Mentoring Program.

Council Awards

The Council on Basic Cardiovascular Sciences proudly sponsors numerous awards, travel grants and a student scholarship that honor researchers, early career investigators and medical students. There are awards associated with our BCVS conference as well as AHA’s Scientific Sessions. Visit americanheart.org/bcvsconference and click on Awards, Lectures and Scholarships (on the left side of the screen) to apply.

Fellowship

Fellowship in the Council on Basic Cardiovascular Sciences is reserved for scientists and physicians with a major and productive interest in cardiovascular basic sciences, and recognizes excellence in the field and volunteer service to the American Heart Association. Members who permanently reside outside the United States and Canada may be nominated for International Fellowship. Nominations must be received on or before the Feb. 1 or Sept. 15 deadline dates. Nominations received after the deadline dates will be held until the next review cycle. Visit americanheart.org/bcvsconference and click on Fellowships (on the left side of the screen) to apply.

Access our Web page anytime at americanheart.org/bcvsconference.

Message From the Editor

I want to take this opportunity to update you on our Council membership and the BCVS Council Summer Conference. BCVS is the second-largest AHA Council after Clinical Cardiology. We have 4,976 members: 116 Premium Plus Members, 2,707 Premium Members, 535 Early Career Members, 804 Student/Trainees, 6317 General Professional Members, and 183 Emeritus members. We have a total of 399 AHA Fellows in our Council.

Scientific Sessions

The American Heart Association will hold Scientific Sessions 2010 from Nov. 13–17 in Chicago, Ill. We invite all BCVS members to join us there! Member registration and housing is now open, and as a member you can save up to $370 on Sessions registration fees. Be sure your membership is active and up-to-date by Sept. 30, so you can take advantage of the discount. You’ll want to register soon for the best choice of hotels. Visit scientificsessions.org to register today.