The Epidemiology and Prevention Council had a productive annual scientific conference in March. Planning is well underway for next year’s conference. Mark your calendars now for March 2–6, 2010, in San Francisco, where we will again be meeting with our colleagues from the Nutrition, Physical Activity and Metabolism Council.

As I pointed out in my opening address at our annual conference, our Council is very excited about the opportunities presented by President Obama for enhancing the role of prevention in improving health in the United States. The cardiovascular disease benefits derived from secondary prevention efforts have contributed to reaching the AHA impact goal of reducing cardiovascular disease and stroke by 25 percent by 2010. We need to expand and continue these efforts in primary prevention by developing methods for improved identification, treatment and prevention of cardiovascular risk factors. To aid in this effort, members of our Council are participating in several areas:

• Contributing their own research
• Authoring AHA scientific statements and guidelines
• Participating in advocacy
• Participating in AHA cause initiatives such as Go Red For Women

If you would like to get involved in Council activities, e-mail me (mary.cushman@uvm.edu) or fill in the Involvement Form on our Web site: www.americanheart.org/epicouncil. Let us know what your interests are and we will try to call on you to participate. Please also consider getting involved in AHA at the local level by participating in Heart Walks and local advocacy.

A few ways to get involved are:

• Communicate with Dr. Mercedes Carnethon, Chair of our Publications Committee, about ideas for scientific statements or guidelines (carnethon@northwestern.edu).
• For advocacy, join AHA’s You’re the Cure Network at YoureTheCure.org. My goal is that 25 percent of our U.S. membership be members of You’re the Cure, which will help keep us informed of AHA advocacy priorities. Right now we are at less than 10 percent participation, so please join today! I had the wonderful experience of meeting with congressional staff and members at AHA Lobby Day in Washington, D.C., in April. Participation involved fun education on how our government works and the actual meetings themselves. I highly recommend that you participate in this activity to help advance the goals that we all care so deeply about.

Finally, please be sure to renew your AHA membership. Membership is critical to our Council’s success, since part of your membership dues comes to your Council to support our conference and other activities.
Update from the Early Career Committee

Matt Alison, Chair

The Early Career Committee (ECC) is entering its fourth year! The new leadership group for the two-year term beginning in summer 2008 consisted of Dr. Matthew Allison, University of California, San Diego (Chair); Dr. Nehal Mehta, University of Pennsylvania (Vice-Chair); Drs. Chris O’Donnell and Russ Tracey (Senior Advisors); and Karen Modesitt (Council Manager).

The ECC continues to be very active in the support of our mission: “promoting and encouraging trainees and early career individuals to participate in Council activities fostering the development of trainees and early career professionals in CVD epidemiology.” Recently, the ECC awarded two travel awards for trainees to Drs. Amitava Banerjee and Kunihiro Matushita. These funds enable trainees to attend and present their research at the Annual Cardiovascular Disease Epidemiology and Prevention Conference. Furthermore, to honor promotion of the field of CV Epidemiology, the ECC presented the 2009 Epidemiology Mentoring Award at the annual meeting to Dr. Aaron Folsom from the University of Minnesota. In the past year, committee activities in support of this mission included co-sponsorship of an early career/minority committee reception at both Scientific Session and the spring meeting. Furthermore, we sponsored Connection Corner, which aims to connect senior investigators and Council leadership members with new investigators and first-time attendees. Finally, we have made improvements to the ECC Web site (http://www.americanheart.org/presenter.jhtml?identifier=3004039), which is maintained by Dr. Jarett Berry. The site provides an overview of the early career period for both clinicians and research doctorates in CV epidemiology, with external links for research skill development as well as funding opportunities. A new initiative being developed by ECC is an “Early Career Guide to the American Heart Association Scientific Sessions.” All members of the committee also are members of various American Heart Association committees including the Membership Committee, the Statistics Committee and the Leadership Committee. The Early Career Committee is accepting applications for a two-year term beginning in July 2009. We look forward to your applications!

AWARD HIGHLIGHTS

The Jeremiah and Rose Stamler Research Award for New Investigators is named for the Stamlers in appreciation of their seminal contributions to cardiovascular disease epidemiology. The award is designed to recognize and stimulate excellence in research by investigators in training.

• Sunil K. Agarwal, MBBS, MPH
• Anna Kottgen, MD, PhD, MPH — Winner
• Kiran Musunuru, MD, PhD
• Shaoyong Su, PhD
• Qi Sun, MD, ScD

The Sandra Daugherty Award for Excellence in Cardiovascular Disease or Hypertension Epidemiology is named for Dr. Sandra Daugherty in appreciation of her outstanding career as a clinical researcher and epidemiologist working in the areas of hypertension, chronic fatigue syndrome and women’s health issues. The award is designed to recognize the role of junior faculty and to stimulate excellence in research by junior investigators.

• Kirsten Bibbins-Domingo, PhD, MD, MHS
• Jun Dai, MD, MSc, PhD — Winner
• Sara Messiah, PhD, MPH
• Lu Wang, MD, PhD
• Jingying Zhao, MD, PhD

The Roger R. Williams Memorial Award for Genetic Epidemiology and the Prevention and Treatment of Atherosclerosis is named for Dr. Roger R. Williams’ pioneering work in genetics of inherited lipid disorders and the prevention of atherosclerosis.

• Marilyn Cornelis, PhD

Epidemiology and Prevention Council Mentoring Award

Aaron Folsom, MD, FAHA, professor of epidemiology at the University of Minnesota, School of Public Health, was this year’s recipient of the Epidemiology and Prevention Council Mentoring Award. He was recognized for outstanding service in mentoring students in cardiovascular epidemiology research.

Frederick H Epstein Memorial Lecture

Pierre Ducimetriere, PhD — The French Paradox: Fact, Fantasy or Mystery?