Our Council on Clinical Cardiology is privileged to confer a number of awards yearly to volunteer cardiovascular scientists. Three of these awards are named for “true giants” in cardiovascular history: Drs. Rene Laennec, James Herrick and Sam Levine.

Rene Laennec (1781–1826) “invented” auscultation two years before the death of Napoleon. He subsequently developed the stethoscope which led to the “first auscultation” by use of a roll of paper to the chest wall. The Young Clinician Award is given in his honor.

James B. Herrick (1861–1954) published in 1912 on the clinical features of the sudden obstruction of the coronary arteries and coronary thrombosis (angina pectoris was first described by Heberdeen in 1768). Herrick emphasized that coronary artery disease can also be chronic and not immediately fatal. The Herrick Award is given in his honor to an outstanding senior cardiovascular clinical investigator.

Sam Levine was a close friend of Dr. Paul Dudley White, the founder of the American Heart Association. He advised in the care of President Harding's myocardial infarction and was involved in the care of President Eisenhower when he experienced his first infarction. He was the first to prescribe “chair rest” on the second day after myocardial infarction in the 1950s. This new and innovative approach to post-infarction care was one of the first steps in the evolution of cardiac rehabilitation as we see it today. The Young Clinical Investigator award is given in his honor.

The Laennec and Levine awards are determined by competition through abstract presentations that are judged by a panel of cardiovascular scientists. The Herrick awardee is chosen through a nomination process based on suggestions from our professional membership.

Our Council has a rich and productive history in cardiovascular medicine. The current “climate” is certainly different from that of Laennec in 1780–1800. We will continue, however, to have more “giants” in our specialty and the continuing privilege to award them appropriately.
The Council on Clinical Cardiology has placed great value on the development of young clinical investigators. To further this effort, the council together with the Get With The GuidelinesSM (GWTG) Steering and Science Subcommittee has offered a Young Investigator Database Seed Grants Program for meritorious research projects based on the data gathered from GWTG (Coronary Artery Disease, Stroke, or Heart Failure). Members of these committees serve as mentors to the successful applicants. Among the goals for this awards program is to have this initial effort succeed in opening future opportunities for research, collaboration and scientific advancement for the young investigator. The first 3 awardees of the Young Investigator Database Research Grants were recently announced: Pamela Peterson, MD, MSPH (Relationship Between Level of Risk and Contraindications to Medical Therapy in Patients Hospitalized with Heart Failure), Todd Brown, MD (Predictors of Non-Referral to Cardiac Rehabilitation in the American Heart Association’s Get With the Guidelines Program), Emmanouil Brilakis, MD, PhD (Clinical Presentation, Use of Coronary Revascularization, Use of Atherosclerosis Secondary Prevention Performance Measures, and In-hospital Mortality in Acute Coronary Syndrome Patients: Comparison Between Patients With and Without Prior Coronary Artery Bypass Graft Surgery). The next deadline for applications is February 28th, 2008.