



TRANSPLANTATION SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA & NEW ZEALAND

Annual Newsletter 2014

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weekend leading up to the meeting (PGC 20-21 June 2015 and ASM June 21-23), so please make note of this change (see SPEC report).

Congratulations to all the highly deserving award recipients, indicated later in this newsletter. In particular special mention must go to Shlomo Cohny who received the Ian McKenzie award. Many junior members of the society also benefitted and the ongoing input of trainees, basic scientists and junior researchers in the scientific program is great to see.

I hope you enjoy this edition of the newsletter. We'll try to keep you up to date with events and meetings throughout the year.

John Kanellis

Editorial Comment

Dear Members,

Welcome to the October edition of the TSANZ Newsletter.

The society has had a productive and stimulating year with another highly successful ASM, and several awards given out to members, junior trainees and scientists. On this occasion the ASM was organised by the newly formed SPEC, with Karen Dwyer as chair. The speakers and the content of the meeting was once again of a very high quality. Karen should be congratulated for her efforts as should all the members of SPEC for their contributions.

The postgraduate course for 2014 was organised by Andrew Jabbour. Excellent feedback was received regarding the program and the excellent international and local speakers. Next year there is a plan to hold the course over the

President's Message

Council continues to discuss a broad range of issues that affect the TSANZ together with significant issues that affect our discipline and our patients.

A significant issue was raised at the recent AGM re: the **timing and venue of our ASM**. This is not a new issue and it is raised every 5 - 10 years or so. There is some concern amongst members that Canberra in mid-winter is not an "inviting" venue and is discouraging attendance and involvement by some, in one of the most important of our activities. It has also been raised that we should not hold a stand-alone meeting but meet back to back with other Societies e.g. A.S.I.

The reason for a Canberra venue revolves around the cost of major cities and hotel venues together with an historic view of "everybody travelling". We are now exploring similar university campus options in the major east

coast cities. Furthermore in 2016 we will likely need to move back to an April time slot, as there is only a short window between our usual June dates and the 2016 ATC. Council has started to discuss these issues and will bring them to the next AGM for a free ranging discussion. Currently the council is supporting our stand-alone ASM not linked to other Society meetings. We will adjust the timing of our ASM re: days of the week in 2015 with the PGC being held over the weekend and the AGM to be held from Sunday afternoon until Tuesday evening.

One of the goals of the current and recent councils has been to use our funds to support “extra” meetings e.g. in 2014 we will hold a **ASI Joint Workshop Monday 1st Dec, 2014 in Wollongong**. The workshop will focus on cell therapies and tolerance. In 2015 there will be a joint **TSANZ-TTS/BSS Meeting Nov 2015, Lorne, Vic**. We will support overseas speakers for this meeting and also support travel grants for young investigators to attend and present their research. We have also discussed a workshop on donor organ perfusion systems. We are considering this for the future.

Council has also been discussing **organ donation performance** across the country. AOTA has presented regularly to council on this issue and the council has been pleased that the last 4 years has seen a 60% increase in donation and 40% transplants. The target to reach is 25 donors per million and is currently at 16.9 donors per million. Council has also heard from Dr Maria Paula Gomez, CEO of Share Life who presented at the June Council meeting. Dr Gomez was previously the Medical Director of organ donation in Spain, Barcelona and believes it is very possible to implement ‘best practice’ in Australia. The key is working at the point of death in the hospital where the death occurs - not in changing laws. Dr Gomez is currently working with Royal Prince Alfred Hospital and NSW Health to implement best practice in organ donation, a 3-year plan that she hopes to implement in all states “once people see it working in one center then it naturally spreads to other centers”.

More recently AOTA has raised the issue that an audit showed 8% of organs donated did not proceed, 36% due to no suitable recipient

identified and 40% due to medical unsuitability. AOTA has asked council whether there are strategies that transplant units can use so they accept more donors. Council believes this is an important issue and has requested such audit data to be given to the chairs of the Advisory Committees to examine. Council plans to discuss this issue in depth at subsequent meetings.

The treasurer’s report and the discussion at the recent AGM outlines the structural financial issues that face our Society. The Council continues to discuss and consider this issue. We welcome members input into all these matters.

Geoff McCaughan
President, TSANZ

Secretary’s Report

The TSANZ remains very active with approximately 644 members currently. Former members who have been in arrears with their membership have now been removed from the list so this is a better reflection of the current membership than previously indicated, where at times there have been more than 700 apparent members.

The society continues in its efforts to actively promote basic scientific research as well as be involved in clinical developments in organ transplantation. The awards to younger members remain an important focus and every effort is being made to maintain and enhance these opportunities for our up and coming scientific and clinical members.

Please remember to encourage junior colleagues who may benefit from membership, to join the society. Benefits include the possibility to receive travel grants, research awards, as well as reduced registration rates for the postgraduate course and scientific meetings. The TSANZ website outlines the many generous grants and awards offered by the society for young as well as established researchers, as well as trainees and clinicians.

As always there are several meetings throughout the year, which may be of interest to society members. The main ones to note for the

near future are outlined near the end of this newsletter.

I hope to see many of you throughout the year at an event or meeting. Please feel free contact me if you any comments or questions related to the society's activities.

John Kanellis
Honorary Secretary, TSANZ

Treasurer's Report

The Society remains in a secure financial position in the medium term with approximately \$1m in savings and \$300-400K for all operations. However, over the past 5 years we have been running at an average annual operating loss of \$42,000 that has largely been a result of increased expenses, a contraction of sponsorship and restrained increases in membership subscription and ASM registration revenue.

At the 2014 AGM, there was broad agreement amongst the membership to adopt a better defined model of sustainability moving forward shown in Fig 1. There was also recognition that we protect the attractiveness of the Society to the early career members and full-time researchers by appropriately scaling subscription and registration rates and that is entirely compatible with the strategy.

I am pleased to report (subject to audit), that we were in the black for the 2014 ASM and PGC course. The total expenses of the event was \$268,540 whist registration revenue brought in \$133,227 with sponsorship making up the difference. Our generous sponsors are shown in Fig.2. There has been no reduction in TSANZ sponsored awards and grants. Council also has aspirations for new competitive funding initiatives in the future once our negative balance overall is reversed.

We have great reasons to be optimistic about the future of the Society as evidenced by the activities reported in the rest of this newsletter. I cannot help but to think that we have been blessed by a dedicated membership and talented successive councils and contributors and with the secret ingredients of Aviva & Sommer that has buffered us from

tough economic times and maintained our financial viability for all our activities.

Hilton Gock
Treasurer, TSANZ

Figure 1

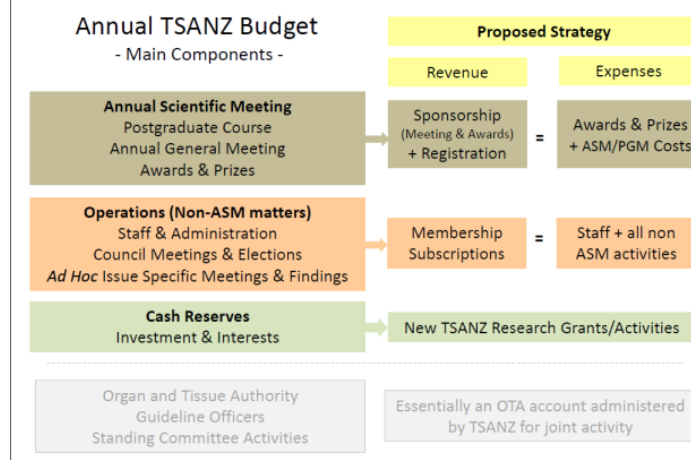


Figure 2

Industry Sponsorship for ASM	
Platinum	
Novartis	
Gold	
Amgen	
Janssen-Cilag	
Roche	
Silver	
Organ & Tissue Authority	
Bronze	
Alexon	
Bio-Strategy	
Link	
Sandoz	

Advisory Committees & Working Groups

The Advisory Committees and working groups, including the newly convened Vascularised Composite Tissue Allograft group, met in and around the TSANZ ASM in June to conduct usual business but also to on generating Version 2 of the Consensus Documents, which will essentially describe the way we perform the business of organ allocation and transplantation in ANZ. Version 1 has now been on the TSANZ website for some years and requires updating to remain contemporary. Version 2 also seeks to

address several issues felt to be beyond the scope of Version 1. To this end, the TSANZ, by use of funding provided by AOTA, has contracted Dr Sarah White of Sydney University to research current global practice in organ allocation and related issues, plus review literature on areas deemed relevant by each of the Working Groups. A Draft document describing the results of this research has been received by TSANZ and disseminated to the Working Groups. We anticipate completing of Version 2 Consensus Documents by mid-2015. This project is running in parallel with the NHMRC project of generating NHMRC Ethical Guidelines for the allocation of organs from deceased donors for transplantation. TSANZ is well represented on the group and has had major input. Whilst the outcome of the NHMRC process is required to provide guidance in several areas of the Consensus Documents, the NHMRC Guidelines are now in an advanced Draft stage and nearly ready to undergo community consultation. This process should not impede development of the Consensus Documents.

Steve Chadban

Chair, Advisory Committees/Working Groups

SPEC Report

SPEC has started working on the program for the 2015 ASM and PGC. The convenors for the ASM are A/Prof Daniel Chambers and Dr Carolyn Clark and for the PGC A/Prof Allison Tong and Dr Jeanette Villanueva. Both Carolyn and Jeanette join SPEC for the upcoming year.

Dan and Carolyn have made progress on the scientific program with two international speakers confirmed: Marcel Van den Brink from Sloan Kettering NY, USA, who has a broad research interest which includes inflammasome, microbiota and tolerance and Bob Gaston from University of Alabama, USA, a pre-eminent transplant physician with interests in the pathogenesis of chronic graft dysfunction after kidney transplantation; clinical immunosuppression after kidney transplantation; minority access and outcomes in kidney transplantation. Innovations to this year's program include a state of the art session on the importance of mentoring with presentations from previous Mentor-Mentee

winners; the "Great Debate" and a session on the "Rise of the Machines".

Members please note that the date of the PGC and ASM has changed for 2015. The PGC will be held on the weekend of the 20th and 21st June and will run for 1.5 days. The ASM will commence from 2 pm Sunday 21st June, with the McKenzie Prize lecture, to Tuesday evening 23rd June 2015 at the Manning Clarke Centre, Australian National University (ANU), Canberra. The gala dinner is planned for Monday night to be held at the War Memorial.

As in previous years there are a number of prestigious awards and grants to be awarded at the ASM. Eligibility for the President's Prize (Basic Science & Clinical) has been revised to "under 35 years of age or within 12 months of completing a full time research degree". Young Investigator and Kidney Health Australia prizes will be awarded. Travel Grants to International Meetings are also available upon application.

Beyond 2015, SPEC have looked at moving the date of the 2016 meeting back to early April as the American Transplant Congress is to be held mid-June in Boston USA.

Karen Dwyer

Chair – SPEC

**TSANZ Annual Dinner
National Portrait Gallery
Thursday 12th June 2014**



2014 International guest speakers received a special thank you during the annual dinner presentations for their contribution to the 2014 ASM, left to right: Prof. Sue McDiarmid, Prof. Michelle Josephson, TSANZ President Prof. Geoff McCaughan and Prof Harald Ott.

PRIZES AWARDED IN 2014

President's Prize (Basic Science)

Gayathri Kumarasinghe

President's Prize (Clinical)

Carlo Pulitano

Ian McKenzie Prize

Shlomo Cohney

KHA Award (Clinical)

Ashley Irish

KHA Award (Laboratory)

Wayne Hawthorne

YIA Novartis

Anar Ganbold

Gayathri Kumarasinghe

Mamdoh Moawadh

Hung Do Nguyen

Moumita Paul

Carlo Pulitano

Yi Wen Qian

Allison Tong

YIA TSANZ

Camilla Hanson

Christopher Hope

Katie Hor

Karen Keung

David Liuwantara

Philip Masson

Darling Rojas-Canales

Benjamin Seibt

Kisha Sivanathan

Andrea Viecegli

Jeanette Villanueva

Zane Wang

Nathan Zammit

TSANZ Fun Run sponsored by DonateLife:

Jade Clarson & Mark Howard (Janssen-Cilag)



President's Prize (Scientific) winner Gayathri Kumarasinghe with TSANZ President Prof Geoffrey McCaughan



Ian McKenzie Prize winner Shlomo Cohney



KHA Award (Clinical) winner Ashley Irish with Prof Toby Coates



President's Prize (Clinical) winner Carlo Pulitano



KHA Award (Laboratory) Wayne Hawthorne



Novartis Young Investigator Award winners



TSANZ Young Investigator Award winners



The Organ and Tissue Authority CEO Ms Yael Cass with Ms Jade Clarkson co-winner of the 2014 Annual Fun Run



Mr Bill Mulley receiving his 'award' as runner up in the TSANZ Fun Run 4 years in a row.....but hey who's counting!

Membership

Since the last newsletter, Council welcomed the following new members:-

TSANZ

Hasan Al-Khayyat, Nyi Nyi Aung, Aron Chakera, Animesh Chatterjee, Frederick Chia, Dov Degen, Carolyn Jameson, Amy Kang, Karen Keung, Vinoth Kavarthapol Jayaraman, Robyn Langham, Chi Kwan Lam, Robert Larbalestier, Darren Lee, Bron Lett, Bentley Logan, Katherine Mackay, Jennifer McRae, Lingjun Mou, Marcos Perini, Suzanna Pilgrim, Carlo Pulitano, Angelique Ralph, Cassandra Rawlings, Janske Reiling, Frank Reimann, Annie Reynolds, Catherine Robinson, Benjamin Seibt, Ankit Sharma, Sudipta Sinnya, Bee Qung Tan and Nikki Wong

ATCA/TSANZ

Sophie Brew, Luke Datson, Elizabeth John and Marie Ann Schuamann,

RESIGNATIONS

Since the last newsletter, Council has accepted the following resignations:

Tara Bull, Heather Burns, Mark Brown, Nicole Coleman, Alana Cresswell, Walter Heale, Ceridwen Jones, Ahmed Kaithal-Shahir, Svjetlana Kireta, Nicole Mifsu, William Watt and Kathryn Wiggins

Society Awards and Grants

The Society provides a number of benefits for members, which include support to attend national and international transplantation meetings and reduced fees at meetings sponsored by the society. The eligibility criteria for each award are outlined on the TSANZ website.

The 2014 International Basic Science Mentee-Mentor Travel Award recipients attended the 2014 World Transplant Congress in San Francisco, California.



Kisha Sivanathan with Prof. Toby Coates (mentor) and TSANZ President Prof. Geoff McCaughan



Kylie Alexander with Dr Kelli Macdonald (mentor) and TSANZ President Prof. Geoff McCaughan.

Travel Grant Award Reports

International Xenotransplantation Association

10th – 13th November, 2013

Osaka, Japan

Evelyn Salvaris

I would like to thank the Transplant Society of Australia and New Zealand for awarding me a travel grant to attend the 12th Congress of the International Xenotransplantation Association, held November 10-13, 2013 in Osaka, Japan. The meeting was held at the “Grand Cube” or more formally known as the Osaka International Convention Centre. The program was intense and jam-packed with many informative presentations, commencing with two satellite symposia; the JXA joint meeting of the 16th Japan Xenotransplantation meeting and 2nd East Asian Xenotransplantation Symposium, and the iABO/Hyperimmune Symposium prior to the official opening of the IXA Congress.

Since the last Congress in 2011, the variety and combinations of different genetic modifications of transgenic pigs have increased. Advances in genetic engineering technology (TALENs, CRISPR, F2A) to efficiently generate pigs that express new transgenes has partly contributed to this increase. Peter Cowan emphasised in his presentation, “Recent progress: Multiple TG + GalTKO pigs”, that efficient testing of these transgene modifications is now required to determine their effect to identify the best transgenic pig donor.

Pre-clinical cell and solid organ xenotransplantation using a variety of genetically modified pigs were covered in a series of excellent review talks by Emanuele Cozzi (Neural cells), Leo Buhler (Hepatocytes), David Sachs (Bone Marrow), Christopher McGregor (Orthotopic hearts), Kazuhiko Yamada (Kidneys), Joseph Tector (Liver) and Richard Pierson III (Lungs), and was backed up by a series of papers outlining the progress from each of the relevant laboratories. Two sessions were dedicated to porcine islet isolation and xenotransplantation. Data from these preclinical trials also highlighted the need to address the cellular immune response and strategies to address this were outlined in the early morning T cell immunity workshop and B and T cell tolerance and cellular immunity sessions.

Carbohydrate and HLA antigens in xenotransplantation have re-emerged as “hot topics” with presentations by Mauro Sandrin, Hideki Ohdan and Michael Rees. Identification of new carbohydrate xenoantigens was presented by Chris Burlak. Guerard Byrne reported on the strategies to overcome non-Gal antibody response to these antigens in the xenotransplantation setting.

The generous support provide by TSANZ also gave me the opportunity to present an oral presentation entitled, “In vitro assessment of the compatibility of thrombomodulin and endothelial protein C receptor in the pig-to-human setting.” Our data demonstrated that expression of human Thrombomodulin (TBM) is efficient at activating protein C (EPCR) however addition of hEPCR further enhanced protein C activation and may provide extra anti-inflammatory and cytoprotective effects. We

also showed that human EPCR was able to modestly active human protein C by pig TBM. Our findings were complimented by data from Agnes Azimzadeh who demonstrated an increase in Activated Protein C levels in vascular endothelial cells expressing hTBM, and *in vivo* data presented by Lars Burdorf, where GalTKO/hCD46/hEPCR pig lungs showed significant improvement in survival time compared to GalTKO/hCD46 in a xenogenic lung perfusion model.

I also had the opportunity to meet and interact with our international collaborators and participate in the Women in Transplantation networking event where Professor Curie Ahn from Korea gave an inspiring presentation which was beautifully illustrated with Korean art works.

On a personal note, I enjoyed visiting Osaka and experiencing a small glimpse of Japanese culture, cuisine and life style and in particular I enjoying sharing lovely Japanese meals with my colleagues.

I look forward to attending the next meeting which will be held in Melbourne in November, 2015.

World Transplant Congress 26th – 31st July, 2014 San Francisco, USA

Eithne Cunningham

I would like to thank TSANZ for providing me with a travel grant to attend the World Transplant Congress, held at the Moscone West Convention Center, San Francisco, CA, from 26th to 31st July 2014.

This was the second time a joint meeting of the American Society of Transplant Surgeons (ASTS), The Transplantation Society (TTS) and the American Society of Transplantation (AST) has been held. It enabled a range of transplant professionals, including physicians, scientists, nurses, organ procurement personnel, pharmacists and other allied health professionals, to meet and discuss new ideas and practices in organ and tissue transplantation. The program consisted of sunrise symposia in the morning, state of the art

symposia and oral abstracts during the day and poster presentations in the evenings.

The main meeting followed the pre-meeting symposia and opened on the evening of Sunday 27th with a reception and the first poster session of the congress. During the following four days I attended a range of talks and poster presentations on topics including antigen presentation and allorecognition, regulatory cells, immune memory and heterologous immunity, ischaemia reperfusion injury, the microbiome and biomarkers and diagnosing tolerance. I attended mostly scientific and clinical sessions but there were also plenty of presentations covering other areas important for transplantation, including health economics, ethics and controversies in organ donation and allocation.

Finally, I presented my poster “Disruption of CD8-coreceptor binding abrogates tolerance induction via liver-directed expression of donor MHC class I – a role for PD-L1?” on Wednesday evening as part of the Tolerance/Immune Deviation session. It gave me the chance to explain our work using an AAV vector system to express foreign antigens in recipient livers, to other researchers interested in using a similar method in their research. This was the final poster session and was followed by the conference closing event, held at the California Academy of Sciences. It was a great venue where we were able to explore the natural history museum, planetarium and aquarium while sampling different food from all around the world, and being entertained by Foreverland, a really energetic Michael Jackson tribute band that had everybody up dancing!

Overall, the congress was a great opportunity to learn more about the progress being made by transplant scientists, clinicians, surgeons and allied health professionals to improve outcomes for transplant recipients. I would like to thank TSANZ for providing me with a grant to enable me to attend this interesting international meeting.

Chris Drogemuller

I would like to thank TSANZ for the provision of a travel grant to attend the 2nd World Transplant Congress held in San Francisco over the period July 26th-31st this year. It provided

me with a great opportunity to update the latest best practices in clinical islet transplantation for the treatment of type 1 diabetes and also expand my knowledge within the fields of transplant immunology, cell therapy and material science in transplantation.

Clinical Islet transplant presentations given by Olle Korsgren, Paul Johnson, Bernard Herring and Klearchos Papas provided new insight into the key factors that lead to increased insulin independence rates and duration. They also discussed how our improved understanding of the molecular structure of the pancreatic matrix and the influence this has on islet isolation will lead to the design of better protocols. In particular, they highlighted the selective destruction of key islet basement membrane components by current methods and the need for a more controlled delivery of digestive enzymes to ensure a homogeneous digestion. Finally new approaches to pancreas preservation were presented such as organ persufflation which was shown to protect pancreas integrity and aid digestion.

As part of the islet transplant session I was able to present the clinical outcomes of our program, the only remote islet transplant centre in Australia to an international audience. This provided an opportunity to discuss and compare our results with similar centres around the world. It was pleasing to note that our results compared favourably with those achieved at other leading centres.

The other areas of interest for me were the sessions on organ bioengineering, iPS cells and stem cell biology and the use of systems biology to transform our health care. It was a great opportunity to see what the field of organ transplantation and health care in general might look like in 10-15 years. The advances being made in organ printing and iPS/stem cell differentiation highlight the really exciting opportunities that lay ahead for the treatment of many diseases.

Once again I would like to thank TSANZ for this fantastic opportunity to visit the great city of San Francisco and present at WTC 2014.

Doreen Fang

I would like to thank the TSANZ for awarding me a travel grant to attend the 2014 World Transplant Congress (WTC) – a joint meeting of the American Society of Transplant Surgeons (ASTS), The Transplantation Society (TTS) and the American Society of Transplantation (AST), held in the beautiful city of San Francisco from July 26th – 31st 2014. The venue of the conference, the Moscone West Convention Centre, is state of the art and its convenient location provides easy access to downtown San Francisco, many shops, restaurants, and hotels, as well as major transportation system.

The Opening Ceremony was rather special where two touching stories were delivered. Reginald Green, the father of a little child who died tragically and became an organ donor, and Charity Sunshine, a professional opera singer who underwent lung transplantation twice, shared their emotional stories and journeys from the perspective of a donor family and a transplant recipient. I thought this opening was exceptionally well done.

The scientific program was jam-packed with many informative sessions on a wide variety of current major interests in the basic science, translational and clinical topics of transplantation. There were great educational opportunities for clinicians, scientists, nurses, pharmacists and allied health professions to learn cutting-edge advances in research and exchange ideas and practice in the field of transplantation. Although it was often difficult to choose which concurrent sessions to attend, I was especially interested in current concepts on donor-specific antibodies, non-HLA antibodies, desensitization therapy, organ bioengineering, stem cell and regenerative medicine. I also enjoyed a session on the long-term outcomes and concerns in living donors.

I had the opportunity to present my poster titled ‘Follistatin Reduces Serum Activin and Attenuates Renal Ischemia-Reperfusion Injury in Mice’. I was pleased to meet and shared experience with researchers who came forward to discuss my poster.

On a personal note, summer in San Francisco was rather cold with fog blanketing the bay in the mornings. I enjoyed visiting a few

landmarks such as Golden Gate Bridge, Fisherman's Wharf, cable cars, Union Square, Sausalito and Muir Woods, sharing lovely times with my colleagues.

I would like to sincerely thank the TSANZ again for their generous support.

Min Hu

I would like to thank the Society for the generous travel grant provided for travel to the World Transplant Congress in San Francisco, July 2014. The conference was the International Joint Transplant meeting for the Transplantation Society (TTS) and the American Transplant Association. It was held at Moscone West Convention Centre, the 26th to 31st of July, 2014. The grant provided was sufficient to cover the airfare, and transport fee from airport to congress centre.

I presented two posters, one is to develop strategy to prolong human islet allograft survival with an *in vivo* therapy that promotes the expansion of human Tregs and suppresses effector T cells, with minimal immunosuppression. Another is to investigate the mechanisms of co-stimulation blockade induced tolerance to pig xenografts in the mouse model and demonstrated that Tregs play a role in xenograft tolerance induced by the co-stimulatory blockade and had more potent regulatory function than naïve-Tregs. During the Congress I also was able to attend a workshop on developing a global virtual laboratory for cells therapy in transplantation. Key areas at the meeting that interested me were: Biomarkers, Immune Monitoring and Out; Clinical and Experimental Islet Transplantation; Stem Cells and Treg Cells Therapy; New Targets for Immune Intervention in Xenotransplantation; Improving Outcome of Kidney Transplantation.

In summary the ability to attend this meeting allowed me to learn about the "cutting edge" studies in my area, to learn more broadly about immunological mechanisms, and to meet with people who were able to offer new ideas related to my current studies.

Philip Masson

I was privileged to be able to attend the World Transplant Congress in San Francisco, 26-31 July 2014 thanks to the generous support of the Transplant Society of Australia and New Zealand (TSANZ). The congress proved to be a valuable exchange of clinical and scientific knowledge and ideas, and provided engaging debate on current ethical and policy issues surrounding organ transplantation.

During the meeting, I presented a poster on how the cognitive skills of people with a kidney transplant compare with the cognitive skills of the general population, and also how these change from before to after a kidney transplant. My work was well-received, with much interest particularly from transplant co-ordinators who could identify with many of the cognitive deficits we had defined as being affected by having a kidney transplant.

I particularly enjoyed the sessions on cardiovascular risk following transplantation because they are relevant to my current research interest which is how kidney disease (and having a kidney transplant) affects the risk of stroke and prognosis of people with kidney disease following a stroke. Being able to discuss methodological issues of working with population-based data, as well as thinking about other areas where knowledge gaps need filling was both reassuring and

The visit to San Francisco was not only a great opportunity to be exposed to cutting edge clinical and scientific research but also allowed time to explore this great hilly city (by bike!!). The de Young museum had the iconic Roy Lichtenstein "Painting with Statue of Liberty" as well as Barnett Newman's "The Stations of the Cross."

My sincere thanks to the society for helping me attend this excellent meeting.

Daniella Penko

I would like to take this opportunity to thank The Transplantation Society of Australia and New Zealand for this generous award allowing me to travel to the United States, and attend the 13th World Transplant Congress in San Francisco. This was the first time that I have travelled to the US, and I was unexpectedly

surprised how beautiful San Francisco was, not to mention how friendly the Americans were.

I presented my work titled 'Endothelial progenitor cell co-transplantation enhances the engraftment of pancreatic islets and influences beta-cell function *in-vitro*' during the poster session Tuesday evening. I quite enjoyed session as it was a more relaxed atmosphere allowing a more in-depth discussion about my work, which sometimes may be missed in oral presentations.

While I enjoyed many of the sessions the sunrise symposia 'Optimising Islet Isolation: Current Challenges and Future Strategies' I found the most interesting and relevant to my field. A presentation by Olle Korsgren (Uppsala University) described a novel approach of isolating pancreatic islets using osmotic shock rather than enzymatic digestion, to avoid the breakdown down of the islet basement membrane, as this is one of the major contributors to islet cell death following isolation. The State-of-the-Art Symposia on 'Organ Bioengineering and Regeneration' was another session that I found fascinating. There was a talk that stood out to me was presented by Jason Werthein (Northwestern University) on 'Developing Replacement Abdominal Organ's' on a bio-artificial ovarian system where they showed replaced endocrine function in mice.

Lastly, I would just like to thank the society again for giving me this great opportunity to visit such a beautiful city and to engage with leaders in my field. I found it very useful in expanding my knowledge, which I can apply to my work.

Darling Rojas-Canales

Thank you to the TSANZ for giving me the opportunity to attend the World Transplant Congress 2014 in San Francisco, USA. The program was extensive, covering a variety of topics in both the clinical and basic science arena. Given this opportunity I was able to present my talk entitled 'Neurokinin-1 Receptor-Signalling Is Required for the Survival of Alloreactive T-Cells for an Optimal Allograft Immune Response'. By having the opportunity to present I was able to discuss my work with other researchers in the field to help further my research. Overall I received positive

feedback. This trip also gave me the opportunity to take part in the moderation of the 'Antigen Presentation and Alloreognition' session for the first time. This was a rewarding experience and would highly recommend other early career researchers to take part. This session highlighted the resurgence of interest in the cross-dressing phenomenon of recipient antigen presenting cells with donor antigen. Dr. Burlingham's group from the University of Wisconsin and Dr. Benichou's group from Harvard University both presented convincing evidence of this phenomenon occurring *in vivo*. The sunrise symposia entitled 'Optimizing Islet isolation: Current Challenges and future strategies' was a key session for me, which highlighted the challenges that are still faced by the islet transplantation community. Although improvements in islet isolation have been slow, Dr. Klearchos Papas described the benefits of gaseous oxygen perfusion otherwise known as persufflation. He demonstrated that local oxygen delivery offers a promising alternative to pancreas preservation, resulting in a significant increase in islet yield by 76%. Increases in islet yield such as these could have a significant impact on the islet transplantation field, Dr. Papas predicts that persufflation pancreas preservation could increase the number of islet isolations transplanted from 42% to 81%. Overall the conference was very informative and I appreciate the opportunity to have been able to attend.

Chuanmin Wang

I very much appreciate the Council of the TSANZ providing me with a travel grant, which enabled me to attend the World Transplant Congress being held from 26th to 31st July 2014 in San Francisco.

The congress was well organized with up to 6500 attendees in basic and clinical sciences from all regions of the world. In attending this conference, I presented the abstract "Establishment and characterisation of a murine model of brain death and syngeneic renal transplantation". I was also involved with several other presentations from our group at the conference.

In addition to our focus on research in this meeting, there were some interesting research directions that attracted me, in particular, the

discussion of pre-transplant sensitization, presented in the Monday morning sunrise symposia, the desensitisation strategy in the Tuesday morning sunrise symposia and the desensitisation treatment in kidney transplantation in the Tuesday afternoon state-of-the-art symposia.

Some other very interesting talks that I very much enjoyed in the conference were on organ bioengineering and regeneration, biomarkers and immune monitoring in Wednesday afternoon state-of-the-art symposia and concurrent sessions.

In a word, I would like to thank the TSANZ for the travel grant, which made my attendance at the conference possible. The conference offered me a great deal of up-to-date information in my research areas, and opened some new directions for my future study.

Zane Wang

First and foremost, I would like to thank the TSANZ committee for providing me with a travel grant to attend the World Transplant Congress 2014 earlier this year. The conference was held in the beautiful city of San Francisco at the end of July. WTC is a joint meeting of ASTS, TTS and AST, providing a large platform for clinicians and scientists to share their knowledge and a fantastic place for learning.

This grant had allowed me to present the findings of my Master's degree through an oral presentation on the "Modulation of Inflammatory Responses after Brain Death and Syngeneic Renal Transplantation by Systemic Expression of esRAGE". Being able to attend this congress was irreplaceable. Not only was I able to present my work but also got to see what other people were doing in the same area of my research.

The conference had many invited bright and knowledgeable speakers all top notch in their own fields. Of particular interest to me were the talks on liver perfusion machines as I work with the organ procurement team at RPAH. The benefits of the machines, being able to improve the condition of donor organs and make more marginal organs usable, simply amazed me although the machines are still not fully

established. The potentials of such machines once refined would be exceptional as it would dramatically increase the number of transplantable organs, allowing for less cost to the government and death of patients whilst waiting for an organ.

All in all, a big thanks to TSANZ for providing me with such an invaluable experience. The meeting had vastly improved my knowledge and allowed me to see what others are doing in the field of transplantation.

Shounan Yi

I would like to thank TSANZ for the travel grant to support me to orally present my abstract entitled "Xenoantigen Stimulated and Expanded Baboon CD4+CD25+ Regulatory T Cells Are Highly Suppressive with Xenoantigen Specificity" at the World Transplant Congress in San Francisco, USA, 26-31 July 2014. It was a joint meeting of the American Society of Transplant Surgeon (ASTS), The Transplantation Society (TTS), and the American Society of Transplantation (AST) with record breaking attendance. The first two days of the meeting, July 26 and 27 provided a variety of focused pre-meeting courses, which focused on current topics of major interest in the science and clinical practice of transplantation. A variety of formats for education, including basic science symposia, plenary and concurrent sessions, state-of-the-art symposia and sunrise symposia were also provided from the opening ceremonies on July 27 to the closing networking event on July 30.

Of huge numbers of presentations in the meeting, topics related to regulatory T cells (Treg) in transplantation tolerance monitoring and induction impressed me most, especially the presentation of "Manipulating Human Regulatory Cells for the Clinic" by Edward Geissler (Germany), an updated summary of The One Study, which is a multi-centre Phase I/II study funded by EN to evaluate various types of immunomodulatory cells (including Treg) in living-donor kidney transplantation. This study aims at developing and trialling various immunoregulatory cell products, including recipient naturally occurring Treg (nTreg) and type 1 regulatory T cells (Tr1), donor regulatory macrophages (Mreg) and tolerogenic DC, in organ transplanted

recipients, allowing a direct comparison of the safety, clinical practicality and therapeutic efficacy of each cell type. There are six centres from five countries are involved in this pilot study. Up to the WTC meeting four centres had initiated their trial on the first cohort of patients and the other two centres are expected to start their first trial in September 2014. What a great progress in Treg-based cellular therapy in organ transplantation. I believe the outcomes from the One Study will be no doubt to encourage us to develop a similar cellular therapy in islet and/or kidney transplantation in Australia as we have ten years' experience in human Treg study at CTRR, including in vivo evaluation of human Treg function in a preclinical humanised pig islet transplanted mouse model, and all the skills required for Treg therapy clinical trial.

I would like to once again thank TSANZ for this wonderful opportunity to present my research and catch up with the progress in the world in transplantation.

**European Assoc. for the Study of
Diabetes
15th – 19th September, 2014
Austria**

Nathan Zammit

I would like to express my gratitude to The Transplant Society of Australia and New Zealand (TSANZ) for the International Travel Award. Thanks to this award I was able to attend the European Association for the Study of Diabetes (EASD) Annual Meeting in Vienna, Austria. A meeting, which brings together leading researchers who study the metabolic and immunological aspects of Type 1 and Type 2 Diabetes, as well as, islet transplantation. The conference also brings together clinicians in these fields to address important clinical and translational issues. It was for this reason that I chose to attend this meeting, as my current research focuses on islet inflammation and how this is intertwined with both islet allograft survival and metabolism.

The first day of the conference started with an update on the status of Type-1/2 Diabetes care and an update on scientific changes in the understanding of their aetiology. A topic that is particularly hot in Type-1 diabetes research, as

evidenced by two recent reviews [Skog, O. et al., 2013 (curr. Opin. Endo. Diab. Obes.), and Paschou, S.A., 2014 (Diabetologia)]. Topics that I found particularly interesting at the meeting included the influence of gut-microbiota and the role of endogenous virus in Type-1 diabetes, and GWAS updates. One talk by Dr. Anna Gloyen at the prestigious Minkowski lecture was particularly interesting as she outlined her experience in identifying single nucleotide polymorphisms (SNPs) within proteins via bioinformatic and GWAS approaches, assessing their effect on islet biology and translating these findings directly into the clinic. Work that our lab is also currently engaged in but with a transplantation focus. Furthermore, talks by Prof. Christen U. lab highlighted a possible role of using a particular combined antibody therapeutic approach that targets chemokine signalling pathways to prevent allograft rejection in two type-1 diabetic mouse models.

Our current work was highly ranked and awarded an Oral Presentation, which gave me the opportunity to acquire feedback from the International Scientific community in a setting that mixes all fields of diabetes research.

On the whole, I found the congress to be informative and a very valuable experience. I have gained a greater understanding of islet metabolism and its role in diabetes, which I plan to extend to my transplantation work. Furthermore, it was also beneficial to be further exposed to cutting edge basic research, particularly the always evolving field of applied bioinformatics. Lastly, it was a great experience to meet a number of inspiring/leading scientists in the field.

Thank you for providing me with this wonderful opportunity to help extend and improve my research.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

2014 Meetings

The 1st International Congress of Living Donor Liver Transplantation Study Group

7th - 8th November, 2014

The Westin Chosun Seoul, Korea

More info go to <http://ildlt.org>

APHIA

15th – 19th November, 2014

Melbourne, VIC

More info go to <http://aphia2014.org>

Australian Health and Medical Research Congress

16th -19th November 2014

Melbourne Convention Centre, VIC

More info go to <http://ahmrcongress.org.au>

44th Australasian Society for Immunology

1st – 5th December, 2014

Novotel Wollongong Northbeach, NSW

More info go to <http://asi2014.org>

2015 Meetings

DNT Workshop (Renal)

1st – 3rd March, 2015

Launceston, TAS

World Congress of Nephrology

13th – 17th March, 2015

Cape Town, South Africa

More info go to <http://wcn2015.org>

12th Congress of the International Hand & Composite Tissue Allotransplantation Assoc.

15th – 17th April, 2015

Philadelphia, USA

More info go to <http://ihctas2015.org>

American Transplant Congress

2nd – 6th May, 2015

Philadelphia, USA

More info go to <http://2015.atcmeeting.org>

Asia Pacific Cardiorenal Forum

8th - 9th May, 2015

Amora Hotel Jamison Sydney

More info go to <http://cardiorenal.com.au>

XIV International Small Bowel Transplant Symposium (ISBTS 2015)

10th – 13th June, 2015

Buenos Aires, Argentina

More info go to <http://isbts2015.org>

TSANZ Postgraduate Training Course and Annual Scientific Meeting

Sat 20th June – Tue 23rd June, 2015

Manning Clarke Centre, ANU

Canberra, ACT

More info go to

<http://www.tsanz.com.au/meetings/index.asp>

Asian Society of Transplantation (CAST)

23rd - 26th August, 2015

Singapore

More info go to <http://cast2015singapore.org>

9th International Transplant Infectious Disease Conference

13th October, 2015

Cancun, Mexico

More info go to <http://tid2015.org>

2015 Organ Donation Congress (13th Congress of ISODP)

17th – 20th October, 2015

Seoul, Korea

More info go to <http://isodp2015.org>

The Transplantation Society Basic Science Symposium (TSS/BSS 2015)

11th -13th November, 2015

Lorne, VIC, Australia

More info go to <http://bss2015.org>

IPITA/IXA/CTS Joint Congress

15th - 19th November, 2015

Melbourne, VIC, Australia

More info go to <http://melbourne2015.org>

TSANZ Council

Professor Geoff McCaughan

President

g.mccaughan@centenary.org.au

Professor Steve Chadban

President Elect

Standing Committees Chair

Steve.chadban@sswahs.nsw.gov.au

A/Professor John Kanellis

Honorary Secretary/Communications

john.kanellis@monash.edu

A/Professor Hilton Gock

Treasurer

hilton.gock@svhm.org.au

Dr Karen Dwyer

Chair - SPEC

karen.dwyer@svhm.org.au

Dr Shane Grey

Liaison with Scientific Societies

s.grey@garvan.org.au

Professor Helen Pilmore

New Zealand Representative

hpilmore@adhb.govt.nz

A/Prof Henry Pleass

Surgical Representative

Henry.Pleass@sydney.edu.au

Mr Nigel Palk

ATCA Representative

Nigel.Palk@health.sa.gov.au

Professor Greg Snell

g.snell@alfred.org.au

Ms Aviva Rosenfeld

TSANZ Executive Officer

tsanz@tsanz.com.au

Ms Sommer Twycross

TSANZ Administrative Officer

admin@tsanz.com.au

TSANZ Advisory Committees

Chairperson – Steve Chadban

Cardiac:

Dr Robert LARBALSTIER

rlarb@inet.net.au

Donor Surgeons & Coordinators:

Dr Michael Fink

mfink@unimelb.edu.au

Ms Hayley Furniss

HFurniss@redcrossblood.org.au

Liver:

Professor Jonathan Fawcett

j.fawcett@uq.edu.au

Lung:

Dr Peter Hopkins

peter_hopkins@health.qld.gov.au

Pancreas & Islet:

A/Professor Henry Pleass

Henry.Pleass@sydney.edu.au

Renal:

A/Professor John Kanellis

john.kanellis@monash.edu

TSANZ Working Groups

Cornea:

Dr John Males

jmales@eye.usyd.edu.au

Paediatric:

Dr Winita Hardikar

winita.hardikar@rch.org.au

Tissues:

Ms Anne Cowie

anne.cowie@perthbonebank.com

Tolerance

A/Professor Frank Ierino

frank.ierino@austin.org.au

Xenotransplantation:

Professor Peter Cowan

peter.cowan@svhm.org.au

TSANZ SPEC

Dr Karen Dwyer

Chair - SPEC
St Vincent's Hospital Melbourne
41 Victoria Parade
FITZROY VIC 3065
Tel: (03) 9288 3141
Mob: 0414 569 891
Fax: (03) 9288 3151
Email: karen.dwyer@svhm.org.au

A/Prof Daniel Chambers

The Prince Charles Hospital
Level 1, Administration Building
BRISBANE QLD 4032
Tel: (07) 3139 4000
Mob: 0419 176 344
Fax: (07) 3139 5696
Email: daniel.chambers@health.qld.gov.au

Dr Michael Fink

Department of Surgery,
Austin Health
Burgundy St
HEIDELBERG VIC 3084
Ph: (03) 9496 5468
Fax: (03) 9458 1650
Mobile: 0407 987 025
Email: mafink@unimelb.edu.au

Dr Wayne Hawthorne

Uni of Sydney, Dept Surgery
National Pancreas Transplant Unit
Westmead Hospital
WESTMEAD NSW 2145
Tel: (02) 9845 7365
Mob: 0417 290 327
Fax: (02) 9893 7440
Email: wayneh@med.usyd.edu.au

Dr Andrew Jabbour

St Vincent's Hospital
Victoria Street
DARLINGHURST NSW 2010
Tel: (02) 8382 1111
Mob: 0411 757 445
Fax: (02) 8382 3084
Email: ajabbour@stvincents.com.au

Dr Wai Lim

Department of Renal Medicine
Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital
Hospital Avenue
NEDLANDS WA 6009
Tel: (08) 9346 3333
Mob: 0414 518 619
Fax: (08) 9346 3942
Email: wai.lim@health.wa.gov.au

Dr Kelli Macdonald

TSANZ Travel Grants to International Mtgs
QIMR - (RBH)
Division of Imm. & Infectious Dis.
K Floor, The Bancroft Centre
HERSTON QLD 4029
Tel: (07) 3362 0404
Mob: 0413 000 184
Fax: (07) 3362 0105
Email: kellim@qimr.edu.au

A/Prof Allison Tong

Centre for Kidney Research
The Children's Hospital at Westmead
Locked Bag 4001
WESTMEAD NSW 2145
Tel: (02) 9845 1482
Mob: 0414 276 883
Fax: (02) 9845 1491
Email: allison.tong@sydney.edu.au

Dr Carolyn Clark

Department of Renal Medicine
Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service
Hospital Road
NAMBOUR QLD 4560
Mob: 0405 332 519 or 0407 390 884
Email: carolyn@clark.gen.nz or
Carolyn.Clark@health.qld.gov.au

Dr Jeanette Villanueva

Immunology Division
Garvan Institute of Medical Research
384 Victoria Street
DARLINGHURST NSW 2010
Tel: (02) 9295 8452
Mob: 0415 556 892
Email: j.villanueva@garvan.org.au