

The Janus Corner

Looking Back



Looking Forward

This occasional section within the journal surveys visions and achievements, often not on the main track of the developing biomedical sciences, but all relating to discoveries and developments of medicinals – both ancient and modern. What they have in common, in one way or another, is providing further background and glances around the edges of the core discipline of pharmacognosy, as it has been and continues to evolve within our times.

ICNPR 2012 in New York

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The American Society of Pharmacognosy (ASP) hosted the International Congress on Natural Products Research (ICNPR) July 28 through August 1, 2012 at the Grand Hyatt Hotel in New York City.

The Eighth ICNPR followed a more than 40-year tradition of joint meetings of pharmacognosy societies from Europe and the United States with the participation of ASP sister societies from Europe: French Speaking Society of Pharmacognosy (AFERP), the Italian Society of Pharmacognosy (SIF), the Phytochemical Society of Europe (PSE), and the Society for Medicinal Plant and Natural Products Research (GA). The collaborative meetings take place every four years, with the purpose of discussing the latest advances in natural products research. Hosting duties alternate between Europe and the United States. This year's event, themed "Global Change, Natural Products, and Human Health" was the largest ever gathering of natural products researchers in the United

States, with the largest foreign contingent coming from Brazil followed by Korea. Organizers received nearly 1,300 abstracts from scientists representing 64 countries across the globe. The abstracts were published in a special issue of *PlantaMedica*, which was included with the registration package.

The scientific program included plenary sessions dedicated primarily to prestigious award lectures and a celebration of the 75th Volume of the ASP's flagship journal, the *Journal of Natural Products*. Lectures were followed by parallel symposia dedicated to specialized areas of natural products research, such as genome mining for natural products discovery, chemistry of symbiosis, and drug discovery.

In addition to the lectures, attendees heard contributed oral sessions, followed by poster sessions arranged by topic areas such as natural drug lead discovery

(marine, microbes, plants, analytical chemistry, isolation and chromatography, structure determination), drug discovery (screening, genomic approaches), herbal products/botanicals and ethnobotanical approaches to procurement of biodiversity. The social program included the Presidents' Opening Reception on Saturday evening and a visit to the New York Botanical Garden in the Bronx on Sunday afternoon, where the participants had the opportunity to tour the science complex and the historic Enid A. Haupt Conservatory. At the closing banquet on Wednesday evening, the ASP President acknowledged the local organizing committee and scientific organizing

committee and thanked them for planning and executing a very successful event. The Presidents of the four European societies also addressed the participants and recognized the organizers for a job well done.

The next joint meeting will take place in the summer of 2016 in Copenhagen (Denmark) and will be organized by the GA. In what has become a tradition of scientific cooperation, this international meeting once again allowed natural products scientists to gather and strengthen their international connections and exchange the latest results in their respective fields of specialization.



ICNPR 2012 in New York City; During the poster session; Prof. Barbara N. Timmermann, President of the American Society of Pharmacognosy(ASP) and Dr. Michał Tomczyk, Department of Pharmacognosy, Medical University of Białystok, Poland (L to R).