Reaching a research consensus
By Kamran Ahrar, MD, FSIR, chair, Clinical Research Trials Division

Each year, to better prioritize research needs and determine how best they should be addressed, SIR Foundation sponsors research consensus panel (RCP) meetings moderated by the chair of the Clinical Research Trials (CRT) Division. After identifying a topic of high research priority, SIR Foundation seeks and selects a principal investigator (PI) who assembles an expert multidisciplinary panel. This panel, members of government agencies U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and National Institutes of Health (NIH), and representatives of the biomedical industry are invited to gather for a full day of intense learning, discussion and debate.

The PI sets the agenda for the panel members to present on the current status of the subject matter. Through two rounds of discussion, the panel members and the audience (i.e., government and industry representatives) create a list of clinical research priorities. The panel members then vote on the priorities to determine the top three on which to focus future research efforts, including the development of a clinical trial or registry that is transformative, feasible, translational, innovative and strategic.

Protocol development for the top priority topic begins at this meeting and continues with the efforts of the PI, and input from many members of the panel. The PI and the panel members are expected to submit a white paper that outlines the proceedings of the RCP meeting for publication in the Journal of Vascular and Interventional Radiology, following appropriate peer review. The PI or any panel member can apply for an SIR Foundation Funding Source Development Grant to help cover subsequent costs associated with protocol development and to complete a grant application with the hope of acquiring government or industry funding to conduct the study.

Supporting the limitless potential of IR: Possibilities to realities
A letter from SIR Foundation’s chair

The future of IR relies on our investment in our investigators, students and, of course, the specialty itself. As 2014 comes to a close, I want to share with you how SIR Foundation does just that, with your support.

We continue to improve care through image-guided therapy with efforts like developing the IR quality registry and hosting a recent research consensus panel that proposed 13 new Physician Quality Reporting System (PQRS) measures—six of which are now on the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) Measures Under Consideration (MUC) list. As you will read about in the story of Sharon W. Kwan, MD, the Comparative Effectiveness Committee is also contributing to our quality initiative. Medical students around the nation are being introduced to IR through our research internships and awards. Our premier grants program continues to grow in prominence, adding several new awards this year.

These achievements are only possible with your support. You’re the reason we are making progress. You’re helping by providing resources to develop 6 standardized reports that were introduced for IR this year—a vital step toward systematic data collection. A memorandum of understanding (MOU) has been executed between SIR and the American College of Radiology (ACR) to begin building an IR registry database under the National Radiology Data Registry (NRDR). ACR has begun building the IR registry database and you’ll be hearing more about this exciting development throughout next year. You’re the reason grant recipients like Achin Chen, PhD, are able to purchase vital equipment or students like Joseph Tessitore are matched with mentors.

You enable SIR Foundation’s work of developing, testing and implementing breakthrough medical treatments. You are the reason IR has been strengthened through research this year. I hope you will join me in turning even more possibilities into realities for the future of IR by supporting our work. Our potential is limitless.

Warmest regards,

Stephen T. Kee, MD, MMM, FSIR, Chair, SIR Foundation

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We see the possibilities: SIR Foundation Gala supports IR research

It takes a certain kind of vision to see a better future, which is why SIR Foundation is proud to work on behalf of interventional radiologists and those who support them. Gather with your colleagues and industry supporters for an enchanting evening on Sunday, March 1, 2015, at the Georgia Aquarium—where seeing truly is believing—and where the endless possibilities of IR continue to be fostered.

- Experience more than 60 breathtaking exhibits and thousands of beautiful sea creatures, including larger-than-life whale sharks
- Dine in the elegant Ocean’s Ballroom, featuring the culinary genius of the Wolfgang Puck company and 360-degree views of marine life
- Celebrate research advances possible through SIR Foundation and its donors, and be with us as at the 2015 Frederick S. Keller, MD, Philanthropist of the Year is honored
- Bid on a silent auction featuring exceptional prizes

Don’t miss this important night and your opportunity to personally contribute to advancing the profession through research. Please visit sirfoundation.org/gala or contact development@sirweb.org to purchase a table or tickets. A portion of your ticket will be tax deductible. Contributions are unrestricted and support the full mission of SIR Foundation.

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SIR Foundation is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization that receives our funding from SIR member dues. Contributions are unrestricted and support the full mission of SIR Foundation.

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The Comparative Effectiveness Committee was tasked with completing and disseminating IR-relevant comparative effectiveness research with a rapid turnaround time. Our goals are to prioritize research topics and publish findings in order to strengthen the IR knowledge base, focusing on safety, effectiveness, resource utilization, health disparities, economics and quality of life. The deliverables of this workgroup were designed to complement long-term horizon projects such as the formation of national registries and prospective trials.

Accomplishments of our investigators include a study that compared morbidity and cost differences between open surgery and percutaneous vertebroplasty and kyphoplasty for pathologic compression fractures of the spine using Medicare claims data. We found percutaneous intervention to be less morbid and less expensive and require shorter hospital stays than open surgery.1 We also completed a study using the National Cancer Institute’s Surveillance Epidemiology and End Results (SEER)-Medicare database, which showed that patients with early-stage lung cancer who underwent percutaneous thermal ablation had similar survival outcomes when compared to a matched cohort who underwent sublobar resection.2 A follow-up health economics study comparing the relative costs and resource utilization of image-guided therapies.

Don’t Forget!

As 2014 comes to a close … thank you!
We asked some of the recent grant and award recipients to share their sentiments about the impact that SIR Foundation donors have had on their careers. Here’s what they told us …

“The SIR Foundation grant played a pivotal role in my research, as it allowed me to stay at home institution and work with my mentors in understanding health care costs in the future. As a transitioning third year of medical school, SIR Foundation has continued to support my research and growing interest in IR. I appreciate the hundreds of SIR Foundation donors who gave so that I could have this incredible experience.”
—Anuag Wang, Medical College of Wisconsin, Student Research Grant Recipient

“Millions of water drops form the oceans; similarly, little donations can bring the funds needed to SIR Foundation and its generous donors who have funded my pilot endeavors and I am glad that they see future innovation through my perspective. Therefore, their continued donations could bring a scientific revolution and the coming generations would be thankful for the first they will see; the end of which donors are seeing today.”
—Mohammad Nourani, MD, Brown University, Pilot Research Grant Recipient

Advancing IR through research: 2014 SIR Foundation grant recipients

These grants, like all SIR Foundation programs, are funded through the generosity of Discovery Campaign, Gala and Annual Fund donors.

DR. ERNEST J. RING ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT GRANT—SUPPORTED BY ANGIODYNAMICS
Aichi Chinn, PhD—UCLA Rapid quantification of blood flow and device-induced flow changes from 2D angiograms

PILOT RESEARCH GRANT—SUPPORTED BY C.R. BARD
Richika Blurt, MD—University of Pennsylvania Treatment of upper-extremity venous thoracic with associated peripherally inserted central catheters: A randomized controlled trial

Muhammad Nazem, MD—Brown University Novel molecular targeting of Nell-3 to prevent intimal hyperplasia and restenosis
Evelyn Nieves, MD—Mayo Clinic nickel-21 in venous neointimal hyperplasia associated with arterial remote stents
Aliza Ten, MD, MBA—The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center Visual and functional characterization of nanopores formation after irreversible electroporation (IRE) in the porcine vertebral body
David Wang, MD—Stanford University Ultrasound and microbubble-mediated therapeutic microRNA modulation of hepatocellular carcinoma

RADIATION ONCOLOGY RESEARCH GRANT
Phillip Parmeet, MD—UT Health Science Center at Houston Evaluation of effects of electroporation and gemcitabine nanoparticles formulation on tumor response in a pancreatic adenocarcinoma nude mouse model

STUDENT RESEARCH GRANT
Angela Wang—Medical College of Wisconsin Understanding costs in interventional radiology and vascular surgery

Can you help us achieve more in research?
Please visit sirfoundation.org/donate to strengthen the resources for research funding.

SIR Foundation typically receives more meritorious applications than can be funded. Help us drive breakthrough treatments that harness the power of image-guided therapies. Please visit sirfoundation.org/donate to provide a tax-deductible donation before Dec. 31, 2014

By Sharon W. Kwan, MD, co-chair

Strengthening IR: The Comparative Effectiveness Committee

‘Tis the season of giving!
SIR Foundation relies wholly on charitable donations to drive the future of IR. We are deeply grateful to the hundreds of donors who give selflessly. Here are some ways donors choose to give in support of increased evidence, research grants funding and research education for the specialty:

■ Make an annual fund donation at sirfoundation.org/donate,
■ Join your peers in the Pioneer Circle (see sirfoundation.org/pioneer—Founding Donor status ends Dec. 31, 2014),
■ Give honoraria or speakers fees to SIR Foundation (contact Julie Wolffe, development director, at jwolfe@sirweb.org).
■ Give a gift of stock (contact Julie Wolffe, development director, at jwolfe@sirweb.org).
■ Include SIR Foundation as a beneficiary in your estate plans (check out sirfoundation.org/ legacy for some ideas about planned gifts and benefits to donors).
■ Recommend SIR Foundation as a beneficiary of your company’s matching gifts program (call Julie Wolffe at (703) 460-5591).

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Thanks for turning possibilities into realities through support of research by considering SIR Foundation in your year-end charitable giving plans!

Please visit sirfoundation.org for updates and application details.

DECEMBER 14
Applications are due for:
■ Academic Transition Grant
■ Allied Scientist Grant
■ Dr. Ernest J. Ring Academic Development Grant
Supported in part, by a generous Discovery Campaign contribution from AngioDynamics
■ Funding Source Development Grant
■ Pilot Research Grant Program
Supported in part, by a generous Discovery Campaign contribution from C.R. Bard

DECEMBER 31
Last day to make a 2014 charitable gift to SIR Foundation (sirfoundation.org/donate)

JANUARY 11
Last day to apply for the HIMI-SIR Foundation Medical Research Fellowship Award

FEBRUARY 1
Applications are due for:
■ Radiology Resident Research Grant
■ Student Research Grant

Please visit sirfoundation.org for updates and application details.

The SIR Foundation Legacy Fund
Thanks for turning possibilities into realities through support of research by considering SIR Foundation in your year-end charitable giving plans!