

Chair's Letter

Summer 2006

I am so pleased with the emphasis on external communications initiated by my predecessor, Joe Bonn, MD, FSIR, that I happily continue the tradition he started of sending out a "SIR Foundation Chair's Letter" twice a year, as a supplement to the Foundation's annual report. My goal is that through communications such as the *Chair's Letter*, Foundation articles in *IR News*, *E-News*, and updates on our web site (www.SIRFoundation.org), members of the interventional radiology community will see examples of IR research in action and how the SIR Foundation is playing a key role in supporting many of these important initiatives for our specialty.

Over the past two years, SIR Foundation has developed programs and provided support funds for many new interventional radiology research projects. Since 2004, the Foundation has developed the Cooperative Alliance for Interventional Radiology Research (CAIRR) clinical trials network, added new research grant opportunities for medical students and radiology residents, and expanded collaboration with other foundations and organizations interested in interventional radiology. Additionally, the Foundation has continued to administer and support the Legs For Life® program, SIR Foundation Grant and Award Programs, and the annual Innovation and Research in Interventional Radiology (IR)² research series. All of these programs have been systematically addressing key strategic items identified in the 2004 SIR Foundation strategic plan.

Realizing that much progress had been made on the 2004 plan and that the Foundation must remain focused on the always advancing needs of the interventional radiology specialty, this past April, the Foundation Board of Directors met to review and "tune-up" the strategic plan that had been guiding the Foundation for the previous two years. Specifically, the Foundation leadership wanted to identify areas of focus for the next two to three years. The Board of Directors worked through the environmental challenges and opportunities facing interventional radiology and concluded that SIR Foundation can best help foster the advancement of interventional radiology by supporting programs focused on: 1) IR participation in and development of clinical trials, 2) encouraging and developing new and current IR researchers, 3) communicating the benefits of participating in IR research, and 4) increasing SIR Foundation's funding capacity to adequately keep up with the growing and changing needs of interventional radiology.

Many of these focus areas are enhancements, or a continuation of the Foundation's previous strategic plan. However I promise you, that as SIR Foundation considers developing a new program or providing program support, the Board of Directors will ensure that at least one of the four strategic areas is clearly being addressed.

In the pages that follow, I am pleased to highlight the accomplishments of some of the Foundation's current ongoing initiatives. I encourage you to visit the Foundation web site for additional information about all the programs supported by SIR Foundation.

Thank you for your generous support of our work.

Sincerely,



James B. Spies, MD, FSIR
Chair, SIR Foundation

I. COOPERATIVE ALLIANCE FOR INTERVENTIONAL RADIOLOGY RESEARCH (CAIRR): OUR CLINICAL TRIALS NETWORK

John H. Rundback, MD, FSIR, Division Director

The CAIRR network has been extremely busy in furthering its mission to serve as an inclusive clinical trials research network for interventional radiology. CAIRR currently supports specific research networks working in the following areas: uterine fibroid disease, carotid atherosclerotic disease, venous disease, skeletal interventions, liver oncology, lung oncology, and cardiovascular imaging.

Uterine Fibroid Disease

SIR Foundation's UAE Fibroid Registry for Outcomes Data (FIBROID), initiated in 1999, has ended its data collection phase and has been a resounding success as the largest, multi-center, prospective, voluntary registry on any procedure for benign uterine fibroids. This effort could not have been possible without the commitment of time and resources from each of the 72 study sites worldwide and the support of our industry partners. Reprints of manuscripts published in the journal *Obstetrics and Gynecology* are being sent to all SIR members. Patient outcomes at three years are currently being analyzed and will be submitted for publication later this summer. ❖ A preliminary draft of the proceedings from the 2005 UAE Research Consensus Panel has been written and will be submitted for publication next month. In the months ahead, a clinical trial committee will be assembled by SIR Foundation to develop a study protocol that will characterize the impact of UAE and myomectomy on ovarian function, endometrial function and endometrial scarring – all parameters which have been shown to affect fertility.

Carotid Atherosclerotic Disease

Over 130 sites from the US and Europe have expressed interest in participating in the Transatlantic Asymptomatic Carotid Intervention Trial (TACIT). Trial leadership, lead by PI Barry Katzen, MD, FSIR, is working with the National Institutes for Health (NIH) and members of industry to assess the feasibility for funding this pivotal trial designed to assess interventional, medical, and surgical treatments for asymptomatic patients with carotid atherosclerotic disease.

Acute Venous Thrombo-embolic Disease

The Thrombus Removal with Adjunctive Catheter-directed Thrombolysis (ATTRACT) was submitted for funding determination to the NIH this past June. ATTRACT leadership, led by PI Suresh Vedantham, MD, worked with the CAIRR network to conduct trial site selection. The CAIRR network is listed as a collaborating organization on the NIH grant application.

Liver – Interventional Oncology

A Research Consensus Panel on this topic was held on March 30. The panel was chaired by Riccardo Lencioni, MD. Research priorities within liver oncology were identified and gaps in the current body of knowledge, as well as research that might address the gaps were discussed. The multidisciplinary panel of experts scored and prioritized the research priorities with input from industry and other interested attendees. Meeting proceedings and findings are currently being drafted for publication and future development of a clinical trial protocol.

Lung – Interventional Oncology

A Research Consensus Panel on this topic was held on April 3 and chaired by Kamran Ahrar, MD. Similar to the Liver Oncology Research Consensus Panel process described above, research priorities were identified, ranked, and will soon be published with the ultimate goal of developing a multi-center clinical trial.

Cardiovascular Imaging

A Research Consensus Panel on this topic will be held this October in Washington, DC. This multi-specialty panel is being formed by Robert Lookstein, MD.

II. RESEARCH EDUCATION

Michael C. Soulen, MD, FSIR, Division Director

(IR)²: Innovation and Research in Interventional Radiology

SIR Foundation's fourth (IR)² conference will be held this October in Washington, DC, as part of the 2006 SIR Multi-modality meeting. This year's (IR)² conference will explore the future of research in cardiovascular imaging, specifically addressing - the technical innovations in cardiovascular imaging equipment, current role of CT and MRI for non-invasive imaging of the cardiovascular system, strategies of different imaging modalities to visualize the manifestations of atherosclerosis, and applications and future developments in molecular and stem-cell imaging in the cardiovascular system. The program chair for this meeting is Dominic Fleischman, MD. ❖ A web site has recently been launched that contains streaming presentations from our 2005 (IR)² meeting that focused on interventional oncology. To view the presentations from last year, please visit <http://rsna2006.rsna.org/rsna2006.IOS2005/ios2005.html>.

III. RESEARCH POLICY and INVESTIGATOR DEVELOPMENT

Gordon McLennan, MD, Division Director

Research Grant Programs

In 2006, SIR Foundation awarded funds to 12 investigators to support their promising research ideas. Research project topics selected for funding include: radiofrequency ablation of lung tumors, medical simulation, MRI assessment of uterine fibroid perfusion after UFE, evaluation of venous valve prosthesis, positron emission tomography, catheter characteristics, and transcatheter arterial embolization.

Collaborations and Emerging Areas

Leadership and staff of SIR Foundation continue to work with other organizations to develop new projects and initiatives that show promise to impact interventional radiology in the years ahead. Recently, SIR Foundation has been involved in collaborative projects including: the development of a pathway for Image Guided Interventions, the blueprint for imaging in biomedical research, and the biomedical research opportunities workshop. Working with other organizations on projects such as these allows SIR Foundation to, at a national level, bring visibility to issues driving future advances in interventional radiology.

IV. SIR FOUNDATION FUND DEVELOPMENT

Frederick Keller, MD, FSIR

Since its founding in 1989, SIR Foundation has played a significant role in support of the SIR mission to improve public health through disease management and minimally invasive, image-guided therapeutic interventions. As a charitable organization, SIR Foundation's impact and effectiveness to carry out its mission is tied directly to the amount of resources it has readily available. The Foundation has benefited tremendously from the public support of members of the IR community to develop, implement, and enhance programs that foster future research and development. Over the years the support of those within the interventional radiology community has grown and continues to grow.

This year, SIR Foundation initiated a new initiative to recognize members of industry that provide unrestricted support for SIR Foundation. This program is called "Partners in Research."

Thank you to the following companies that have become 2006 SIR Foundation Partners in Research:

AngioDynamics, Inc
ArthroCare
Bard Peripheral Vascular, Inc
BioSphere Medical, Inc
Cadmus Communications
New England Society for Cardiovascular and Interventional Radiology

