



February 17, 2021

Dear Members and Friends of SCGDB,

I am very happy to write this letter as the President of the Society for Craniofacial Genetics and Developmental Biology (SCGDB). The mission of the SCGDB is to promote education, research, and communication about normal and abnormal development of the tissues and organs of the head. We achieve this as a community at our annual meeting. In this letter, I will summarize our activities over the past year, share plans for the 2021 annual meeting, and provide some updates on future activities of the society.

### **2020 Annual Meeting**

The 43<sup>rd</sup> Annual Meeting of the SCGDB was held virtually on October 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup>. The meeting began with a career development workshop presented by Dr. Sharon Milgram (NIH) focusing on resiliency and wellness in the era of COVID-19. This was followed by a lunchtime workshop presented by Drs. Leslie Frieden (Extramural Training Officer) and Kathryn Stein (Program Officer) from NIH/NIDCR, which covered different granting mechanisms for trainees and investigators and current research areas of interest to NIDCR. Dr. Sally Moody then presented Dr Marilyn Jones with the David Bixler Distinguished Scientist in Craniofacial Research Award and Dr. Kerstin Ludwig with the Marylou Buyse Distinguished Scientist in Craniofacial Research Award, with both awardees giving excellent summaries of their career and current research work. These awards were sponsored by *Developmental Dynamics*. The plenary sessions then began, focusing on Molecular Regulation of Craniofacial Development (plenary talk by Paul Kulesa, Stowers Institute for Medical Research), Craniofacial Morphogenesis (plenary talk by Ralph Marcucio, University of California, San Francisco), Translational Craniofacial Biology (plenary talk by Juhee Jeong, New York University) and Signaling During Craniofacial Development (plenary talk by Joy Richman, University of British Columbia). For each plenary session, additional talks were selected from submitted abstracts. The meeting also included a workshop sponsored by FaceBase and presented by Rob Shuler (University of Southern California) on navigating and finding data on the FaceBase website.

Each day ended with a four hour “poster” session, in which faculty, post-docs and students presented their poster abstracts in the form of an 8-minute Zoom presentation. Awards were presented to the three best talks presented by post-docs and students, with the awards sponsored by the American Association for Anatomy.

Awards for postdoctoral scientists and residents were:

Carrie Leonard (1<sup>st</sup> place, University of Maryland)  
Michi Kanai (2<sup>nd</sup> place, University Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus)  
Soma Dash (3<sup>rd</sup> place, Stowers Institute for Medical)

Students/trainee awards were:

Lauren Bobzin (1<sup>st</sup> place, University of Southern California)  
Kimberly Diaz-Perez (2<sup>nd</sup> place, Emory University)  
Beatriz Ibarra (3<sup>rd</sup> place, Case Western Reserve University).

You can find the 2020 student and post-doctoral award winners, as well as former winners, listed on the Past Annual Meetings page of the SCGDB website ([craniofacialgenetics.org](http://craniofacialgenetics.org)) and also on our

Facebook ([www.facebook.com/SCGDB](http://www.facebook.com/SCGDB)) and Twitter ([www.twitter.com/SCGDB1](https://www.twitter.com/SCGDB1)) pages. Congratulations to the winners for their outstanding presentations.

At the 2020 Member's business meeting held during the annual meeting, Amy Merrill-Brugger (University of Southern California) was elected to a 2-year term as the Vice President and Jean-Pierre Saint-Jeannet (New York University) was re-elected to a 2-year term as the Treasurer. The SCGDB thanked outgoing President Sally Moody for her leadership during the past 4 years, the first two of which she served as Vice-President. Sally will continue to support the SCGDB for another two years on the Advisory Committee that is comprised of past officers to provide institutional memory and advice to the current Executive Committee. We thank all attendees of the meeting for making this a most interactive and successful meeting. The complete proceedings are being submitted for publication in the *American Journal of Medical Genetics* (Brugmann et al., 2021). When accepted, this manuscript will be posted on the SCGDB website and social media.

### **2021 Annual Meeting**

While the 2020 virtual annual meeting was great success, we recognize that in-person meetings are preferable for reasons that include comradery and networking. However, due to the current COVID-19 crisis that is still ravaging many parts of this country and the uncertainty as to when wide spread vaccination will be available, the Executive Committee voted in December 2020 to again hold a virtual meeting in 2021. I am therefore pleased to extend this official invitation to all to attend the 44<sup>th</sup> annual meeting of the Society for Craniofacial Genetics and Developmental Biology, to be held virtually on **Monday and Tuesday, October 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup>, 2021**. As is our tradition, the majority of talks will be selected from the abstracts, with a balance among junior and senior members of the society to provide opportunities for our colleagues at all career stages to present their research. We will again have career development workshops and will be presenting the David Bixler Distinguished Senior Career Scientist Award and the Marylou Buyse Distinguished Mid-Career Scientist Award. These two awards are made possible by a generous contribution from *Developmental Dynamics* (Wiley). Details on the nomination process will be emailed shortly, and nomination packets will be due April 1, 2021. Please consider nominating a colleague.

The 2021 meeting also will feature a business meeting at which we will elect a new Secretary. Please consider nominating yourself or others that you think would benefit the society. We will once again be using PheedLoop as our virtual event platform. Details about meeting registration, abstract submission and programming will be posted on the SCGDB website, Facebook and Twitter pages when available.

More information and news about SCGDB, its members and upcoming events can be found on our website ([craniofacialgenetics.org](http://craniofacialgenetics.org)), Facebook ([www.facebook.com/SCGDB](http://www.facebook.com/SCGDB)) and Twitter ([www.twitter.com/SCGDB1](https://www.twitter.com/SCGDB1); handle = @SCGDB1) pages. We would like to highlight everyone's achievements, so if you publish an exciting paper, issue a press release, receive an award, or are profiled in an article, please let us know so we can share the good news and keep our members up-to-date.

As we start the new year, I encourage all of you to engage in our Society by renewing your membership with AAA (with SCGDB as your affiliate of choice), attending the annual meeting, presenting your work, and spreading the word about our Society to your colleagues, basic scientists and clinicians.

With very best wishes,



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