



Preface



The 2018 meeting of the International Federation of Placenta Associations (IFPA 2018) was organized by the Japan Placenta Association (JPA) and was held at the Jikei University School of Medicine in Tokyo, Japan in conjunction with the 20th meeting of JPA and the 36th meeting of JTDS (Japan Trophoblastic Disease Society).

Jikei university is located in the center of Tokyo, a city ripe with a rich academic atmosphere, Japanese tradition, and the liveliness of an economic and cultural mecca.

JPA hosts the IFPA meeting every six years. Five hundred and six participants were welcomed to the Meeting from 28 countries. Two hundred and seventy-eight participants were from Japan.

Although I am a gynecologic oncologist, I was charmed by the fascinating work being done in placenta research. It was my hope that the basic research on the placenta shared at this conference will soon be translated into clinical practice. That was why I designated the theme for IFPA 2018 to be “Clinical Growth via Placenta”.

The scientific program included two keynote lectures, award lectures, three symposiums, nine workshops, new investigator oral sessions, an early and mid-career researcher session, luncheon seminars and poster sessions. The scientific session opened with informative keynote lectures by Y.M. Dennis Lo (The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, China) on “NONINVASIVE PRENATAL TESTING: PROGRESS THROUGH GENOMICS, EPIGENOMICS AND TRANSCRIPTOMICS” and by Akihiro Umezawa (National Center for Child Health and Development, Tokyo, Japan) on “STEM CELL-BASED THERAPY IN JAPAN: CURRENT STATE OF THE ART”. These outstanding presentations were followed by three symposia on “Sequencing the placenta”, “Making better placentas and healthy pregnancies” and “DoHAD and the placenta”.

We also set up 9 workshops entitled, “Extracellular vesicles in pregnancy”, “Pre-eclampsia and the placenta”, “Drug delivery in pregnancy”, “Reproduction and placentation among ocean-living species”, “Abnormally Invasive Placenta”, “Impact of infection on placental biology”, “Imaging of the Placenta”, “Epigenetics” and “Gestational Trophoblastic Disease (GTD)”.

304 abstracts were submitted for the conference. After review by the International Scientific Committee, 12 abstracts were accepted for oral presentation in the new investigator session. 285 abstracts were presented as poster presentations over two sessions.

We also had the opportunity to hear from junior, mid-career and senior researchers who were presented with IFPA (see reviews in this edition of TR) and NIH awards. The Elsevier Trophoblast Research Award lecture was presented by Stephanie Worton (Manchester, UK), who was recognized as the second poster presenter at the IFPA Meeting 2017 in Manchester, UK.

The Gabor Than Award, which is given every two years, was awarded to a placentologist for her contributions to the field, namely

Tu'uhevaha Kaitu'u-Lino (Melbourne, Australia).

The 12 finalists for the Elsevier Placenta New Investigator (NI) Award gave Padma Murthi (Monash University, Australia) and her judging panel a very difficult job, as the presenters of the pre-selected best 12 NI abstracts all did an excellent job in presenting their research. Ultimately, the award was given to Lisa Vrooman (University of Pennsylvania, PA, USA) and the runner-up for the award was Mike Guernsey (Stanford University, CA, USA).

The Elsevier Trophoblast Research Award, acknowledging the best poster presentation at IFPA Meeting 2018, was judged by a panel of judges led by Mark Dilworth, (Manchester, UK) and given to Mancy Tong, (Yale University, USA). The runner-up was Giulia Del Gobbo (The University of British Columbia, Canada). The work by all the judges is greatly appreciated.

There were 40 YW Loke New Investigator Travel Award recipients who benefited from the generosity of Professor YW (Charlie) Loke. Professor Loke's great support of New Investigators is greatly appreciated. His generosity enables these young placentologists to attend IFPA Meetings. In addition, there were 9 NIH Travel Awards presented by Leslie Myatt (OR, USA) to New Investigators to assist their attendance at the meeting.

The NIH sponsored an established US investigator to attend the IFPA Meeting and give an NIH Lecture. This year, Marisa Bartolomei (PA, USA), gave the lecture: “Placental epigenetic regulation development and under adverse environmental conditions”.

Professor Hiroaki Soma (Saitama, Japan) won the “IFPA Senior Award in Placentology” in recognition of his outstanding contribution to the IFPA community through his Presidency and Editorship of Placenta as well as furthering our understanding of placental physiology; though he spent most of the lecture pointing out all the things he still doesn't know.

In addition to scientific content, we prepared a fantastic Japanese style Welcome Reception, Early Career Researcher's (ECR) Social Meeting, and Gala Dinner. We hope the participants were able to share in many discoveries, learn valuable knowledge, and exchange interesting opinions among many researchers from many countries.

Finally, I would like to thank all the people responsible for putting the program together and ensuring its smooth delivery. The members of the International Scientific Advisory committee were great in providing suggestions for symposia topics and speakers and marking scores of abstracts in a very short time frame! But personally, I am especially grateful to the Organizing Committee and particularly acknowledge the support by the President of IFPA, Claire Roberts, and Nick Illsley. I am most appreciative of Keiichi Isaka, the President of JPA, for his continuous encouragement to me during difficult circumstances. I also wish to thank my colleagues including Associate Professor Osamu Samura in my department at the Jikei University school of medicine for their hard

work in preparing for and conducting the IFPA Meeting 2018. Finally I would like to thank to all of you who made IFPA Meeting 2018 a success.

Conflicts of interest

The author does not have any potential or actual personal, political,

or financial interest in the information contained in this preface.

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