

Highlights of the 67th ASAIO Conference in Chicago, Illinois

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ASAIO was one of the first organizations to hold its in-person conference in 2021, and it brought the enthusiasm back this year with a full in-person conference in Downtown Chicago, IL, from June 8 to June 11. The spirit of the organization has always been about innovation where medicine, engineering, and industry meet in an engaging and meaningful discussion to advance science and technology. Conference abstracts were published in *ASAIO Journal* with individual abstract DOIs as a convenience for authors and others when citing abstracts. Soon after the conference, *ASAIO Journal* announced its 2021 Journal Impact Factor of 3.826. This is the highest journal impact factor in *ASAIO Journal* history, as well as the highest journal impact factor of all artificial organs journals.

On the opening day of the conference, Dr. Joseph Zwischenberger gave the President's Address titled "Innovation is never evidence based," where he recounted instances in his career that were inspired by the conversations and discussions done at previous ASAIO Society meetings, and reflected on his year as the President of the national organization. Dr. Dongfang Wang, Program-Chair, welcomed the congress followed by the keynote address from Dr. Robert Bartlett. Dr. Bartlett, Professor emeritus at University of Michigan, and largely regarded as the father of modern-day extracorporeal membrane oxygenation (ECMO) is a longstanding member of ASAIO, and he gave an engaging history of the wonderful organization starting back to its initial roots. The most initial description of the society was mentioned in 1954 by Dr. P.F. Salisbury in a number of personal letters sent to eminent scholars at that time, and the recipients of that initial letter were asked to submit ideas concerning the function of the society, and within the next year, the very first meeting was held on June 4 simultaneously with the American Medical Association in Atlantic City, NJ.

A total of 243 abstracts were submitted to the conference, and in addition to the main program, there were multiple specialty tracks that were concurrently running including Cardiac, Pulmonary, Pediatric, COVID, Bioengineering, Renal, and Nursing/VAD coordinator tracks. A preconference VAD University Course and a pediatric medical device course were successfully attended by many attendees followed by the main conference on Thursday. In addition, a joint ASAIO ICCAC/MCS Hands-On Bootcamp was offered for attendees.

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The top abstracts from each group are listed below. *ASAIO Journal* invited submission of full manuscripts based on these abstracts and hopes to publish them in future issues.

Bioengineering: Identification of Biomarkers Sensitive to Pulsatile and Continuous-Flow for Identification of Promising Continuous-Flow VAD Modulation Protocols to Mitigate Nonsurgical Bleeding Events¹ (Willem Kolff Award First Runner Up).

Cardiac Clinical: Comprehensive Machine Learning Analysis of Preimplantation Risk Factors for Right Heart Failure After LVAD Implantation² (Willem Kolff Award Winner).

Cardiac R&D: Combining VA-ECMO and Impella (EC-Pella) Before Reperfusion Mitigates Left Ventricular Loading and Injury Due To VA-ECMO In Acute Myocardial Infarction.³

COVID: Platelet Function at the Intersection of the COVID-19 "Cytokine Storm" and Mechanical Circulatory Support.⁴

Nursing: Self-Measured Doppler Blood Pressure Readings in Continuous-Flow LVAD Patients Are Reliable.⁵

Pediatric: Taking ACTION: A Contemporary Prognostic Tool for Pediatric VAD Mortality.⁶

Pulmonary: Real-World Use of Extracorporeal CO₂ Removal (ECCO2R) to Correct Respiratory Acidosis: Analysis of the Hemolung Registry⁷ (Willem Kolff Award Second Runner Up).

Renal: A Dialysate Free Portable Artificial Kidney Device.⁸

The society for the first time in its history granted 50 individual travel awards to trainees and these were very well received, especially by the young investigators subsection of the Society. The Hasting's Lecture was presented by Stephen R. Topaz, in which he engaged the society with his recollection of how the balloon pump was conceived in the laboratory with Dr. Spyridon Mouloupoulos and Dr. Willem Kolff at Cleveland Clinic Research Laboratory. The Young investigator presentations were exceptionally well received with real-time audience feedback for awardees that engaged and inspired the younger members of the society. Subsequently, the Young investigators and new ASAIO members were treated to an *Evening with ASAIO Pioneers* Kurt Dasse, H. David Humes, and Rhona Shanker, who graciously shared their spirited and inspiring stories about getting the first generation left ventricular assist devices (LVADs) approved through the FDA. In addition, a mentor-mentee networking event was held to allow ASAIOfyi advance in its mission.

The spirit of the annual conference was well displayed through countless settings both formal and informal, including a display of musical prowess by the Society's stalwarts (Figure 1). Thanks to the countless members and volunteers of the Society, the meeting continues to be inspiring, reachable, and forever in the spirit of service to the field. It is in this spirit of the Society, that a unicorn like me, a pulmonary and



Figure 1. ASAIO Pioneers' jam session at the ASAIO 67th annual conference opening reception. (R-L) Dr. Steve Ash, Dr. George Pantalos, Dr. Robert Bartlett, Dr. Joseph Zwischenberger. Photo credit: Dr. Pramod Bonde.

critical care intensivist that practices mechanical circulatory support critical care, absolutely feels at home, and I suspect you will too. We look forward to seeing you at next year's 68th ASAIO conference in San Francisco, CA, from June 14 to 17, 2023. Abstract submission will open in late September or early October 2022.

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