

January 2008

From the Office of the  
Club President

David Sibley PhD  
Chief, Molecular Neuropharmacology  
Section, NINDS  
National Institutes of Health  
Bethesda, MD 20892-9405  
Tel: 301-496-9316  
Fax: 301-480-3726  
Email: [sibley@helix.nih.gov](mailto:sibley@helix.nih.gov)

## Catecholamine Club

# Chronicle

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Editor: Graeme Eisenhofer PhD  
Email: [graeme.eisenhofer@uniklinikum-dresden.de](mailto:graeme.eisenhofer@uniklinikum-dresden.de)

### **Randy D. Blakely, PhD to receive the Julius Axelrod Award for 2008**

This year Julie's legacy is honored by the selection of Professor Randy D. Blakely, Ph.D. for the 2008 Julius Axelrod Award in Pharmacology. Randy received his undergraduate degree at Emory University School of Medicine, did his doctoral training at Johns Hopkins School of Medicine under Joseph Coyle and his post-doctoral training at Yale University with Susan Amara (the 2006 Julius Axelrod medalist). He returned to Emory in 1990 and then went on to Vanderbilt University Medical School in 1995, where he is now the Allan Bass Professor of Pharmacology.

Randy is best known for cloning the norepinephrine and serotonin transporters during the early days of transporter molecular biology, thereby extending some of Julie Axelrod's most influential discoveries. Indeed, Julie was Randy's model of a scientist; both were colleagues and friends in the last years of Julie's life. An especially poignant interaction came during Julie's last visit to Vanderbilt, when Julie pointed to Randy's scientific achievements and named Randy as his model of the emerging new scientist, passing on the baton in the form of rare reprints of Julie's own most influential works.

Randy's approach to science has been unique, combining both a cell biologist's and

pharmacologist's perspective towards a detailed understanding of function which he has coupled with a broad disease orientation seeking to uncover the involvement of transporter genes in neuropsychiatric disorders. In this way Randy has made some fundamental discoveries in pharmacology and neuroscience, introduced new techniques and enhanced our level of understanding of the biochemical mechanisms underlying drug action. Randy has also mentored



numerous young neuroscientists and future pharmacologists from all parts of the world. He has a wonderful knack of sweeping up everyone around him with his ideas and infectious

enthusiasm. His scientific insight, integrity and brilliance continue to inspire students, fellows and faculty. In this capacity he has epitomized the exemplary intellectual and philosophical traits that characterized Julie's life and work. They were each other's models of what a scientist should be and could become, not only from native intelligence but also from hard work, integrity and honesty.

Randy will be presented with the Julius Axelrod award and medal on April 5, 2008 during the annual meeting of ASPET in San Diego, CA. Randy will also deliver the Julius Axelrod Lecture and organize the Julius Axelrod symposium at the 2009 ASPET meeting. In keeping with tradition, he will be further honored at the 2008 Catecholamine Club Dinner meeting (details below) where he will present an anecdotal account of his career in science.

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### **The Catecholamine Club 2008 Dinner and 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration**

The Catecholamine Club's 2008 dinner and 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration will be held on the evening of Sunday April 6<sup>th</sup> (starting at 6:30 PM) in conjunction with ASPET and Experimental Biology 2008 (April 5-9, <http://www.eb2008.org>). The venue for this years dinner, Bertrand at Mister A's (<http://www.bertrandatmisteras.com/>), is just minutes from Downtown San Diego and offers some of the most spectacular views of the surrounding area.

This year the Catecholamine Club celebrates its 40th Anniversary. Therefore, in addition to the traditional after dinner talk by this year's Julius Axelrod medalist, Professor Randy Blakely, the dinner will include the presence of numerous past Axelrod medalists and Club presidents (see listings on the next page). This and other planned celebrations make this years dinner a particularly important event not to miss.

Details about the dinner — location of the restaurant, cost, procedure and deadlines for

payment — are appended to this Newsletter. This year, there are substantial discounts to the cost of the dinner offered to Club members and trainees. These discounts — available through the generous support of the Foundation for Catecholamine Research, Lundbeck-USA, Johnson & Johnson, Wyeth Pharmaceuticals and Merck Research Laboratories — provide a considerable savings (*in fact, more than the annual dues for Club membership*). Therefore, if you are not a member of the Catecholamine Club, but plan to attend the dinner, then this year it is in your best interest to join up (see how on page 5).

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### **Message from the Club President — [David Sibley](#)**



As we enter the New Year, it is worth looking back on our Club activities during 2007 as well as those coming up for 2008. One of the initial events in 2007 was the launch and expansion of our

home page at <http://www.catecholamineclub.org>. Our new web site now provides an initial point of contact between our organization and the outside world as well as providing information about our membership and our science. All Club activities, documents and photographs are now archived at our web site for viewing by current and future "catecholaminologists". Of course, our other major event last year was the annual Club dinner held during the Experimental Biology meeting in Washington DC. Attendance was the highest that we've had in a number of years and everyone certainly enjoyed the lecture by the inaugural ASPET Julius Axelrod Award recipient, Professor Tong Joh. You are invited to view pictures of this very successful event at the Club website: <http://www.catecholamineclub.org/pages/club%20dinner.html>.

We have a number of exciting events and changes planned for 2008. Most importantly, this year

represents the 40th anniversary of the Club, which was initially formed in 1968 by Julie Axelrod and several of his colleagues. A complete history of the Catecholamine Club, and an accompanying TiPS article covering the “first 20 years”, can be found at the club website: <http://www.catecholamineclub.org/pages/history.html>.

In partial commemoration of this 40th anniversary and historic event, there will be a special Julius Axelrod Symposium, organized by Lee Eiden and held during the ASPET meeting in San Diego this April, which will feature talks by several previous Julius Axelrod Award medalists. In addition to those former medalists, it is anticipated that this event will also attract as many past Club Presidents who are able to attend (see listings this page). Our 40th annual Club dinner will be held the evening of the symposium (Sunday, April 6th) and will feature an after dinner talk by the 2008 Julius Axelrod Award recipient, Professor Randy Blakely. More information about the dinner and how to make a reservation can be found at the end of this newsletter. You won’t want to miss this historic event!

2008 will also bring a change in leadership for the Club. Subsequent to the annual dinner, I will step down from the Presidency having completed a two-year term. Esther Sabban, our current Club Secretary/Treasurer, will replace me as President, and Courtney Holmes, a new member of our Executive Committee, will replace Esther as Secretary/Treasurer. I am thus confident I am leaving the Club in experienced and capable hands. I would like to say that it has been a real pleasure serving as your Club President and working with Esther and all other members of the Executive Committee over the last couple of years. And, of course, I’ll be looking forward to seeing everyone in San Diego this coming April!

**Julius Axelrod Award Medalists**

1991	UllrichTrendelenberg
1992	Arvid Carlson
1993	Norman Weiner
1994	Robert Furchgott
1995	Irv Kopin
1998	Sidney Spector

1999	Sol Snyder
2000	Erminio Costa
2001	Toshi Nagatsu
2002	Sal Langer
2003	Richard Weinshilboum
2004	Richard Palmiter
2005	Marc Caron
2006	Susan Amara
2007	Tong Joh
2008	Randy Blakely

**Catecholamine Club Presidents**

1968-1969	Julius Axelrod
1969-1970	Richard Crout
1970-1971	Irwin Kopin
1971-1972	Solomon Snyder
1972-1973	Floyd Bloom
1973-1974	Norman Weiner
1974-1975	Sidney Spector
1975-1976	Menek Goldstein
1976-1977	Erminio Costa
1977-1978	Perry Molinoff
1978-1979	Charles Rutledge
1979-1980	Ray Fuller
1980-1981	Cyrus Creveling
1981-1982	William Manger
1982-1983	Gertrude Tyce
1983-1984	Leon Goldberg
1984-1985	Richard Weinshilboum
1985-1986	Walter Lovenberg
1986-1987	Vincent DeQuattro
1987-1988	Otto Kuchel
1988-1989	Walter Dixon
1989-1990	David Bylund
1990-1991	Sydney Ellis
1991-1992	Jim Gibb
1992-1994	Tom Westfall
1995-1996	Dave Westfall
1996-1997	Cyrus Creveling
1997-1998	Margarita Dubocovich
1998-1999	Richard Vulliet
1999-2000	Pat Sonsalla
2000-2001	David Goldstein
2001-2002	Margarita Dubocovich
2002-2003	Paul Ernberger
2003-2004	Lee Eiden
2004-2005	Dona Wong
2005-2006	Graeme Eisenhofer
2006-2008	David Sibley
2008-	Esther Sabban

## Message from Esther Sabban – Incoming Club President for 2008



It has been my pleasure to serve as secretary / treasurer of the club for the past three years, under the capable presidencies of Graeme Eisenhofer and David Sibley. These have been exciting times for the Catecholamine Club. Our activities have been expanded and formalized. Among his many contributions, Graeme has established our newsletter, the Catecholamine Club Chronicle. We are fortunate that he has agreed to remain as editor for this newsletter. Dave has also made tremendous contributions, especially with the website, and has agreed to continue to be in charge of the website. He also has worked tirelessly to plan an especially exciting program for our 40th anniversary this year. During this time we have also seen the Axelrod medal formalized and incorporated into an even more widely recognized accolade under the auspices of ASPET. Lee Eiden and Dave Sibley have been especially instrumental in bringing this to fruition.

Coming after these important advances, I am challenged to try to further improve our activities. We are fortunate to have several new board members who will help invigorate the Club and also provide a new perspective for the future. After 40 years, this is a time of reflection both on the past, as well as on the future which appears to be quite bright. After 40 years it is time for us to undergo some Strategic Planning. This is your Club and I ask our members to provide suggestions regarding their views of the direction they would like to see the Club take as we start our next 40 years. I urge you to email me your suggestions (<mailto:Sabban@nymc.edu>) or to add them to the website.

We definitely have to continue to formalize our structure and I aim to finalize our tax-exempt

status, and help draft specific by-laws. Other important aims are to attract more young investigators both students, post-docs and junior faculty. We also need to consider whether we want to follow the example of the Serotonin Club in helping to sponsor a more formal scientific symposium in addition to our yearly dinner. Your comments and suggestions are most welcome.

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## News and Events

**Recap of Catecholamine-Related Symposia during 2007:** This past year saw several important symposia of relevant interest to investigators with catecholamine-related interests. At the end of May there was the Dopamine Conference held in Göteborg, Sweden, which was followed in mid June at Smolenice Castle (Slovakia) by the 9<sup>th</sup> Symposium on Catecholamines and other Neurotransmitters in Stress. Then in August there was the Gordon Research Conference on Catecholamines held at Oxford in the United Kingdom, which was followed in October by the 14<sup>th</sup> International Symposium on Chromaffin Cell Biology (ISCCB) held at Sestri Levante, Italy.



Attendees of the ISCCB in Sestri Levante, Italy.

All were highly successful meetings with significant attendance and input by members of the Catecholamine Club. The Foundation for Catecholamine Research helped support two of these meetings with funding and additional support in the form of I.J. Kopin Travelling Fellowships awarded to four post-doctoral level investigators.

At the Smolenice symposium there was a special meeting of Catecholamine Club members and

interested parties held to discuss proposals for the 10<sup>th</sup> International Catecholamine Symposium (Present: Esther Sabban, Dona Wong, Graeme Eisenhofer, Dan O'Connor, Dave Goldstein, Mike Zeigler, Karel Pacak, Richard Kvetnansky, Miklos Palkovits, Murray Esler and Toshi Nagatsu). Discussions centered on the practicalities of the various proposals and venues, sources of funding and identification of an organizing committee. Numerous key points were dealt with, but the most important issue of identifying someone capable and willing to take on the responsibility of presiding over the next meeting remains an obstacle. With a hiatus of over seven years since the last International Symposium, it is now crucial for someone to step up to the plate for the Symposia series to continue.

**Second International Symposium on Pheochromocytoma:** The 2<sup>nd</sup> International Symposium on Pheochromocytoma (ISP2008) will be held at Queens' college in Cambridge, England from 17th - 20th September 2008. This Symposia series is organized by members of the Pheochromocytoma Research Support Organization (PRESSOR <http://www.pressor.org>), a consortium of scientists and clinicians formed as an outcome of a meeting at Cold Spring Harbor in 2003, held at the behest of Drs. James Watson and William Manger. This year the meeting is being co-chaired by Professors Morris J. Brown and Ashley B. Grossman, The deadline for receipt of abstracts for ISP2008 is May 2008. Further details can be found at the Symposium website: <http://www.isp2008.ukevents.org/>

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## Catecholamine Club Positions and Membership

**Executive Committee:** The Catecholamine Club Executive Committee for the 2008/2009 program year has 3 new members. Our welcome to these members: Courtney Holmes, Daniel O'Connor and Laurent Taupenot.

- Esther Sabban, President
- Courtney Holmes, Secretary/Treasurer
- Irv Kopin, Membership Secretary

- Graeme Eisenhofer, CCC Editor
- Susan Amara
- Walter Dixon
- Margarita Dubocovich
- Lee Eiden
- David Goldstein
- Daniel O'Connor
- Charles Rutledge
- David Sibley
- Laurent Taupenot
- Gonzalo Torres
- Dona Wong



Courtney Holmes, our new Secretary/Treasurer and an expert in catecholamine measurements, was a principal and key organizer of the 8<sup>th</sup> International Catecholamine Symposium in Asilomar, CA (1996). The highly capable Courtney brings to the Executive Committee a wealth of experience.

**Membership:** Membership fees are \$20 per annum or may also be paid at the reduced rate of \$50.00 for three years. Membership runs from the beginning of each calendar year to the next. Please visit the Catecholamine Club Website (<http://www.catecholamineclub.org>) for details on methods of payment (including on-line payment), whether you wish to join the club or renew your membership.

**Benefits of Membership:** What are the benefits of membership in the catecholamine club — what is the incentive to paying the membership fee?

1. Eligibility for the subsidy towards Catecholamine Club Dinners.

2. Eligibility to nominate investigators for Foundation for Catecholamine Research I.J. Kopin young investigator travel fellowships (Note: the nominator and mentor supporting the application must belong to the Club).

3. Eligibility of members to nominate

candidates for the Julius Axelrod Award.

4. Continued receipt of Club Newsletters and ability to contribute to the News and Events forum.

5. Certain web site privileges - posting lab links, job advertisements, etc.



JOIN US AT THE 2008

# CATECHOLAMINE CLUB DINNER

SUNDAY, APRIL 6, 2008

## BERTRAND AT MISTER A'S

2550 5TH AVENUE, TWELFTH FLOOR

SAN DIEGO, CA 92103

(619) 239-1377

WWW.BERTRANDATMISTERAS.COM

Join us for the 40th Anniversary  
celebration of the Catecholamine Club!

Bertrand at Mister A's is just minutes from Downtown and offers some of the most spectacular views in San Diego. See the beautiful San Diego skyline, with views of San Diego Bay, Balboa Park, Coronado, Point Loma and even the world famous San Diego Zoo. Toast an inspiring San Diego sunset from the outdoor, wrap around balcony. And watch the jets gently glide into the San Diego Airport. A dining experience you will never forget, and always treasure.



A pre-dinner reception with an open bar will begin at 6:30 p.m., followed by a seated multi-course meal with wine. After dinner, we will enjoy a lecture by the 2008 recipient of the ASPET Julius Axelrod Award, which honors investigators for their mentorship and contributions to the field of pharmacological research.

Both members and non-members of the Club are welcome.

THE 2008 ASPET JULIUS AXELROD AWARD RECIPIENT IS  
RANDY D. BLAKELY, PH.D., PROFESSOR OF PHARMACOLOGY  
AT VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY.



### Dinner and Meeting:

- Current Club members \$60.00
- Non-members \$95.00  
(Annual club membership is \$20)
- Trainees \$50.00  
(Includes 1 yr. free club membership)

Register and pay at  
[www.catecholamineclub.org](http://www.catecholamineclub.org).

Payment for the dinner is  
required by no later than  
Sunday, March 23rd.

**NO WALK-INS ALLOWED.**

### **Directions from San Diego Convention Center**

Head southeast on West Harbor Drive toward 1st Avenue. Turn left at 5th Avenue. The restaurant is 1.7 miles up 5th Avenue.

### **Directions from Interstate 5**

#### Traveling South

Exit Sassafras. DO NOT TURN ON SASSAFRAS. Continue straight on Kettner Blvd. Turn LEFT on Laurel Street. Turn LEFT on 5th ave.

#### Traveling North

Exit 6th ave. Make a RIGHT onto 6th ave. Make a LEFT onto Laurel Street. Turn RIGHT on 5th ave.

**\*\*Valet parking is available on 4th Ave.  
Take elevator to 12th floor.**