

# REPORT OF THE 28<sup>TH</sup> POLITZER SOCIETY MEETING, ATHENS, GREECE, 28 SEPTEMBER – 1 OCTOBER 2011

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The 28<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Politzer Society, organized by Prof. John Xenelis, was held in Athens, Greece, from 28<sup>th</sup> September to 1<sup>st</sup> October. Over 700 members from Europe, both Americas, Asia and Australia attended. Poland was represented by team members of Institute of Physiology and Pathology of Hearing in Warsaw, Otolaryngology Clinics on Bialystok, Lodz and Lublin.

The opening lecture was by Prof. Nuri Ozgirgin. Prof. John House gave a lecture “Otology from the perspective of my father”, in memory of Prof. Howard House – leader in contemporary otology, pioneer of cochlear and brain-stem implants, and founder of the House Ear Institute in Los Angeles.

The 4-day program consisted of 25 key lectures, 9 plenary sessions, 31 round tables, 10 mini seminars, 16 sessions of free papers, and several workshops. There were also two satellite symposiums organized by Med-El and Cochlear in which lectures were presented by Prof. H. Skarzynski. The Politzer Prize, awarded to young otologists, went to David Pothier, Cian Hughes, and John Rutka (Canada) for clinical research on digital image stabilization in the treatment of oscillopsia; and for basic research to Abraham Jacob (USA) for novel histone deacetylase inhibitor with high clinical-translational potential as treatment for nf2-associated tumors.

The meeting covered a wide range, starting from methods in hypoacusis detection, operating techniques, and extending indications for surgical procedures. Topics included hearing screening in new populations, surgical treatment of conductive hearing loss (including new types of ossicular prostheses), indications for mastoid obliteration, and new radiological methods of post-op care. Two sessions concerned lesions of the cranial base, such as cerebello-pontine angle tumors. Recurring themes were new indications for different auditory prostheses, like BAHA or Vibrant Soundbridge, and standards in progressive hearing loss in children. A focal point was electro-acoustic stimulation, including results from Prof. Skarzynski's team in Poland and from Prof. Bruce Ganz in USA. In this work, the aim is to preserve preoperative hearing in terms of speech audiometry scores, and to relate these parameters to factors like type of electrode array, surgical approach used, and insertion depth. A key lecture on contemporary methods of partial deafness treatment was presented by



Prof. H. Skarzynski; another on hearing, vision and speech screening was presented by Dr. P. H. Skarzynski.

In basic science, there were sessions on hair cell regeneration. One on pharmacological and biochemical treatments for hearing loss after implantation was given by Prof. Denis Poe of Harvard Medical School. Parallel workshops were on practical aspects of audiometric measures, like videonystagmography, VEMP, ASSR, and ABR.

The meeting ended with a lecture dedicated to Prof. Jan Helms from Wurzburg. Prof. John Dornhoffer (USA), Prof. Haruo Takahasi (Japan), and Prof. Joachim Muller (Germany) gave honor to Prof. Helms as a distinguished tutor and teacher.

The next Politzer Society meeting will be in two years in Turkey.