

PRESIDENT'S PAGE 2008

Dear Members and Friends,

On behalf of ISARP, I wish all of you a happy and productive New Year. This year, ISARP will hold its annual meeting October 5-7 in Ann Arbor, Michigan, USA. Nick Giardino and the Program Committee are already actively planning the workshops, invited addresses, symposia, and social events. As President of ISARP, I look forward to our upcoming meeting in the fall with great excitement. Announcements and updates will be available on the Web at <http://www.ohiou.edu/isarp>.

I have been an active member of ISARP for over ten years. Over the course of those ten years, I have seen some impressive changes take place. When I first joined ISARP in 1997, the organization was at a crossroads. The paper presentations at the early conferences I attended were somewhat variable. Members spoke of the tension between a focus on scientific rigor and an emphasis on clinical applications, and many were doubtful that an organization could encompass both arenas to the satisfaction of the membership.

There is no doubt that the scientific rigor of the program has increased since my early years of attendance. Although the inception of this change is difficult to pinpoint, I recall the 2000 conference in San Diego, organized by Dick Gevirtz, began to set the bar higher. Many subsequent conferences continued this trend. With each successive conference, many members who had earlier "left the fold" returned to find a new ISARP. Paper presentations encompassed a wide array of scientific topics relevant to respiratory psychophysiology. These included issues of more basic functions of respiratory control, topics relevant to stress, anxiety, and respiration, symptom perception in clinical populations such as children with asthma and adults with COPD, and intervention approaches. The workshops retained their clinical relevance, yet were founded on empirically supported principles.

With this new focus, members found the ISARP conference an exciting and invigorating meeting. Lunches, coffee breaks, and social gatherings became a place for discussing mutual research interests and interesting clinical problems. This trend has continued consistently over the past several years. The Bristol conference, although small in size, was of high scientific value. All who attended can attest to the high quality of papers and posters. The workshop coordinated by David Beales and colleagues was among the best and most stimulating workshops I have ever attended.

Over the past several conferences I have been struck, in particular, by how the membership continues to learn from the interesting and divergent perspectives that are shared among us. There has been a high degree of stimulating scientific debate about topics such as biofeedback using heart rate variability data, methods of measuring symptom perception, and how to interpret the clinical significance of our findings. My own research program seeks to link respiratory psychophysiology with broader contextual influences such as family and culture. Despite my "macro" view, I find that I often learn the most from presentations that present elegant science and measurement on the very "micro" level. For example, Bob Banzett's symposium on Animal Models of Dyspnea, coordinated at ISARP 2006 in Newport, stands out in my mind as an intellectually rich and exciting symposium that challenged me to consider new ways of thinking about my own work.

This is ISARP 2008. I encourage you to submit an abstract to the Fifteenth Annual ISARP Meeting in Ann Arbor, and share your views with us. I promise that you will not be disappointed.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth McQuaid, PhD
ISARP President, 2008