Delegates from 85 Countries Welcomed at the XXII World Allergy Congress (WAC 2011)

From 4-8 December in Cancún, México, 3,517 attendees from 85 countries gathered for the XXII World Allergy Congress (WAC 2011), one of the largest allergy/immunology scientific meetings in the world. In his opening remarks, Richard F. Lockey, WAO President, reminisced with delegates. "The first meeting of the World Allergy Organization took place in Zurich, Switzerland in 1951, at which 470 individuals attended. Now, WAO is an organization of 89 member groups and promotes excellence in patient care, teaching and research in the field of allergy and clinical immunology throughout the world. 2011 is also the 100th anniversary of allergen immunotherapy, the prototype of which is used today to treat many other diseases, not just allergic diseases. What a wonderful legacy."

Shortly after a welcoming presentation from the Governor of Quintana Roo, the Honorable Roberto Borge Angulo, Dr. Lockey presented the **2011 WAO Awards** to 10 recipients.

**Scientific Achievement Award**
Recognition of Outstanding Scientific Contributions in the Field of Allergy and Immunology
Aiding Clinicians Worldwide to Provide Improved Patient Care
*Rebecca H. Buckley (USA) and Stephen J. Galli (USA)*

**Outstanding Clinician Award**
Recognition of Outstanding Performance in Medical Care and Teaching toward Enhanced Allergy Care Worldwide
*Bee Wah Lee (Singapore), James M. Oleske (USA), and Pakit Vichyanond (Thailand)*

**Special Recognition Award**
Recognition of Outstanding Contributions in the Field of Allergy and Immunology toward Wider Recognition of Allergy and Related Diseases as Global Health Issues
*James P. Kiley (USA) and Erkka Valovirta (Finland)*

**Distinguished Service Award**
Recognition of Dedication and Service to the World Allergy Organization
*Yehia El-Gamal (Egypt) and Cassim Motala (South Africa)*

**Gold Medal Award**
Recognition of Outstanding Dedication and Exceptional Service to the World Allergy Organization
*Michael A. Kaliner (USA)*
Outstanding Junior Abstracts
To assure the future of the specialty of allergy and clinical immunology, the World Allergy Organization strives to support and encourage young clinicians and scientists in their professional careers. On 5 December 2011, the WAO Junior Members Group Advisors, Ignacio Ansotegui and Paul Potter, announced the Best 5 Junior Oral Abstract Presenters. The Top 3 Junior Poster Abstracts were also identified in several categories. The top posters were judged and the best poster was selected by the judges. For a full list of Award recipients and award categories, click here.

Presidential Recognition & Collaboration Awards
During the WAO Presidential Dinner, several individuals received Presidential Recognition & Collaboration Awards for their special contributions to WAO over the past two years.

Virginia Bellido Linares, Spain
Matteo Bonini, Italy
Jan Brozek, Canada
Sergio Del Giacco, Italy
Pascal Demoly, France
Veselin Dimov, USA
Yehia El-Gamal, Egypt
Dalia El-Ghoneimy, Egypt
Alessandro Fiocchi, Italy
Stuart Friedman, USA
Claudia Gallego Corella, México
Liliane Gendreau-Reid, Canada
Georgy Gudima, Russia
Kamal Maurice Hanna, Egypt
Juan Carlos Ivancevich, Argentina
Connie H. Katelaris, Australia
Krzysztof Kowal, Poland
Bob Laniier, USA
Dennis Ledford, USA
Phil Lieberman, USA
Carlos Nunes, Portugal
Giovanni Passalacqua, Italy
Barbara Rogala, Poland
Nelson Rosário Filho, Brazil
Lanny J. Rosenwasser, USA
Hirohsa Saito, Japan
Anna Sala Cunill, Spain
Silvia Sánchez Garcia, Spain
Glenis Scadding, United Kingdom
Holger Schünemann, Canada
Rebaz Sepiashvili, Russia
F. Estelle R. Simons, Canada

Scientific Program Highlights
The Scientific Program kicked-off with 5 New Horizon Sessions that showcased the latest science related to allergy, asthma and clinical immunology, and the 1st WAO Allied Health Program designed for health professionals who provide care to people with allergy, asthma and immunologic diseases. Click here for the Final Program. Other highlights of the program include:

- 246 Speakers
- 85 Travel Grants
- 682 Abstract Presentations
- 251 sessions featuring Allied Health Program, Breakfast Symposia, Collaborating Partner Symposia, Debates, New Horizons Sessions, Oral Abstract Presentations, Plenary Sessions, Poster Symposia, Sister Society Symposia, University Training Programs, Workshops, and Year in Review sessions

WAO 60th Anniversary
Congress attendees relived WAO’s proudest achievements and, scientific breakthroughs and honored the pioneering leaders of the allergy specialty through the WAO 60th
Anniversary Display. The display was featured at various events during the Congress and comprehensive articles by Alain de Weck and Michael Kaliner, past presidents of WAO, were on hand at the display. Personal recollections by past presidents, congress organizers and other WAO leaders that make up the new WAO History publication are available for reading and downloading on the WAO Journal website.
Congress Committee Members were pleased with the outcome of the planning and work that went into the WAC 2011 over the past few years. Dr. Lockey expressed his appreciation in his opening ceremony speech. “I am honored to be the WAO President and sincerely thank everyone who has made these last several years extremely enjoyable. WAO is the specialty’s international organization. Its purpose is to interact, collaborate, and cooperate with its 89 Member Societies as well as with the training programs. That is our goal and will continue to be our goal in moving the specialty of allergy and clinical immunology forward into this 21st Century.”