

The CAHON Reception at the 2015 AACR Annual Meeting

Report and Summary

In collaboration with the American Association of Cancer Research (AACR), this year marks the first time in its 10-year history that the Chinese American Hematology and Oncologist Network (CAHON)* held its meeting and reception for the CAHON members and invited guests at the AACR annual meeting. It was on April 18, 2015 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

The goal of this inaugural event was to fulfill CAHON's missions in building solid bridges for its members and for promoting Sino-US exchange in cancer research. It provided the opportunity for collaborations to CAHON members and invited guests from every domain of oncology including academia, clinical practice, pharmaceutical industry, regulatory agencies and financial sectors. More than thirty CAHON members and 40-plus invited CAHON friends attended and enjoyed the meeting, including a number of CAHON leadership team and board members (Drs. Jing-Zhou Hou, Delong Liu, Ke Liu, Cynthia Ma, Wenru Song, , Weijing Sun, Ruirong Yuan, and Sen Zhuang) as well as distinguished guests, Frederic Biemar and Jeff Ruben from AACR, Dr. Robert Carson, MD, the CEO of National Comprehensive Cancer Network (NCCN), Dr. Howard Kaufman, MD, the current president of the Society of Immunotherapy of Cancer (SITC), Dr. Heinz Zwierzina, MD, the current president from the Cancer Drug Development Forum, and Paul Pearlman from Center of Global Health at NCI.

This event was supported in part by AACR, one of the largest organizations in promoting cancer research and seeking cancer cure in the United States as well as globally. CAHON shares the vision and missions of AACR at its core. In particular, CAHON has been playing an active role in facilitating the AACR outreach program in China, with its very first successful New Horizons in Cancer Research Conference in Shanghai in October 2014.

Dr. Jing-Zhou Hou, the current CAHON President, opened up the meeting, and introduced the members of the CAHON executive team and board members. Dr. Wenru Song, Chair of the CAHON board introduced the invited guests and summarized the history, missions, and strategic plans of CAHON. Dr. Delong Liu, the founding president of CAHON and Editor-in-Chief of *Journal of Hematology & Oncology* (JHO), highlighted the CAHON official journal JHO, as well as three other rapidly growing journals that are affiliated with CAHON: *Experimental Hematology and Oncology*, *Biomarker Research*, and *Stem Cell Investigation*. Dr. Ruirong Yuan, a board member and past president of CAHON, detailed the history and current active interaction and collaborations between CAHON and the Chinese Society of Clinical Oncology (CSCO). Dr. Cynthia Ma, Chair of the Academic Committee of CAHON, shared the vision and plan of CAHON on the selection and awarding CAHON Young

Investigator Award (YIA) in the upcoming CAHON meeting which coincides with the 2015 annual ASCO meeting in Chicago.

Two CAHON members shared their experience in fulfilling CAHON's missions. One is Dr. Ruibao Ren, Professor at Brandeis and Deputy Director of Shanghai Institute of Hematology, sharing his experience in promoting Sino-US exchange in hematology and cancer research. In light of the exciting developments in the field of cancer immunotherapy, Dr. Lieping Chen MD PhD, professor and the program leader of the Cancer Immunology at the Yale Cancer Center, shared his story and history of discovery of PD-L1 in 1999 (named B7-H1 back then), one of the key checkpoints of T cell activation. This discovery, and his subsequent work demonstrating the aberrant expression of PD-L1 by cancers of many types paved the way for the current paradigm shift in oncology, which aims to enhance the host immune defense via immune checkpoint blockade for the broad treatment of cancers including lung cancer, melanoma, bladder cancer, triple negative breast cancer as well as Hodgkin lymphoma.

The meeting concluded with the announcements of the CAHON president-elect (2016-18), Zihai Li, MD PhD, Professor and Chair of Immunology and Microbiology at Medical University of South Carolina to lead CAHON to next height as the young CAHON marches to its 2nd decade of exciting development.

*About **CAHON** (www.cahon.org):

Founded in 2005, CAHON is dedicated to fostering communications among Chinese American medical professionals for the delivery of high-quality health care to patients with neoplastic and hematological diseases, and to promoting the exchange of medical information between the United States and China in the fields of hematology and oncology.