

## **Report on First Joint Meeting on Alcohol and other Drugs of Abuse: from molecules to human disorders**

The “First Joint Meeting on Alcohol and other Drugs of Abuse: from molecules to human disorders” took place in the Hotel El Araucano (Concepción, Chile), and began on October 16<sup>th</sup> and adjourned on October 19<sup>th</sup>, 2013. Attendance at the meeting was close to 150 people, comprising researchers and graduate and undergraduate students from Chile, Brazil, Argentina and México. Scientists at the meeting were from UK, Spain, Australia, USA, Argentine, Brazil and Chile.

This meeting was a joint effort of the Latin American Society for Biomedical Research on Alcoholism (LASBRA) and the Latin American Research Network on Drug Abuse (LARNEDA), with support from the International Brain Organization (IBRO), the International Society for Neurochemistry, ISN, the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores de Chile; Millennium Scientific Initiative, Ministerio de Economía de Chile; Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile; Universidad de Concepción.

The meeting had 5 keynote conferences given by outstanding researchers in the field of alcohol and drug addiction. Dr. Günter Schumann (UK) opened the meeting focusing on results gathered in adolescent drinking from the IMAGEN project and how they help to understand drug-mediated reinforcement. Dr. Howard Field (USA) discussed different theories and supporting evidence on the role of midbrain dopamine in substance abuse disorders. Consuelo Guerri (Spain) made an extensive review on the role of neuroinflammation in the acute and chronic effects of drugs. Changes in the physiology of nucleus accumbens after exposure to ethanol in adolescence were discussed during Patricio O’Donnell’s (USA) keynote talk. During the closing conference, in turn, Dr. Peter Dodd (Australia) proposed, based on post-mortem brain tissue data, that chronic alcohol exposure results in alteration in the balance of amino acid-based transmitters. Photographs taken during the keynote conferences of Dr. Guerri and Dr. Dodd follow.



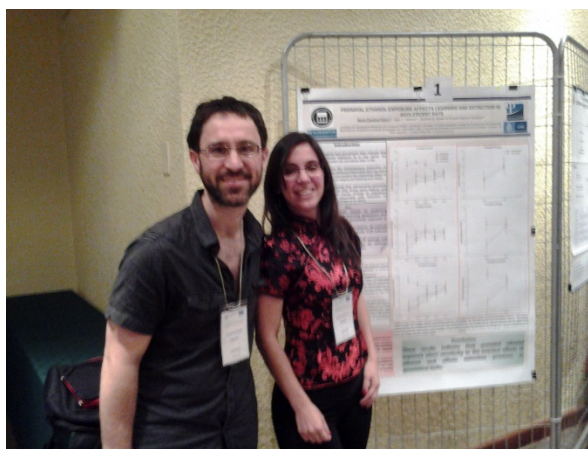


There were six symposiums of 2 hours each featuring local, regional and international speakers, such as Alexander Medina (USA), Tamara Marcourakis (Brasil), Miriam Virgolini (Argentina), Alfredo Ghezzi (USA) and Sylvane Desrivieres (UK), among many others. These activities we focused on issues such as effects of drug during development, anxiety and emotions, molecular targets of alcohol in the brain, ethanol-induced motivation, plasticity and learning, genetic traits associated with alcohol abuse and dependence, etc. Photographs taken of Dr. Medina and Dr. Quadros (Brazil) during the symposia follow:





Almost 80 posters were presented during three sessions, most of them given by graduate students from Argentina, Brazil, Chile and México. It should be noted that thanks to our supporting organizations, **all students** who presented a poster were awarded a fellowship (US\$ 400, 300 and 150 depending on distance) to help in the costs of attendance and lodging. The photograph below shows the poster “Prenatal ethanol exposure affects learning and extinction in adolescent rats” by Pautassi and Fabio (Argentina).



During the meeting, two different prizes were given by the organization to outstanding young scientists. The best poster on alcohol research was awarded with the “Harold Kalant Award” and the most innovative poster was selected for the “Innovative Research Award” sponsored by the Chilean Chapter of the SFN. The Award Committee was composed of three professors (Drs. Abate, Yevenes and Campusano) who suggested to equally divide the prize money of the “Kalant Award” between two winners, due to the high quality of both research projects. The winners were Vanesa Ortiz (IFEC, Argentina) with her work “ETHANOL WITHDRAWAL DECREASED THE EXPRESSION OF GABA-A  $\alpha$ 1-SUBUNIT IN BASOLATERAL AMYGDALA AND ELICITS A MEMORY TRACE RESISTANT TO LABILIZATION AFTER RECALL” and Braulio Muñoz (University of Concepcion, Chile) with his poster entitled “ETHANOL MODULATES GLYCINE RECEPTOR IN NUCLEUS ACCUMBENS”. The winner of the “Innovative Research Award” was Andre Rueda (U. Sao Paulo, Brazil) with the poster “ETHANOL-INDUCED BEHAVIORAL SENSITIZATION IS BLOCKED BY ENVIRONMENTAL ENRICHMENT: EFFECTS ON MICRO-RNAS TARGETING BDNF”. A photograph of the awardees and the current president of LASBRA, Dr. Luis Aguayo, follows:



Last but not least, the annual LASBRA assembly as well as a camaraderie dinner took place during the meeting in which attendees had the possibility of enjoying typical Chilean music and dance (see closing photograph). In summary, the **First Joint Meeting on Alcohol and other Drugs of Abuse: from molecules to human disorders**, was a very important event that served as a forum of discussion, update and exchange between scientists of Latin America and throughout the world.



The organizing committee (LASBRA and LARNEDA)

Luis G. Aguayo (Chile)

Ricardo Pautassi (Argentina)

Rosana Camarini (Brazil)

Jorge Campusano (Chile)

M. Estela Andres (Chile)

Kaita Gysling (Chile)

Concepcion, October 23, 2013

## Financial Report for the US\$ 11,000 Award from ISN

Applicant name	Country	Category	Poster	Scholarship US\$
Priscilla Carrara	Brazil	Postdoctoral	Yes	400
Andre Rueda	Brazil	Grad Student	Yes	400
Aline Soeiro	Brazil	Undergrad	Yes	400
Ricardo Schneider Jr.	Brazil	Grad Student	Yes	400
Lucas Hoffmann	Brazil	Undergrad	Yes	400
Sheila Engi	Brazil	Grad Student	Yes	400
Giovana de Macedo	Brazil	Grad Student	Yes	400
Mariana Beu Rae	Brazil	Grad Student	Yes	400
Maria Belen Acevedo	Argentina	Grad Student	Yes	300
Samanta March	Argentina	Postdoctoral	Yes	300
Maria Carolina Fabio	Argentina	Grad Student	Yes	300
Mara Matalloni	Argentina	Grad Student	Yes	300
Natalia Marchese	Argentina	Grad Student	Yes	300
Macarena Fernandez	Argentina	Undergrad	Yes	300
Vanesa Ortiz	Argentina	Grad Student	Yes	300
Karina Conde	Argentina	Grad Student	Yes	300
Marcela Cullere	Argentina	Grad Student	Yes	300
Laura De Giovanni	Argentina	Grad Student	Yes	300
Arredondo Ramirez	Chile	Postdoctoral	Yes	150
Raquel Ibañez	Chile	Postdoctoral	Yes	150
Georgina Renard	Chile	Postdoctoral	Yes	150
Hector Yarur	Chile	Postdoctoral	Yes	150
Luis Pereira Cerda	Chile	Grad Student	Yes	150
Julian Saez Andura	Chile	Grad Student	Yes	150

**TOTAL**

**US\$ 7,100**

**OTHER EXPENSES**

**Hotel Rooms, lunches**

**US\$ 3,900**

**GRAND TOTAL**

**US\$ 11,000**