

# Introduction

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This issue of *Experimental Biology and Medicine* represents papers presented at the 5th International Conference on Metallothionein held in Beijing, China, October 8–12, 2005. The theme of the meeting was Metals and Metallothionein in Biology and Medicine. Both basic research on structure, biochemistry and molecular biology, and clinical applications of metals and metallothionein in cancer, diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, and neurodegenerative diseases were discussed. The manuscripts from all these research areas are included in this issue.

About 200 scientists from 17 different countries participated in the meeting. The scientific sessions consisted of three plenary lectures delivered by Drs. J.H.R. Kagi (Switzerland), C.D. Klaassen (United States), and K.T. Suzuki (Japan); seven symposium sessions, two special evening sessions for presentation from Chinese scientists; and poster sessions. The meeting provided a unique opportunity for scientists from a number of countries with similar research interests to present their latest results, exchange ideas, and develop research collaborations. More than 50 international students and postdoctoral fellows participated in the meeting, thanks to funding from some of our sponsors, International Society of Neurochemistry, Nickel Producers Environmental Research Association,

Society of Toxicology, Research Western (University of Western Ontario), National Natural Science Foundation, and the Ministry of Education of China. The cochairs of the meeting were Drs. Binggen Ru (Peking University, China) and M. George Cherian (University of Western Ontario, Canada). Drs. Wei Li and Xuexun Fang (Ji Lin University, China) were secretaries general of the conference.

The organizing committee consisted of Drs. Y. James Kang (Louisville, Kentucky, USA), Jie Liu (National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences, Research Triangle Park, North Carolina, USA); Bruce Fowler (Atlanta, Georgia, USA); Max Costa (New York University, New York, New York, USA); Gunnar Nordberg (Umeå, Sweden); James Koropatnick (London, Ontario, Canada); Juan Hidalgo (Barcelona, Spain); Kazuo T. Suzuki (Chiba, Japan); Michael Aschner (Nashville, Tennessee, USA); and M. Ding, X. Shen, and P. Zhou (China).

It is a pleasure for us to acknowledge the help and assistance of the sponsors and all the participants—especially to those who contributed these manuscripts—and special thanks to the reviewers of the submitted manuscripts. We also thank the editors of the special issue. We believe this issue will be a useful reference for metals and metallothionein to all scientists and students working in this research area.