

## FOREWORD

# Proceedings of the Ninth International Conference on Endothelin (ET-9)

ET-9 was held at The Canyons in Park City, Utah from September 11–14, 2005 under the auspices of the Department of Internal Medicine at the University of Utah Health Sciences Center. This meeting was part of a series of biennial conferences that rotate between North America, Europe and Asia. Approximately 225 scientists from academia and industry attended and presented data from studies involving the role of ET in health and disease of a wide range of organ systems. While the ET field still maintains a major focus on cardiovascular function, many other areas of interest are evolving. This Proceedings deals with many of the developments that were presented at ET-9; highlights include, but are not limited to:

- ET receptor heterodimerization
- Novel ET signaling pathways
- New models of hypertension and vascular injury involving the ET system
- Role of ET in obesity, insulin resistance, diabetes and the metabolic syndrome
- ET and the eye, including retinopathy and glaucoma
- Involvement of ET in pain and narcotic tolerance
- ET and cancer, including its role as a survival or metastatic factor, in pathologic bone formation, and in assisted drug delivery
- Protective effects of ET blockade in cardiac fibrosis and cardiomyocyte survival
- ET induction of fibrosis and epithelial to mesenchymal transition
- ET in systemic sclerosis
- Clinical trials of ET receptor antagonists in pulmonary hypertension, cancer, pain, and other disorders using nonselective or ETA receptor selective antagonists
- Emerging concepts on the role of ET in regulating renal function in health and disease
- ET in inflammation, including rheumatic, transplant-related, and infectious causes

ET-9 involved a great deal of preparation, requiring the essential contributions of members of the Local Organizing Committee and, in particular, Ms. Jessica Kuo and Ms. Martha Israelsen. The advice, guidance, selection of awardees for Young Investigator Travel Awards, and abstract review by the Scientific Advisory Board and other ET experts was greatly appreciated. I believe that those attending the meeting felt it was a success on several levels, including encouraging young investigators interested in the field (40 of whom received travel awards), providing the opportunity to relate ET work in different fields, and facilitating transition between basic research and clinical trials. We were fortunate to have Drs. Paul Vanhoutte and Tomoh Masaki as Honorary Chairs. Sir John Vane, Nobel Laureate and co-founder of the International Conferences on ET, had agreed to be an Honorary Chair, but sadly passed away prior to the meeting. ET-9, and this Proceedings, are dedicated to his memory.

The next International Conference on Endothelin (ET-10) will be held in Bergamo, Italy in September of 2007, under the Chair of Dr. Ariela Benigni. This coming meeting promises to continue the tradition of excellent international science and communication that are a hallmark of the ET conferences. I encourage anyone interested in the ET field to attend and to take part in studies involving an ever increasing scope of ET in health and disease.

DONALD KOHAN, Chair, ET-9