

12th international congress of inborn errors of metabolism, 3rd–6th September, 2013

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ICIEM was held in Spain for the first time in September, 2013, and we were delighted to welcome to the Congress 2,520 delegates from all over the world. All continents were represented with 62 % of participants coming from Europe, 25 % from America, 9 % from Asia, 2.5 % from Australia and New Zealand, and 2 % from Africa. This truly reflects the continuing and expanding scientific interest in inherited metabolic diseases.

We would like to acknowledge the contribution of all of our local colleagues towards the success of the Congress, particularly the students and young people working with us “the blue shirt team.” Everyone involved worked very hard to make this a memorable event.

We are living at a time when there is a paradigm shift in the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of inborn errors of metabolism, and this was reflected in the program of five plenary sessions and twelve workshops which brought together the leading workers in the field. In addition, there were eight sessions of oral presentations, a session on hot topics and late breaking news and the prestigious Komrower lecture and Emmanuel Shapira and Archibald Garrod awards. During the Congress, there were presentations on nine newly discovered diseases. The oral presentations were complemented by

poster sessions at which 882 posters were available for information and discussion.

The plenary sessions covered a diverse range of topics—glycosylation defects, movement disorders, novel treatment strategies, laboratory diagnostics, and cofactor metabolism. These, and the other scientific sessions, were punctuated by a fine program of social and cultural events—a performance from a Catalan choral, a reception at the congress venue accompanied by music from a jazz band, an evening at Pueblo Español with a taste of Catalan culture including live music and “Castellers,” and the Congress dinner in the Palau Nacional, where the permanent Romanesque and Gothic exhibitions could be visited. In the usual pattern of SSIEM symposia, a choice of Barcelona excursions was offered on Thursday afternoon.

We are very grateful to everyone who helped in making this Congress such a success: the speakers, the international organizing committee and its chairman, Prof. Cornelis Jakobs, the SSIEM as the organizing society, Grupo Pacífico, our congress organizers, the Sponsors, and all of the participants.

Conflict of interest None.

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