

## ***IVEC/ISVS 2008-Welcome Letter***

*In my capacity as President of the International Society of Vascular Surgery (ISVS) and Chairman of the IVEC Scientific Committee, it is a great pleasure to welcome you to the 9<sup>th</sup> International Vascular and Endovascular Course (IVEC): Emerging Technologies, New Achievements and Future Perspectives in Endovascular Interventions, held joint with the 2<sup>nd</sup> European Congress of the International Society for Vascular Surgery (ISVS).*

*The International Society for Vascular Surgery (ISVS) was founded in 2003 by a worldwide group of distinguished vascular surgeons who claimed the need to have an international organization, committed to the recognition and promotion of vascular surgery as a defined specialty, separate and distinct from general and cardiothoracic surgery. Some of these surgeons were the first in line to adopt, perform, support and divulge endovascular procedures since the beginning of the fascinating new endoluminal era*

*The original intention of the ISVS was to provide univocal ways of conduct among vascular surgeons by creating one voice, while engaging vascular surgeons worldwide in exploring what is new on the endovascular horizon and recognizing that vascular surgery must continue to evolve and be respected as a separate and distinct specialty worldwide.*

*As a result of the tremendously rapid evolution of technical skills and professional acquisitions and development of new devices, the large majority of vascular procedures can be performed either endoluminally or through hybrid (endovascular and open) approaches. We are witnessing a transitional situation. The problems that we are now facing did not exist in the past and will not exist in the future.*

*I must emphasize that the ISVS mission is to make vascular surgery a universally accepted specialty worldwide, which is essential for our survival. Moreover, the ISVS is actively engaged in raising standards while offering their members an opportunity to become involved in training programmes and to learn access techniques that they cannot be taught at home. This will particularly be a great asset to our Members, especially our colleagues who practice vascular surgery in developing countries also known as the emerging markets. Finally, high on the council's agenda is to send Council Members to developing countries to assist them in their programmes.*

*As an international organization, we are in a very unique, fortunate and favourable situation because we can promote an international agenda. In fact, national and regional societies cannot internationalize themselves by trying to attract members from other countries. Generally speaking, the main goal and concern of national*

*societies is to focus on their own national, rather than international, vascular surgery issues.*

*Our accomplished objectives include the organization of sessions and meetings for the Membership. Examples for the year 2008 include the 9<sup>th</sup> IVEC/2<sup>nd</sup> European ISVS Joint Congress in Milan, Italy (October 9-11); a scientific poster session at the VEITHsymposium in New York (November 19-23) and an independent session at the X Pan American Congress on Vascular and Endovascular Surgery in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (October 28-November 1). Other educational events are currently being organized that include training vascular surgeons interested in endoluminal procedures, as well as non-vascular surgeons who might benefit from being tutored in open access.*

*The ISVS affiliated centres of training fellowship programmes were established 2 years ago and have received a lot of attention from young fellows worldwide. These programmes run for a period of 3 to 6 months or up to 1 year. Affiliated teaching institutions include: the Hospital Clinic, University of Barcelona (Barcelona, Spain) under the direction of Dr. Vincent Riambau; the Cleveland Clinic (Cleveland, OH) under the direction of Dr. Daniel Claire; the AZ Saint-Blasius, under the direction of Marc Bosiers, MD (Dendermonde, Belgium); and the University of Milan-Bicocca (Milan, Italy) under my personal direction. To date, we continue to receive an enormous amount of e-mail inquiries from young fellows from many continents interested in applying for these fellowship training programs. Scholarships are available. Information can be found at the ISVS.com web site.*

*In addition, we are pleased to recognize and honor two very special individuals who, over the years have contributed to expanding our educational horizons. Through a generous contribution made by Joan L. and Dr. Julius H. Jacobson II, every year, The International Society for Vascular Surgery will award two (2) ISVS junior members, \$1,000 each, for research projects on "Vascular Biology and/or Microcirculation" to acknowledge their work.*

*The first award will be presented to one winner at the ISVS meeting, (based on the best oral presentation, at the X Pan American Congress on Vascular and Endovascular Surgery (Rio de Janeiro - Brazil). Your research will will be considered for publication in "VASCULAR").*

*Although our peer-reviewed journal, Vascular, is still a young publication, it continues to grow, which is the result of the submission of excellent papers and the support received from industry and through the hard and dedicated work of a luminary, Dr. Frank Veith.*

*We have recently established a Women's Committee, chaired by Dr. Allison Halliday, from the United Kingdom. This Committee is working on several new initiatives that will be announced and launched during the course of the IVEC/ISVS Joint Congress in Milan.*

*Finally, our International Government Relations Committee is busy reaching out to other groups and worldwide associations, in order to establish ways in which to improve vascular care to the public on a global scale.*

*The society's goals, as they were enunciated when the Society was established, and which were strongly pursued under the excellent leadership of my predecessor, Sir Peter Bell, have not changed but rather have evolved. Thank you Sir Peter.*

*A society cannot exist without a trusted management team. Pauline Mayer, Executive Director of the ISVS, is dedicated to promoting the ISVS globally, actively engaged in recruitment. She is experienced in all the nuisances associated with our specialty. Thanks to Pauline and her staff, the ISVS profile has been elevated and continues to grow in membership. Thank you Pauline.*

*Vascular surgery is no longer a species in danger but it does need to define its identity. The ISVS is here to provide indications and to show the way.*

*One question that colleagues sometimes pose to me is "Why should vascular surgeons join the ISVS?"*

*The answer is in the mission of the Society. I remember - I was personally present on that occasion, when a President of the United States of America, during his Inaugural Address stated: "Ask not what your country can do for you - ask what you can do for your country."*

***As Chairman of the IVEC/ISVS 2008 Scientific Committee, I am honoured to acknowledge the presence of an outstanding Faculty with 93 distinguished friends and colleagues from 17 Countries, from 4 Continents.***

*Thank you once more for accepting my invitation to participate in the scientific programme of the IVEC/ISVS. once more*

*In addition to the invited Speakers, it has now become a tradition to host two Free Papers Sessions of 15 papers each. I am pleased to announce that 67 abstracts were submitted for consideration for inclusion in the Scientific Programme. As Chairman of the Scientific Committee, I wish to thank all the Authors for considering the IVEC/ISVS as the suitable scientific event at which to present the results of their clinical and experimental work. The Evaluation Committee has selected the 30 papers, which are included in the Scientific Sessions.*

Thank you!

I am also pleased to announce that we have two brand new initiatives this year:

- 1- The Poster sessions: 24 posters were received and 18 were selected by the Selection Committee for presentation.
- 2- The "Women's Session". As mentioned before, the original idea to establish an ISVS Women's Committee came from the ISVS and Dr. Alison Halliday was unanimously proposed as Chairperson of this Committee. In addition, Alison was asked, and enthusiastically accepted, to organize, as a "premier", a Scientific Session in Milan entitled: **This Is a Women's Vascular World**. Alison has set up an excellent international panel of female colleagues involved in clinical activities and experimental research in the field of vascular procedures.

Thank you.

My sincerest thanks go to the Partner Industries, that have believed and continue to believe in the Milan Annual Congress and that have generously contributed in the organization of this event. The IVEC/ISVS Meetings could not be possible without their support.

Thank you.

I also wish to cordially thank the Academic Authorities of the University of Milano Bicocca and especially the Rector, Professor Marcello Fontanesi, and all the colleagues and friends that have supported and encouraged me to continue with the organization of the IVEC.

Thank you!

Finally, I wish to thank my close collaborators who, since almost 10 years, have worked with me and have contributed greatly in the organization of the IVECs over the years, with vivid enthusiasm and professional competence and skill.

Thank you. Thank you all very much.