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SCAR

NEWS

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SOCIETY FOR COMPUTER APPLICATIONS IN RADIOLOGY

SCAR 2004 A Great Northern Meeting

The SCAR 2004 Annual Meeting, held in the gemlike Pacific northwest setting of Vancouver, BC, May 20–23, brought together more than 2,500 attendees, 65% of whom were first-time participants. More than a third of attendees came from outside the United States (24% Canadian, 9% from 25 other countries). “This was a truly remarkable meeting,” said SCAR Chair Bruce I. Reiner, MD. “We had excellent attendance, wonderful exhibits, superb scientific and technical sessions—all in a beautiful location. The growing energy and interest in imaging informatics was in evidence everywhere, from casual on-the-exhibit-floor conversations to the presentation of new and innovative work.”

The meeting was preceded by the second annual PACS Administration overview course on May 19. The session was well attended, with intensive course work and reviews of the core competencies of PACS administration. Attendee evaluations were overwhelmingly positive to this one-of-a-kind educational offering that seeks to prepare individuals for what is, in many institutions, an entirely new professional position.

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Leo Black, MD, spoke on “Information Technology and Medical Practice Automation.”

SCAR TRIP™ Initiative Continues to Build

Special Session, Corporate Partners, NIH Grant Highlight Early Success

The SCAR Transforming the Radiological Interpretation Process (TRIP™) initiative has matured from a preliminary challenge in 2002 into a vital and growing movement among imaging specialists. The ways in which this SCAR-led effort has galvanized a range of professionals in the field were evident in presentations at the special TRIP™ session on May 20 during the SCAR Annual Meeting in Vancouver, BC. As part of a full slate of presentations addressing the “data explosion” of increasingly large image datasets, session chair Katherine P. Andriole, PhD, announced that the National Institutes of Health (NIH) National Institute of Biomedical Imaging and Bioengineering (NIBIB) had awarded a prestigious R13 grant to SCAR in support of the first annual TRIP™ Conference and Workshop, to be held January 31 and February 1, 2005, in Bethesda, MD.

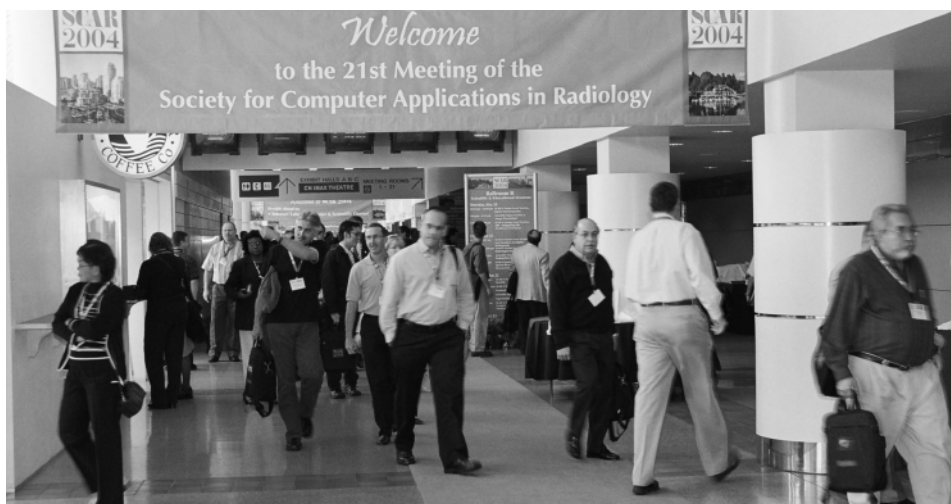
Behind the scenes at the meeting, Andriole and other SCAR members were hard at work enlisting support for a program through which corporate partners will join the TRIP™ initiative as it evolves to address

new issues and changing technologies. “We are delighted that these elements have all come together to demonstrate the success of the TRIP effort,” said Andriole. “The depth and breadth of topics at the special session, NIH’s recognition of our work through the grant funding, and the encouraging initial response we’ve received from corporate partners are all evidence that the topics with which the TRIP™ initiative deals resonate with a broad range of imaging informatics professionals.”

2004 SCAR TRIP™ Special Session

The TRIP™ session at SCAR 2004 focused on computer-aided detection (CAD) as an approach for dealing with large medical image data sets. “This is one of the most challenging questions facing imaging specialists today,” said Andriole. “How much can we expect the computer to augment human detection capabilities across the range of modalities and imaging settings? What is feasible now and what can we expect in the future?” Of special interest and discussed by several participants was

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SCAR TRIP™

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the question of whether CAD can or will achieve the screening capabilities seen in other fields, such as automated analysis of pap smears and other pathology specimens.

Andriole began the meeting with a presentation on "Addressing the Coming Radiology Crisis: Current Status of the SCAR TRIP™ Initiative." She was followed by participants who addressed specific CAD applications. Bradley Erickson, MD, PhD, spoke on CAD and change detection; Matthew Brown, PhD, presented CAD in thoracic CT; and Maryellen Giger, PhD, reported on CAD in breast imaging.

The session was well attended and was followed by questions and answers as well as substantial after-session discussion among participants and attendees. All presentations from the session are available on the SCAR website.

2005 SCAR TRIP™ Conference and Workshop

The first annual SCAR TRIP™ Conference and Workshop will be held at the Hyatt Regency in Bethesda, MD, on January 31 and February 1, 2005. "The goal of the meeting is to stimulate interdisciplinary interactions for the discovery of solutions to the problem of health care information and image data overload," said Andriole. "The workshop format will give us an unprecedented opportunity to focus on this subject in a collegial setting."

A preliminary schedule posted on the SCAR website includes plenary and breakout sessions, scientific posters (including student submissions), and a dinner with keynote speakers. Topics for poster abstract submission and slated for in-depth discussion are human perception, image processing and CAD, visualization, navigation and user-interface design, databases and integration, evaluation of methodologies, and validation of performance. "NIH was enthusiastic in its endorsement and support of the conference," said Andriole. "They noted the 'laudable and necessary objective' and 'timely and innovative' topics and pointed to 'potentially high significance, which if successful, will define the future directions of advances in radiology'. We all look forward to the first in what we hope will become an internationally recognized series of imaging informatics meetings."

The schedule will be updated over the summer and fall. Important dates to remember are September 30, when conference registration will open, and October 7, the deadline for submission of abstracts. A proceedings summary will be published as a SCAR white paper later in 2005.

SCAR TRIP™ Corporate Partnership Program

From the outset, the aims of the TRIP™ initiative have reflected the concerns of the diverse and unique membership that makes up SCAR. Only in SCAR do the researchers, clinicians, vendors, and providers who work in quickly changing imaging technologies come together on an equal footing to share insights and results and identify the direction of future work. All these constituencies share in the risks of adopting new technologies, programs, services, and processes designed to improve performance and patient care. TRIP™ is an entirely new kind of initiative for the Society, and partnerships are a critical mechanism needed to support the continued growth and success of this effort.

Plans for the SCAR TRIP™ Corporate Partnership Program were launched earlier this year. The program will be open only to SCAR corporate members, who may choose to participate at one of three levels: TeraPartners (\$10,000), PetaPartners (\$20,000), and ExaPartners (\$40,000). Participants will receive a number of privileges and recognitions that have been spelled out in initial Corporate Partnership Program materials circulated during the early summer. "Initial response has surpassed our expectations," said Anna Marie Mason, SCAR Executive Director. "Those companies who have already signed on as partners have expressed not only their willingness to support the effort but also their understanding that this is another way to facilitate an ongoing exchange among industry, researchers, end-user clinicians, and scientists in and outside medicine who struggle with similar issues in their use of image data."

A formal roll-out and announcement of the program, along with the names of the founding corporate partners, is planned for August. For more information on the program contact Mason at the SCAR office at 703-757-0054 or amason@scarnet.org.

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Gala Opening Session and Premier

The SCAR 2004 opening session featured keynote speaker Leo F. Black, former CEO of Mayo Clinic Jacksonville (FL) as well as an unexpected gala motion picture premier. In his address, Black urged physicians to take the lead in pushing for widespread adoption of health care information technology in an effort to limit increasing costs, reach underserved populations, and deal with increasing numbers of studies. He reviewed experience at his own institution in shifting from paper-based to electronic medical records.

At the conclusion of Black's remarks, when veteran SCAR attendees were accustomed to leaving for educational and scientific sessions, the audience was given a brief break to prepare for the world premier of a new film. Popcorn and soft drinks were handed out, and Eliot L. Siegel, MD, took the stage to introduce *Digital Eye for the Analog Guy*, a film on the physical elements necessary to transition to an all-digital imaging department. The film and the premier event were supported by GE Medical Systems. Tongues firmly in cheek, Siegel and colleagues from the Baltimore Veterans Affairs Medical Center and the University of Maryland Medical Center starred in the film and led viewers on a madcap trip through a radiology suite rehab.

A Packed Schedule for Attendees

The scientific program at SCAR 2004 included 10 regular sessions and two vendor sessions, in addition to 10 special sessions on topics of immediate interest to a broad range of participants. This year three facilitated roundtable discussions joined the traditional Residents' Roundtable as part of the program. The three new roundtables were designed to serve distinct SCAR constituencies and included foci on outpatient imaging centers, PACS administration, and information technology and engineering. SCAR U, with its multilevel offering of courses in 12 subject areas continued to be popular with attendees, as were local hospital tours and ancillary meetings.

"The quality of original presentations in the scientific program is increasing every year," said Byrn Williamson, Jr., MD, who chaired the Annual Meeting Program Committee. "At the same time the number and range of other offerings is growing. It's becoming a real challenge for attendees to decide how