

Open Letter to the JSPCR

Dear Friends, Colleagues and Collaborators,

It is a great honor and pleasure to write this letter to all my friends and colleagues in the JSPCR on the occasion of its 29th Annual Meeting held in November 2019 in Okayama. It is particularly rewarding for me to do this since the meeting Chairman, Prof. Hideya Ando, was once a valued post-doctoral fellow in my laboratory at the NIH and he has since gone on to become a renowned scientist in the field of Pigment Cell Biology, as evidenced by his selection to organize and host this Annual Meeting. Over the years, I was extremely fortunate to host many JSPCR members as postdoctoral fellows in my laboratory at the NIH. There is no doubt that my career success was built in large part upon the research efforts and contributions of my Japanese post-doctoral fellows over the years. Many of them have gone on to have successful careers themselves in research laboratories, clinics, frequently becoming Chairs of those departments and serving as Council Members, Officers and Meeting Organizers of the JSPCR. I feel especially connected to the JSPCR since I have attended many JSPCR Annual Meetings over the years and was elected an Honorary Member of the JSPCR in 2016.

As many of you are aware, I was a Senior Biomedical Research Scientist at the National Cancer Institute in Bethesda, MD. My career at NIH spanned more than 40 years, and I served as Chief of the Pigment Cell Biology section in the Laboratory of Cell Biology at the NCI. I have also served as President of the PanAmerican Society for Pigment Cell Research and then as President of the International Federation of Pigment Cell Societies. I was Editor of the Society's official journal, *Pigment Cell Research*, and also was Organizer of a PASPCR Annual Meeting in 1989 in Bethesda, Maryland and then the 19th International Pigment Cell Conference held in Washington DC in 2005. JSPCR Annual Meetings are extremely important as they provide settings to share scientific advances in the field and opportunities for young researchers to present their work and establish new collaborations.

I retired from NIH in 2015 but have maintained my connections with many of my former laboratory members through my work as an editor at DASS Manuscript. It is particularly rewarding to read through the significant scientific advances being made in the field and my editing work allows me to continue to stay up to date on advances in the field via PubMed. It is always a thrill to see new publications that feature one or more of my earlier post-doctoral fellows as coauthors.

In summary, I congratulate all of you for your significant contributions to furthering our understanding of pigment cell biology and its related diseases. I'd like to take this opportunity to warmly welcome you to the 29th Annual Meeting of the JSPCR and wish each and every one of you a productive and successful meeting. I look forward to seeing your continued contributions to science in the coming years.

Sincerely,



Vincent J. Hearing, Ph.D.