

2013 Tribbranch Symposium

3–5 JUNE 2013

Atlantic City Convention Center

Atlantic City, NJ

Total attendance: 404

Total number of exhibitors present: 108



The 2013 Tribbranch Symposium hosted researchers and exhibitors in one of the most densely populated areas for laboratory animal science. This year's symposium, held 3–5 June in Atlantic City, NJ, featured the theme "Safety: Make it first, make it last." Thirty-eight posters were presented on topics related to this theme, including 1st prize winners "Innovative NHP Manipulative Devices and Treats Using Recycled Materials, Fruits and Vegetables" (Rodolfa Quesada, Novartis Pharmaceuticals Corporation, East Hanover, NJ) and "A Comparison of Thermoregulatory Devices During Rodent Anesthesia and the Effects of Body Temperature on Physiological Parameters" (Adam Caro, Claire Hankenson and James Marx, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA).

Hosted by the Metro New York Branch of the American Association for Laboratory Animal Science (AALAS) together with the New Jersey Branch and the Delaware Valley Branch, the meeting included sessions covering best laboratory practices for the safety of animals and personnel alike. The symposium also offered many workshops, including a "People's Choice" Workshop, which was decided through votes on the meeting's Facebook page, on the topic of safe needle technology.

Norman B. Guilloud delivered the meeting's keynote address, providing a history of the use of personal protective equipment (PPE) in biomedical research with animals. He gave a colorful presentation complete with photographs from the 1940s and 1950s of researchers wearing suits and ties (and no gloves) while delivering toxic or highly contagious agents to various research animals. In addition to PPE, he also highlighted the importance of proper sedation techniques, providing a brief history of anesthesia for laboratory animals. Dr. Guilloud also showed incredible images from his early days as one of the first biomedical researchers to work with primates. Notably, Dr. Guilloud reported the first case of the successful vaccination against polio in primates. The charismatic speaker frequently departed from any remarks he may have prepared, choosing instead to delight the standing-room-only audience with tales from the original days of primate research. In one story, he recounted a night spent trapped

in a caging unit with two orangutans, his ears ringing with their cries, because there was no way out of the unit that didn't involve walking right past one of the animals and risking injury. Such stories drove home the point that the safety precautions now mandated for researchers serve an important role in protecting the safety of both animals and researchers.

A highlight of the symposium was a panel discussion on disaster preparedness, a topic that is particularly relevant to researchers in this region, hit hard by Superstorm Sandy in November 2012. Amber Lange of Novartis Institutes for Biomedical Research (East Hanover, NJ) clarified the updated federal requirements for disaster plans, including the amendment to the Animal Welfare Act introduced in December 2012. The US Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service is amending its Animal Welfare Act regulations to require all licensed and registered facilities to develop a contingency plan for emergencies so they can better protect their animals in disaster situations. This rule became effective on 30 January 2013. A written plan must be in place at all USDA-licensed and registered facilities by 29 July 2013, and all employees must be trained on the plan by 27 September 2013. More information about the updates can be found on the USDA website (http://www.aphis.usda.gov/newsroom/2012/12/contingency_rule.shtml). The other panelists, including Lynell M. Dupepe (Tulane University, New Orleans, LA), John Donaho (JCD Consulting, Houston, TX) and Naomi Seufert (The Rockefeller University, New York, NY), recounted their experiences with restoring the operations in their facilities after major storms and offered valuable advice on preparing for and responding to natural disasters.

The meeting also did its part to aid those affected by Superstorm Sandy, raising \$2,600 through a PPE fashion show and a silent auction. The proceeds were donated to the Atlantic City Rescue Mission.