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Editor
E.-L. Laakso PhD
Welcome to WALT2014 in conjunction with NAALT2014

Dear friends and colleagues,

I am very excited by the opportunity to welcome delegates, exhibitors, speakers and sponsors to the combined meetings of WALT2014 and NAALT at the Renaissance Arlington Capital View hotel in Arlington, Virginia. This is the second time in recent years that WALT has partnered with a national laser society to deliver its biennial congress and I think you’ll find this collaborative model produces excellent outcomes for all stakeholders. As the joint meeting of WALT and NAALT gets underway, I feel sure that you will see the benefits in leveraging the combined efforts of like-minded associations.

I am aware that the work undertaken by this year’s conference organising and scientific committees and support personnel has been incredible, further elevating the standards and potential outcomes for this conference. In particular, I wish to extend my gratitude and heartiest congratulations for a job well-done to Dr Chip Godine, Dr Praveen Arany, Robin Schumacher and Jennifer Anderson. Your dedication and commitment is inspiring.

The Congress scientific program with the theme “Photobiomodulation: Mainstream Medicine and Beyond” promises to provide a smorgasbord of information to satisfy everyone’s tastes. From a competitive field, almost 90 abstracts were selected for this joint conference, and we thank all authors for their interest in contributing to the expected success of the WALT/NAALT program. The scientific program is structured with the most relevant and contemporary topics in PBM/LLLT including three Hot Topic sessions discussing the latest mechanisms and applications on the near horizon including dosage parameters, and effects on stem cells. A special effort has been made to bring in the best new investigators and clinicians in the field through funding incentives and dedicated sessions. Much thanks needs to be afforded to the panel of international abstract reviewers for their commitment to ensuring a high quality scientific program. We are delighted with the broad range of keynote and invited speakers who will contribute to the high quality we’ve come to expect of WALT and NAALT conferences. And the continuation of pre-conference workshops will add significant value to your congress dollar – the array of topics in 2014 covers enormous ground.

I am proud to announce that the quality of WALT congresses has been recognised this year by an invitation from Elsevier to index the congress proceedings in Scopus and Compendex (from now on, and back-dated to 2006). The invitation is a clear recognition of the high and ever-increasing scientific quality of WALT congresses as well as the hard work by a succession of WALT committees and supporters over many years. The agreement was co-signed with Medimond International who has been providing WALT its expertise in the publication of its congress proceedings for a number of years. To all presenters, please look out for your invitation to contribute to the full published proceedings, and consider carefully this very significant opportunity to disseminate your research findings.

As delegates, I want to thank you for your on-going support of WALT. I encourage you to make the most of all of the opportunities at WALT2014/NAALT. Please make sure you visit the trade displays and talk to the exhibitors because without them, conferences such as WALT2014/NAALT are difficult to deliver. If you’re not a WALT member we trust that you’ll find this year’s congress interesting and thought-provoking enough that you’ll consider joining. We would welcome your application for membership at http://waltza.co.za/amember/signup.

As I’ve said before at major conferences, “to obtain the most from the programming I urge you to talk with someone new each day, catch up with old friends, start new networks, learn as much as you can, see the sites and enjoy the hospitality of locals”. And start planning for WALT2016!

In the meantime, I extend to you all a happy and safe time and hope that you enjoy and gain much from the joint WALT2014 and NAALT conference.

A/Prof Liisa Laakso
Co-Chair
l.laakso@griffith.edu.au
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