



# IDARS Newsletter

International Drug Abuse Research Society News



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## President's Message

Our recent joint meeting of IDARS with the Asia-Pacific Society for Alcohol and Addiction Research (APSAAR) in Sydney Australia, from August 18-21, 2015 was a classical example of cross-continental success of drug abuse research meeting, highlighting current trends and understanding in frontiers in addiction. This was the 4th APSAAR and the 5th IDARS meeting that was jointly combined at the same venue and at the same time with concurrent sessions focusing on alcohol and other abused substances research presentations. This was the first occasion that the two societies combined forces to share and present data from basic and clinical sciences with implication for translational underpinnings for public health and clinical management. This success further fuels the growing enthusiasm and optimism for the continued and rapid success of IDARS as a global international drug abuse research society. Such a diverse and well attended meeting attests to the outstanding design and international nature of IDARS to integrate recent advances in drug abuse research with seminal studies in different parts of the globe. During the joint meeting in Australia, Dr. Laura Orio from Complutense University in Madrid Spain and Dr. Frederico Pereira from University of Coimbra in Portugal were IDARS awardees shown in the pictures below with me and Syed Ali our Executive Director. We have continued to have a booth at Society for Neuroscience (SFN) meeting to introduce potential new members from the (SFN) community to IDARS



[Dr. George F Koob](#)

and a dinner meeting featuring Guest speakers. Last year at the IDARS—SFN social in Washington DC, Dr. David Lovinger was the key speaker and his presentation was, "Striatum and habitual drug seeking". In this issue the IDARS newsmaker spotlight is on Dr. Lovinger. This year our Guest speaker at the 2015 IDARS—SFN social in Chicago will be Professor Subhash Pandey, Director, Alcohol Research Center, Department of Psychiatry at the University of Illinois in Chicago. I am looking forward to seeing you all in Chicago for the 2015 SFN meeting.

George Koob  
IDARS President

## IDARS AWARDEES AT THE JOINT MEETING IN SYDNEY AUSTRALIA



Joint IDARS APSAAR Meeting in Sydney Australia 2015



Selected pictures above are attendees of the joint 5th IDARS and 4th APSAAR meeting in Sydney, Australia in 2015. Pictures highlight the opening of the conference by Dr. Koob, with concurrent and coffee break sessions and closing ceremony with a solo performance during the dinner party.

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**IDARS Booth at the 2014 SFN Meeting in Washington DC**



We have established a tradition to showcase IDARS with an exhibition booth at the society for neuroscience to attract additional members to IDARS for a truly international model of drug abuse research society. Selected pictures above are IDARS members during the 2014 SFN meeting in Washington DC. The pictures are taken in front of the IDARS booth at the 2014 SFN meeting.

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**Susan Schenk**  
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New Zealand

**Kiyofumi Yamada**  
Nagoya, Japan

IDARS DINNER WITH GUEST SPEAKER AT SFN IN WASHINGTON DC IN 2014.



Members of IDARS and their guests at the society for neuroscience meeting in Washington DC in 2014.

IDARS DINNER WITH GUEST SPEAKER AT SFN IN WASHINGTON DC IN 2014.



Members of IDARS and their guests at the society for neuroscience meeting in Washington DC in 2014.



## Spotlight on Dr. David M. Lovinger

Dr. David M. Lovinger received his Ph.D. in Psychology from Northwestern University where he worked on regulation of the maintenance of hippocampal long-term potentiation by protein kinase C and protein F1. Dr. Lovinger is Chief of the Laboratory for Integrative Neuroscience (LIN) at the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA), Intramural Research Program (IRP) in Rockville, MD. He is also the head of the section on synaptic pharmacology. He is the principal author and co-author on more than two hundred publications and book chapters. He has received many awards including NIAAA merit award and an NIH Directors award for discovering novel forms of synaptic plasticity. Dr. Lovinger's lab examines the role of particular molecules in acute alcohol intoxication, alcohol seeking behavior, addiction and habitual behavior. His lab analyzes the structural basis of the pharmacology of membrane proteins that are targets for alcohol actions. An important unifying theme of research with LIN is investigation of forebrain mechanisms involved in aspects of cognition and behavioral control that contribute to addiction. Dr. Lovinger was Guest speaker at the 2014 IDARS-SFN social event in Washington DC and his presentation was on "Striatum and habitual drug seeking" and provided cellular and molecular evidence that alcohol promotes habitual behaviors including habitual alcohol seeking.

## Editorial Corner: Welcome to our Newsletter\*

Emmanuel Onaivi, Ph.D., Newsletter Editor of IDARS is delighted to publish our electronic newsletter, with information about the society, seeking ideas about our journal, and opportunities for our members. The intention of this newsletter is not only to communicate to you, but also, for you to be able to respond with suggestions for how IDARS may increase its role in your research. We are interested in the latest advances in drug addiction vaccines that could help people stop smoking, or stop compulsive use of drugs of abuse. But whether vaccines can prevent smoking or drug addiction remains an open question. Please send us feedback, and get involved! As editor of this newsletter, I invite you to contact me with ideas for articles in future editions, or to volunteer to write an article yourself.

## What is Addiction? How does it work? And why is it so hard to stop?

The disease model is the front-runner among current definitions of addictions. Is there a role of choice and self-medication in addictions? Nevertheless genetics, environment and epigenetic factors have been linked to compulsive behaviors with withdrawal and relapse as deterrent from quitting from the cycle of addictions. New tools for pharmacogenetic approaches in addictions including optogenetics, epigenetics, vaccines, nanotherapeutics, deep brain stimulation, immunotherapeutics, gene-editing and photo-acoustic imaging require more development and studies in addiction therapy.

**IDARS journal is the Journal of Drug and Alcohol Research (JDAR ). JDAR website: <http://www.ashdin.com/journals/jdar/editors.aspx>**

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### IDARS-AWARDEES

- *Dr. Laura Orio*  
Spain
- *Dr. Frederico Pereira*  
Portugal

### GUEST SPEAKER

- *Dr. Subhash Pandey*  
Chicago-USA

