AO Annual Meeting highlights: A Q&A

By Sierra Rendon, Managing Editor

Following the Academy of Osseointegration’s Annual Meeting 2014 in March, the meeting chairmen, Drs. Lyndon Cooper and Donald Clem III, answered some questions for Implant Tribune.

Dr. Cooper

How many people attended AO Annual Meeting 2014?

More than 2,000 clinicians joined us for the 29th annual meeting of the Academy of Osseointegration (AO), which recorded the fourth largest attendance in its history. We had 614 international attendees representing 45 countries and more than 1,100 exhibitor representatives who showcased products and services to support implant dentistry.

Why did AO choose the theme “Real Problems, Real Solutions”?

We have seen that implants are widely applicable and generally successful, and we recognize that clinician education is critical to success among our patients. This year, we sought to inform clinicians that a segment of our population will experience implant complications and failure, but emerging strategies can help them recover success. We encouraged the clinical team to examine implants carefully, address issues promptly and recognize when — and how — to intervene to preserve dental implant and patient health.

What were some highlights of the clinical sessions?

Leading experts led the program with insights on who experiences complications, why they occur and what evidence says about how well we address these complications. Consistent with the plan, a broad range of data was presented. The early focus on peri-implantitis opened the minds of the audience, while the closing futuristic presentations certainly left everyone feeling inspired. Our clinical presentations anchored the meeting by demonstrating what good science offers great clinicians who adopt an evidence-based approach to caring for people.

Was research a big focus of the meeting?

Yes, presentations ranged from digital planning, new esthetic techniques and prevention strategies to molecular strategies and stem cell biology. Abstract presentations explored original scientific and clinical research, clinical innovations and case presentations that could help shape the future of implant dentistry. We had a record number of more than 250 scientific posters as well.

The new board of directors was also announced in Seattle. How does the AO enjoy such a seamless transition in leadership?

Approaching its 30th year, the AO is fortunate to have organization leadership and leadership development that are very carefully managed. We are all very excited to announce that Dr. Joseph Gian-Grasso, a periodontist from Philadelphia, was elected to serve as the 2014-2015 president of AO. He will follow in the footsteps of a very successful president, Stephen Wheeler, DDS. Dr. Gian-Grasso — along with the rest of us — will remain commit-

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ted to establishing a nexus where specialist
ists and generalists from around the world

can come together to learn and stay up-to-
date on the rapidly advancing clinical re-
search and innovations in the dental im-
plant and tissue engineering industries.

Dr. Clem

Have you already started planning for AO

2015?

Yes, because it’s AO’s 30th anniversary,

we’re all very excited about it. Mark the

calendar now to join us in San Francisco

from March 12-14, 2015, where we plan

to focus on the power of collaboration to

advance the art and science of dental im-

plant therapy.

Can you give us a few glimpses at what’s in

store for next year?

The opening symposium will feature

teachers of doctors presenting on how they

manage patients together for optimal re-

sults. The keynote speaker will be Dr. Dan-

sel Alam, MD, who was a member of the

multi-disciplinary team of doctors and

surgeons at Cleveland Clinic that, in 2008,

performed the first near-total face trans-

plant in the United States.

He will speak to the critical importance

of different disciplines coming together to

support a patient’s medical, surgical and

emotional needs to make him or her feel whole again.

AO also will take a look at what the acad-

emy has learned throughout its 30-year

history and summarize current recom-

 mendations to address the most challeng-

ing conditions in implant dentistry. AO

has enlisted some of the foremost author-

ists and generalists from around the world

to share their knowledge and views to support this initiative.

Keeping with AO tradition, we also want
to ensure the closing symposium doesn’t
disappoint. It will be an interactive ses-

tion where attendees can vote on keypads to
give their opinion on various treatment
options for presented cases. A panel of ex-

perts will also discuss and debate the op-
tions.

What are you most excited about for the

meeting?

At the annual meeting, we are excited to

build on AO’s past and chart the way for

its future. This will be done via top-notch

surgical and restorative tracks, as well as a

“Morning with the Masters,” for which AO

has put together an outstanding group of

experts to give attendees pearls that can

be used in the office on Monday morn-

ing. Ultimately, patient safety and benefit

must be based on sound evidence — that’s

what the academy is all about and our an-

nual meetings are as well.

To learn more about AO membership,

please visit www.osseo.org/NEW

membership.html.

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