

SAC President's 2019 Opening Speech

Discurso inaugural de la Presidencia de la Sociedad Argentina de Cardiología 2019

Mr. President of the National Academy of Medicine, Authorities of the Argentine Society of Cardiology, Argentine Foundation of Cardiology and Argentine Journal of Cardiology, Colleagues, ladies and gentlemen,

It is an honor for me to be here today in this place of privilege, as it has surely been for all those who preceded me in this position. It means a great responsibility towards all those who placed their trust in me, and only by contributing to the growth of our society I will have paid off part of the debt incurred.

The task is not easy. In a world of paradigms that are rapidly changing, and in times when effort, commitment to one's neighbor and work - often volunteer - have lost their meaning, it is an immense challenge to transmit to the younger generations the values that our teachers instilled in us and to keep the flame of mysticism burning. That mysticism that led the founders of the Argentine Society of Cardiology (SAC) to make a dream come true with its creation, and which during its almost 82 years of life has enveloped us all with the commitment to carry its mission throughout our country: to be a leader in cardiovascular health.

Medical education is a responsibility involving all of us and not just a few; therefore, we should understand the importance of embracing the society career and of getting involved in projects and decisions. Progress in membership is only achieved through academic merit, which is solely obtained through the presentation and publication of scientific papers. This implies dedication and perseverance, even though the only reward is our professional growth.

The medical career is a long and difficult road, and scientific societies are that meeting point that allows learning from the experience of others, debating and sharing opinions and developing knowledge. We cannot fail to be part of it.

Congratulations to the young physicians who have completed the biannual course of cardiology and who will soon obtain their degree as cardiologists for this achievement, but be aware that the goal reached is only the point of a new departure. The future starts today. Daily challenges and a lifetime dedicated to study are awaiting you. Become professionals of excellence, of superlative knowledge, but never forget the empathy and dedication towards the patients and their families; this will really make you grow. Be generous. Transmit your knowledge to those who come

after you. Do not turn away from the society; on the contrary, take possession of the SAC so that new blood flows through it with winds of change. The doors are open for you.

Aware that nowadays medical training is ruled by less traditional methods, we have begun to follow the pathway of integrating technology adapted to education, and with the recent development of the SAC mobile application, we are taking a crucial step to build a bridge to the millennials.

This application launched during the last congress in October is just starting, closely guided by the entire team of SAC YOUNG COMMUNITY and constituting an example of how very different generations, but with common objectives, can work well together.

SAC YOUNG COMMUNITY must continue growing to become the big doorway that welcomes those who have completed their residency program and who start participating in the Society with great passion.

The SCIENTIFIC COUNCILS are the cornerstones supporting the SAC and, for this reason, to access the Board of Directors or the Scientific Secretary their members must have demonstrated their academic growth and be full members.

The activity carried out throughout the year by physicians, technicians and nurses -essential actors of the health team- is very intense, not only on site but also remotely with the modality of live webcasts and the development of e-courses.

Nowadays, we can count on technology to break down territorial borders and spread knowledge. During this year, we shall focus on maintaining the quality and increasing the diversity of online courses at all training levels, to allow easier access to education and thus achieve superior quality of medical care, even in those parts of the country that are distant from the training centers.

The Institutional Resource Area, together with the Center for Permanent Education, will have a relevant place in this project, since all the coordination of the information offered to the members will be under their supervision. They will have to coordinate and design the diffusion of the information through the website, the App and the e-mail newsletter, and decide which language to use, so that each member, in that diverse cosmos that conforms our Society, receives the appropriate proposal.

Communication is nowadays a challenge; the techniques have changed and become more complex, and

despite the unlimited access to information, we often do not understand the messages. In this sense, this year we want to make an old wish come true: to professionalize internal and external communication, so as not to duplicate efforts and take full advantage of what others are performing.

Some things have started to change and have been successful. This year, for the first time, the REGIONAL DISTRICTS were responsible for the comprehensive organization and development of their own conferences. They worked as a team providing opinions and suggestions, and the result was the implementation of eight days of high quality, well-attended scientific programs distributed across the country. We must continue improving this change, respecting the autonomies and contributing to the empowerment of each district. This will surely allow more well-trained cardiologists to become visible and join the teaching commitment we have with our peers.

The CONSENSUS STATEMENTS are being used more frequently for daily practice, and they provide support in legal situations. Therefore, it is important to strengthen this area, allowing agile updating with personal hallmark according to our needs and realities and with strong participation of professionals nationwide.

The Congress of Echocardiography and Cardiovascular Imaging and the Argentine Congress of Cardiology are trademarks held every year and a guarantee of success. This achievement is the product of many people working hard throughout the year planning and renewing each event.

Undoubtedly, the economic situation of the country will be an important obstacle since the costs of such projects are not easy to finance, but we shall endeavor all our ingenuity to ensure that quality is not at all impaired.

The Argentine Journal of Cardiology (RAC), the official organ for the diffusion of scientific information and the pride of the SAC, will change the way in which its authorities are elected, and the Director will no longer be designated directly by the Board of Directors. Aware of the importance of providing transparent and predictable mechanisms of selection, a committee made up of former presidents has written the new regulations to be applied next year for competitive selection of applicants.

At the international level, the integration with the most outstanding societies of cardiology worldwide has started, with cooperation agreements that have allowed joint sessions in the most important congresses on the one hand, and the possibility of the participation of Argentine cardiologists in multiple and enriching activities on the other. Dr. Daniel Piñeiro, who has led the area for the past three years with unbeatable passion, has been a key driving force in reaching those achievements. We now want to expand our horizons and have begun negotiations for similar agreements with Asia-Pacific and Africa.

The patients, the targets of all our efforts, will continue occupying a privileged place. WIKICARDIO, the website dedicated to transmitting reliable information, will begin a process of reconversion of the electronic platform to incorporate new types of interaction and make it more attractive and appealing. Undoubtedly, the Argentine Foundation of Cardiology will be, as usual, our partner in this mission.

We have a lot of work ahead of us and with the invaluable effort of all our house staff, who daily do their bit to make everything work, we can surely be proud of the results.

It has been a privilege for me to share this year the board of directors with Ricardo Migliore, Luis Quintana, Pablo Stutbach and Claudio Higa. Dialog and respectful approach characterized all our meetings, and as time went by, fellowship and friendship were added. Thank you for all that I have learned from you and for the enormous commitment you have undertaken.

I have met many people throughout these years, some of whom, perhaps unintentionally, have left indelible marks. I entered the University with the dream of becoming a cardiologist. During my training at the Hospital Teaching Unit, when the stethoscope was a mysterious instrument, an extremely patient teacher gave me the first lessons about cardiac sounds and murmurs and pathophysiology of valvular heart diseases. That wonderful professor was Dr. Ricardo Esper, who a few years later became President of the SAC.

I entered the residency program of the Instituto de Cardiología del Hospital Español, a center of excellence that had to close its doors because of those inexplicable causes Argentina has. Horacio Pomés Iparraguirre, a tireless reader, was then Head of the Coronary Care Unit and encouraged me to present the first scientific papers at the SAC.

Then, I was invited by José Andrés Martínez Martínez, "Pepe" for most of us, to work in the Coronary Care Unit at Hospital de Clínicas. He loved the SAC and considered it to be essential in the development of a cardiologist. He rapidly induced me to follow the remaining steps to become a full member of the SAC and to participate in the activities of the scientific councils. I owe him the beginning of my life in the SAC and I shall always be grateful to him.

In 2004 Dr. Liliana Grinfeld invited me to work with her at the Argentine Foundation of Cardiology. I met an exceptional woman who became president of the SAC in 1992, and was, to this day, the only woman who occupied this place of honor. She was an extraordinary worker, a visionary who understood early that women's cardiovascular health required a gender-sensitive approach, and created the commission "Women and Cardiology" - today renamed "Heart and Woman" - a group of which I had the honor to be a founding member.

I respectfully pay tribute to Liliana and I believe

that the best way to do so is to empower women, not through quotas for women or inconsistent claims, but with equal opportunities so that men and women together can give their best.

My parents made work, integrity, love and respect for others their life's motto. I hope that the seed they sowed in me has germinated. Today they are no longer with me, but their love is the flame that never goes out in my heart.

I want to thank Jorge, my brother, for his permanent love and protection.

My friends and colleagues who encouraged me so many times and were by my side in good and bad times.

And Eduardo, my exceptional partner, for being my support and stimulus for these fifteen years of shared love.

Thanks to you all.

Ana Salvati

President of the Argentine Society of Cardiology