

## Highlights of PICS-AICS 2008

By Ziyad M. Hijazi, MD

With over 700 attendees from 65 countries, PICS (Pediatric and Adult Interventional Therapies for Congenital and Valvular Heart Disease) was a huge success. Fifty percent of the attendees were from the US. A faculty of ninety-five members participated, the largest of its kind in the world.

Similar to last year, we combined the pediatric and adult sessions for interventional therapy of congenital and structural heart disease. Live cases from twelve sites were transmitted via satellites to the venue at the Bellagio Hotel. The quality of live cases this year was outstanding.

PICS started Sunday July 20th at 8:30 AM with an industry-sponsored workshop (Cook Medical). The workshop was well-attended due to its excellent faculty and subject matter. Among the speakers in this workshop was Dr. Robert White from Yale, who is the world's expert on pulmonary AVMs. Other speakers included: Drs. Lee Benson, Shakeel Qureshi, Jeff Feinstein, Jo De Giovanni and Omar Galal. Feedback from attendees on this workshop was overwhelmingly excellent.

In the afternoon, we had an excellent workshop on the atrial septum and imaging. There were fourteen talks discussing various aspects of imaging and devices for the septum. In that workshop, there were two excellent debates: one on ICE vs TEE and another on surgery for ASD vs device closure. The last debate between Dr. Fu and Dr. Ilbawi was particularly lively.

The day ended with "Meet the Expert" sessions and oral abstract presentations. At the end of the day, all attendees were invited to the welcome reception in the exhibit hall. This year, we had 29 exhibitors representing the wide range of manufacturers in our field.

The following day, Monday, July 21st, 2008, was full of action. Live cases were transmitted from Danta Pazzanesse Instituto de Cardiologia in Sao Paulo, Brazil, where Dr. Carlos Pedra and his team performed four excellent cases; from Rush University Medical Center in Chicago, where Dr. Hijazi and his team performed two cases; from Miami Children's Hospital, where Dr. Evan Zahn and his team performed two cases, and from Seattle Children's Hospital where Dr. Tom Jones per-

formed three cases. Between the live cases, there were seventeen excellent talks discussing various aspects of interventional therapies in children and adults. Topics included were the following: Covered Stents, Medical Simulation, Percutaneous Aortic Valve Therapies, the Mitral Valve (Imaging and Therapies), and Percutaneous Pulmonary Valve Implantation. At the end of the day, there were two excellent sessions: one, a debate between Drs. Schranz and Bacha about management of AS in infants <3 months of age, and the other session was about catheterizing critically ill babies. Monday included the ever-popular "My Nightmare Case in the Cath Lab" session!

At the end of the day, we had our traditional "PICS Achievement Award." This year's recipient was Dr. Carlos Ruiz. Dr. Bill Hellenbrand reviewed Dr. Ruiz's many accomplishments. Everyone was very impressed with Carlos' background, and what he has achieved in our field.

Tuesday July 22nd, 2008 was the third full day of the meeting. Again, we had many excellent live cases transmitted from Atlanta, where Dr. Bob Vincent and his team performed two excellent cases; from Columbus Nationwide Children's Hospital, where Drs. John Cheatham and Mark Galantowicz performed two excellent cases; from Detroit, where Dr. Tom Forbes and his team performed three very good cases, and from San Diego, where Dr. John Moore and his team performed three very good cases. Also on Tuesday, we had twenty-five talks covering a broad range of topics. The topics included the following: a

debate about whether to angioplasty native coarctation, ventricular septal defects, the PFO, the LAA, heart failure monitoring devices, and the PDA.

At the end of the day, the attendees were treated to a night of fun at the traditional Gala Dinner. The gala was very well-attended, and similar to each year, we had drawings from B. Braun and the PICS Foundation for free registration and hotel for two for next year's PICS.

The last day of the meeting, Wednesday, July 23rd, 2008 was as enjoyable as the first. Again, four sites transmitted live cases. From Cincinnati, Dr. Russel Hirsch and his team transmitted three very good cases. Dr. David Nykanen and his team transmitted two very good cases from Orlando. From St. Louis, Dr. David Balzer transmitted two very educational cases, and from Vancouver, Dr. John Webb and his team transmitted two excellent cases. For the first time at PICS, we had a transapical aortic valve replacement transmitted live from Vancouver. The same day we had twelve excellent talks covering: cath lab issues for nurses and techs (inventory





management, sedation in the cath lab, vessel closure devices and surgical procedures in the cath lab); pericardiocentesis; vascular thrombosis and its management; vascular closure devices; hybrid management of HLHS. At the end of the day, five speakers talked about what is coming down the pipe that we should be looking for.

That was our last meeting in Las Vegas, at least for the next two years.

I hope that you all can join us in Cairns, Australia, June 21-23rd, 2009 for PICS at the *World Congress of Pediatric Cardiology and Cardiac Surgery*. It promises to be educational as usual, but more fun for you and for your family. For more information, go to [www.picsymposium.com](http://www.picsymposium.com).

See you in Cairns,

Ziyad M. Hijazi, MD  
on behalf of all course directors

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**PEDIATRIC CARDIOLOGIST**

The Division of Pediatric Cardiology of Sanger Clinic and Levine Children’s Hospital in Charlotte, N.C. is recruiting a board certified pediatric cardiologist with sub-specialty expertise in electrophysiology (EP). The candidate should be clinically excellent, have superior interpersonal skills and be willing to develop and grow a successful local and regional EP program. The successful applicant will join a rapidly growing practice of eight pediatric cardiologists and two cardiothoracic surgeons. The Sanger Clinic also has a large and busy adult congenital practice with a large volume of adult congenital patients. Electrophysiology cases will be performed in one of two biplane catheterization laboratories including a new biplane laboratory which will be completed in the first quarter of 2009.

The Sanger Clinic is the premier congenital heart center in North Carolina performing over three hundred surgeries and cardiac catheterizations per year. The practice is affiliated with Carolinas Healthcare System, the third largest hospital authority in the country, but operates much like a private practice with very competitive compensation and benefits. The hospital authority just opened Levine Children’s Hospital in the fall of 2007, an eighty-five million dollar, 240 bed state-of-the-art facility. Charlotte, NC is a friendly, thriving metropolis with excellent arts (symphony, theatre, and museums), entertainment (US National Whitewater Center), professional sports (Panthers, Bobcats, NASCAR) and wonderful restaurants (Johnson and Wales College of Culinary Arts). The city is only two hours from the mountains and three and one half hours to the coast. Interested applicants should fax or e-mail their CVs to Dr. Stern.

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