The Radiological and Medical Physics Society of New York

RAMPS 1948 – 2021
The Earliest Organization of Medical Physicists in the United States

History of RAMPS

During the mid 1940's, physicists associated with medical institutions in the metropolitan New York City region commenced meetings to compare instrumentation and their measurements of the quantity of radioactivity in solutions in medical use. This was necessary for uniformity, and also for accuracy since the national standard available appeared to be inconsistent. This was just prior to the availability of megavoltage x rays and electrons, and the primary concern of the physicists was associated with the uses of radioactive nuclides. The clinical uses of iodine-131 and other radionuclides (phosphorus-32, yttrium-90, etc.) were being actively explored and agreement on the amount of activity being administered was essential. Such measurements led to the “New York Millicurie,” which served a vital purpose.

By 1948 the meetings of these medical physicists were on a scheduled basis with elected officers and records. Those initially active in RAMPS included Momes Berman, Hanson Blatz, Carl Braestrup, Giacchino Failla, Sergei Feitelberg, Elizabeth Focht, Hiram Hart, Lillian Jacobson, Robert Loewinger, Leo Marinelli, Eleanor Osny, Edith Quimby, Edward Siegel, Aaron Yalow, Rosalyn Yalow, and others. This group established the measurement procedure for the “New York Millicurie,” and their meetings served both scientific and professional functions. A constitution was written in 1954 by R. Yalow and J. Laughlin, and revised in 1957 by them. RAMPS has continued to grow from its modest beginning to a current membership of about 150 and conducts monthly meetings which are well attended. Their meetings usually include scientific presentations by a member or guest on physical aspects of treatment, diagnosis, nuclear medicine, or protection. Also, a symposium on a pertinent scientific topic is held annually. RAMPS welcomed the initiation of the AAPM and became a chapter in it.


In 1968, in order to assist the training of residents in the various radiological physics specialties, RAMPS appointed a committee to prepare an examination on radiological physics. This examination was administered on a voluntary basis to radiological residents in the New York City area at a session held at the New York Academy of Medicine with the cooperation of the New York Roentgen Ray Society. The response was so enthusiastic that this examination has become an annual event. It is now being used throughout the United States through the courtesy of RAMPS and of the AAPM. In recent years, separate examinations for Diagnostic Radiology and Radiation Oncology have been produced. Teaching has always been an important activity of the medical physicist in his/her institution and the establishment of this examination procedure was a method of assisting the education of residents in the physical aspects of radiology.

American Association of Physicians in Medicine was established 10 years later as an important activity of the medical physicist in his/her institution. RAMPS, in conjunction with the Greater New York Chapter of the Health Physics Society, holds the Annual Failla lecture. The lecturer is an internationally known expert on Medical Physics and/or Radiation Protection. This year’s lecture presented by Stephen Baier marked the 54th Anniversary of the Failla lecture, which honors the memory of Dr. Failla, a Medical Physics pioneer. Other Failla lecturers over the past 10 years are:

- Chen Chu, Ph.D., 2011
- Sally Arndt, M.D., 2020
- Ellen Yorke, Ph.D., 2018
- Stephen Mastino, Ph.D., 2018
- John Hynes, Ph.D., 2017
- Craig Redd, Ph.D., 2016
- Stephen Baier, Ph.D., 2015
- Isabel Flores, Ph.D., 2014
- David Rogers, Ph.D., 2013
- Arden L. Brooks, Ph.D., 2012

Recent Failla lecturers

- John S. Laughlin, Ph.D., 1965
- Lawrence N. Rothenberg, Ph.D., 1998
- Howard I. Amols, Ph.D., 2005
- Jean M. St. Germain, Ph.D., 1985

Major Awards to RAMPS Members

AAPM Cooledge Award

John S. Laughlin 1974
Edith H. Quimby 1977
Lowell L. Anderson 2000
C. Clifton Ling 2004

AAPM Quimby Lifetime Achievement Award

Ellen D. Yorke 2019
Lawrence N. Rothenberg 2007
James M. Galvin 2008
Lawrence E. Steinberg 2009
Howard I. Amols 2014
Edward L. Nickoloff 2014
Wendell R. Lutz 2016

Marvin MD Williams Professional Achievement Award

John S. Laughlin 1992
Edward L. Nickoloff 2008
Jean M. St. Germain 2015
Christopher H. Marshall 2015

AAPM Officers from RAMPS

President
John S. Laughlin 1965
Lawrence N. Rothenberg 1998
Howard I. Amols 2005
Secretary
Jean M. St. Germain 1985

57th Anniversary of the Failla Memorial lecture

The Failla Memorial lecture is held at the Greater New York Chapter of the AAPM, and is supported by RAMPS. The Failla Memorial lecture is an annual event that honors Dr. Failla, a pioneer in medical physics. The lecture is given by an expert in the field of medical physics and/or radiation protection. The Failla Memorial lecture has been held every year since its inception in 1958.

THE WINNERS OF THE 2021 VACIRCA YIS AWARD

- Jun Hong: 2021
- Yucieh Liu: 2020
- Kari Spuhler: 2019
- Karl Spuhler: 2018
- Jose Tereuh: 2017
- Peter Klages: 2016
- Paul Black: 2015
- Lei Zhang: 2014
- Ida Hagstrom: 2013
- Reza Farjam: 2012
- Irina Zawisz: 2011
- Boksi Ravidranath: 2010
- Yong Hu: 2009
- Louise Fanchon: 2008
- Chen Chui: 2007

Recent RAMPS Symposia

2021 New Developments in QA and Therapy Outcome Analysis
2020 Innovations in Radiation Therapy
2019 Automation in Radiation Therapy and Beyond
2018 Emerging Technologies in Imaging and Therapy
2017 Advancing Medical Physics
2016 New Developments in Radiation Therapy
2015 Imaging and Oncology Physics: A Reunion
2014 Adaptive Radiation Therapy
2013 Icos Focals From left: Saul Harris, Joyce Davis, Shirley Epp