

# FIRST MESSENGER

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## AACE RALLIES STAKEHOLDERS FOR ENHANCED PATIENT CARE



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# Meet Dr. Franco Grimaldi, AACE-Italy Chapter President



**FM:** Tell us a little bit about yourself. Where were you born, where did you attend school and complete your training, and why did you decide to become an endocrinologist?

I was born in Cividale del Friuli, a small and beautiful town founded by Julius Caesar with the name of Forum Julii, which, later on, became the name of the whole Friuli Venezia Giulia region located in Northeastern Italy. I graduated in medicine from the University of Trieste and I specialized in endocrinology at the University of Verona and afterwards in food science at the University of Padua. When I was a student, I started attending the endocrinology unit at the hospital in Udine, where the professor, who was my advisor, was also the director. The study of this branch of medicine that, in 1980, was still a fairly new one, fascinated me and sparked my interest in pursuing it as a specialty. It was love at first sight.

**FM:** Where has your professional career path taken you?

My professional career began at the emergency department of the hospital in Udine with an interest in electrolyte disturbances and later at the endocrinology, diabetes, metabolic and clinical nutrition unit, of which I am currently head of the department.

I have participated in several training courses including a post graduate course on growth hormone and growth factors - metabolic disorders in Stockholm in 1995 and in Go-



thenburg in 1998 and the advanced course in neuroendocrine tumors in Uppsala in 2000. Since 2006, I have been teaching endocrinology and metabolic diseases to fourth-year medical students and in five specialization schools including medical, oncology, hematology, gynecology at the University Hospital S. Maria della Misericordia, Udine.

I am a member of several scientific societies, including AACE, the Endocrine Society, the European Neuroendocrine Tumor Society, the European Neuroendocrine Association, the European Society of Endocrinology, the European Association for the Study of Diabetes and Endocrinology, the Italian Association of Andrology, Endocrinology, Neuroendocrine Tumor and the Italian Association of Thyroid.

**FM:** How has the endocrine practice changed from when you first entered practice?

One of the most important changes has been the development of local and national multidisciplinary net-

works, which has led to great improvements in patient care.

Another change has been the development of new drugs, in particular target therapy, which have expanded the range of new treatments, such as those for neuroendocrine tumors.

**FM:** How long have you been a member of AACE?

I have been an AACE member since August 2003.

**FM:** How many AACE members are there in the chapter?

There are currently 67 members in the AACE-Italy Chapter.

**FM:** What interested you most in getting involved in the AACE regional chapter in your area and serving in a leadership role?

One of the main reasons for initially joining AACE was the opportunity to meet and exchange knowledge with experts in the field, both in the United States and worldwide. Sub-

sequent scientific collaborations between AACE and the *Associazione Medici Endocrinologi* (AME - the Italian Association of Medical Endocrinologists) made me and other colleagues realize the need for instituting an Italian chapter of AACE, which was then officially formed in July 2014. I am deeply honored to have been elected its first President.

**FM:** Are there additional activities or initiatives that you would like to pursue at the chapter level in the future that would benefit AACE members?

The Italian chapter's initial objectives are to promote AACE's clinical practice guidelines and other white papers published by AACE. To this end, we are planning to translate various AACE guidelines into Italian to enhance their applicability and utilization for Italian endocrinologists.

The chapter would also like to develop clinical practice guidelines in collaboration with AACE and other international scientific societies, as well as develop AME certification of Endocrine Certification of Neck Ultrasound (ECNU).

In addition, the chapter is very interested in establishing a partnership with the Mediterranean countries and Northern Europe to create an ultrasound course, similar to what was done with the AACE-Romania Chapter, which worked with Egypt and Croatia to hold an event in Rome.

**FM:** Describe one of your most memorable or rewarding career experiences.

One of the most interesting and rewarding experiences has been the collaboration between the medical and nursing staff with the association of patients with pituitary disease and neuroendocrine tumors in order to better understand the needs and requirements of these patients. ●





## The First AACE-Italy Chapter Meeting

Rome, Italy • November 6, 2014



Representatives from National AACE, AACE chapters in Italy, Gulf, and Romania, and leadership of AME at the inauguration of the Italy-AACE Chapter meeting.

The first meeting of the Italian AACE chapter convened on Thursday, November 6, 2014, at the Ergife Palace Hotel in Rome, Italy, the day before the AME (Associazione Medici Endocrinologi) Annual Congress. This first meeting of the Italian AACE chapter was attended by more than 50 AACE members. This year, approximately a record number of 1,200 people attended the AME Congress, among them 100 AACE members.

The chapter meeting was cochaired by Drs. Giorgio Borretta, Franco

Grimaldi, and Hossein Gharib. Dr. Borretta, AME Past President, welcomed the attendees and briefly reviewed the origins of AME-AACE collaboration, noting that collegial discussions in 2002 between two Presidents, Dr. Roberto Valcavi, of AME, and Dr. Hossein Gharib, of AACE, were key to the success of the beginning and subsequent joint efforts. Dr. Franco Grimaldi, AACE-Italy Chapter Chair, then discussed the chapter's programs and perspectives. Dr. Hossein Gharib greeted all on behalf of AACE, and reviewed the key role of AACE-

USA in sponsoring and supporting international chapters, their importance in AACE global efforts, and emphasized advantages of chapters to AACE members.

Several AACE international leaders then presented viewpoints for continued collaborative efforts and educational activities. Drs. Mihail Coculescu, Diana Paur (AACE-Romania Chapter President) and Catalina Poiana of Romania; Dr. Ali Khalil, Gulf Chapter Immediate Past President; and Dario Rahelic, AACE member from Croatia,

each described their expectations of chapter developments and plans for future joint efforts. This was followed by a Q & A period.

The meeting concluded with a strong recommendation for a joint scientific chapter meeting in the Mediterranean region in 2015. The group will begin work on this project to determine where and when the meeting will take place and remain in close contact to organize this. ●