

ATVB Named Lecture Reviews—Insight Into Author



ATVB Named Lecture Reviews—Plenary Lecture

Insight Into the Author: Hiroaki Shimokawa, MD, PhD,
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Why did you choose the profession of scientific investigation?

I chose the profession of scientific investigation because I thought (and think) that science is one of the most creative and stimulating fields and that medical research is one of the most important activities among scientific investigations.

Who have been your role model(s) in your scientific and professional life?

- (1) Professor Akira Takeshita, an emeritus professor of Kyushu University, who served as an Asian Associate Editor of ATVB and unfortunately passed away in 2009. I worked with him at the Kyushu University as an assistant professor (1991–1994) and then as an associate professor (1995–2005), when I studied molecular mechanisms of coronary artery spasm and arteriosclerosis with a special reference to Rho-kinase.
- (2) Professor Paul Vanhoutte, a professor and chairman of the University of Hong Kong. I worked in his laboratory at Mayo Clinic from 1985–1988, where I studied endothelial functions with a special reference to endothelium-derived relaxing factors.

What have been important influences on your professional life?

Interactions with young medical students, doctors (graduate students and postgraduate fellows), and staff in my department.

What are your scientific inspirations?

It is very stimulating and inspiring to elucidate unknown facts and to develop new diagnostic and therapeutic strategies, all of which are useful to advance medicine.

How have mentors contributed to your professional development?

Professor Vanhoutte taught me the pleasure of research where we can discover unknown facts and contribute to society. I have learned from Professor Takeshita about the importance of continuation of research despite any difficult situations.

If you knew then what you know now, would you do anything different?

No. I only could have been able to save some time, if any, even if I knew then what I know now.

What wisdom do you impart on new investigators?

Three points: (1) the theme of research should be original; (2) should have good mentors; and (3) should continue research despite any difficult situations (there always are good solutions to overcome them).

If you were not a scientist, which profession would you pick?

I would like to work for the country as a government official, like finance or diplomacy field.

Which direction do you envisage your science taking?

My research is directed to develop noninvasive diagnostic and therapeutic strategies to achieve a healthy society.

What are your nonscientific activities?

Reading books, music (classic), and sports.

What sports do you follow?

Football and baseball. I used to play football at high school and university.

What are your favorite books, movies, music (pick one or all)?

Ryotaro Shiba (Japanese novelist), human dramas (movies), and Beethoven (music).

What are your favorite foods and are they heart healthy?

Sushi and sashimi, definitely good for your heart!

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