

The Swedish-American Life Science Summit



FOR THE SIXTH year in a row, the Swedish-American Life Science Summit was held in Stockholm. The summit aims at bringing together Swedish and American scientists, business people and investors working within the life science sector. "We want to create a high-level meeting point for people to meet and do business. We believe this is best achieved by keeping a small format event with only specially invited guests," explains Ms. Barbro C. Ehnbom, founder and Chairman of the summit.

Despite the limited format the summit has expanded to become more of an international summit rather than a Swedish-American event. This year's summit featured guests from India, Israel and several European countries.

According to tradition, the opening reception was held at the US embassy, hosted by H.E. US ambassador Matthew Barzun. Keynote speaker on the first day was the Nobel Laureate Professor Gerald M. Edelman. He won the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine in 1972 for the discovery of the structure of the antibody. He has since worked within neurobiology and is Professor at the SCRIPPS Research Institute.

The major purpose of the summit is to create business opportunities and according to Ms. Ehnbom this has so far been a success. "Since we started six years ago, several new business cooperations have been created," says Ms. Ehnbom. "Mixing clever people working within different fields and in different regions, such as scientists and venture capitalists from Sweden and the US, creates interesting discussions which may lead to business being made," she continues.

And indeed this year's event constituted an interesting mix of people. American investors included Mr. G. Steven Burill, CEO and Founder of the VC-company Burill & Co, Mr. William Gedal, NGM Capital, Mr. Joseph M. Cohen, JM Cohen & Co, and Dr. Yuval Binur, Accelerated Technologies Partners.

The themes of this year's summit was *Neuroscience, Biotech financing in the new "after the crisis" climate, and Converging Technologies*. Guest panel members included Ms. Åsa Hedin, head of neuroscience at Elekta, Professor Martin Ingvar from the Karolinska Institute, and Dr. Laurent Leksell from Elekta. Big pharma was also well represented with executives from Pfizer, Abott Laboratories, and Bristol Myers Squibb. Several world leading scientists, from e.g. the SCRIPPS Research Institute and the Singularity University, were also attending.

An interesting theme on the second day is neuroscience and music. Dr. Aniruddh Patel from the Neurosciences Institute will talk about *Music and Biological Evolution*. Music will also be the theme of the concluding luncheon at the Confidencen Royal Theatre in Ulriksdal, hosted by Madame Kjerstin Dellert, where the guests enjoyed music from a violinist, a clarinetist, and a pianist. With this grand finale, the attendees hopefully left the bad memories of the financial crisis behind them and let the music inspire them to make new investments in Swedish life science. ●



Pictures from SALSS 2009.