

Editor's Note: *This Chapter Update is devoted exclusively to young surgeons. Why? Because the vitality and the future of the College—as well as its chapters—lie in the recruitment and involvement of young surgeons. Alexander J. Walt, MD, FACS, who was the College's Immediate Past President, believed strongly in this philosophy. Whenever he addressed chapter officers and members, he always used the occasion to emphasize the importance of getting young surgeons involved.*

While there's no established "recipe" for involving young surgeons in chapter activities, this issue provides some excellent "how to" information. Whether appointing two or three young surgeons to the governing council, establishing a committee for young surgeons, or conducting grand rounds for young surgeons and residents, the importance of young surgeons' participation in chapter activities is evident. Chapter officers and administrators should seek out ways to get young

surgeons involved in developing their leadership skills, planning and arranging educational and social programs, and participating in policy-making processes.

This Chapter Update was written by four experts on young surgeons. Marsha Hawk, the staff liaison to the College's Committee on Young Surgeons (CYS), provides an overview of the CYS. Sara Case, MD, FACS, and Charles Littlejohn, MD, FACS, focus on how the Connecticut Chapter recently established a CYS. Shawna Willey, MD, FACS, who is very active in the Metropolitan Washington (DC) Chapter, summarizes her chapter's activities for young surgeons. Finally, Kirby I. Bland, MD, FACS, a former chair of the College's CYS, provides a "senior" surgeon's perspective on the importance of getting young surgeons involved in the College. This information should be useful to many chapters that are interested in establishing a young surgeons committee, but may be unsure of the logistics involved.

THE ORGANIZATION AND STRUCTURE OF THE COLLEGE'S COMMITTEE ON YOUNG SURGEONS

by Marsha Hawk, Administrative Associate, Department of Education and Surgical Services, Chicago

The College's first Committee on Young Surgeons (CYS), originally called the Ad Hoc Committee to Study Relationships with Young Surgeons, was appointed in September 1969. The CYS was formed to advise and offer recommendations to the Board of Regents concerning whether the policies and activities of the College were meeting the needs of younger Fellows. In February 1993, the CYS was made a standing committee.

Since 1969, the goals and objectives of the committee have remained constant: "To study ways of establishing closer relations with the Candidate Group, Associate Fellows, and other young Fellows of the College; how the young surgeons can participate more actively in College affairs; and how certain College activities might be made more meaningful to young surgeons."

Membership/terms of appointment

The CYS has 14 members. To be eligible for appointment, CYS members must be Fellows under the age of 45. CYS members are appointed for a maximum of two three-year terms or until the year of their 45th birthday, whichever

occurs first. The committee elects a chair and vice-chair from among its members. The chair may serve for two two-year terms; the vice-chair may serve for two one-year terms. The terms of the chair and vice-chair end automatically with their termination from the committee, by virtue of age, or upon reaching the six-year maximum term for committee appointment.

Nominations for membership are considered as vacancies occur. The ultimate goal of the CYS is to have diverse representation that closely resembles the younger College Fellowship. Among the criteria considered when reviewing nominations for appointment are age, geographic area of residence, specialty, and gender.

Duties and responsibilities

The CYS conducts two business meetings each year—in the spring in Chicago and in the fall during Clinical Congress. At these meetings, the CYS develops plans for the Annual Meeting of Surgeon Representatives and the Clinical Congress programs. The annual meeting is held each year at ACS headquarters and provides a forum where young surgeon representatives gather to meet with College officers and executive staff to discuss issues of importance

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to the younger surgeon. At Clinical Congress, the committee's current offerings include:

- Initiates Program to welcome those who will be inducted into Fellowship
- postgraduate course on practice selection and management
- panel discussion on an issue of current importance to younger Fellows

In recent years, the committee has also held a special summer meeting in Washington, DC, to conduct Capitol Hill visits. The CYS members meet with legislators from their home districts to discuss a variety of socioeconomic issues affecting younger surgeons.

For more information about the College's CYS, contact Marsha Hawk at 312/664-4050, extension 423.

HOW TO ESTABLISH A YOUNG SURGEONS COMMITTEE

by Sara Case, MD, FACS, Bantam, CT, and Charles Littlejohn, MD, FACS, Stamford, CT

Recently, the Connecticut Chapter (CTC) established a Young Surgeons Committee. This article reviews the CTC's approach. Dr. Case and Dr. Littlejohn serve on their chapter's Young Surgeons Committee. Dr. Littlejohn also serves on the College's CYS.

Forming a Young Surgeons Committee (YSC) at the chapter level begins with finding young surgeons who are interested in the mission and goals of the proposed committee. The chapter council can help identify surgeons who may be interested in serving and should make the final selection

of YSC members. A YSC should have good specialty representation, and the members should be involved in a variety of practice settings, such as academic, community, military, and so on. Importantly, the young surgeons who are asked to participate should be hard working and eager to take on new committee assignments.

Once a group is identified, it should meet and formulate the initial goals of the YSC, which should then be reviewed and approved by the chapter council. A dinner meeting is an inexpensive and fairly efficient way to conduct these initial gatherings. The CTC's newly formed YSC outlined five initial goals:

1. To ensure young surgeon representation in chapter activities and committees.
2. To encourage new membership within the chapter and to retain existing members.
3. To encourage the exchange of information among the younger membership.
4. To encourage an *esprit de corps* among the younger members.
5. To serve as a resource for residents and students who seek a career in surgery.

Appointing one or more young surgeons to serve on the chapter council will encourage communication between younger and senior members of the College. In addition, these appointments will help younger surgeons develop leadership skills.

Information exchange is important to both younger and senior surgeons. Conferences and special sessions at chapter meetings that are developed by the YSC can help stimulate information exchange. Topics of broad appeal should be chosen for the meeting or special session. The meeting also should allow active discussion by the participants. Open-microphone formats or small discussion groups are popular; participants should be allowed to ask questions and give their perspective.

Another form of chapter-level communication is online discussion groups. Clinical material can be presented and opinions obtained from the participants. The Internet also has a wealth of medical information available. As more

10 steps for YSC success

- Select assertive, highly motivated young surgeons to serve on the YSC
- Attain diversity among the YSC membership in terms of specialty, practice setting, geographic location, and gender
- Establish goals and objectives for the YSC
- Develop and implement educational and social programs and activities that will help the YSC meet its goals and objectives
- Evaluate the success of YSC programs and activities and make changes, if necessary
- Seek to involve residency program directors and residents in YSC and chapter activities
- Support the YSC in chapter newsletters, at meetings, and in the budget
- Appoint YSC members to chapter council and standing chapter committees
- Assist young surgeons in affiliating with the College
- Make membership in the chapter meaningful to young surgeons

surgeons go online, we can anticipate chapter members exchanging information via e-mail or, perhaps, teleconferencing between council members. Young surgeons support the implementation of new technology that could be useful to surgeons of all ages.

The YSC should be actively involved in recruiting new chapter members of all surgical specialties. The CTC recently surveyed its current members in an effort to address the needs of all its members. Knowledge obtained from surveys can be used to enhance current programs and to develop new activities that will be attractive to potential members.

The CTC's YSC plans to serve as a resource for surgical residents. One of our goals is to have a resident spend a

day with a young surgeon. This way, the resident can see how surgeons interact in the hospital, the office, and the community. Also, we hope this "preceptor program" will help residents select a practice. For example, a resident training in an urban setting may wish to spend a day with a surgeon in a rural setting.

A YSC needs the support and advice of senior surgeons, and the YSC activities do not need to be exclusive. By establishing themselves and working within the existing chapter organization, today's young Fellows, Associate Fellows, and Candidates will have an effective organization to rely on for their future needs.

THE METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON (DC) CHAPTER'S YOUNG SURGEONS COMMITTEE

by Shawna C. Willey, MD, FACS, Immediate Past Chair, Washington, DC

The Young Surgeons Committee (YSC) of the Metropolitan Washington Chapter (MWC) was formed in 1992 as a direct result of a presentation at the Chapter Officers' Seminar in Chicago. David K. Little, MD, FACS, then President, asked Kurt Newman, MD, FACS, to chair the new YSC and to select its first members. Dr. Newman, who worked with many residents who rotated through Children's National Medical Center, brought together a small group of surgeons to serve as the initial members of the YSC. The goals of the YSC are to:

- improve the degree of involvement by Participants in the Candidate Group, Associate Fellows, and young Fellows
- increase the number of Participants in the Candidate Group
- improve participation of surgeons from all specialties
- disseminate information to surgical residents concerning the requirements for Candidate status
- decrease institutional and geographic barriers that foster isolation

Because the District of Columbia has a large, diverse surgical community—six training programs exist in the area—we made an effort to diversify our committee with regard to professional activities, hospital affiliation, and geographic location. We emphasize getting representatives from each of the training programs, military programs, and major suburban areas. Currently, our YSC has 13 members; nine are general surgeons, and the rest are other specialty surgeons. Two of the YSC members are affiliated with the U.S. National Institutes of Health. In addition, we selected members who are enthusiastic and committed to the goals of the YSC.

Launching a brand new committee seemed a big undertaking for a handful of people. Because Washington is a "city of social events," we felt that perhaps the best way to make our presence known was to throw a party. At our first black-tie event at the Corcoran Gallery of Art, we were honored to have Alexander J. Walt, MD, FACS, attend. This event was very successful, and an annual social event has been one of our activities ever since. Our black-tie affairs have been attended by 200 to 250 surgeons, spouses, and guests.

Because we realized that there would be some concerns about the credibility of a committee based solely on social events, we expanded our activities to include educational endeavors. The YSC's first All-City Grand Rounds was held at the Walter Reed Army Medical Center. Our All-City Grand Rounds features a case presented by a resident, and Col. David Jaques, MD, FACS, leads us through the workup. There are often lively and heated discussions among the residents, attendings, and department chairs. The residency program directors have given All-City Grand Rounds a priority in residents' schedules, and any regularly scheduled sessions are canceled. Now, All-City Grand Rounds are scheduled Saturday mornings twice each year.

The YSC's newest educational endeavor is a surgical basic science review course for residents for the In-Training Surgical Basic Science Examination. Preparing this review course was an awesome task! The review course covered areas frequently not stressed in the typical residency curriculum. Also, the YSC made an effort to select our best educators for the faculty. The course was free to all residents who were Participants in the Candidate Group. Our recently completed course was attended by 70 percent of the residents in the DC metropolitan area and

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received excellent reviews from the attendees. Best of all, 100 new residents joined the Candidate Group.

The MWC has strongly supported the activities of the YSC. Financially, the YSC attempts to be self-sustaining to cover expenses of our social and educational events. While we charge admission for our dinners, we also have accepted contributions from surgery departments, hospitals, and commercial companies. Fundraising has been successful, and the YSC has had sponsors for breakfasts at grand rounds, as well as lunches for the surgical residents at the review course. When our receipts have fallen short of our expenses, the MWC council has generously given us an allocation from its budget.

Our chapter has been very pleased with the vitality of the new YSC. Re-creating our success, however, would not be guaranteed by following the same strategy. Because each geographic location has its own unique characteristics, an assessment of each chapter's goals and resources is imperative.

The strength of any organization is dictated by its leadership. Target a strong, dynamic leader to chair your YSC and keep the momentum going by giving the YSC positive reinforcement. The MWC supported us by giving us recognition at chapter functions, arranging for publicity in newsletters, and appointing a YSC representative to attend council meetings. To gain credibility and to publicize our activities, the YSC enlisted the support of program directors and residency coordinators. Some area hospitals and surgery departments have made financial contributions to our events.

Finally, at the national level, the College has supported our activities by sending a representative to our functions.

Having an officer of the College or a senior executive staff member attend a local function sends a powerful message to young surgeons and imparts a sense of worth and importance. These messages are heard at the local level and are the types of actions that make the young surgeons realize the vitality of the College and the value of being an active member.

Chapters with formally organized committees on young surgeons

Northern California
 Connecticut
 Metropolitan Washington (DC)
 South Florida
 Hawaii
 Idaho
 Michigan
 Missouri
 New Jersey
 Brooklyn–Long Island
 North Carolina
 South Dakota
 Wisconsin

*Note: Most other chapters indicated that activities are developed specifically to attract younger surgeons; however, these chapters have established **formal** committees.*

Source: 1994 Triennial Chapter Activities Questionnaire

IMPACT OF YOUNG SURGEONS ON THE FUTURE OF THE COLLEGE: A SENIOR SURGEON'S PERSPECTIVE

by Kirby I. Bland, MD, FACS, Providence, RI

Dr. Bland is currently chair of the department of surgery at Brown University in Providence, RI. He served as chair of the national CYS from 1985–87.

The College's most valuable asset is the intellect, resourcefulness, collective abilities, and leadership of the younger surgeons. The College's leadership values the views of younger colleagues and strives to review and solve problems that are specific to young Fellows, Associate Fellows, and Candidates.

Problems that pertain to individual Fellows must be brought to the attention of the chapters, where initial attempts to present emerging issues relative to state specialty society, socioeconomic, legislative, governance, policy, and reimbursement concerns are relevant. As Stephen R. Covey noted in *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People: Powerful Lessons in Personal Change*, "It is inspiring to

realize that in choosing our response to circumstance, the individual will powerfully affect their environment." Thus, the younger surgeon must also respond to his or her environment in a very proactive and sensitive manner.

The needs of individual chapters reflect differing regional practice guidelines, reimbursement, and legislation. The College continues to respond to the highly sensitive issues that have a negative impact on patient care and quality measures that are common to all Fellows, regardless of age. At no time in the history of American surgical practice are consensus building and shared interests in patient care, legislation, and governance issues more important than the present.

Vitally necessary to further the goals and missions of the College is the ability of young surgeons to make commitments to the College's leadership. This interaction and support allows a greater voice for young surgeons to have

their particular concerns considered, through reasonable decision processes, by the College leadership. Commitments made by young Fellows to the chapters, officers, and to the public—together with the integrity of these commitments—are the essence and clearest manifestation of the proactivity expected of youthful leadership.

Involvement by young Fellows in chapter functions is the mechanism for growth of the College and is essential to sustain its integrity, discipline, and mission. To become involved with and to provide support to senior leaders on the issues that are relevant to all surgeons, young surgeons should:

- attend and actively participate in chapter functions
- openly convey ideas, views, and concerns to chapters and the College
- encourage dialogue with senior leadership at chapter and national levels
- be proactive and follow up your commitments to the chapter's leadership
- volunteer your services to chapters, when appropriate
- educate yourself, chapter members, and constituents regarding common socioeconomic and legislative policies affecting surgical practice
- strive to provide prudent solutions to concerns of the chapter and the College
- encourage eligible surgeons to affiliate with the College

The senior leadership of the College continues to recognize the need for responding proactively to the varying needs of younger colleagues. With the federal and state governments and health care payors downsizing medical practices and access to medical care, the inevitable transition will be uncertain and complicated. With these expected changes, young surgeons must have a voice in governance and

policy decision making. The creation of organizational infrastructures, the alignment of practice incentives, and the integration of decision-support mechanisms must have major input from younger surgeons from all the chapters in the United States and Canada.

Perhaps now, more than at any point in the history of American surgery, younger Fellows should take a more active and prominent role in the decision-making process. The open dialogue initiated by younger Fellows with senior Fellows in chapter meetings will encourage both to be more proactive and more participatory and will provide a forum for resolving problems and issues common to each. Clearly, by consensus building and with the sharing of mutual problems, solutions will be imminently forthcoming. As a senior surgeon who shares these views almost daily with residents and younger Fellows of the College with whom I practice, I see this process evolving parallel with the legislative and socioeconomic issues of American medicine, public needs, and the health care marketplace. It is my sincere hope that the integration of both senior and younger surgeons' viewpoints will help the College achieve its overall mission and purpose of delivering high-quality surgical care in this evolving marketplace.

As a senior surgeon, my perspective on these important issues has not changed since serving on the College's Committee on Young Surgeons. While the Purpose Statement of the CYS has been modified over the past two decades, the College remains committed to addressing the needs of young surgeons. The CYS continues to extol the virtues of young surgeons' involvement in chapter activities to enhance their knowledge of issues that involve clinical, legislative, and practice perspectives. Participation by young Fellows and Candidates in chapter activities is necessary despite differences in clinical specialty, practice setting, and geographic location. The cohesiveness that can be achieved by all surgeons at the chapter level will serve as a tribute to the College.

Special activities for young surgeons	
Type of Activity	% of Reporting Chapters
Send representative to ACS Annual Meeting of Young Surgeon Representatives	89%
Appoint young surgeons to standing committees	66%
Young surgeons representative on chapter council	39%
Special function or meeting	17%
Special session at chapter's annual meeting	9%

Source: 1994 Triennial Chapter Activities Questionnaire

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