

# **R**eport of the Chair of the Board of Regents

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Let me start by saying that I hope everyone who attended the 2003 Clinical Congress found it as informative and enjoyable as I did. It went absolutely splendidly, and I want to thank the Program Committee, the staff, and everyone else who worked so hard to make it a great success.

## **Board of Regents**

During the Clinical Congress, the Board of Regents met three times. After two years of having the real pleasure of chairing this group, I can tell you that they are the most dedicated and professional group of physicians with whom one could ever want to be associated. And, I think that we have done good work in that time. We have had lively meetings covering very, very important issues and have moved forward on a number of fronts, largely due to the talent and the exemplary leadership skills of the members of the Board of Regents and our Executive Director, Thomas Russell, MD, FACS.

The Regents are going to be even more responsive in the future. I think you probably sensed some of this spirit at this year's Clinical Congress. However, the whole concept of the Board of Regents, their representativeness, and their degree of involvement in the actual practice of surgery is undergoing a complete overhaul based on the recommendations offered by a committee that has been studying the Board. This committee has been led by Gerald Austen, MD, FACS, a former Regent and Past-President of the College.

The composition of the Board of Regents changed at the conclusion of this Clinical Congress. We now have three more Regents, who were added in an attempt to broaden the representation of the surgical specialties on the Board and to ensure that this body can help to build the unified house of surgery, which Dr. Russell has envisioned as a primary purpose of the College.

Additionally, the requirements for membership on the Board of Regents have changed. All Regents now will need to be in active practice. We anticipate that this prerequisite will result in a different cast to the Regents' level of involvement, as well as their level of expertise.

## **Research and optimal care**

As Director of the Division of Research and Optimal Patient Care, R. Scott Jones, MD, FACS, has had a tremendous impact on the College's growth in this arena. For example, we are embarking on a cooperative effort with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to bring its National Surgical Quality Improvement Program (NSQIP) into the private sector. Ultimately, we anticipate taking this quality initiative into every institution where surgeons work and where we seek to try to improve both the quality and the professionalism with which we complete our tasks.

In addition, we are expanding our efforts in evidence-based surgery, which, after all, is the basis of what we do and the way we can maintain the public's trust and our commitment to providing proven care to our patients. This *continued on page 56*

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## REPORT OF THE CHAIR OF THE BOARD OF REGENTS, from page 31

deavor is going to be enhanced enormously by a number of related programs. The American College of Surgeons Oncology Group was our first step in that direction, and the College is now undertaking other prospective trials in areas outside of cancer. As a result of these programs, evidence-based practice guidelines and information are becoming available for all of the Fellows of the College who are hoping to achieve

the goal of providing better—optimal, if you will—patient care.

This concludes my remarks, other than to note that many more activities are going on, and you may read more about them in the reports from my colleagues, Dr. Russell and J. Patrick O’Leary, MD, FACS, outgoing Chair of the Board of Governors (see pages 32 and 34 of this issue). 

# Next month in *JACS*

The January issue of the *Journal of the American College of Surgeons* will feature:

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### Original Scientific Articles

- Trauma Fatalities
- TA90 Response and Prognosis in Melanoma
- Verification of Pelvic Nerve Function

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### Collective Review

- Management of Esophageal Leiomyoma

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### What’s New in Surgery

- Colon and Rectal Surgery

