

RAS-ACS News



A Quarterly Update from the Resident and Associate Society of the American College of Surgeons



Winter 2005

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RAS-ACS to Sponsor Three Sessions at the 33rd Annual Spring Meeting

When: April 17, 2005

Where: Hollywood, FL

REGISTER NOW!

The Resident and Associate Society of the American College of Surgeons (RAS-ACS) is pleased to sponsor educational programs for residents and Associate Fellows that will take place during the upcoming Spring Meeting, to be held April 16-19 at the Westin Diplomat Resort and Spa in Hollywood, FL. In a continuing effort to support resident participation, the program will feature three resident-oriented sessions on **Sunday, April 17:**

Session 1: **7:30 to 9:30 am, Clinical Abstract Presentations by Residents** will be moderated by Steven Wexner, MD, and Barry Jenkins, MD. This session will provide a forum for resident to present their research and discuss their findings with experts and peers.

Session 2: **9:30 to 11:00 am, Spectacular Cases from Residents** will be moderated by Frederick Schild, MD, and Juan C. Paramo, MD. This interactive program will present extraordinary cases to a group of expert panelists, and the session format will encourage audience participation. This session promises to be a wonderful learning experience.

Session 3: **1:00-3:00 pm, Surgical Jeopardy** will be moderated by Mark Bowyer, MD. Teams of residents from residency programs across the country will test their general and specific surgical knowledge against that of their peers.

Once again, all residents and Associate Fellows are invited to attend these and other exciting sessions during this year's Spring Meeting. This is certain to be a valuable experience that will offer high-quality educational and networking opportunities. For more details about the program and to register online, visit the College's Web site

<http://www.facs.org/2005springmeeting/index.html>. Remember, the annual Spring Meeting is "**The Meeting of the Resident**", and Sunday April 17 is "**The Day of the Resident**"

See you there!

Juan C. Paramo, MD

Co-Chair, RAS-ACS Communications Committee

RAS-ACS Community Editor, ACS Web Portal

Miami Beach, FL

ACS "Operation Giving Back" Program Highlights Service through Volunteerism

Volunteerism is of pivotal importance to the College and to many of its members and has attracted much attention in recent years. In recognition of the importance of volunteerism and the contributions made by many surgeons, the Board of Governors Committee on Socioeconomic Issues originated "Operation Giving Back" (OGB) after closely examining the extent of volunteer involvement among members of the College. Their findings demonstrated a great breadth and depth of involvement and underscored the fact that many surgeons considered volunteerism an integral component of their professional identity.

Under the Direction of Kathleen M. Casey, MD, FACS, Operation Giving Back is designed to be a **comprehensive resource center where surgeons can investigate volunteer opportunities**. In addition to its use internally, OGB is also intended to serve as a **source of education and inspiration externally** for those who are interested in surgical volunteerism: volunteer agencies, philanthropists, policy makers, and the public. The RAS-ACS hopes to encourage resident participation in volunteer activities by providing information relevant to both domestic and international surgical opportunities. Supervised residency electives may provide advanced insight into issues such as health policy, cultural and economic influences on health care, and potential career paths, as well as broader exposure to surgical approach and pathology. And finally, the College will recognize distinguished accomplishments through the annual **Surgical Volunteerism Award**.

Recently, the extraordinary devastation caused by the tsunami in Southeast Asia and Africa inspired an unprecedented worldwide monetary and volunteer response. The College has offered assistance to governmental and global organizations through dissemination of information and mobilization of surgical resources. Operation Giving Back is also a vehicle through which we can support this effort. We express our deep sorrow for victims, survivors, and families affected by the tsunami and offer our respect for those supporting the relief effort.

RAS-ACS supports and promotes volunteerism and will work to inform its members about ongoing College activities.

Visit <http://www.operationgivingback.org> to volunteer your services and ideas.

"You make a living by what you get, but you make a life by what you give."
— Winston Churchill

John Karamichalis, MD

Member, RAS-ACS Education Committee,
Omaha, NE

RAS-ACS Working on Resident Area for New ACS Web Portal

The American College of Surgeons is in the process of developing a Web Portal for this members that will serve as each member's window into the world of surgery. **What is a Web Portal?** It is a personalized homepage interface designed to provide content and website links based on your general interests as a surgeon as well as your specific interests as a member of the RAS-ACS community. The Web Portal concept allows you to "pull" in information according to the interests you specify while allowing the College to "push" information out to you. The report from the June 2004 Board of Regents meeting outlines the goal of the project to develop e-FACS.org, the College's portal: "...to improve and extend the relationship between the College and its members... The project will unify...College Web sites into an integrated Web presence and...allow...members to customize...College Web documents..." (See <http://www.facs.org/news/regentsjune2004.html> for details.)

With this issue of *RAS-ACS News*, we are initiating an interactive dialog with you about the content for our area of the Web Portal. **Before May 1, 2005, forward your insights and ideas about content for the RAS-ACS community to: Peg Haar, RAS-ACS Administrator, at phaar@facs.org.** You will find feedback in the next issue of our newsletter, and the dialog will continue until the Web Portal is launched next fall and as time goes on. Through this effort, we plan to deliver quality content that is relevant to you as a surgeon in your stage of training and development.

We look forward to your contribution.

C. Suzanne Cutter, MD

Co-Chair, RAS-ACS Communications Committee
RAS-ACS Associate Community Editor, ACS Web Portal
New York, NY

Financial Considerations for Surgical Residents

According to the most recent figures from the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC), the average debt of the graduating medical school class of 2004 was \$115,218. Twenty-eight percent of all students had a debt of greater than \$150,000, and 16.7 percent of students graduating from private schools had accumulated more than \$200,000 in debt. In addition, the average PGY-1 stipend for last year was \$39,800. Based on the average medical residency of three years with a six-month grace period and two and a-half years of economic hardship deferment with no payments made, the standard 10-year repayment plan on \$115,000 debt would be \$1,242/month, with a total repayment of \$149,075 (\$34,074 interest cost)*. Although surgical residents train for a minimum of five years, many residents now complete both one to two years of research during residency as well as one to two years of fellowship training following residency. **The interest paid by surgical residents is therefore much higher**, and the resulting resident debt is an often ignored problem.

Currently, numerous debt repayment, debt forgiveness, and debt management programs are available. However, resident debt as a practical issue has not been addressed on a national scale. We therefore plan to discuss the issue of surgical resident reimbursement and debt in the next few months via *RAS-ACS News*. Also, we would ask current Associates and fellows to **be on the lookout for a brief survey on educational debt and the strategies used to manage it.**

This is an exciting time of ongoing change and evolution in surgical education. The RAS-ACS Issues committee intends to play an active part in ensuring that residents' and Associates' goals are addressed.

*October 2004, AAMC Medical Student Education: Cost, Debt and Resident Stipend Facts

Hima Ghanta MD
Richard Baynosa MD
Faisal G. Qureshi MD
RAS-ACS Issues Committee

RAS Symposium at Clinical Congress to Examine "Truncated Training for the Surgical Resident—The Future or Fallacy?"

Each year, the RAS-ACS sponsors a symposium during the Clinical Congress on a topic targeted at surgical residents, young surgeons, and fellows. This year's presentation will examine the issue of truncated training for residents proceeding to surgical specialties and will be held on Sunday, October 16, from 1 to 4 pm. The aim of this session is to provide insight into the future of surgical training and how truncated training would impact the trainees, training programs, and societal needs. The symposium will explore the possible **advantages and pitfalls of reducing the number of years a surgical specialist has to train.** The role of truncated training in the

environment of limited work hours, long-term financial benefits, and impact on family life will also be discussed.

Attendance is open to all RAS members as well as all residents, fellows, and medical students. An open-microphone discussion will promote audience participation.

We hope to see you there.

Faisal G. Qureshi, MD
Chair, RAS-ACS Issues Committee
Pittsburgh, PA

Join RAS-ACS and Become a Resident Member of the College

Many residents don't know much about the College until they are in the latter years of their training. Others think the College is only for general surgery residents and not for those pursuing surgical subspecialties. In reality, the ACS is the largest surgical organization in America, as well as the main voice for surgeons on Capitol Hill. RAS is the voice for residents in the College, and, to coin an old phrase, there is strength and power in numbers. Let your fellow residents know about RAS and encourage them to join the College. Visit <http://www.facs.org/ras-accs/membership/membership.html> or call 1-800-293-4029 for an application. Benefits of membership include **free online access to the ACS Surgery: Principles & Practice**, the College's official textbook of surgery.

Andrea Silver, MD
Chair, RAS-ACS Membership Committee
Royal Oak, MI

About RAS-ACS

The Resident and Associate Society of the American College of Surgeons (RAS-ACS) is an organization within the American College of Surgeons that was formed to benefit young and future surgeons through involvement in the College's activities. Membership in the RAS-ACS is automatic when you become a member of the Candidate Group or an Associate Fellow of the American College of Surgeons. Candidate Group membership is open to all surgical residents enrolled in an accredited graduate educational program, surgical research, or fellowship program. Associate Fellow membership is open to young surgeons who are currently engaged in a second surgical residency, a research or a fellowship program, a surgical specialty practice, and are within five years of graduation from formal surgical residency training. Currently, over 2,700 Associate Fellows and 4,400 Candidate Group members are part of the RAS-ACS.

Benefits of becoming a RAS-ACS member:

- free *Journal of the American College of Surgeons* subscription
- free *Bulletin of the American College of Surgeons* subscription
- free online *ACS Surgery Textbook*
- free Clinical Congress and Spring Meeting registration and access to CME credit
- reduced pricing for selected postgraduate courses at the Clinical Congress
- information on clinical and research fellowship opportunities
- free access to the College's job and resume databank
- electronic newsletter and Web site
- educational materials to meet requirements for board certification
- opportunities to serve on various College committees
- opportunities for local chapter affiliation
- access to ACS-sponsored insurance programs (life, health, disability)
- a voice in advocacy and policy-making issues concerning residents and young surgeons

Join today!

Be Sure to Visit These Important Areas of the ACS Web site:

RAS-ACS Homepage: <http://www.facs.org/ras-accs/index.html>

How to Join RAS-ACS: <http://www.facs.org/ras-accs/membership/membership.html>

Job Bank: http://www.healthcareers.com/site_templates/ACS/index.asp?aff=ACS&SPLD=ACS

ACS Homepage: <http://www.facs.org>

ACS Spring Meeting: <http://www.facs.org/2004springmeeting/index.html>

Your Feedback Is Important to Us

We are interested in making sure that the content of *RAS-ACS News* meets the interests and responds to the needs of surgical residents and newly practicing surgeons across the country. Your feedback and ideas are important to us. Please send your comments about this newsletter and your ideas for articles to the Editor at ras-news@facs.org.

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For additional information regarding the benefits and activities of the RAS-ACS, please contact Peg Haar at ras-news@facs.org



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