

RAS-ACS News



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



March 2010 RAS-ACS eNewsletter

Editor: Sangeetha Prabhakaran, MD

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We recently returned from the American College of Surgeon (ACS) Board of Regents meeting in Chicago, during which ACS leadership addressed many of the current challenges that confront the profession and the College itself. Major issues include delivery of quality surgical care, managing the current economic downturn, addressing the physician workforce shortage, and navigating the unclear waters of health care reform.

The College continues to actively seek input from the Resident and Associate Society (RAS). Our oral report was presented to the Board of Regents and detailed RAS activities for the upcoming year, including plans for RAS activities during the Clinical Congress and a description of the work of our four

standing committees.

We would like to thank ACS Executive Director, **Dr. David Hoyt**, who met with us personally to help offer insight into RAS activities. Look for us to work on developing more **RAS activities at the local level** and building a **stronger relationship** with the chapters. View the RAS Web site at <http://www.facs.org/ras-acs/index.html> for details on upcoming events and announcements.

Joshua Broghammer, MD
Chair, RAS-ACS

● **Message from the Vice-Chair**

I echo Josh Broghammer's enthusiasm regarding the February Board of Regents meeting in Chicago. College leadership expressed interest in the opinions of resident and associate members and sought to find even more ways to **integrate us into the decision-making process**. In particular, Executive Director Dr. David Hoyt expressed his interest in ensuring RAS's continued involvement in charting the future direction of the ACS.

This is an exciting time to be a member of RAS as we move into our adolescence as an organization. Since RAS began in 1999, we have developed an efficient and productive structure that leads to impressive Clinical Congress programs and annual publications. Additionally, RAS has contributed to the discussion of important topics and has publicly expressed our views on subjects such as work hours. I think that the next 10 years will allow residents and associates to continue to become important groups in the College.

Joshua M.V. Mammen, MD, PhD
Vice-Chair, RAS-ACS

● **Report from the Communications Committee**

Health Care Policy and the Future of Surgery

The RAS-ACS-dedicated June *Bulletin of the American College of Surgeons*, originally scheduled for June 2010, will now be published in the **July Bulletin**. The **June Bulletin** will be dedicated to **surgical volunteerism**, which will focus on tragic events and public health concerns in Haiti.

Some of the topics that will be discussed in the July Bulletin include:

- **History of Health Care Reform**
- **Educating Surgery Residents on Health Care Policy**
- **The Policy of Addressing Work Force Issues with Foreign Medical Graduates**
- **New Media and Web 2.0 and Health Care Policy**

Look for this important and compelling issue of the *Bulletin*, written by members of our RAS-ACS community.

David Tom Cooke, MD
Chair, RAS-ACS Communications Committee

Call for Submissions to the Bulletin of the American College of Surgeons

The Communications Committee of RAS invites all members to consider submitting brief articles on topics relevant to issues facing our members. Accepted articles will be reviewed and considered for publication in the *Bulletin of the American College of Surgeons*. Articles should be brief (ideally 500-1,000 words), well written, and cite relevant literature, if appropriate. Submit articles to Anathea Powell by e-mail to acpowellacs@gmail.com. Include the words "RAS Bulletin Submission," the date, and your last name in the title of the e-mail; attach the article to the e-mail as a Word document. Articles will be edited for length and content. We look forward to receiving your submissions.

Anathea Powell, MD
Vice-Chair, RAS-ACS Communications Committee

● **Report from the Education Committee**

The Education Committee is updating the **Surgical Jeopardy** Bank of questions and has received almost **200 new questions**. We continue to solicit questions from our members to expand the reach and heterogeneity of the Question Bank. Additionally we **seek a co-host** to partner with Mark Bowyer, MD, FACS, to administer the 2010 event and to continue serving in this capacity as Dr Bowyer gradually turns over the reins to RAS.

J. W. Awori Hayanga, MD MPH
Chair, RAS-ACS Education Committee

● **Report from the Membership Committee**

The Membership Committee is working with the College to strengthen its shared membership through **increased activity at the state and local levels**. At the local level, this goal is accomplished by participation in the **liaison program—in which** each surgical residency training program assigns a local coordinator to undertake membership and recruitment activities, as well as to communicate key information regarding the College and its activities.

At the state level, we are seeking increased involvement of residents in **state chapter activities**, ideally by adding a resident member to each Executive Committee. This individual would participate in Executive Committee activities and would manage the state's liaison activities. Our goal is to create a coordinated network that will add power to the organization and encourage involvement among medical students, residents, and Associate Fellows.

If you are interested, contact Peg Haar at phaar@facs.org to learn about opportunities in your state.

Melissa Rader, MD, MPH
Chair, RAS-ACS Membership Committee

● **Report from the Issues Committee**

Join the Debate: Do More Requirements Make a Better Surgeon?

The RAS Symposium will feature a debate among leaders in surgery on whether in the modern era of surgery, the increasing requirements facing surgeons improve patient care and outcomes. Does increasing testing, time on simulators, tracking work hours, and more documentation requirements lead to safer surgery? Or should our profession be reducing certification and documentation requirements to previous levels? Express your views at the RAS Symposium

In addition, the RAS invites all members to participate in the **Annual Resident Submissions Competition**. Submit your opinions on "Do More Requirements make a Better Surgeon?" to the RAS. A first-place winner for both "pro" (in favor of more requirements) and con (against requirements) will be invited to present their viewpoints at the RAS Symposium on **Sunday, October 3**. Second-place winners will have their submissions published in an ACS publication.

Submission guidelines:

- Maximum 1,000 words
- References not required but are preferred.
- Due by **April 1, 2010**, to ras@facs.org

Brian J. Santin, M.D
Chair, RAS-ACS Issues Committee

● **Global Observerships in Place for IMGs at the University of Miami**

Short-Term Training Permits for International Graduates in Louisiana

The Louisiana State Board of Medical Examiners has amended and published in the *Louisiana Register* the rules for training permits for international graduates . The Board may, in its discretion, issue an **institutional temporary permit** to allow international medical graduates to participate in a short-term residency or other postgraduate training program. The program must be conducted by a Louisiana medical school or a major teaching hospital, as defined in the rule. The temporary permit will be valid for **up to three months**, subject to the program and applicant meeting certain requirements. Find more information at <http://www.lsbme.la.gov/>

Global Observerships at the University of Miami

The Global Observership program at the **University of Miami (UM)** and **The William J. Harrington Medical Training Programs** for Latin America and the Caribbean are part of the Division of Education and Training of the International Medicine Institute. These two programs provide International Medical Graduates (IMGs) with the opportunity to apply for research and clinical rotations in different specialties, including surgical subspecialties. These programs facilitate the **adaptation of highly qualified IMGs to the American health care system** by allowing them not only day-to-day experience with clinical rounds and surgical discussions, but also providing them with the ability to **build relationships with potential mentors** in preparation for applying for surgical residencies.

Since the Global Observership started about two years ago it has accepted observers from Egypt, Saudi Arabia, India, China, Germany, France, Ghana, Italy, and Korea; the Harrington Program accepts applications from Latin American countries and the Caribbean. Most Harrington applications have been received from Brazil, Colombia, Peru, Ecuador, Mexico, and the Dominican Republic. Some of the **requirements** include a high pass on the TOEFL exams and a personal interview and written recommendation from a UM voluntary faculty member in the applicant's country, an immediate supervisor department chief, or the director of the institution at which the applicant is presently training, working, or is a faculty member. The dean of the applicant's medical school also must provide a recommendation. More information at:

<http://www.med.miami.edu/imi/x35.xml>

Mecker G. Möller, MD
Chair, RAS-ACS IMG Committee

● **State Advocacy Representative Program Gets You Involved in Political Action**

The State Advocacy Representative (**StAR**) program provides an opportunity for all members of the American College of Surgeons to become **involved in federal and state affairs**. By participating in the StAR program, Residents and Associates have the opportunity to act as the "eyes and ears" of the College at the state level. The representatives monitor current legislation and inform the State Affairs "team" at the College about what's happening at the local level. StARs might be recruited to take action on an issue at the grassroots level or to provide testimony to a state legislature.

StARs are invited to participate in **conference calls** throughout the year and will be contacted with upcoming call information that will highlight the 2010 legislative session. Contact **Alexis Walters** at awalters@facs.org for more information on the StAR program.

If you have questions, contact RAS Issues Committee Chair **Brian Santin**, briansantin@gmail.com or Vice-Chair **Kimberly Ruscher**, kimberlyrr@gmail.com.

American College of Surgeons Issues Call for Clinical Scholars Program

Information for Positions Starting July 1, 2011

See <http://www.facs.org/ropc/clinicalscholars.html> for more information.

The American College of Surgeons (ACS) is offering a **two-year fellowship in outcomes research, health services research, and health care policy**. The ACS has **one position available** each year for a surgical resident who has completed two or three clinical years of training, is a United States citizen, and has obtained two years of program funding from a home institution or other granting agency. The fellow will work in multiple areas within the Division of Research and Optimal Patient Care to conduct clinical research, further the research and policy objectives of the College, and improve the care of surgical patients.

The program's primary objective is to **address issues in patient safety, health care quality, and health policy** that complement ACS priorities. Areas of concentration will include surgical oncology ([National Cancer Data Base, NCDB](#)), surgical quality improvement ([ACS National Surgical Quality Improvement Program, NSQIP](#)), and trauma ([National Trauma Data Bank, NTDB](#)). Other possible projects include guideline development, accreditation programs, and health policy. The scholar-in-residence's objective is to further the projects and programs of the ACS Division of Research and Optimal Patient Care.

The goal of the Scholar in Residence Program is to **help prepare a surgical resident for a career in academic surgery** through a unique, practical research, and health policy experience at the American College of Surgeons. The program includes **the opportunity to earn a Master of Science degree in Clinical Investigation (MSCI) or a Master's degree in Healthcare Quality and Patient Safety** through the Northwestern University Schools of Medicine, Public Health, and the Institute for Healthcare Studies in Chicago, IL. The clinical scholars work closely with the ACS staff and must complete coursework; as a result, **the clinical scholar is required to move to Chicago**.

Timeline for position starting July 1, 2011

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| Application process opens | May 1, 2010 |
| Application deadline | July 15, 2010 |
| Interview notification | August 15, 2010 |
| Interview Process | October 2010 at ACS Clinical Congress |
| Notification of | November 1, 2010 |

| | |
|---------------|--------------|
| appointment | |
| Starting date | July 1, 2011 |

Karl Bilimoria , MD, MS
Chief Resident, General Surgery, Northwestern
University
Chicago, IL

● **Report on the 46th Meeting of the Society of Thoracic Surgeons**

The field of cardiothoracic surgery is advancing rapidly, from the development of new training paradigms to the development and implementation of new technology. This fact was evident at the 46th annual meeting of the Society of Thoracic Surgeons (STS), recently held in Fort Lauderdale, FL. The meeting emphasized **surgical education and the training of the new generation of cardiothoracic surgeons.**

Thirty exceptional general surgery residents from different programs around the United States were invited to the meeting under the society's **Looking into the Future Scholarship Award.** The residents met with faculty and cardiothoracic residents, attended scientific sessions and social events, and learned more about the scope and practice of the field. The residents were also invited to the STS Residents Luncheon hosted by the STS, the Thoracic Surgery Program Directors Association (TSDA), and the Thoracic Surgery Residents Association (TSRA). During the luncheon, several faculty members talked about their experience as cardiothoracic surgeons. Residents and fellows also met and chatted with more than 30 faculty members about the field. In addition, as part of the STS meeting, the TSRA hosted a resident/fellow luncheon on the topic "**A look into the future of cardiothoracic surgery.**" **Dr. James Fann** from Stanford University articulated the role of simulation in training cardiothoracic surgeons, and **Dr. William Cohn** from the Texas Heart Institute spoke about some of the newest technologies in cardiothoracic surgery.

An important challenge in cardiothoracic surgery training is the development of a curriculum that can better serve contemporary cardiothoracic surgery. As part of this effort, the TSDA and the TSRA agreed to identify key people who are exceptional teachers in each cardiothoracic surgery residency around the country and who can help **redesign the current curriculum** and drive the implementation of new techniques of teaching and training. The TSRA reiterated its goal of **representing all cardiothoracic surgery residents** in the country. If you are interested in learning more about the TSRA or becoming more involved in the organization, contact **Joe Turek, MD**, TSRA President at turek001@notes.duke.edu.

Carlos M. Mery, MD, MPH
Member, RAS-ACS Communications Committee
Secretary, Thoracic Surgery Residents Association

● 2010 CoC Paper Competition Issues Call for Abstracts

The Commission on Cancer (CoC) is encouraging members of the College to share the CoC Paper Competition information with surgical residents and oncology fellows. The competition offers these young surgeons an excellent opportunity to gain presentation skills, visibility, and networking opportunities.

The competition is open to general surgery residents, surgical specialty residents, subspecialty residents, and oncology fellows in the United States. Abstracts should describe original research in cancer care including basic laboratory research, clinical investigation, and quality of care/health services research.

Abstracts must be submitted to the CoC Office by **March 31**. Five finalists will be chosen and asked to submit their full paper to the CoC office by **July 1**. The final three winners will be announced in August.

The first-place winning resident or fellow will receive a **\$1,000 award** and will have the opportunity to present at the **CoC Annual Meeting on Sunday, October 3, 2010, in Washington, DC**. Second- and third-place winners will be granted a \$500 award and the opportunity to present a poster at the CoC Annual Meeting.

This competition is funded by the CoC along with a memorial gift from Mrs. A. Lee Campione in honor of her late husband, Matthew P. Campione, MD, FACS.

For information see our Web site at <http://www.facs.org/cancer/canews.html> or contact the CoC Office at cjones@facs.org.

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 Resident Member or an Associate Fellow of the American College of Surgeons. Resident 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 3,500 Associate Fellows and 9,300 Residents are part of the RAS-ACS.

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. Communications Committee

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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 Clinical Congress advance 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, Web site, and Web portal
- 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-acs/>

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

Job Bank:

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

ACS Web portal: <http://efacs.org/residents>

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

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Anathea Powell, MD, Vice-Chair, New York, NY

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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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