

April 2009

Editor: David Tom Cooke, MD

Associate Editor: Parth Amin, MD

- [New ACS Pilot Program Aims to Increase Resident Membership](#)
- [ACS launches 'Operation Patient Access: Quality Surgical Care for All'](#)
- [Write an article for the ACS Bulletin -- your voice counts!](#)
- [Do you have content for the Residents and Associate Fellows Community?](#)
- [Take Advantage of Opportunities for Residents and Associate Members in the ACS](#)
- [Recap from the Joint Surgical Advocacy Conference 2009](#)
- [Resident Events Scheduled for ACS 95th Annual Clinical Congress in Chicago, IL](#)

Messages from the Chair

New ACS Pilot Program Aims to Increase Resident Membership

The American College of Surgeons (ACS) will soon be launching a **program designed to increase the number of residents who become members of the College and to reinforce the lifelong benefits of membership**. The program will be piloted in three locations: Boston, MA, Portland, OR, and Connecticut. Our own Raphael El Youssef, Resident and Associate Society of the American College of Surgeons (RAS-ACS) Membership Committee chair, and Carlos Mery, RAS-ACS Communications Committee chair, will serve as resident advocates in Oregon and Boston respectively. Chris Tasik, executive director of the Connecticut chapter, will serve as the advocate in that location. A video presentation may be viewed at: <http://www.facs.org/memberservices/acs-video.html>.

To help guide this program, **we would like to hear your recommendations regarding the best way to reach residents with information about the College's member benefits and how to encourage resident involvement**. Please share your thoughts on what influenced your decision to join the College--was it a mentor who influenced you; the activities, programs, or products the College offers; or a combination of some or all of the above? Also, we'd like to know what College resources are of the most value to you.

E-mail your feedback to Amy Steigman at asteigman@webershandwick.com. Your input is extremely important in creating a successful program.

ACS launches 'Operation Patient Access: Quality Surgical Care for All'

As part of its advocacy platform to call attention to the severe and worsening surgical workforce shortage that we face, the College, together with multiple other surgical societies, patients, hospitals, public health and other providers, and other stakeholders, launched **Operation Patient Access: Quality Surgical Care for All** last month.

This collaboration, supported by more than 15 other surgical professional societies, is **designed to**

emphasize that access to quality surgical care is already limited in many regions across this country, and that the College and its partners are poised and eager to cooperate with policymakers to implement solutions to these important national deficiencies.

The proposed solutions include:

- Increasing funding for graduate surgical education and the number of available residency positions in surgery.
- Incentivize surgeons (with assistance in educational loan repayment) to practice in underserved areas by expanding the National Health Service Corps
- Limit medical malpractice liability claims to help reduce the high malpractice premiums that are driving many surgeons out of the field.
- Introduce alternative payment methods, including revising the Emergency Medical Treatment and Labor Act (EMTALA) in order to reduce the number of emergency department visits and uncompensated care.

For further details on this critical initiative, visit <http://operationpatientaccess.facs.org/>.

Jacob Moalem, MD

Chair, RAS-ACS

Write an article for the ACS *Bulletin* -- your voice counts!

RAS-ACS invites you to submit **short articles for publication in the monthly *Bulletin* of the ACS** under the RAS-ACS banner. RAS-ACS is particularly interested in publishing articles on topics of interest to residents and young surgeons.

If you have a topic that you would like to write about or an experience that you would like to share via the *Bulletin*, contact cmery@partners.org or phaar@facs.org.

We look forward to hearing from you!

Do you have content for the Residents and Associate Fellows Community?

The Residents and Associate Fellows community on the ACS members-only Web portal, available at <http://efacs.org/residents> is designed to bring surgeons at all levels of training relevant and timely resources. **We invite you to check out the page and welcome your feedback.** If you feel that there is an important resource or article that you would like to see on the portal, send the URL or document to the RAS. The editorial board will review all submitted items for possible posting on the portal.

To send feedback and content suggestions, contact Heena Santry, Community Editor of the Residents and Associate Fellows area of the Web portal, at heena@santry.org.

Carlos M. Mery, MD, MPH

Chair, RAS-ACS Communications Committee

Heena Santry, MD

Vice-Chair, RAS-ACS Communications Committee

Take Advantage of Opportunities for Residents and Associate Members in the ACS

The College plays an important role in guiding, improving, and ensuring surgical education, as well as helping to determine health care policy. **RAS has become a growing and vibrant force in the ACS over the last five years.** Many of the Resident Members and Associate Fellows who comprise the RAS leadership have been able to act as a vocal advocate for all surgeons. The contributions made by RAS members are achieved through their voluntary commitment to participate in ACS activities.

The challenges that RAS faces include further developing its membership in order to increase its role in ACS activities. **The goal of having 100 percent of US surgical residents as members of RAS is an achievable target.** We are working towards having a RAS representative at each institution in the country. Each RAS member is urged to seek out his or her program's representative, and if one does not exist, to recommend a peer or themselves for the position. Associate Fellows can participate by engaging their peers at work and/or those they encounter at meetings.

RAS members will play an important role in the future of both the ACS and the profession of surgery, resulting in a strong voice for surgical advocacy and an effective guiding body for surgical education. Make sure you do not miss this opportunity to get involved today.

For information about Resident Member or Associate Fellow membership, visit <http://www.facs.org/memberservices/resident.html>.

Raphael El Youssef, MD
Co-Chair, RAS-ACS Membership Committee

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

Recap from the Joint Surgical Advocacy Conference 2009

From March 22-24, the members of the RAS-ACS had the opportunity to participate in the **2nd Annual Joint Surgical Advocacy Conference in Washington, DC.** Over 450 surgeons from 18 different specialty societies participated in the conference, which offered surgeons an opportunity to educate Congress about the challenges facing surgical practices and patients today while also building the grassroots bridges with legislators that are essential to having meaningful input on issues that affect us on a daily basis.

Those in attendance had the opportunity to hear from speakers who discussed the current political environment in Washington, DC, and across the country, as well as the current status of important health care issues, which include transformational health care reform, medical student debt, surgical workforce shortages, and Medicare physician payment. Attendees also had the opportunity to meet with senators and representatives to discuss these issues and share our perspectives on solutions to problems that will ultimately be part of health care reform.

In conjunction with the conference, Operation Patient Access (OPA): Quality Surgical Care for All, an effort to bring into focus the urgent issues facing access to quality surgical care in the United States, was launched. **Information on this joint effort--a collaboration of America's surgical community, including patients, surgeons, hospitals, public health and other providers--highlighting the overall advocacy platform in 2009 and 2010 for America's surgical community can be found on the OPA Web site at <http://operationpatientaccess.facs.org/>.**

If the College and the surgical specialty societies are to successfully shape these legislative initiatives, **more surgeons must become personally involved in the advocacy effort.**

For more information and to find out about how you can get involved, visit http://www.facs.org/acspa_pac/, or contact rfgoldberg@hotmail.com for additional information.

Ross F. Goldberg, MD
Member, RAS-ACS Issues Committee
Resident Member, Board of Directors
ACSPA-SurgeonsPAC

Resident Events Scheduled for ACS 95th Annual Clinical Congress in Chicago, IL

Spectacular Cases from Residents
Tuesday, October 13, 2009
8:00-11:15 am

Moderators:
A. Frederick Schild, MD, FACS
Juan Carlos Paramo, MD, FACS

Surgical Residents Submit Your Cases

This interactive session allows selected residents to present extraordinary cases to an expert panel, followed by a discussion led by A. Frederick Schild, MD, FACS, and Juan Carlos Paramo, MD, FACS. Each resident will have approximately 15 minutes to present the case, followed by a 10-minute discussion period.

We invite surgical residents to submit a case worthy of discussion. **To participate, e-mail a one-page, double-spaced abstract as a Word document attachment to spectacularcases@facs.org.** Include the title and description of the case, along with your name, mailing address, phone, fax, and e-mail address. The maximum word count is 300.

Abstracts may be submitted until **April 24 at 5:00 pm (CDT)**. Abstracts received after the deadline will not be considered.

Questions should be addressed to phaar@facs.org or call 312-202-5312. Abstracts **must be emailed** to spectacularcases@facs.org.

Surgical Jeopardy
Wednesday, October 14, 2009
8:00-11:15 am

Test your surgical knowledge against the best and brightest from residency programs across the country. **This session will test the surgical knowledge of teams of surgical residents and Associate Fellows.** This is a great opportunity to enhance young surgeons' knowledge and promote camaraderie.

Rounds one through six will include four, two-member teams who will compete to answer questions. The four highest-scoring teams will advance to the next level. Rounds six and seven will include final questions to determine the winner. The winning team will be awarded a plaque.

Submit the following information about your team:

The name of surgical residency program, city, state, names of two resident contestants, and resident contact information (including mailing address, phone number and e-mail address).

E-mail the completed application form by **April 24 at 5 pm (CDT)** to surgjeopardy@facs.org. **Only electronic applications will be accepted.**

Questions should be directed to phaar@facs.org or call 312-202-5312.

If the number of applications exceeds the number of slots available, preference will be given to (1) teams whose residents are members of the American College of Surgeons, and (2) date application was received. Team selection will attempt to maximize geographic and program diversity. Chosen teams will be sent a form to be signed by the program director guaranteeing attendance/participation.

How to Succeed in the Highly Competitive World of Grant Funding
Thursday, October 15, 2009
8:00-11:15 am

Moderators:

Leigh A. Neumayer, MD, FACS, Salt Lake City, UT
Geoffrey C. Gurtner, MD, FACS, Stanford, CA

The objectives of this session are to: provide an overview of the role of the surgeon-investigator; identifying and framing the research project; grant preparation; and how a grant is processed, evaluated, and scored after submission. This session is sponsored by the Committee for the Forum on Fundamental Surgical Problems. For additional information, contact phaar@facs.org.

Contribute content for the next RAS-ACS e-Newsletter! The next deadline is June 1, 2009.
You may e-mail submissions to spm352@yahoo.com.

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 2,600 Associate Fellows and 8,000 Residents 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 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-ac/>

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

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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Peg Haar, Staff Liaison, phaar@facs.org; 312-202-5312

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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633 N Saint Clair St, Chicago, IL 60611-3211