

**September 2007**

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#### **[From the Chair: Hearing Your Voice](#)**

**Thanks to the thousands of young surgeons who completed our recent survey!** We shared the results with the Board of Regents in June, and numerous committees of the American College of Surgeons (ACS) have subsequently asked for information about the survey. Surgical leaders want to know more about young surgeons, and this survey will help them.

When answering the survey, many young surgeons expressed the desire to become involved in ACS activities. As a result, **we are distributing calls for applications for ACS committee assignments and RAS leadership positions.** You may have received a recent e-mail asking for young surgeons to apply to serve on the ACS Surgical Workforce Committee. In this edition of *RAS-ACS News*, you will find more information about open RAS positions and Advisory Council appointments. There are many exciting opportunities available for young surgeons in the American College of Surgeons. I hope you'll consider becoming involved!

**Gregory S. Cherr, MD**  
Chair, RAS-ACS  
Buffalo, NY

#### **[Call for Applications for RAS-ACS Leadership Positions](#)**

RAS has **open positions available for members interested in serving in an administrative role in the organization.** Take advantage of this opportunity to become involved!

**Advisory council seats** are available for **ObGyn, Ophthalmology, Plastic Surgery, Urology, and Neurosurgery.** The RAS Representative will attend semiannual Advisory Council meetings and will act as a liaison between the Advisory Council and the RAS-ACS. The Advisory Councils of the College serve, in turn, as liaisons between the surgical societies and the Regents of the

College, advise the Regents on policy matters related to their specialties, and provide specialty input into the development of sessions for the Clinical Congress, among other important functions.

**Committee Vice-Chair** positions are available for all of the RAS standing committees. The standing committees include Education, Issues, Membership and Communications. Chair and Vice-Chair positions are for two-year "rolling" terms.

We are also seeking a new **Secretary for the RAS Executive Committee**. The position of Secretary is a one-year term that succeeds to Vice-Chair and then Chair of the Executive Committee. Candidates should be familiar with RAS and should have held prior leadership positions in the organization. Eligible candidates will be invited to speak at the RAS business meeting, which will be held during the upcoming Clinical Congress, where a vote will take place to determine the new Secretary. More information about this role can be found at the following link:  
<http://www.facs.org/ras-acs/about/bylaws.html>

Official appointments will be made at the annual RAS business meeting to be conducted on Sunday, October 7, in New Orleans. **The deadline for applications is September 15, 2007.** Please send a CV, a one-page letter of interest, and for surgical residents a letter of support from your Program Director or Chair. Send application material to Peg Haar at [phaar@facs.org](mailto:phaar@facs.org). Becoming involved in the RAS leadership provides an avenue for participation in College affairs, as well as an opportunity to address issues and voice concerns of residents and young surgeons. For more information about these or any other positions in RAS, please contact Gregory Cherr ([gcherr@facs.org](mailto:gcherr@facs.org)) or Ted James ([tjames@facs.org](mailto:tjames@facs.org)).

**Ted James, MD**  
Vice-Chair, RAS-ACS  
Burlington, VT

### **RAS Liaisons Bring New Members to the College**

**The Membership Committee of RAS-ACS would like to congratulate the general surgery residents and in particular the RAS liaisons** at Cedars Sinai Medical Center (Rodrigo Alban), Louisiana State University (Patrick Greiffenstein), Medical College of Wisconsin (Rebecca Keim), Saint Elizabeth's Medical Center (Ash Patel and Peter Lee), SUNY-Buffalo (Liana M. Lugo and Mary Elizabeth Rashid), University of Pittsburgh (Matthew Neal, Michael Stang, and Gregory Watson), and University of Toronto (Karen Devon) for **enrolling all of their residents as members of the American College of Surgeons.**

There are still many programs in need of a RAS Liaison to further our efforts in developing membership opportunities. We are also particularly interested in subspecialty residents in order to assist in **our goal of attaining 100 percent membership for all surgical interns this year.**

Remember that all surgical interns have their enrollment fee waived for the first year of training. If you are interested in becoming the RAS liaison for your program, please contact Luke Brewster ([lukebrewst@aol.com](mailto:lukebrewst@aol.com)) or Peg Haar ([phaar@facs.org](mailto:phaar@facs.org)).

**Luke Brewster, MD**  
Co-Chair, RAS-ACS Membership Committee.  
Oak Park, IL

### **RAS-ACS Survey Gathers Data on International Surgery**

The Education Committee of the RAS-ACS recently surveyed all resident members to gather data on how residents would prioritize international training over other available elective opportunities and on the aspects of the experience that are important to trainees. The survey also sought to understand the motivation behind the desire for international training and perceived barriers. This information, collected from the diverse group of US and Canadian resident members of the ACS, will help focus efforts to incorporate international experience into residency training.

We thank all of you who participated in this important survey. The data is now being analyzed, and the results will be published in the next issue of *RAS-ACS News*.

**Anathea Powell, MD**

Co-Chair, RAS-ACS Education Committee  
Bethesda, MD

**Looking for Clinical or Research Fellowships? Visit [e-FACS.org](http://efacs.org)**

A new Web page with **information on clinical and research fellowships** has been added to the RAS-ACS section of the ACS Web portal. Compiled by George F. Sheldon, MD, FACS, Editor-in-Chief of the portal, this robust resource explains the different types of clinical and research fellowships and provides links to important resources that can facilitate your search.

If you are looking for the next step in your career development, be sure to visit:

[http://efacs.org/portal/page/portal/ACS\\_Content/ACSCOMMUNITIESSPECIALITIES/ResidentsCmt/Fellowships%20for%20Residents](http://efacs.org/portal/page/portal/ACS_Content/ACSCOMMUNITIESSPECIALITIES/ResidentsCmt/Fellowships%20for%20Residents).

You will need your *e-FACS* username and password to log on.

**Carlos M. Mery, MD, MPH**

Member, RAS-ACS Communications Committee  
Boston, MA

**RAS-ACS Research Fellowship Database Launched**

The Education Committee of the RAS-ACS announces the launch of the Research Fellowship Database. **The database is an effort to support principal investigators (PI) and residents in their respective searches for laboratory fellows and positions.** The database provides information on:

- Location (institution, city, and state)
- Focus of research (basic science, clinical, and public health/policy)
- Length of position
- Funding status
- Clinical responsibilities
- Required qualifications (citizenship, degree, years of training)

Position entries also include posting date, application due date, start date, method of application, and contact information. There is also free-text space available for describing the position further or for any other important information. Program directors and PIs are able to quickly list their positions by clicking on a link and inserting information on the form provided. Residents are able to search the database using as many or as few criteria as they like. Results are listed in a table with links to each posting. Postings have dates of entry on them, and the database will be kept current.

**The database is now available on the RAS page of the Web portal and has begun accepting listings.** The link is:

[http://efacs.org/portal/page/portal/ACS\\_Content/ACSCOMMUNITIESSPECIALITIES/ResidentsCmt/SurgicalResearchFellowshipInformationDatabase](http://efacs.org/portal/page/portal/ACS_Content/ACSCOMMUNITIESSPECIALITIES/ResidentsCmt/SurgicalResearchFellowshipInformationDatabase). You will need your *e-FACS* username and password to access it. National advertising will begin soon, and we hope the resource will be attractive to both PIs and residents. Please e-mail Anathea Powell ([anatheapowell@earthlink.net](mailto:anatheapowell@earthlink.net)) with any questions regarding the database.

**Anathea Powell, MD**

Co-Chair, RAS-ACS Education Committee  
Bethesda, MD

## ACS Clinical Congress Planning Guide

This edition of the *RAS-ACS News* is devoted to the 93<sup>rd</sup> annual Clinical Congress of the American College of Surgeons. It is intended to help you plan your participation at the meeting so that you can take advantage of all the things the Clinical Congress has to offer. Following are highlights of some of the sessions we think will be of particular interest to surgical residents and young surgeons.

### **Sunday, October 7**

#### **RAS Annual Business Meeting**

9:00am – 12:00 pm

Morial Convention Center, Room 260-262

During this meeting, RAS members will analyze the accomplishments of the prior year, create the agenda for the following one, and elect the new RAS secretary, who will eventually become Vice-Chair and then Chair of our society. You can also volunteer to join any of the standing committees (Communication, Education, Issues, and Membership) of RAS and start to actively participate in our activities.

If your colleagues are not Resident or Associate Fellow members, contact Peg Haar ([phaar@facs.org](mailto:phaar@facs.org)) for application materials or go online to:  
<http://www.facs.org/memberservices/documents.html#application>

#### **RAS Symposium**

1:00-4:00 pm

Morial Convention Center, Room 252-254

Every year during the College's Annual Clinical Congress, the Resident and Associate Society (RAS) sponsors a **symposium** focusing on a timely topic targeted at surgical residents, young surgeons, and Fellows. This year's symposium, entitled "Pay-for-Performance and Surgical Quality Initiatives: Will the 'Generalist' and Surgical Training Survive in the New Paradigm?" will be held on Sunday, October 7, from 1 to 4 pm. **The purpose of the session is to examine surgical quality initiatives and their potential impact on both resident training and the practice of surgery in the future.**

**Courtney Townsend, MD, FACS**, Chairman of the Department of Surgery at the University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston, will discuss the "con" pay-for-performance perspective and the potential pitfalls of this initiative. **Barbara Bass, MD, FACS, Chair, Department of Surgery, Methodist Hospital, Houston, TX**, will discuss the "pro" pay-for-performance perspective and its potential advantages for the patient and the surgeon. **Frank Opelka, MD, FACS**, Associate Dean of Clinical Affairs and Professor of Surgery at Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center in New Orleans, will also be a guest speaker, sharing his perspective on pay-for-performance. **Hari Nathan, MD**, Co-Chair of the Issues Committee of RAS-ACS will provide a resident's perspective on this topic.

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

### **Monday, October 8**

#### **ACS Surgery Resident Program**

9:45am – 2:30pm

Morial Convention Center, Room 252-254

“Essential Skills for Surgical Practice: A Primer for Residents” will be a special program specifically designed to assist surgery residents with essential nonclinical issues they face during residency training and the transitional period to their posttraining careers. The program will feature sessions on personal financial planning and debt management, job-seeking strategies and negotiation skills, reduction of liability risks, practice management, and stress management in personal and professional relationships. For additional information contact Ms. Cherylann Sherman at 312/202-5424 or [csherman@facs.org](mailto:csherman@facs.org). Registration is required for this course.

### **General Sessions of Interest to Surgical Residents and Young Surgeons**

#### **Monday, October 8**

- GS20. Early Specialization: Are We Ready to Change How Surgeons Train? (3-5pm)  
Sponsored by the Committee on Resident Education

#### **Tuesday, October 9**

- GS27. All Politics Is Local: Strategies to Effect Health Care Change in Your Community (8-10am) Sponsored by the Committee on Young Surgeons and the Resident and Associate Society

#### **Wednesday, October 10**

- GS45. The Gender Shift in Surgery (8-10am) Sponsored by the Committee on Resident Education
- GS53. Mentoring: Creating a Pathway to Success for Young Surgeons (10am-12noon)  
Sponsored by the Resident and Associate Society
- GS63. Learning from Our Mistakes (3-5pm) Sponsored by the Committee on Medical Student Education

### **Practice Management Consultations to Be Available at Clinical Congress**

An excellent opportunity exists for RAS members attending Clinical Congress – participation in a FREE practice management consultation! For many years, the American College of Surgeons has worked with Tom Loughrey and Rick Ley of Economedix to provide these consults which are held at the Division of Advocacy and Health Policy booth in the College’s Member Information Center in the exhibit hall. Mr. Loughrey and Mr. Ley have expertise in a wide range of practice management issues, and RAS members certainly have many questions about starting a practice, coding, compliance, patient flow, personnel management, financial management, governance, and so on.

If you will be attending Clinical Congress, take advantage of this free service. Appointment information will be posted soon on the Advocacy and Health Policy web page at <http://www.facs.org/ahp/index.html>, so check there for updates, or call 202-337-2701.

### **Reception Planned for Residents Interested in Vascular Surgery**

The Society for Vascular Surgery, along with the American College of Surgeons, will host a reception for residents and medical students interested in vascular surgery careers at the upcoming ACS Clinical Congress in New Orleans. This is a great opportunity to interact with vascular surgery fellowship program directors and other vascular surgeons. The reception will be held on Monday, October 8, from 6:00 – 7:00 pm. Location details are not available at this time. If you are interested in attending, please e-mail [communications@vascularsociety.org](mailto:communications@vascularsociety.org), and an invitation with specific details will be sent to you.

For the latest news on vascular surgery careers, subscribe to *On the Cutting Edge* e-newsletter, which reports on new training programs, up-to-date vascular research, and other vascular-related

information. Send your e-mail address to [communications@vascularsociety.org](mailto:communications@vascularsociety.org) to be included on the e-newsletter distribution list.

**Emily A. Kalata**

Society for Vascular Surgery  
Chicago, IL

**And While You are in New Orleans, Your Kids Can Attend Camp ACS**

Once again, ACCENT on Children's Arrangements, Inc. is partnering with the American College of Surgeons to provide an exciting on-site children's camp in New Orleans. The 2007 Clinical Congress will be an opportunity for kids from six months to 17 years to experience the diversity and history unique to New Orleans and the surrounding area. Children will enjoy a Mardi Gras Madness camp located at the Hilton New Orleans Riverside. Hours of operation are Sunday, October 7 – Wednesday, October 10, 7:30am-10:00pm. *For further information or to register online, please visit the ACS Web site, <http://www.facs.org>.*

**Surgery Oral Examination Course to be Held in New Orleans**

The 26th Clinical Performance & Oral Examinations in Surgery course will offer a three-day course just prior to the Clinical Congress in New Orleans, October 5-7, 2007. This course is geared towards surgeons who have not successfully completed the certifying examination or senior residents who anticipate difficulty with the certifying examination. **The program attempts to help each participant recognize his/her strengths and weaknesses in knowledge base, professional image, and verbal communication skills in order to allow him/her to successfully complete the certifying examination.** All participants will be videotaped in a mock certifying examination and assigned a debriefing session after the examination. Each debriefing will include a behavioral analysis, a review of strengths and weaknesses, and a suggested plan for improvement.

For more information about the course and registration, visit <http://oralboardreview.net>. Questions about the program should be sent to [Pamela.Rowland@Dartmouth.edu](mailto:Pamela.Rowland@Dartmouth.edu).

**Carlos M. Mery, MD, MPH**

Member, RAS-ACS Communications Committee  
Boston, MA

**Clinical Trials Method Course Scheduled for November**

The American College of Surgeons' Surgical Research Committee is sponsoring the ninth Clinical Trials Methods Course November 9-13, 2007, at ACS headquarters and the Wyndham Chicago Hotel. **This course is recommended for surgeons who plan to engage in clinical research at a leadership level.** It includes concepts and development of skills in the design, implementation, and analysis of randomized clinical trials; observational studies; the use of large administrative databases; meta-analysis; funding mechanisms and budget development; outcomes (medical, patient-centered, cost); and dissemination of results. Participants work in small groups mentored by a surgeon and a biostatistician to develop a protocol.

**Reserve your spot early because the course is limited to 50 participants and is only offered every other year.** Preference is given to members of the American College of Surgeons. Register by September 7, 2007, to take advantage of the early sign-up discount. The course fee after September 7 will be \$2,395.

Visit <http://www.facs.org/cqi/src/clintrial.html> for additional information about the course, a preliminary course schedule, course fees, and a registration form. Questions? Contact Mary Fitzgerald at 312-202-5319, or by e-mail at [mfitzgerald@facs.org](mailto:mfitzgerald@facs.org).

## **Mary Fitzgerald**

Continuous Quality Improvement, ACS  
Chicago, IL

### **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 online *ACS Surgery Textbook*
- free Clinical Congress 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/index.html>

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

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](mailto:ras-news@facs.org).

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For additional information regarding the benefits and activities of the RAS-ACS, please contact Joan Wellington.

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