

RAS-ACS News



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



RAS-ACS eNewsletter: CLINICAL CONGRESS SPECIAL EDITION

Fall 2005

Editor: C. Suzanne Cutter, MD, Chair, Communications Committee, RAS-ACS

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Welcome from the Chair of RAS-ACS

Welcome to a new year with the Resident and Associate Society of the American College of Surgeons (RAS-ACS)! It is my pleasure to take over as Chair of our society for the next year as Danielle Katz completed her very productive year at our meeting during the Clinical Congress in San Francisco. We had many very productive meetings during the Clinical Congress, and I know that we are well on our way to having another amazing year.

The Executive Committee met to hear reports from the **At-Large Members** and **Advisory Council representatives**. Plans for the next year were discussed, and our agenda for the Council of Representatives was established. The Officers attended the **ACS Board of Regents** meeting, where Dr. Katz presented our accomplishments of the past year and our voices were heard on timely issues in the College.

The **Council of Representatives** met on Sunday morning, and more than 50 representatives from numerous specialties met as a whole to elect **Ted James, MD**, a surgical oncologist at the University of Vermont, to be the new Secretary of RAS. The

standing committees then broke into smaller groups and worked on an agenda for the next year. Numerous progressive ideas have emerged, and through the year, we will look for progress on work on a new topic for our symposium, a course for senior residents teaching **management skills**, and increased frequency of publication of this RAS eNewsletter, as well as developing new ways to recruit and retain members.

The RAS Symposium, "**Truncated Training: Future or Fallacy**," was well received by a standing room only audience. There were so many questions for the panel, the discussion extended to the limit of time for the meeting, and all in attendance enjoyed a stimulating exchange.

My plans for this year include improving our interaction with the residents and young surgeons from specialties other than general surgery, offering and **awarding a scholarship** for one of the ACS courses that develop leadership or scientific investigation skills, further improving our **visibility within ACS publications**, and increasing our collaboration with the **Committee on Young Surgeons**.

In an effort to improve ease of communication with all of you, the officers now have easy-to-remember and use e-mail addresses. Please forward any ideas or concerns to any of us. We can help direct you to the individual who can best answer your question, bring your concern to the group, or help you become involved in ACS and RAS committees and other activities.

Michael Sutherland, MD	Chair	msutherland@facs.org
Gregory Cherr, MD	Vice-Chair	gcherr@facs.org
Ted James, MD	Secretary	tjames@facs.org
Peg Haar	Staff Liaison	phaar@facs.org

Again, I'm looking forward to another exciting year and hope that you, as a member, will help me reach out to other people in your specialty, and other specialties, to invite them to join and get involved. Please let us know how we can help you.

Michael Sutherland, MD
Chair RAS-ACS
Travis AFB, California

Special Thanks to Danielle Katz, MD

The members of RAS-ACS would like to thank Danielle A. Katz, MD, outgoing Chair of RAS-ACS, for all of her hard work and outstanding leadership during the past year. Dr. Katz has been very instrumental in expanding the roles of the RAS members within the College. We are confident that she will continue to play a vital role in the leadership of the College. We look

forward to her continued support and wish her all the best.

RAS-ACS Standing Committee Reports

ALL resident and Associate Fellow members of ACS are automatically members of the Resident and Associate Society (RAS) of the American College of Surgeons. ALL RAS-ACS members are eligible to participate in RAS-ACS standing committees. To join a committee, contact Peg Haar.

Issues Committee

Our focus for this past year has remained on discussing the topics that affect almost all residents across the country. The primary focus of our sessions is on the following:

1. **Financial considerations** (loan payments, retirement strategies, and so on)
2. Finding an interesting, controversial topic that we can discuss at the **yearly RAS symposium**. We had an excellent symposium this year with three eloquent speakers who discussed the concept of truncated training. Several programs have followed this plan, and although no definite conclusion was reached, that was not expected to be the case. Nevertheless, the afternoon session proved to be very thought provoking.

We would encourage and appreciate new members to join and help the Issues Committee continue these goals throughout 2005-2006.

Hima Ghanta, MD

Rich Baynosa, MD

Co-Chairs, RAS-ACS Issues Committee

Communications Committee

The Communications Committee remains invigorated and focused on keeping residents and Associate Fellows informed. We use several methods to disseminate information on College programs and key issues affecting RAS constituents:

- **RAS-ACS e-Newsletter.** The e-Newsletter is targeted toward residents and Associate Fellows of the College. The articles are brief. Each highlights issues in surgery, College programs, and advances in surgery. Submissions are sought quarterly. Beginning November, 2005, we will publish the e-

Newsletter bimonthly to accommodate the large volume of submissions.

- **July Issue of the College *Bulletin*.** Each year, the Communications Committee is responsible for developing special content for the July issue of the *ACS Bulletin*. After we determine the topics, we will assign articles in January, 2006 and work with Communications staff at ACS headquarters to incorporate the special content into the issue.
- **Web Portal.** The College is developing a Web portal, which is an exciting electronic interface, for its membership. E-FACS.org will provide access to robust information and links relevant to all surgeons, as well as electronic tools such as a system for maintaining your CME credits and access to a case-logging system. The Web Portal is organized into web "communities" by specialty. We are working with the Resident Community Editor, Juan Paramo, MD, FACS. Residents can sign up by using their member IDs as a Username and their last names as a Password.

Shortly, we may become more involved in communicating directly with residency programs in order to keep residents and Associate Fellows informed while also encouraging both ACS membership and participation. We also have several new and stimulating communication opportunities under consideration. If you enjoy writing and editing, join us! We are also interested in your ideas and feedback. Our next conference call is December 5 at 7pm EST.

C. Suzanne Cutter, MD

Chair, RAS-ACS Communications
Committee
Flushing, New York

Education Committee

The Education Committee had a very fruitful committee meeting during the Clinical Congress. With many new faces on the committee, several new ideas were introduced, and the committee plans to act upon during the year. Additionally, ongoing projects are moving towards completion, including the **academic surgical career guide**, preparation document for the **oral surgery board exam**, and a

simulated surgery education database. These projects will be finalized prior to the end of this calendar year.

The new projects generated a great deal of enthusiasm from committee members. In particular, plans by the American College of Surgeons to create courses tentatively entitled "**Residents as Managers**" and "**Residents as Teachers**" generated much discussion. The Education Committee plans to actively collaborate with the creators of the program to ensure that the courses are both informative and relevant to the needs and expectations of resident members. **Fellowship preparation** was another area of interest at the committee meeting. Committee members felt that fellowship information was available in an ad hoc manner and that the RAS could serve as a central source for this material, particularly through the new **ACS Web Portal**. Several committee members volunteered to work in this area during the upcoming year. With two major projects identified, the Education Committee is poised to make further concrete steps in facilitating RAS member opportunities.

Joshua Mammen, MD

Chair, RAS-ACS Education Committee

Membership Committee

We at the membership committee are excitedly anticipating a very productive, fruitful year. With help from every program's director, we are attempting to **recruit one RAS-ACS liaison** from each residency training program. These individuals will be a great asset to our goal of increasing membership among surgical residents, surgical subspecialty residents, and medical students with a particular interest in surgery.

In addition to these efforts, other initiatives for this year include **restructuring the ACS' data collection system** for membership in order to allow for much more accurate tracking of our numbers and possibly creating **multi-year membership packages** to improve our retention rate. If you are interested in helping us achieve these goals, please join our next conference call, December 8, at 5:00 PM CST, by calling 1-866-434-7675, and entering access code number 7287911.

Jacob Moalem, MD

Chair, RAS-ACS Membership Committee

The College Helps Residents Prepare for Success in Practice

As residents progress in training and near graduation, many of us wrestle with unfamiliar issues. The College has recognized this lack of preparation and organized a special one-day program during the Clinical Congress in San Francisco for residents, which was entitled "**Essential Skills for Surgical Practice: A Primer for Residents.**"

Wayne Sotile, PhD, taught us that **resilience is the key to dealing with stress** while avoiding burnout. Once we were feeling more resilient, Roger Bonds, MBA, showed us how to look for a job by using print, electronic media, and networking. When we find an opportunity we like, we should ask the **four important questions**: Do they need me? Can I treat my patients? Can I live there? Can I trust them? Thomas Whalen, MD, FACS, prepared us for successful contract negotiations with a series of techniques and strategies, like using "**the nibble**" just before closing the negotiation or "**the flinch**" when they mention unacceptable terms.

Efficiency is the key to managing a practice. Charles Mabry, MD, FACS gave us **three keys to optimizing our practice**: search for ways to increase income, search for ways to control costs, and analyze practice patterns and insurance contracts. Likewise, we learned from James Saxton, Esq., that **creating a five-star practice** is the way to decrease our malpractice exposure while building a strong and successful practice. Sensing that we may not know how to manage an attending salary, the College provided two financial seminars. One seminar, presented by Roger Bonds, MBA, offered **strategies to get out of debt** by avoiding debt mistakes and using the strategies that millionaire physicians use. Ralph Broadwater, MD, FACS, presented the second seminar on financial planning and taught us how to **avoid the 10 MD mistakes**.

Finally, Timothy Flynn MD, FACS tried to give meaning to all the abbreviations we hear everyday, such as the State BOM (licensure), CMS (formerly HCFA), MedPAC (congressional advisory), and NQF (partnering with CMS on pay-for-performance) to help us to **get licensed, remain licensed, and stay out of trouble**. We left the program feeling more resilient and better prepared to get a job on our own terms, as well as being able to use our new income to build wealth. We have the College's Division of Education to thank for organizing such a relevant and effective seminar. We hope it will be offered again.

C. Suzanne Cutter, MD

Chair, RAS-ACS Communications Committee
Flushing, New York

Resident and Associate Society Holds Sixth Annual Symposium

The Resident and Associate Society held its sixth annual symposium on October 16, during the Clinical Congress. This year's symposium was entitled "**Truncated Training: Future or Fallacy?**" Held in conjunction with the annual RAS Council of Representatives meeting, the symposium explored this timely topic of interest to residents as well as practicing surgeons and medical students. Moderated by Richard Baynosa, MD, Co-Chair of the Issues Committee and Resident Member of RAS (Las Vegas, NV), the symposium was followed by a lively question-and-answer session.

Barbara Bass, MD, FACS (Houston, TX), spoke first and described the impetus for the American Board of Surgery to consider reducing the length of surgical residencies. **James Seeger, MD, FACS** (Gainesville, FL), outlined the possible future of **vascular surgery** training, including truncated training paradigms. To provide a spirited counterpoint, **L. Scott Levin, MD, FACS** (Durham, NC), described the Duke University **plastic surgery** residency's foray into early specialization and subsequent return to a traditional (longer) training program. The last speaker was **Amit Kumar, MD**, Resident Member (Cleveland, OH), who reported on a research project to evaluate medical student attitudes towards surgical training.

Perhaps the highlight of the symposium was the question-and-answer session. Speakers and audience members stayed past the allotted time for the session, and discussions continued in the hallways for some time thereafter.

Interested in helping to plan the RAS symposium at the 2006 ACS Clinical Congress in Chicago? Join the **RAS Issues Committee** and be a part of the future of surgery.

Gregory Cherr, MD
Vice-Chair, RAS-ACS
Member, RAS Issues Committee
Buffalo, New York

Contributions Sought for RAS-Sponsored Sessions at the 2006 Spring Meeting

When: Sunday April 23, 2006
Where: Dallas, TX
Deadline: **November 30, 2005**

Because of the tremendous success of programs the Resident and Associate Society has sponsored during the College's Spring Meeting in past years, the RAS will again sponsor three resident-oriented programs during the 2006 meeting. The 34th Annual Spring Meeting will be held in Dallas, TX, April 23-26. All of the RAS programs are scheduled to be held on **Sunday, April 23, 2006.**

- The first session, "**Clinical Abstract Presentations by Residents,**" will provide a forum where residents can

present their research findings and discuss results of their research with experts and peers.

- The second session, "**Spectacular Cases from Residents**" will offer residents the opportunity to present extraordinary cases to a group of expert panelists and to discuss various aspects of these cases.
- Finally, "**Surgical Jeopardy**" will be an exciting competition during which resident teams from across the country will be able to test their surgical knowledge against that of their peers.

To submit abstracts, spectacular cases, or nominations for "Surgical Jeopardy," please refer to the instructions at the end of this newsletter. For additional information, please contact Molly Clear at 312-202-5325 or mclear@facs.org. The registration fee for the Spring Meeting **will be waived** for all surgical resident registrants who attend the sessions.

The deadline for submissions is November 30, 2005.

Juan Paramo, MD, FACS

ACS Web Portal Community Editor
Miami Beach, Florida

RAS Scholarships for Conference Attendance

The Resident and Associate Society (RAS) of the American College of Surgeons (ACS) is pleased to announce a new scholarship for residents and Associate Fellows. The **RAS Scholarship** will be awarded competitively to a young surgeon who exemplifies the goals of the Resident and Associate Society. Specifically, the goal of the scholarships is to develop **future leaders** in the field of surgery. The scholarships will defray costs associated with conference **registration, travel, and participation.**

The **ACS courses** offered through this scholarship will engage young surgeons and expose them to opportunities to improve their abilities in areas such as leadership, communications, and research tools necessary to succeed as leaders in surgery. The courses available for scholarships include:

1. Clinical Trials Methods Course
2. Outcomes Research Course
3. Young Surgical Investigators Conference
4. Surgeons as Leaders
5. Surgeons as Effective Communicators
6. Surgeons as Educators

Check the College website <http://www.facs.org> for exact course dates as they become available. These courses will also be advertised. For consideration by the selection committee, applicants should submit:

1. **Letter of request** detailing the reasons for application and course desired
2. **Letter of support** from program director or department chair confirming that if the applicant is awarded the scholarship, he or she will be able to have time away from his or her department in order to attend the course
3. **Letter of support** from colleague, mentor, or other staff supporting the individual's application
4. **Curriculum vitae**

Only complete packages will be considered and should be mailed for receipt by **January 15, 2006** to:

Ms. Peg Haar
Division of Member Services
American College of Surgeons
633 N. Saint Clair Street
Chicago, IL 60611-3211

Submission Details for Spring Meeting

Clinical Abstract Presentations by Residents **Sunday, April 23, 2005** **9:00–10:30 am**

The author (surgical investigator in-training) is asked to submit an abstract of up to 250 words including a concise summary of hypothesis-testing research, completed or in progress, that has not been presented or published previously. Please e-mail your contact information and abstract as a Word document attachment to clinicalabstracts@facs.org. Abstracts may be submitted until **November 30, 2005 at 5:00 pm (CST)**. Abstracts will not be accepted after the deadline.

Spectacular Cases from Residents **Sunday, April 23, 2006** **10:45 am–12:15 pm**

We invite surgical residents to submit an extraordinary case worthy of discussion. Please 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 and fax numbers, and e-mail address. The maximum word count is 300. Abstracts may be submitted until **November 30, 2005 at 5:00 pm (CST)**. Abstracts will not be accepted after the deadline.

Surgical Jeopardy **Sunday, April 23, 2006** **1:30–4:00 pm**

Please fax or e-mail the completed application form to the ACS Division of Education by **November 30, 2005 at 5:00 pm Central Standard Time**. The fax number is 312/202-5029.

The e-mail address is surgjeopardy@facs.org. Preference will be given to teams whose residents are members of the American College of Surgeons, and team selection will attempt to maximize geographic and program diversity.

Questions: Please contact Molly Clear directly at (312) 202-5032 or via e-mail at mclear@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 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 *SESAP*
- 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!

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.

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

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

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

Job Bank: <http://www.facs.org/ras-accs/career/career.html>

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

ACS Web Portal: <http://www.efacs.org>

ACS Spring Meeting:

http://www.facs.org/spring_meeting/index.html

Communications Committee, RAS-ACS

C. Suzanne Cutter, MD, Chair, New York, NY

Josh Broghammer, MD, Detroit, MI

Jennifer Choi, MD, Indianapolis, IN

Alekzandra Hollingworth, Fresno, CA

Mecker G. Möller, MD, Co-Chair, Grand Rapids, MI

Joshua Rosenow, MD, Chicago, IL

Heena Santry, MD, Chicago, IL

Executive Committee, RAS-ACS

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Jacob Moalem, MD, North Brunswick, NJ

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Joshua Rosenow, MD, Chicago, IL

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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