

**November 2009**

**Special Edition: 2010 RAS-ACS Agenda**

**Editor:** Sangeetha Prabhakaran, MD

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### **[Message from the Chair](#)**

The 95<sup>th</sup> annual Clinical Congress of the American College of Surgeons (ACS) was held in Chicago, IL, October 11-15. The meeting was a tremendous success for the Resident Associate Society of the American College of Surgeons (RAS-ACS) and showcased the impact that RAS is making on the College. A few highlights of the meeting and the past year's achievements are below:

1. The RAS would like to thank **Jacob Moalem, MD, FACS**, and congratulate him on his accomplishments over the last year as Chair of the RAS. Dr. Moalem helped implement the RAS position statement against further work hours restrictions and delivered the message on behalf of young surgeons to the Institute of Medicine.
2. Congratulations to **Heena Santry, MD**, as the new Secretary of the RAS. Dr. Santry has served with distinction as Vice-Chair of the Communications Committee and Editor of the RAS section of the ACS Web Portal. Heena also represents RAS on the Advisory Council for General Surgery and the College's Women in Surgery Committee. We look forward to her continued success in the RAS.
3. The RAS would like to thank **Mark Bowyer, MD, FACS**, and **Juan Paramo, MD, FACS**, for their work on Surgical Jeopardy and Spectacular Cases, respectively. Dr. Bowyer was presented with a plaque for his past work and continued commitment to making Surgical Jeopardy a success.
4. A special note goes out to **Awori Hayanga, MD, MPH**, for his work in establishing the Reuben J Williams Foundation. Dr. Hayanga is the Chair of the RAS Education Committee and received the inaugural 2009 Resident Volunteerism Award.
5. **Anathea Powell, MD**, new Vice-Chair of the Communications Committee, received an award for best essay written by a RAS member about the mentor who had a memorable influence on her career. All RAS members are encouraged to participate in the 2009-2010 RAS Essay Contest on Volunteerism. (For more details see the final section of this newsletter.)

6. The RAS business meeting on Sunday, October 11, was a smashing success. Our four standing committees continue to produce excellent work. The committee chairs for the upcoming year will be **David Cooke, MD**, Communications; **Melissa Rader, MD**, Membership; Awori Hayanga, MD, MPH, Education; and **Brian Santin, MD**, Issues. Participating on a committee is a great way to get involved in RAS and, more importantly, the College. Contact Peg Haar at [phaar@facs.org](mailto:phaar@facs.org) for more details.

7. The RAS-sponsored sessions were an overwhelming success. The RAS symposium was well attended and created great discussion. The **first RAS town hall meeting** focused on the topic of work hours and was well received. As usual, Surgical Jeopardy and Spectacular Cases were a hit. The other RAS-sponsored symposia were met with very positive feedback and great attendance.

8. The voice of RAS at all levels of the College continues to strengthen. To that end, we are pleased to report that many existing vacancies for RAS representatives to advisory councils and special committees were filled. Look for an upcoming announcement of the few remaining vacancies and consider applying to represent the RAS throughout the College administration.

I am very excited to begin my term as Chair. It is my hope that with your help we can continue to elevate RAS to new heights within the College. For more information visit the RAS-ACS Web site at <http://www.facs.org/ras-acs>, the ACS Web Portal at <http://efacs.org/residents>, or email [phaar@facs.org](mailto:phaar@facs.org).

**Joshua Broghammer, MD**  
Chair, RAS-ACS

#### **Message from the Vice-Chair**

I would like to echo Dr. Broghammer's comments regarding the recent activities of the RAS as well as the exciting prospects for the upcoming year. Over the last year, the visibility and effectiveness of the RAS in advocating for the interests of Resident Members and Associate Fellow continued to increase under the leadership of the outgoing Chair, Jacob Moalem. The beginning stages of this year bode well for the continued growth of RAS under the leadership of Dr. Broghammer, our new Chair, and Heena Santry our newly elected Secretary. In addition to continuing all of the other successful areas that RAS has developed, one major area of focus for this year is **ensuring that all surgical disciplines are represented**. To that end, the remaining vacancies on the Executive Committee have been filled, including representation from the areas of cardiothoracic surgery, otolaryngology, and orthopedic surgery. Through a variety of outreach mechanisms, we hope to continue to work to **develop the RAS into a representative body for all of surgery**. I am looking forward to the next several months with great excitement and invite my fellow RAS members to become more actively involved in this venture.

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

#### **Communications Committee**

**The Communications Committee is the voice of RAS-ACS.** Our Chair is Dr. David Tom Cooke, and our Vice-Chair is Dr. Anthea Powell. Our goal is to inform Medical Student Members, Resident Members, and Associate Fellows of the College about programs and initiatives of interest to them, and to use our voice to raise concerns and issues that affect our community. This year, we had a very productive meeting at the 2009 ACS Clinical Congress.

**Main initiatives during the 2009-2010 year will be:**

**--June edition of the Bulletin**

Every year, the RAS Communications Committee spearheads the development of editorial contributions for the June issue of the *Bulletin of the American College of Surgeons*. A theme

relevant to surgeons at all levels of experience is chosen, and the articles for this special edition are written by RAS members. This past year's theme, "Building a Surgical Career" was a huge success and extremely well received ([http://www.facs.org/fellows\\_info/bulletin/2009/jun09bullet.html](http://www.facs.org/fellows_info/bulletin/2009/jun09bullet.html)). The 2010 June edition of the *Bulletin* will address the theme "Health Care Policy and the Future of Surgery". We encourage RAS members to participate in writing articles for this special edition. Articles published in the *Bulletin* are also indexed in *PubMed*.

#### **--Other RAS contributions to the Bulletin**

In addition to the June edition, articles on important topics written by RAS members will appear periodically in the *Bulletin*, under the RAS-ACS banner. The RAS is **looking for authors to contribute articles**. If you have an idea for an article that you would like to compose and contribute, contact [ras-news@facs.org](mailto:ras-news@facs.org).

#### **--RAS-ACS News e-newsletter**

The RAS-ACS News e-newsletter highlights topics of interest to the RAS membership and provides information about ACS programs and initiatives of interest. **We invite you to send short submissions that you think will be interesting to other members of the RAS community**. In addition, **if you have attended a meeting or symposium, we encourage you to submit a summary of that meeting**. The Editor of RAS-ACS News is **Sangeetha Prabhakaran, MD**. RAS-ACS News is also **looking for an Assistant Editor**. For more information, contact [ras-news@facs.org](mailto:ras-news@facs.org).

#### **--Resident Community on the ACS Web Portal**

A subcommittee of the Communications Committee serves as the editorial board for the resident community section of the ACS Web Portal at <http://efacs.org/residents>. The Web portal can be used as a daily tool to enhance the productivity, educational activities, and networking options for all surgeons. Heena Santry, had spearheaded this project as the previous Community Editor. But with Dr. Santry assuming duties as the newly elected RAS-ACS Secretary, **there is now an opening for Community Editor**. If you have Web savvy and interest, contact [ras-news@facs.org](mailto:ras-news@facs.org).

The Communications Committee is always looking for ideas or for people interested in becoming active in its work. Contact [david.cooke@ucdmc.ucdavis.edu](mailto:david.cooke@ucdmc.ucdavis.edu) or [phaar@facs.org](mailto:phaar@facs.org) if you're interested in the Communications Committee and the previously described projects.

#### **David Tom Cooke, MD**

Chair, RAS-ACS Communications Committee

#### **Issues Committee**

The Issues Committee sponsored a very well-received Annual Symposium at the Clinical Congress last month! Many thanks go out to all committee members who helped put the symposium together. A very special THANK YOU goes to our past-Chair, Suzanne Cutter, MD. As Dr. Cutter passed the reigns as Chair of the Issues Committee to Brian Santin, MD, the annual meeting took off without a hitch!

The agenda for this coming year will include planning next year's symposium. Currently we are exploring topics for consideration. If you have an idea for a controversial topic that will ignite debate amongst panel members and the audience alike, send your ideas to Dr. Santin at [briansantin@gmail.com](mailto:briansantin@gmail.com), and he will gladly get you involved! In addition to developing our annual contribution for the *Bulletin*, this year we will also be hosting the **Third Annual Resident Competition** as we seek residents from around the country to participate as panel members at the Annual Symposium as well as publish resident submissions in ACS publications.

This year the Issues Committee has two new and exciting projects on its agenda. One involves **coordinating efforts with the State Legislative Affairs area of the Division of Advocacy and**

**Health Policy** to explore pertinent ideas at the state level; the second is designed to help **promote health care reform updates** targeted at residents. We have a full plate to look forward to this year, and we anticipate having a very productive and energetic group of members to participate in our conference calls. We certainly appreciate any and all help from RAS members. If you are interested in joining these active and lively discussions, we host a conference call on the **first Wednesday of every month** at 9:00 pm Eastern Time. Calls will last no longer than one hour. Call in if you can make it. We'd love to have you!

Conference Call #1-866-434-7675 Access Code: 7287911

For more information about the Issues Committee, contact [briansantin@gmail.com](mailto:briansantin@gmail.com).

**Brian J. Santin, MD**  
Chair, RAS-ACS Issues Committee

### **Membership Committee**

The goal of the Membership Committee is to promote membership in the College among residents and young surgeons. The Membership Committee is very excited about the upcoming year, and we hope to expand upon the following initiatives:

#### **1) RAS-ACS Liaison Program**

Our liaison residents are an important bridge between RAS-ACS and their training programs. This year we were able to recognize these individuals at a special breakfast meeting at ACS Headquarters in Chicago. It is our goal to build upon our current liaisons and obtain representation at each surgical training program in the US.

#### **2) State Chapter Representation**

State chapter meetings are a great initial introduction to College activities. We hope to increase resident representation in ACS state and local chapter activities. The individual program liaisons will be prompted to serve their local or state chapter; in cases where there are multiple programs per chapter, one liaison should be designated as a representative to the chapter.

#### **3) Subspecialty Surgical Resident Membership**

We aim to increase membership among trainees in subspecialty surgical programs. We plan to promote the College's programs and activities through updates on the resident community section of the ACS Web Portal and to provide links pertinent to surgical subspecialty residents.

#### **4) Medical students**

We are interested in promoting the recruitment of medical students into the College. Membership provides access to [e-FACS.org](http://e-FACS.org), the College's members-only Web portal, which provides many useful tools and educational options like the opportunity to view videos, explore surgical topics, and use the Little Red Book "So, You Want to be a Surgeon." All are valuable resources for medical students.

We would like to thank the College and RAS-ACS for the opportunity to promote membership to our constituents for the coming year.

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

**Robert Winfield, MD**  
Vice-Chair, RAS-ACS Membership Committee

## Education Committee

The Education Committee has had a tremendous year with the completion of the Fellowship Database. The database provides prospective resident applicants with an opportunity to read about and apply for fellowships of their choice. The committee also published the results of a resident survey that explored resident opinion regarding surgical volunteerism. Having inherited Surgical Jeopardy, the committee provided questions for the competition at the Clinical Congress in Chicago and is committed to providing enough questions to allow for a question bank that can be used to **market Surgical Jeopardy as a stand-alone online tool**. The committee is also striving for the **online launch of the research database**, which is in the final vetting process. This database will allow prospective mentors to post research opportunities online for which interested residents may apply.

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

## International Medical Graduates Committee

Activities during Clinical congress:

1) The International Medical Graduates (IMG) Committee was invited to attend the annual meeting of the ACS International Relations Committee during the Clinical Congress. IMG received the committee's support to **expand RAS-ACS membership to international surgery residents** and send membership related material through the ACS international chapters.

2) We met with the representatives of the Surgery Trainee society of the Royal College of Surgeons of Ireland (RCSI) to discuss upcoming collaborations between the RCSI and RAS. Some of the projects include **creating a Web interface to exchange information about fellowship programs, residency training, job opportunities, and practical information about living abroad**, such as accommodations, recommended city areas, transportation, and so on. The RCSI has already developed relationships with other trainees' societies in Europe, including Spain, Germany, and Australia. The RAS hope to become part of this global effort.

3) Other exciting news is the invitation extended for one of our RAS members to attend the RCSI annual meeting in Ireland in May 2010. Travel will be supported by a grant obtained by the Surgery Trainee Society. The RAS is working on a similar arrangement and lobbying to obtain a grant to make this exchange reciprocal.

4) Members of the IMG Committee have been given the opportunity to write an article for the June RAS-ACS edition of the *Bulletin*. The article will focus on the IMG workforce and its impact on the current practice of surgery in the US.

5) Through coordination with Operation Giving Back, the IMG Committee is planning to facilitate information for **international surgical electives available to American surgery residents**.

We want your support in helping us to reach colleagues overseas. If you know any surgery residents or young surgeons interested in learning more about membership in the RAS-ACS and becoming international liaisons, have them provide us with their contact information. International membership in RAS is available to all surgery residents for an annual fee of \$20, which provides access to the ACS Web Portal educational materials, free online access to the *Journal of the American College of Surgeons*, and free registration for the annual Clinical Congress of the ACS.

Contact [mmoller@med.miami.edu](mailto:mmoller@med.miami.edu) or [phaar@facs.org](mailto:phaar@facs.org), for more information about becoming an active member of the RAS-ACS IMG Committee.

**Mecker G. Moller, MD**  
Chair, RAS-ACS IMG Committee

## 2010 Surgical Investigators Conference Early Signup Discount Available

The American College of Surgeons is offering the **Tenth Biennial Surgical Investigators Conference March 5-7, 2010**, at the Bethesda North Marriott Hotel and Conference Center in North Bethesda, MD. The conference is designed to assist surgeon-scientists in obtaining extramural, peer-reviewed grant support for their work and to introduce them to the process, the content, the style, and the people involved in successful grant-writing and interactions with the National Institutes of Health (NIH) representatives.

As participants, surgeon-scientists meet their peers, selected mostly from surgery departments in US and Canadian academic medical centers. The conference provides opportunities to meet and talk with key NIH staff and many of the leading surgeon-scientists who have been successful in obtaining NIH grant support for their work and who participate in the Conference as leaders of various small group meetings and as plenary session speakers.

The program includes intensive exposure to:

- NIH programs and policies
- What programs are best and available for your research project and how to apply
- Grant-writing strategies
- Workshops in hypothesis testing, methodology, background, and preliminary results
- Networking with representatives from 10-12 Institutes about research priorities, pilot programs, and training grants targeted to new investigators.
- Mock study sections reviewing model grants

The fee for the conference is \$1,825 USD, (**\$1,695 if registration and payment are received by December 17, 2009**). This fee includes all related conference materials, meals, breaks, receptions, and lodging for two nights. Confirmation is contingent upon payment of the course fee and is subject to availability. Preference is given to surgeon members of the College. **The deadline for registration is January 22, 2010.**

Find additional information, online registration, and an application form by visiting <http://www.facs.org/cqi/src/surginconf.html>. For questions, contact [mfitzgerald@facs.org](mailto:mfitzgerald@facs.org) or call 312-202-5319.

## Deadline Extended to November 30 for the Second Annual RAS-ACS Essay Contest

Have you given of yourself in an effort to help improve the lives of others? Have you offered your time, wisdom, and skills to meet another's emotional or practical needs? If so, you are by definition a volunteer, and we want to hear from you. This year's RAS-ACS Essay Contest focuses on **volunteerism**. In **500 words or less**, tell us how a volunteer experience has shaped you and benefited others. If you have volunteered domestically or abroad to help those in need of financial or spiritual care, share your story with us. Essays will be judged on content and quality of writing by a committee of RAS members.

All essays will appear in the Surgeon Life section of the resident community on the ACS Web Portal at <http://www.efacs.org/residents>. The top nine essays will be published in a series entitled "**How I help others: Stories from RAS-ACS volunteers**" in the *Bulletin*. The writer of the best essay will receive a **cash award at the 2010 RAS-ACS Business Meeting** during the ACS Clinical Congress in Washington, DC.

E-mail submissions as Microsoft Word document attachments to [phaar@facs.org](mailto:phaar@facs.org) with the subject line "**2010 Volunteerism Essay Contest**." Include your contact information (including mailing address, e-mail, phone number, year of training, program, and institution) in the body of the e-mail. We look forward to reading about your unique volunteer experiences and wish you the best of luck in the contest.

**Heena P. Santry, MD**  
Secretary, RAS-ACS

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

### **Communications Committee**

David Tom Cooke, MD, Chair, Sacramento, CA  
Anathea Powell, MD, Vice-Chair, New York, NY

Parth Amin, MD, Kathryn Berndt, MD, Natasha Bir, MD, Kris Brown, MD, Jaime Cavallo, MD, David Tom Cooke, MD, Robert Crawford, MD, Jeff Dehmer, MD, David Tom Edelman, MD, Wesley Francis, MD, Adil Haider, MD, Jonathan Hernandez, MD, Alexandra Hollingworth, MD, Haytham Kaafarani, MD, Fatuma Kromah, MD, Marco Melis, MD, Carlos Mery, MD, Biren Modi, MD, Mecker Möller, MD, Angela Moss, MD, Deepak Nair, MD, Jennifer Nelson, MD, Steven Nurkin, MD, Tassos Polimenakos, MD, Sangeetha Prabhakaran, MD, Shankar Raman, MD, Kimberly Ruscher, MD, Joseph Sakran, MD, Mallory Williams, MD

**Executive Committee**

Josh Broghammer, MD, Chair, Kansas City, KS  
Josh Mammen, MD, Vice-Chair, Kansas City, KS  
Heena Santry, MD, Secretary, Boston, MA  
Rima Abraham, MD, Otolaryngology Advisory Council  
Michael Boros, MD, Vascular Advisory Council  
Donald Buck, MD, Plastic Advisory Council  
Bill Chiu, MD, Pediatric Advisory Council  
Jonathan Chun, MD, Colon-Rectal Advisory Council  
Eric Deshaies, MD, Neurosurgery Advisory Council  
Andrew Evans, MD, Orthopaedic Advisory Council  
Fatuma Kromah, MD, Thoracic Advisory Council  
Alex Kutikov, MD, Urology Advisory Council  
Heena Santry, MD, General Surgery Advisory Council  
Renee Solomon, MD, Ophthalmology Advisory Council  
Carrie Wieneke, MD, Obstetrics and Gynecology Advisory Council

Peg Haar, Staff Liaison, [phaar@facs.org](mailto:phaar@facs.org); 312-202-5312

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

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