

# RAS-ACS News



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



**December, 2006**

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## **Welcome from the Chair of RAS-ACS**

Welcome, new members and old, to the Resident and Associate Society of the American College of Surgeons (RAS-ACS). Our agenda for the coming year includes both improving our existing initiatives and developing new and innovative programs. Our theme for the year will be **“Come to the College to Learn.”** In part, we need to get the word out about the many great new opportunities available at the College (For instance, did you know that there are now Surgical Resident Scholars at ACS headquarters in Chicago?) More importantly, we can **develop new programs that reflect the rapid pace of change in surgical training and surgery as a whole.** As Chair of the RAS-ACS, I intend to promote this theme throughout the College and work to develop programs that support this goal. However, to be successful, we need the help of energetic and enthusiastic surgeons like you.

I'm looking forward to another great year for RAS, and I hope to meet every one of you. In the meantime, please send your comments and suggestions to [ras-news@facs.org](mailto:ras-news@facs.org). Your feedback is important to us!

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

### **2006 RAS-ACS Meeting Update**

The RAS-ACS Annual Meeting took place on October 7 and 8 during the annual Clinical Congress in Chicago. Doctors Sutherland and Cherr attended the Board of Regents meeting during which Doctor Sutherland reviewed our accomplishments of the past year and many issues of importance to young surgeons were discussed. The RAS Executive Committee met and heard reports from the RAS committee chairs and Advisory Council representatives. Plans for the coming year were discussed, and the agenda for the Council of Representatives meeting was finalized. The Council of Representatives met on Sunday morning and elected **Jacob Moalem, MD**, a chief resident at UMDNJ-Robert Wood Johnson Medical School as Secretary. Also elected were Chairs for the Issues Committee (**Hari Nathan, MD**, and **Mindy Robinson, MD**, Co-Chairs), Education Committee (**Joshua Mammen, MD**, Chair, and **Anathea Powell, MD**, Co-Chair), Communications Committee (**Suzanne Cutter, MD**, Chair, and **Mecker Möller, MD**, Co-Chair), and Membership Committee (**Luke Brewster, MD** and **Adil Haider, MD**, Co-Chairs).

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

### **Special Thanks to Michael Sutherland, MD, past-Chair of RAS-ACS**

The members of RAS-ACS would like to thank Michael Sutherland MD, past-Chair of RAS, for all of his hard work, leadership, and attention to every detail of our organization. **Doctor Sutherland has been instrumental in increasing the RAS membership and expanding the role of RAS in the College.** We're confident that as a Fellow, Dr. Sutherland will continue to play a leadership role in the work of the College. We look forward to his continued support and wish him the best.

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

### **Needed: RAS Liaisons to Residency Training Programs**

Thank you to all surgery residents who offered to represent RAS at your respective training programs. We have over 40 residency programs represented. Those who have volunteered will help the

College disseminate the benefits of RAS membership and the opportunities it offers its constituents during surgical residency and beyond.

**Our aim this year is to have a liaison for every general surgery residency training program.** If you are interested in being the College's representative for your residency program, please e-mail your name and residency program information to Peg Haar, RAS staff liaison, [phaar@facss.org](mailto:phaar@facss.org). She will e-mail you a questionnaire to complete and add your name to the master roster.

**Luke Brewster, MD**

Co-Chair, RAS-ACS Membership Committee  
Oak Park, IL

**RAS-ACS Symposium Focuses on Acute Care Surgery**

The 92<sup>nd</sup> ACS Clinical Congress in Chicago this past October served as the host for another successful Resident and Associate Society (RAS) Symposium. The RAS-ACS held its eighth annual symposium entitled “**Acute Care Surgery – Improving Outcomes or Fragmenting Care?**” Each year, RAS sponsors a symposium on a timely topic of interest to residents, practicing surgeons, and medical students. This year's session, moderated by **Dr. Richard Baynosa** (Chair, RAS Issues Committee), examined the issues and controversies of the proposed paradigm shift to “acute care surgery” and was followed by a lively open question-and-answer session.

The symposium opened with **Dr. Michael Rotondo** (Professor and Chair, Department of Surgery and Chief of Trauma, Brody School of Medicine, East Carolina University), who focused on the current and growing crisis in patient access to emergency surgical care and introduced the rationale behind the drive to broaden the scope of practice for trauma surgeons trained in this new specialty. After learning about the issues driving this proposed change, **Dr. Alex Valadka** (Professor and Vice-Chair, Department of Neurosurgery, UT-Houston), described the neurosurgery perspective and eloquently mentioned the reservations his specialty has regarding the proposed increase in scope of practice of trauma surgeons. A different perspective on the potential shortcomings of an acute care surgery specialty was provided by the next speaker, **Dr. Bruce Browner** (Professor and Chair, Department of Orthopedic Surgery, University of Connecticut School of Medicine). Dr. Browner presented a strong argument from the orthopedic perspective concerning the potential for limitations in patient care the proposed changes would impose. Bringing the argument full circle, **Dr. David Hoyt** (Professor and Chair, Department of Surgery and Chief of Trauma, UC-Irvine School of Medicine), presented the trauma surgery perspective regarding the need for a solution to the growing crisis in access to timely emergency care for the critically injured and the benefits of acute care surgery in

treating these patients. **Dr. R. Shayn Martin** (RAS-ACS Committee on Trauma Representative), presented the unique resident standpoint and its potential impact, particularly on those residents interested in pursuing a career in trauma/acute care surgery.

The frank presentations and animated open discussion enlightened many attendees about the controversial topic and evoked several passionate personal perspectives from the audience. It was clear, however, that the primary goal of each of the panelists was the optimal care of the critically injured patient. The future of “acute care surgery” and other solutions for the growing crisis in patient access to emergency care will no doubt continue to evolve in the coming months. We plan to keep the RAS up-to-date with this issue and to present another timely topic at next year’s RAS symposium in New Orleans. Hope to see you there!

**Richard C. Baynosa, MD**  
Chair, RAS-ACS Issues Committee  
Las Vegas, NV

### **Governor’s Committee on Socioeconomic Issues Update**

The Governor’s Committee on Socioeconomic Issues had a productive annual meeting during the 92<sup>nd</sup> ACS Clinical Congress in Chicago. The past year’s activities were reviewed and the coming year’s agenda set.

The committee heard a presentation by Christian Shalgian, Manager of Legislative Affairs, and Julie Lewis, Quality Programs Associate, both of the Washington office of the College. **The major focus of the current College’s legislative efforts is to try to prevent the current proposal to cut Medicare payments to physicians by 5.1 percent beginning January 1, 2007.** The 5.1 percent cut is to be followed by an annual 5 percent cut through 2015. More information on these cuts, and the College’s efforts to prevent them, can be found in the Legislative Action Center (<http://www.capitolconnect.com/acspa/>) and the Advocacy and Health Policy home page (<http://www.facs.org/ahp/views/views.html>). In addition, Ms. Lewis discussed the College’s efforts on pay-for-performance initiatives and quality improvement measures. In particular, we discussed the College-supported risk-adjusted outcome data provided by the American College of Surgeons National Surgery Quality Improvement Project (ACS NSQIP). More information on ACS NSQIP can be found at <http://acsnsqip.org>. These topics, as well as other health care policy debates, will be the subject of ongoing discussion for the committee during the coming year and at next year’s Clinical Congress.

The committee also heard a presentation by Kathleen Casey, MD, FACS, Director of Operation Giving Back (OGB). **OGB is**

**undergoing exciting growth. Collaborations have been formed within the College, and also with government, non-government organizations, and other surgical specialties.** More information on OGB can be found at <http://www.operationgivingback.facs.org/>. The committee also discussed this year's Surgical Volunteerism Award recipient, Dr. John Tarpley, and discussed the criteria for next year's award.

**Anathea C. Powell, MD**

Co-Chair, RAS-ACS Education Committee

RAS liaison, Governor's Committee on Socioeconomic Issues

Bethesda, MD

**Committee on Women's Issues (CWI) Update**

The annual meeting of the CWI during the ACS Clinical Congress in Chicago was well-attended. Many new initiatives were proposed, and existing projects were reviewed. We reviewed the successful session sponsored by CWI during the Clinical Congress. This year's session, "Pregnancy during a surgical career; strategies for making it work in residency, academics and private practice," was moderated by committee member Linda G. Phillips, MD, FACS. Next year's sessions for the Clinical Congress were also discussed. The CWI is pleased to begin planning for a named lecture honoring the late Olga M. Jonasson, MD, FACS, to be held annually at the Clinical Congress.

**Work was begun on an initiative to collect and report data regarding the status of women within surgical specialties and within the College.** Work was also continued on an existing mentoring program for young women academic surgeons in collaboration with the Division of Education. The committee members also heard a presentation from Gregory Cherr, MD, Chair of RAS-ACS, on a mentoring program for medical students. Collaboration was established to assist Doctor Cherr with this project. Finally, a subcommittee was formed to build a web page for the CWI. The committee will continue to work on these and other projects during the coming year.

**Anathea C. Powell, MD**

Co-Chair, RAS-ACS Education Committee

RAS Liaison, Committee on Women's Issues

Bethesda, MD

**Surgical Spring Week: SAGES/ACS Joint Symposia & Popular Resident Programs**

You are invited to attend the 35<sup>th</sup> Annual Spring Meeting of the College to be held **April 22-25, 2007**, in Las Vegas, NV, at the Paris Las Vegas Hotel. This year, the Society of American Gastrointestinal and Endoscopic Surgeons (SAGES) will kick off Surgical Spring

Week with its annual conference followed by the ACS Spring Meeting. Joint symposia will be held on **Sunday, April 22, 2007**:

### **ACS/SAGES 2007 Joint Symposia**

“Esophageal and Gastric Disease”

“Establishing a Skills Training Program: What You Need to Know”

### **Resident Programs on Monday, April 23, 2007**

The very popular (and entertaining) resident programs will be held on **Monday, April 23, 2007**. An overview of each program follows, along with links to instructions and electronic submissions. The deadline for all resident submissions is **January 8, 2007, at 5:00pm CST**. Visit the College’s Web site for a full program description and submission instructions:

[http://www.facs.org/spring\\_meeting/index.html](http://www.facs.org/spring_meeting/index.html).

### **Clinical Abstract Presentations by Residents**

Listen to presentations by the future Folkmans, Starzls, and Fogarties. Investigators in-training will present summaries of hypothesis-testing research.

Description/Instructions:

[http://www.facs.org/spring\\_meeting/clinical.pdf](http://www.facs.org/spring_meeting/clinical.pdf).

Abstract submissions: [clinicalabstracts@facs.org](mailto:clinicalabstracts@facs.org).

### **Spectacular Cases by Residents**

Based on actual cases, surgery residents weave a tale that takes the panel of experts and the audience on an amazing, interesting journey of patient care. The panel asks and answers questions about the cases in a clinicopathologic conference style.

Description/Instructions:

[http://www.facs.org/spring\\_meeting/spectacular.pdf](http://www.facs.org/spring_meeting/spectacular.pdf).

Abstract submissions: [spectacularcases@facs.org](mailto:spectacularcases@facs.org).

### **Surgical Jeopardy**

Join us for this very popular game show style event during which teams of surgical residents test their surgical knowledge. Alex Trebek is otherwise engaged, but Dr. Mark Bowyer has graciously agreed to once again command the podium.

Description/Instructions:

[http://www.facs.org/spring\\_meeting/surgicaljeopardy.pdf](http://www.facs.org/spring_meeting/surgicaljeopardy.pdf)

Submissions: [surgicaljeopardy@facs.org](mailto:surgicaljeopardy@facs.org).

You do not want to miss these resident programs, the joint symposia, or exciting Las Vegas. If you have further questions about resident program submissions, contact Kathryn Matousek at [kmatousek@facs.org](mailto:kmatousek@facs.org) or 312.202.5336.

**C. Suzanne Cutter, MD**  
Chair, RAS-ACS Communications Committee  
New York, NY

### **ACS Offers Resident Educational Benefits**

Membership in the American College of Surgeons is a **sound professional and financial decision for surgical residents and their training programs**. In addition to receiving the *Bulletin*, the *Journal of the American College of Surgeons*, and *ACS NewsScope*, resident members are provided with free registration for the Clinical Congress, opportunities to serve on various College committees, online access to *ACS Surgery: Principles & Practice*, and discounts on both the print version of *ACS Surgery* and *SESAP*.

For more information on how to become a member, visit the RAS-ACS Web site at <http://www.facs.org/ras-acs/membership/membership.html>.

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

### **Surgical Videos: Another Educational Opportunity on the ACS Web Portal**

Did you know that the ACS Web Portal, *e-FACS.org*, gives you free access to multiple educational videos and audio programs in surgery? **Now you can learn about different surgical techniques or refresh your memory prior to a case by watching short videos of prominent surgeons performing different operations.** The portal provides access to multiple videos in different specialties including bariatric surgery, surgical oncology, cardiothoracic surgery, pediatric surgery, vascular surgery, gynecology and obstetrics, minimally-invasive surgery, otolaryngology, trauma surgery, and more. It also has links to podcast audio programs relevant to residents and practicing surgeons. Just give it a try, and you'll be amazed at the amount of information available in front of you!

To access the videos and audio programs, log on to the Web Portal (<http://www.efacs.org>) and click on "Videos/Audio Programs" on the homepage. Unless you have changed your *e-FACS.org* username and password, use your ACS ID number (found on your membership card or on the label of your copy of the *Bulletin*) and your last name to log in.

**Carlos M. Mery, MD, MPH**  
Member, RAS-ACS Communications Committee  
Palo Alto, CA

## Featured RAS Liaison

Patrick Greiffenstein is a PGY4 general surgery resident at Louisiana State University (LSU). He currently serves as a resident member of LSU's graduate medical education committee. During his medical school and residency years, he has volunteered time in international health care programs. After completing his PGY2 year, Patrick entered Patricia Molina's laboratory, which investigates the role of alcohol upon the immunologic and physiologic response to traumatic injury. Unfortunately, Hurricane Katrina hit the Gulf Coast the following month. **In the weeks following Katrina, Patrick was part of the personal response effort that delivered medical care and humanitarian aid to the people of New Orleans.** For the next several months, Patrick left New Orleans to continue his laboratory experience with one of his mentor's colleagues in Chicago. He presented some of his work this past summer at the Shock Annual Meeting. Back in New Orleans since March, Patrick reports that University Hospital is open and is continuing its mission to provide care for the people of New Orleans. The general surgery residency training program itself has been able to retain almost its full complement of residents and was recently accredited for seven categorical residents per year.

Patrick has an immense pride in the LSU surgery tradition and its connection to the famed Charity Hospital. **The opportunity to serve the City of New Orleans has been both personally and professionally rewarding for Patrick.** He is looking forward to the return of the American College of Surgeons Annual Clinical Congress to New Orleans next October.

### **Luke Brewster, MD**

Co-Chair, RAS-ACS Membership Committee  
Oak Park, 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 2,700 Associate Fellows and 8,000 Resident 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 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-acg/index.html>

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

ACS Spring Meeting:

<http://www.facs.org/springmeeting2006/index.html>

#### **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 Peg Haar at [ras-news@facs.org](mailto:ras-news@facs.org)



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