

December 2008

Editor: David Tom Cooke, MD

Associate Editor: Parth Amin, MD

Special Edition: 2009 RAS-ACS Agenda

- [Message from the Chair and 2008 ACS Clinical Congress Write-up](#)
- [Communications Committee](#)
- [Issues Committee](#)
- [Membership Committee](#)
- [Education Committee](#)
- [International Medical Graduates Committee](#)

[Message from the Chair](#)

The 94th annual Clinical Congress of the American College of Surgeons (ACS) was one of the most successful meetings in recent memory for the College as a whole, and for the Resident and Associate Society (RAS), specifically. Please allow me to highlight some of the most important achievements during this Clinical Congress, and of the past year:

1. The four RAS-sponsored sessions were a tremendous hit, having been very well attended and very well received. Our two former Spring Meeting programs, "Surgical Jeopardy" and "Spectacular Cases," flourished in their new venue. I would like to extend special thanks to **Mark Bowyer, MD, FACS**, and **Juan Paramo, MD, FACS**, for continuing to support these activities. With ongoing support from the College, these activities will be maintained in 2009.
2. We attended the Board of Regents' meetings immediately before and after the Clinical Congress, during which our position statement on "Further Work Hours Reductions" was approved. This statement was published in the [January issue of the *Bulletin of the American College of Surgeons*](#). In principle, the statement cites a lack of data to support further reductions in work hours, and some recent data suggesting that handoffs might actually be associated with poor outcomes, as justification to ask the IOM to defer further cuts in work hours.
3. Our proposal for a surgical resident volunteerism award was approved. Further details on this award to follow.
4. Our four standing committees are thriving. During our business meeting, many of the members enjoyed the opportunity to meet face-to-face and discuss some fresh ideas and initiatives for the upcoming year. Details from each of the committees follow.
5. Many thanks to **Ted James, MD, FACS**, of Burlington, VT. Ted has served as Chair of RAS with distinction, and has advanced our organization tremendously.
6. Congratulations to our new Secretary, **Joshua Mammen, MD**. Josh has been an active member of RAS for four years, and he will undoubtedly continue to make great contributions to RAS.

I am thrilled and honored to begin my term as Chair of this very vibrant, active, and important society, and I encourage you to become an active participant, as well. For more information, visit

our Web site at <http://www.facs.org/ras-acs/>, on the Web portal at <http://efacs.org/residents>, or e-mail us at phaar@facs.org.

Jacob Moalem, MD
Chair, RAS-ACS
Rochester, NY

Communications Committee

The Communications Committee is the voice of RAS-ACS. Our goal is to inform residents 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.

Our main initiatives during the 2008-2009 year will be:

--June edition of the ACS Bulletin

Every year, the RAS Communications Committee spearheads editorial responsibilities for an issue of the *Bulletin*. A theme related to young surgeons or surgical training is chosen, and the majority of articles in this edition are written by RAS membership. This year, the special edition of the *Bulletin* will be published in June rather than July. Previously, we have addressed the future of surgery and surgical education. The theme for this year's issue has not been selected yet but we're open to ideas. Let us know if there is an issue you would like to see addressed on a broad scale for a broad audience of surgeons.

--RAS-ACS eNewsletter

The eNewsletter is an electronic document that briefly highlights topics of interest to residents and Associate Fellows and provides information about ACS programs and initiatives that we think will be of interest to you. This year, we'll be publishing the eNewsletter every two months. We invite you to send any short submissions that you think will be interesting for other members of our RAS community. Deadlines for submissions will be the first day of every other month, starting February 2, 2009.

--RAS Web Portal

A subcommittee of the Communications Committee serves as the editorial board for the RAS section of the ACS Web portal (<http://efacs.org/residents>). The vision of the College when starting this project was to make the portal a daily tool to enhance the productivity, educational activities, and networking options for all surgeons. To achieve that vision, we are looking for your help. Soon, you will receive a short survey asking you what you would want and what features it would take for the RAS portal to be your daily tool. Our intention this year is to improve the functionality and content of this section and to make it as friendly and useful as possible for all members of the RAS community. Take a couple of minutes to answer the questions and help us provide you with a better multimedia product targeting surgeons in training.

--Monthly RAS section in the ACS Bulletin

This year, articles on important topics, written by RAS members, will appear periodically in the *Bulletin* under the RAS-ACS banner. We're looking for authors - if you're interested in writing an article for the *Bulletin*, please let us know!

The Communications Committee is always looking for ideas or for people interested in joining. Contact phaar@facs.org or cmery@partners.org if you're interested in participating in any way.

Carlos M. Mery, MD, MPH
Chair, RAS-ACS Communications Committee
Boston, MA

Heena Santry, MD
Vice-Chair, RAS-ACS Communications Committee
Boston, MA

Issues Committee

Overview of the RAS-ACS National Standing Committee on Issues

The RAS-ACS Issues Committee is interested in the synthesizing current health care policy and legislative issues relevant to residents and young surgeons. Historically, this interest has translated into a focus on developing the program for the Annual RAS-ACS Symposium held on the Sunday during the ACS Clinical Congress. In the 2007-2008 ACS year, the focus was broadened to include two additional programs.

1. **RAS-ACS Annual Symposium.** A health care policy or current issue relevant to surgeons is selected. The topic is discussed by multiple speakers, most recently in a debate format. Ample time is reserved for audience participation through a question-and-answer period for the panel of speakers.
2. **Annual RAS Symposium Competition.** We have successfully defined an important role for the RAS speakers who were, for the first time in 2008, an integral part of the symposium debate. RAS members are invited to submit a brief discourse on the symposium topic. Two tiers of winners are selected.
 - a. Tier I winners are invited to present during the RAS-ACS Symposium.
 - b. Tier II winners will have their submission edited and published in a College publication.
3. **CHIP on the Web Portal.** Recognizing the need for RAS members to have current information on health care issues, our committee developed a plan for a Web portal resource. The plan for this interactive environment, known as **CHIP (Current Health care Issues and Policy)**, has been adopted by the RAS Community Editorial Board for development and placement **on the Web portal** in 2009.

During the 2008-2009, the Issues Committee will continue to deliver these important programs. For further information, contact phaar@facs.org.

C. Suzanne Cutter, MD

Chair, RAS-ACS Issues Committee
Los Angeles, CA

Brian Santin, MD

Vice-Chair, RAS-ACS Issues Committee
Columbus, OH

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. Our primary goals and initiatives are:

--RAS Liaison Program

The Membership Committee has liaison residents who work as a bridge between RAS-ACS and their training program. It is our plan to expand this initiative to all surgical training programs in the country. This goal will be accomplished through the hard work of our current liaisons as well as through coordination with surgical training program coordinators.

--Increased resident representation in the ACS State and Local Chapters' activities

The individual program liaisons will be prompted to either each serve on their local or state chapters or in the cases where there are multiple programs per chapter, to select one liaison as a representative to the chapter. This arrangement will promote the activities of both the College and the chapters.

--Subspecialty surgical resident membership

We aim to increase membership among trainees in subspecialty surgical programs. We plan to promote the College's program of waiving the membership fee for all residents during their intern year. By allowing residents to experience the benefits of membership during their intern year, we believe that the modest costs they will incur in subsequent years will be seen as worthwhile.

--Medical students

The Membership Committee is investing much effort into the recruitment of medical students (both Canadian/US and international) into the College. Membership provides access to e-FACS.org, the College's members-only Web portal, which provides the opportunity to view videos, explore surgical topics, use the "Little Red Book," *So, You Want to be a Surgeon*, and other valuable resources for medical students.

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

For further information, contact phaar@facs.org.

Raphael El Youssef, MD

Chair, RAS-ACS Membership Committee
Portland, OR

Melissa Rader, MD, MPH

Vice-Chair, RAS-ACS Membership Committee
Chattanooga, TN

Education Committee

Our chair is **Randall Craft, MD**, Rochester, MN. The focus of the Education Committee is to identify areas in which resources can be produced to aid resident and associate members in advancing their careers and furthering their education. Four major projects in varying stages of completion comprise the majority of the agenda:

--International Surgery Survey

The international surgery survey was enormously successful and had a significant response from the membership. The survey sought to describe the attitudes and interest of the RAS membership in international surgery experiences. The results are currently being analyzed and will be formally presented in the form of a manuscript.

--RAS-ACS Research Fellowship Database

The research fellowship database is envisioned as a centralized clearinghouse for research opportunities. The database is intended to facilitate seeking unique research opportunities throughout the US. This database will be posted on e-FACS.org.

--Clinical Fellowship Guide

While the residency application process for most surgical residencies is now well honed, the application process for clinical fellowships can still remain an enigma. The clinical fellowship guide will shed some light in this area by delineating key resources and dates for fellowship applications. The guide currently includes almost 20 specialty fellowship areas and seeks to add more. The guide will ultimately be placed as a resource on e-FACS.org for members of RAS.

The Education Committee has a full slate and is always looking for help on any of its ongoing projects. Additionally, new ideas are always welcome. For further information, contact phaar@facs.org.

Randall Craft, MD

Chair, RAS-ACS Education Committee

Scottsdale, AZ

Awori Hayanga, MD

Vice-Chair, RAS-ACS Education Committee
Superior, MI

International Medical Graduates Committee

The *ad-hoc* International Medical Graduates (IMG) Committee of RAS has another exciting year ahead of us. This is a young committee in our organization, and we continue to grow and recruit valuable members. Our goals for this upcoming year are to:

--**Promote the contribution of IMG surgeons** to the US surgical field

--**Increase membership** of international medical students and residents

--**Assist in designing and improving the RAS-ACS Web page** to provide answers to common questions for students interested in pursuing a surgical residency in the US and to provide information to facilitate the exchange of residents and young surgeons between US and foreign universities

--**Increase awareness** of the opportunities that are available by becoming a member of RAS-ACS

--**IMG-RAS representation** in the International Surgery Society and similar organizations

We look forward to a productive year! We welcome and encourage IMG surgical residents to become members of our committee and collaborate in our projects. If you're interested, e-mail us at mecker.moller@moffitt.org

Mecker Möller, MD

Chair, RAS-ACS IMG Committee
Tampa, FL

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/>

Residents Community on ACS Web portal: <http://efacs.org/residents>

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

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@facs.org.

Communications Committee

Carlos M. Mery, MD, MPH, Chair, Boston, MA

Heena Santry, MD, Vice-Chair, Boston, MA

Parth Amin, MD, Kathryn Berndt, MD, Natasha Bir, MD, Kris Brown, MD, Jaime Cavallo, MD, David Tom Cooke, MD, Robert Crawford, MD, David Tom Edelman, MD, Wesley Francis, MD, Adil Haider, MD, Jonathan Hernandez, MD, Alexzandra Hollingworth, MD, Haytham Kaafarani, MD, Marco Melis, MD, Vahe Melkonyan, MD, Biren Modi, MD, Mecker Moller, MD, Deepak Nair, MD, Jennifer Nelson, MD, Tassos Polimenakos, MD, Mallory Williams, MD

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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