

Thoracic Surgery Residents Association (TSRA) Report of Activities, July 2010 – April 2011

President: Carlos Mery
Vice-President: Shamus Carr
Secretary: Jason Williams
Immediate Past-President: Joe Turek

The Thoracic Surgery Residents Association (TSRA) is the organization that represents all thoracic surgery trainees in the United States. This year, in order to help advance the mission of the TSRA, two sub-Committees were created within the TSRA: the Education Committee and the Communications Committee. These committees include a combination of members of the TSRA Executive Committee and other thoracic surgery residents that expressed interest in participating. The Communications Committee is chaired by the Secretary of the TSRA (Jason Williams) and the Education Committee is chaired by the senior TSRA representative to the Joint Council for Thoracic Surgery Education (JCTSE) (Joe Turek). In addition, the TSRA has created an Ex-Officio position in its Executive Committee for the Resident Director of the Society of Thoracic Surgeons (STS).

TSRA Review of Cardiothoracic Surgery

In an attempt to improve the education of thoracic surgery residents and facilitate self-review of cardiothoracic surgery topics, the TSRA embarked on the creation of a review book on cardiothoracic surgery. The book, edited by the TSRA and authored by more than 50 cardiothoracic surgery residents from different programs around the country, is being published on the web as an electronic book free-of-charge and as a print book in Amazon.com. The book is undergoing its final copyediting and will be available soon.

International Network of Young Cardiothoracic Surgeons (iNYCTS)

The TSRA, in conjunction with the Surgical and Manpower Committee of the European Association for Cardio-Thoracic Surgery (EACTS) and other international organizations, created an independent social/professional network to promote the exchange of ideas and experiences with other young cardiothoracic surgeons around the globe, provide social events/courses both online and at academic meetings, and explore the future of cardiothoracic surgery. The network was launched in Facebook and its page is available at www.facebook.com/iNYCTS. Currently in its first month of existence, the iNYCTS has recruited more than 400 members from different countries, with membership increasing every day.

Education Committee

The goal of the Education Committee of the TSRA is to coordinate all TSRA efforts to evaluate and improve the education of thoracic surgery residents. In association with the JCTSE, the STS, and the American Association of Thoracic Surgery (AATS), the Education Committee spearheaded the design of a survey on outstanding cardiothoracic surgery programs. The purpose of this survey was to identify the main characteristics that

make a cardiothoracic surgery program outstanding with the goal of focusing further efforts on promoting those traits within training programs around the country. According to 105 thoracic surgery residents, the variables thought to be most important in determining outstanding programs were the reputation of the cardiothoracic surgery program, the expectation of the resident being the operating surgeon, help in finding employment, high volume, complexity of cases, high rates of passing the boards, and a strong culture of education. A new more detailed and scientific survey is being designed with the Thoracic Surgery Directors Association (TSDA).

Communications Committee

The Communications Committee is the voice of the TSRA. The projects of this Committee include:

- TSRA website. The Committee is in charge of maintaining the TSRA website. A member of the Committee (Samuel Youssef) is the person in charge of updating the different areas of the website.
- *Thoracic Surgery News*. The TSRA publishes a monthly piece on the “Residents’ Corner” of the *Thoracic Surgery News*. The goal of this publication is to announce important TSRA projects and news of interest to residents. Robroy MacIver, a member of the Communications Committee, is the TSRA liaison to Thoracic Surgery News.
- Primer of cardiothoracic surgery. The goal of this project is to create a practical primer on different aspects of cardiothoracic surgery and critical care for incoming and new thoracic surgery residents. This project is currently in its planning phase.
- STS representation. The Communications Committee is appointing a member to serve as a liaison between the TSRA and all residents that have been appointed by the STS to serve in its multiple committees and workforces. This will facilitate communication between residents and the leadership of STS.

Socrates and Dr. Dwight McGoon Awards

The TSRA is continuing with the tradition of selecting the recipients of the Socrates and Dr. Dwight McGoon Awards. The Socrates Award is given every year at the STS Annual Meeting to an outstanding mentor for thoracic surgery residents that has been on clinical practice for more than 10 years. Dr. Lyle Joyce, from Mayo Clinic, was the recipient of the 2011 TSRA Socrates Award. The Dr. Dwight McGoon Award is intended for a young attending physician that exemplifies the virtues of a great educator for cardiothoracic surgery residents. This Award will be granted at the AATS Annual Meeting.

AATS and STS Resident Luncheons

Every year, the TSRA organizes a resident luncheon at the Annual Meetings of the AATS and STS. This year, at the STS Annual Meeting, CDR Anthony Baker from the US Navy talked to residents about the training of a SEAL and its similarities with cardiothoracic surgery training. This year’s AATS/TSRA Resident’s Luncheon, organized in conjunction with the leadership of the AATS, is scheduled for Monday, May 9. Dr. Joseph Bavaria will talk about the requirements for certification in trans-catheter

valve implantation. In addition, residents will have an opportunity to interact with several faculty members during lunch.

In-service exam survey

Every year, the TSDA provides an opportunity for the TSRA to edit and modify a survey that thoracic surgery residents are required to take prior to the annual in-service exam. The survey focuses on important aspects of training, workforce, and career planning of residents. The results of previous surveys were presented at the STS Annual Meeting in January 2011.

Fellowship/electives database

Over the last two years, the TSRA has created a database with national and international educational opportunities for trainees, including electives for thoracic surgery residents and additional training fellowships. The database has been merged with a database created by the Surgical and Manpower Committee of the EACTS. The database is published on the TSRA website and CTSNet.