



# TSDA News

## Thoracic Surgery Directors Association

Volume 4 • Issue 2 • Fall 2009

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### President's Greeting

John H. Calhoun, MD

It is my pleasure to bring you the latest issue of *TSDA News*. It is my privilege to work on behalf of program directors and cardiothoracic surgery education to move the specialty forward in an environment of change in health care reform and medicine. The TSDA has much to be proud of, including the highly successful second annual [Boot Camp](#), and we look forward to creating new and improved resources for TSDA members and residents.

Goals during my tenure as TSDA president boil down to three: The first is to ensure the TSDA, RRC, and ABTS work together collaboratively and within reason in concert. The second is to enhance the TSDA Education Universe and curriculum electronic platform. The third is to help position simulation into our programs and resident education at a local level. These three goals cannot be accomplished without the already invaluable support of Dr. Ed Verrier and the Joint Council on Thoracic Surgery Education, Inc. (JCTSE). Down the road, it is my hope that thoracic surgical education can adopt a mechanism to allow for residents to be promoted not only on the metric of time spent, but on the specific measurement of didactic education progress, technical skill acquisition, surgical judgment and experience, and documentation of the professional and personal maturity needed to be a thoracic surgeon.

We need to further refine and develop the content of the TSDA Curriculum (updating the Blue Book since last done four years ago) and overhaul the Education Universe architecture so it is a fully functioning and valuable resource

for general surgery and cardiothoracic surgery residents. To that end, the TSDA will be surveying program directors and their program's faculty and residents as to what is working and what is not with the current and vastly improved curriculum being directed by Dr. Curt Tribble. Issues we need help with include format, content refinement, and delivery architecture. The TSDA leadership and the Director of Education of JCTSE are working with ABTS and RRC to sort out the future of integrated programs and thoracic surgery education.

One thing is very clear to those who have attended the TSDA Boot Camp or have been exposed to simulation: in some way, simulation will be a part of every cardiothoracic surgery program. Some may adopt it more, others less, but it is here to stay and has been made a requirement of the RRC going forward. Exact language and structure is still not clear, but count on simulation being a part of resident education.

Cardiothoracic surgery education continues to face challenges and your involvement is critical to the strength of TSDA. Plan to attend the upcoming [TSDA General Session](#), scheduled for **January 23, 2010 in Ft. Lauderdale, FL**. We will be addressing several important issues, including simulation as a teaching modality, the status of the TSDA curriculum, and the status of integrated programs. Suggestions for the meeting agenda are welcomed, and please don't hesitate to [contact me](#) directly to discuss any issues you feel should be addressed by TSDA.

On behalf of TSDA's 2009-2010 officers, we look forward to seeing you in January.

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## **TSDA Meeting Dates**

### **TSDA Curriculum Committee**

Friday, November 6, 2009  
12:00 - 1:30 p.m.  
Capri Salon 2 & 3  
Marco Island Marriott Beach Resort  
Marco Island, FL

### **TSDA General Session**

Saturday, January 23, 2010  
1:00 - 4:00 p.m.  
Greater Ft. Lauderdale Broward Convention Center  
Room Assignment Pending

### **TSDA Executive Committee**

Monday, January 25, 2010  
7:00 - 8:30 a.m.  
Greater Ft. Lauderdale Broward Convention Center  
Room Assignment Pending

### **TSDA Curriculum Committee**

Tuesday, January 26, 2010  
7:00 - 8:30 a.m.  
Greater Ft. Lauderdale Broward Convention Center  
Room Assignment Pending

Interested in viewing presentations from previous TSDA meetings? [Visit the Meetings Archive section of TSDA.org.](#)

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### **Save the Dates**

#### **In-Training Exam**

April 10, 2010

April 17, 2010 (back up date)

#### **2010 Match Dates for 2011 Appointment Year Announced**

[National Resident Matching Program](#) (NRMP)

Thoracic Surgery Match Schedule

Match registration opens: January 6, 2010

Rank order list system opens: April 7, 2010

Quota change deadline: May 12, 2010

Rank order list closes: May 26, 2010

Match Day: 12:00 p.m. ET, June 9, 2010

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### **TSDA General Session**

*Special presentations scheduled for January meeting.*

Plan to attend the TSDA General Session to be held Saturday, Jan. 23, 2010 from 1:00 - 4:00 p.m. in Ft. Lauderdale, FL. The TSDA Executive Committee is busy working on a new and exciting agenda that will include special presentations and interactive roundtable discussions on important topics such as simulation as a teaching modality, curriculum development, integrated programs, and Boot Camp. The Benson Wilcox Award for Best Resident Paper and Socrates Award recipients will also be recognized at this meeting. Watch your e-mail in-box and TSDA.org for more information.

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### **ACS Hosts 95th Annual Clinical Congress**

*ACS/STS/AATS sponsor hands-on CT surgery session at ACS Clinical Congress.*

General surgery residents and medical students can get hands-on experience and learn more about the exciting specialty of cardiothoracic surgery at the upcoming American College of Surgeons Clinical Congress in Chicago. On Oct. 12, ACS, STS, and AATS will present a special interest course, "Cardiothoracic Surgery in the Future: Technology Overview for Residents and Medical Students."

This course, taught by leaders in minimally invasive cardiac and general thoracic surgery procedures, will introduce attendees to the specialty's current and future technology. Participants will have the opportunity to experience cardiac procedures for percutaneous valves and OPCAB, as well as vessel suturing and mitral valve repair. General thoracic hands-on procedures include VATS lobectomy, endoluminal esophageal surgery, EBUS, and pulmonary RFA. The course will also provide timely information about plans for a six-year integrated cardiothoracic surgery

training program.

If you know of a general surgery resident or medical student with a possible interest in CT surgery, please pass on this information. The cost of the course, which will run from 5:30 - 9:00 p.m. on Oct. 12, is \$25, and includes dinner.

To register, residents and medical students must complete the [ACS registration form](#) and fax to 800-682-0252 or mail to the American College of Surgeons, Attn: Registration Services, PO Box 92340, Chicago, IL 60675-2340.

For additional information, contact Damon Marquis, STS Director of Education & Member Services, at [dmarquis@sts.org](mailto:dmarquis@sts.org) or 312-202-5813.

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### **TSDA Hosts Second Annual Boot Camp**

*32 residents gather for hands-on training.*

Recognizing the continued need for basic yet intensive training early in a cardiothoracic surgeon's career, the TSDA held its second Boot Camp, July 30 - Aug. 2, in Chapel Hill, NC. Nearly 60 leaders in cardiothoracic surgery education volunteered as faculty members over the weekend to lead Boot Camp courses and participate in faculty development sessions that identified critical issues concerning the future of cardiothoracic surgery education.

The program, introduced in 2008 by TSDA and this year funded by a grant from the Joint Council on Thoracic Surgery Education, Inc., provided 32 resident participants with training in five specific areas: cardiopulmonary bypass, anastomosis, open lobectomy, bronchoscopy/mediastinoscopy, and aortic valve surgery.

Boot Camp program directors and STS members James I. Fann, MD, Richard H. Feins, MD, and George L. Hicks, Jr., MD, crafted the intensive two-and-a-half day course based on emerging needs in CT surgery residency education. The use of simulators for both the cardiac and general thoracic sessions provided Boot Camp participants with hands-on experience in basic cardiothoracic operating skills, allowing them to be better prepared when entering the operating room in their home programs.

Residency program directors were invited to register one in-coming resident on a first come-first served basis. Instruments, tissue, simulators, equipment, and materials were largely donated by industry, including CryoLife, Enthicon-Endo Surgery, Immersion Medical, Medtronic, Olympus America, Teleflex Medical, Scanlan International, Sorin Group, and St. Jude Medical.

Resident evaluations were collected from 81% of attendees and feedback was universally positive. All respondents agreed that Boot Camp was time well-spent and that the curriculum either exceeded (88%) or met (12%) their expectations. One hundred percent of respondents said they would recommend Boot Camp to another resident. Residents indicated they "thoroughly benefited from the experience" and considered Boot Camp an "outstanding educational experience" and the "best post-graduate experience to date." Residents also expressed gratitude toward the faculty and were "very impressed with the faculty turnout and involvement" and felt "the one-on-one faculty teaching is critical. It is important that all of the faculty realize how grateful we are for the time they spent with us."

Program director survey results were also positive. Seventy-eight percent responded that their residents exhibited improved enthusiasm for the specialty following participation in Boot Camp. In addition, 74% saw improved confidence; 93% saw improved technical skills; and 96% indicated they would send a resident to a future Boot Camp. Seventy-two percent expressed interest in participating as faculty at a future Boot Camp.

Ajit Sachdeva, MD, Director, Division of Education, American College of Surgeons, who attended Boot Camp as an observer, agreed. "The opportunity for the incoming residents to learn and practice these skills in a safe environment under the watchful eye of expert surgeons was very special," said Dr. Sachdeva. "The residents appeared to gain a tremendous amount of knowledge and skills during the experiential and didactic components of the course and appeared to appreciate the opportunity to work closely with nationally renowned faculty. The bonding and camaraderie between the residents was quite evident."

[Click here](#) to view photos and syllabus materials from the TSDA Boot Camp. For more information, contact Beth Winer, TSDA Affiliate Manager, at 312-202-5855 or [bwiner@tsda.org](mailto:bwiner@tsda.org).

#### **TSDA Boot Camp Program Directors:**

George L. Hicks, Jr., MD, TSDA President-Elect, University of Rochester; Jim I. Fann, MD, Stanford University; Richard H. Feins, MD, University of North Carolina

#### **TSDA Boot Camp Faculty:**

Mark S. Allen, MD, Mayo Clinic; Ron E. Angona, Jr., CCP, University of Rochester; Manjit S. Bains, MD, Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center; Craig J. Baker, MD, University of Southern California; Katherine Birchard, MD, University of North Carolina; Michael E. Bowdish, MD, University of North Carolina; Harold M. Burkhart, MD, Mayo Clinic; David B. Campbell, MD, Pennsylvania State University; Andrea J. Carpenter, MD, University of Texas-San Antonio; Alfanso D. Chiscano, MD, University of Texas-San Antonio; Daniel N. Coore, PhD, University of the West Indies; Thomas M. Daniel, MD, University of Virginia; Malcolm M. DeCamp, MD, Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center; James I. Fann, MD, Stanford University; L. Penfield Faber, MD, Rush University; Richard H. Feins, MD, University of North Carolina; David Fullerton, MD, University of Colorado; James Gangemi, MD, University of Rochester; Eugene A. Grossi, MD, New York University; Benjamin E. Haithcock, MD, University of North Carolina; George L. Hicks, Jr., MD, University of Rochester; Mark D. Iannettoni, MD, University of Iowa; Carolyn Jones, MD, University of Rochester; Irving L. Kron, MD, University of Virginia; George J. Magovern, MD, Allegheny General Hospital; Kamal A. Mansour, MD, Emory University; Michael R. Mill, MD, University of North Carolina; Daniel L. Miller, MD, Emory University; Joseph I. Miller, MD, Emory University; Gordon F. Murray, MD, West Virginia University; L. Wiley Nifong, MD, East Carolina University; Mark B. Orringer, MD, University of Michigan; Peter C. Pairolero, MD, Mayo Clinic; Robert S. Poston, MD, Boston Medical College; Paul S. Ramphal, DM, University of the West Indies; W. Steves Ring, MD, University of Texas Southwestern; Francis Robicsek, MD, Carolinas Medical Center; Ajit Sachdeva, MD, American College of Surgeons; Edward Y. Sako, MD, University of Texas-San Antonio; Peter M. Scholz, MD, UMDNJ Robert Wood Johnson Medical School; Richard J. Shemin, MD, University of California-Los Angeles; Ara A. Vaporicyan, MD, University of Texas-MD Anderson Cancer Center; Edward D. Verrier, MD, University of Washington; Jennifer D. Walker, MD, Massachusetts General Hospital; Thomas J. Watson, MD, University of Rochester; Benson R. Wilcox, MD, University of North Carolina; Douglas E. Wood, MD, University of Washington; Stephen C. Yang, MD, Johns Hopkins University; J. Nilas Young, University of California-Davis

#### **Resident Programs Represented:**

Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center; Boston Medical Center; Brigham and Women's Hospital; Duke University; Johns Hopkins Hospital; Loma Linda University; Long Island Jewish Medical Center; Massachusetts General Hospital; Mayo Clinic; Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center; New York Presbyterian Hospital-Weill Cornell Medical Center; Oregon Health and Science University; Pennsylvania State University; Rush University; Medical University of South Carolina; Stanford University; Vanderbilt University; Washington University; UMDNJ Robert Wood Johnson Medical School; University of California-Davis; University of California-San Diego; University of Cincinnati; University of Colorado; University of Kentucky; University of Michigan; University of Minnesota; University of North Carolina; University of Rochester; University of Texas-San Antonio; University of Virginia; University of Washington; Yale University

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## **TSDA Launches New Database**

*Program directors asked to follow position turnover procedures.*

TSDA is pleased to announce that it now maintains a comprehensive database of all cardiothoracic residency program contacts, including program director, associate director(s), coordinator(s), faculty, and current and incoming residents and fellows. The information housed in this database has been collected over the past year from program coordinators; the database is only as accurate as the information provided. **Please respond to TSDA requests for contact information, particularly for newly-matched residents and fellows.** Accurate data will help ensure incoming residents and fellows are included on TSDA Weekly Curricula distribution list, and receive other timely news and information from TSDA, TSRA, and STS.

If your program experiences program director or associate program director turnover, please submit a letter on institution/hospital letterhead detailing the change in leadership, including the full name of the former and current program directors and/or associate program directors. Please send to: Dr. John Calhoun, TSDA President, 633 N. St. Clair Street, Suite 2320, Chicago, IL 60611.

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## **In-Training Exam Set for Spring 2010**

*New exam now in development.*

The TSDA 2010 In-Training Exam (ITE) now in development is scheduled to be administered on April 10, with a back-up exam date offered on April 17. The fee for the 2010 ITE will be \$250 per exam candidate. Information and registration packets are scheduled to mail in early 2010.

The ITE is designed to assess knowledge among current residents in thoracic surgery. Test questions are equally divided between cardiac and general thoracic surgery. TSDA President-Elect Dr. George L. Hicks, Jr., is the TSDA In-Training Examination Committee chair, and is assisted by cardiac section chair, Dr. V. Seenu Reddy (University of Texas-San Antonio) and general thoracic section chair, Dr. Mark Iannettoni (University of Iowa).

The computer-based ITE must be given at the training program site and actively proctored by a Board-certified thoracic surgeon. Home computer access is not permitted. A mandatory pre-exam survey will also be conducted to gauge the residents' opinions of their job-search experiences and other issues.

As in previous years, individual results will be sent only to the resident's program director. It is expected that the program director will meet with individual residents to go over exam results, provide feedback, and identify areas in need of remediation.

Comparative performance reports for the 2009 ITE were mailed to program directors in June. [Distribution of percent graphs, and exam and program director review links are posted on TSDA.org.](#)

For more information about the ITE, contact Beth Winer, TSDA Affiliate Manager, at [bwiner@tsda.org](mailto:bwiner@tsda.org).

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## **TSDA Curriculum Update**

*Education Universe sections now open access.*

The TSDA Education Universe, where the TSDA pre-requisite and requisite curriculum, schedule, and associated talks are housed, has undergone changes in recent months, making the site more user-friendly. Most sections of the site, located at [www.tsdaeducation.org/login.asp](http://www.tsdaeducation.org/login.asp), are now open access, relieving users of the burden of logging in to access curriculum materials. Users can now search for talks and view and link to the pre-requisite and requisite curriculum. (New users of the evaluation application may have experienced difficulties logging in. TSDA is aware of the technical glitch and is working to fix the problem.)

The TSDA Curriculum Committee is working on redesigning the site and hopes to revise or replace dated talks and, when possible, include links to articles posted online free of charge. The Committee is also striving to incorporate new modalities, including podcasts and streaming videos. TSDA Weekly Curricula e-mail messages continue to be sent to CT program directors, coordinators, faculty, residents, fellows, and general surgery residents scheduled to begin their CT training in July 2010.

The Curriculum Committee will meet on Nov. 6 in Marco Island, FL during the STSA 56th Annual Meeting. If you are a Program Director who plans to attend the STSA 56th Annual Meeting and would like to also attend the TSDA Curriculum Committee meeting, please RSVP to Beth Winer at [bwiner@tsda.org](mailto:bwiner@tsda.org).

An update will be provided at the January 2010 TSDA General Session. [Click here](#) to access a complete listing of Year 1 and Year 2 TSDA Weekly Curricula cardiac and thoracic talks and readings, the 88-week core curriculum, and the e-mail archive.

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### **TSDA Renames Resident Award**

*Former TSDA president honored.*

The TSDA Resident Award will now be known as the Benson Wilcox Award for Best Resident Paper in honor of former TSDA president, Dr. Benson R. Wilcox. The award is presented annually at The Society of Thoracic Surgeons Annual Meeting for the best scientific abstract submitted by a cardiothoracic surgery resident. Dr. Wilcox was instrumental in establishing TSDA and drafting the association's Bylaws. A leader in cardiothoracic surgery education, Dr. Wilcox was TSDA's first secretary/treasurer from 1977-1980. He also served as president-elect from 1983-1984 and as president from 1985-1986. TSDA remains committed to Dr. Wilcox's goal to improve cardiothoracic surgery education.

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### **TSDA.org: Check it Out**

*Your source for all things TSDA.*

Have you visited [TSDA.org](http://www.tsda.org) lately? Be sure to check it out for current news and information from TSDA.org, including photos from the TSDA Boot Camp, a schedule of meetings and events, presentations from past meetings, and links to related cardiothoracic websites. The complete TSDA Curriculum is also posted, including archived issues of the TSDA Weekly Curricula, the 88-week schedule, detailed talks and readings, instructions for creating and submitting a talk, and the complete pre-requisite and requisite curriculum. You can also use the site to post interview dates and open positions in your program and search for fellow TSDA members. Visit [www.tsda.org](http://www.tsda.org) today.

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