



TSDA News

Thoracic Surgery Directors Association

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President's Greeting

George L. Hicks, Jr., MD

It is my pleasure to bring you the latest issue of TSDA News. Over the years, TSDA has grown into an active association collaborating with key stakeholders in thoracic surgery education, and offering valuable educational content and cutting-edge opportunities for program directors and cardiothoracic surgery residents.

In a few weeks, TSDA will host the 2010 Boot Camp, a program established three years ago to better prepare residents for cardiac and thoracic surgical procedures through the use of simulation, one-on-one teaching techniques, and emergency case scenarios. This year, Boot Camp will be held in conjunction with the Joint Council on Thoracic Surgery Education's Educate the Educator, a faculty-based program designed help to educators understand the skills necessary to teach cardiothoracic surgery residents. Together, TSDA and JCTSE are coordinating efforts to optimize education for our residents, and bring into prominence the skills needed by cardiothoracic surgery faculty to capture the enthusiasm of today's residents.

Revamping the TSDA Education Universe remains a priority of TSDA's Executive Committee and steps are being taken to launch a comprehensive, interactive, and viable online curriculum to support residency programs. To that end, nine new talks have recently been posted on TSDA.org, and the Curriculum Committee is soliciting faculty to

prepare and submit new talks; TSDA welcomes and invites your contribution to the endeavor.

As we move into new residency year, TSDA welcomes your ideas and feedback on how the organization can prepare the best and the brightest for a successful surgical career.

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TSDA Membership Elects President-Elect and Councilor-at-Large

David A. Fullerton, MD and Ara A. Vaporciyan, MD join Executive Committee.

In a special election held during its January 2010 General Session, the TSDA membership elected David Fullerton, MD as President-Elect. Fullerton will carry out his term as President-Elect through May 2011. Dr. Fullerton is Program Director at the University of Colorado and an active leader of TSDA, STS and ABTS.

At its May 2010 General Session, TSDA membership elected Dr. Ara Vaporciyan to the TSDA Executive Committee. Dr. Vaporciyan will serve as Councilor-at-Large through May 2013. He is the Program Director at MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston, TX, and is actively involved in CT surgery resident education through his work with TSDA and the Joint Council on Thoracic Surgery Education. Dr. Vaporciyan fills the Councilor-at-Large position most recently held by Dr. Walter H. Merrill, who was recognized at the General Session with a warm round of applause for his service and many contributions to TSDA throughout his three year term.

For a complete list of TSDA Executive Committee members, visit the [Current Officers section of TSDA.org](#).

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In-Training Exam

The TSDA 2010 In-Training Exam was held on April 10, with a back up date of April 17. A total of 271 residents and fellows were registered for the exam, three more than the number of exam candidates in 2009. Sixty-eight U.S. programs and six Canadian programs were represented. Program directors can expect to receive individual comparative results in mid-June.

TSDA utilized the services of a new vendor, Kryterion, to administer the exam. This year, the task of testing system compatibility as well as launching and exiting the exam was placed on the proctor and/or the program coordinator. While it may have seemed burdensome at the time, running the Sample Assessment was essential to a successful launch on exam day. Kryterion's technical support team received very few calls on April 10 and April 17, evidence that most exam proctors did not experience any difficulties launching or exiting the system on behalf of their test takers.

TSDA invites your feedback about this year's exam. Please let TSDA know what worked, what didn't work, and what could be improved for next year. Send comments and to Beth Winer, TSDA Affiliate and Marketing Manager, at bwiner@tsda.org.

Results of the [2010 In-Training Exam Residents Survey](#) are now posted on TSDA.org. This survey was completed by all 271 residents and fellows registered for the exam. Survey responses include residents' primary career interest, reported educational debt, primary determinant in choosing a career in CT surgery, and opinions about the 80-hour work week, simulation as a teaching modality, and the TSDA Weekly Curricula.

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TSDA to Host 2010 Boot Camp

Residents gather for hands-on training.

For the third year in row, TSDA will offer its basic skills Boot Camp course to 32 residents July 8-11, 2010 in Chapel Hill, NC. The program will provide resident participants with training in five key areas: cardiopulmonary bypass, anastomosis, open lobectomy, bronchoscopy/mediastinoscopy, and aortic valve surgery. Boot Camp program directors George Hicks, Jr., MD, Richard Feins, MD, and Jim Fann, MD, have developed the intensive two-and-a-half day course based on emerging needs in cardiothoracic surgery residency education. Approximately 30 faculty members have been recruited to teach the residents throughout the weekend. The use of simulators for both the cardiac and general thoracic sessions will provide participants with hands-on experience in basic CT operating skills, allowing them to be better prepared when entering the operating room in their home programs.

The Joint Council on Thoracic Surgery Education (JCTSE) will host [Educate the Educator](#) in Chapel Hill concurrent to Boot Camp. This program is designed to help educators understand the skills necessary to teach CT surgery residents. This combined effort will optimize CT surgery resident education and lay the foundation for future resident and faculty training programs.

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TSDA Curriculum Committee Update

New talks posted on TSDA.org.

Nine new talks were recently posted on the [New Talks section of TSDA.org](#) and are accessible using current operating systems for PC and Mac computers. The TSDA Curriculum Committee recruited faculty members to create new talks as part of the Education Universe renewal project, and additional talks are expected to be posted in the coming months. Faculty members are encouraged to submit talks for the TSDA Education Universe. [Click here](#) to view instructions on how to create a talk.

The TSDA Weekly Curriculum is nearing the end of Year 1 with the last message scheduled for delivery on June 10 for the week of June 14. This message will represent week 44 of 88. Year 2 will begin with week 45 and will be sent on July 8 for the week of July 12. [Click here](#) to view the complete 88-week curriculum.

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TSDA General Session Presentations Now Posted on TSDA.org

TSDA's 2010 General Session presentations can now be downloaded as pdf files from TSDA.org. To view the January and May 2010 General Session agenda and presentations, visit the [Meetings Archive section of TSDA.org](#). Previous meeting agenda and presentations are also posted on this page.

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TSDA Remembers Founding Member

TSDA Past President honored.

In 2009, TSDA renamed its resident paper award the Benson R. Wilcox Award in honor of TSDA Past President, Dr. Benson Reid Wilcox. Dr. Wilcox, a cardiothoracic surgeon who served 29 years as chief of the Division of Cardiothoracic Surgery at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, died of brain cancer on May 11, 2010. He was 77.

Dr. Wilcox was instrumental in establishing TSDA and drafting the association's Bylaws. He served as TSDA's first secretary/treasurer from 1977-1980, as president-elect from 1983-1984, and as president from 1985-1986. The Benson R. Wilcox Award is presented annually at The Society of Thoracic Surgeons Annual Meeting for best scientific abstract submitted by a cardiothoracic surgery resident. The [STS 47th Annual Meeting abstract submission site](#) is now open through June 18, 2010.

The family has asked that those wishing to honor Dr. Wilcox send memorial gifts to the TSDA Benson R. Wilcox Award. Contributions will be collected toward endowing the Wilcox Award so that a monetary award can be given to recipients along with a plaque. Checks can be made to the Thoracic Surgery Directors Association and mailed to 633 N. St. Clair Street, Suite 2320, Chicago, IL 60611.

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JCTSE Six-Year Integrated Program Manual Now Posted on TSDA.org

Free resource now available for download.

The Joint Council on Thoracic Surgery Education's [Manual for Creating a Comprehensive Six-Year Integrated Curriculum in Cardiothoracic Surgery](#) is now posted on TSDA.org. The online version of the Manual is posted in multiple sections, including an overview of new requirements; pertinent articles; annotated bibliography; discussion and negotiation resources; funding issues; and tips on preparing a Program Information Form (PIF). Each section is posted as a pdf file and can be viewed, downloaded and printed.

TSDA and JCTSE hope the information provided in this resource will help those program directors planning a possible transition to a comprehensive six-year integrated program.

Contact Rebecca Mark, JCTSE Administration and Education Manager, at rmark@jctse.org or 312-202-5893, with any questions.

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TSDA Data Collection

TSDA maintains a comprehensive database of all cardiothoracic residency program contacts, including program director, associate director, coordinator, faculty, and current and incoming residents and fellows. The information housed in this database is collected 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. Coordinators can expect to receive a [request for contact information](#) shortly after the June 9 match.** Accurate data will help ensure incoming residents and fellows are included on the TSDA Weekly Curricula distribution list, and receive other timely news and information from TSDA and TSRA.

Program Directors asked to follow position turnover procedures. 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. George Hicks Jr., TSDA President, 633 N. St. Clair Street, Suite 2320, Chicago, IL 60611. A copy of a letter with this information to ACGME or ABTS is also acceptable.

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RRC Seeks Resident Member

The ACGME Residency Review Committee for Thoracic Surgery is seeking nominations for resident members. [Click here](#) for details on the qualifications and responsibilities of the resident members, as well as the nomination process. The nomination deadline is June 15, 2010.

For more information, visit the [Thoracic Surgery section of ACGME.org](#), or contact Peggy Simpson, PhD, at 312-755-5499 or psimpson@acgme.org.

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Cardiothoracic Surgeons to Gather in Washington, D.C. for STS Legislative Advocacy Workshop

Free registration offered to resident attendees.

Dozens of cardiothoracic surgeons will attend the [STS Legislative Advocacy Workshop](#), to be held June 13-15, 2010 in Washington, D.C. Workshop participants will hear from national health policy leaders and develop valuable advocacy effectiveness techniques. They will then travel to Capitol Hill where they will have the opportunity to meet with representatives, senators, and their staffs to discuss health care policy and other issues relevant to cardiothoracic surgeons and their patients. The registration fee for residents has been waived; please encourage one of your residents to register for this important program. For more information, contact Bob Kohlmeyer, STS Government Relations Coordinator, at 202-481-1026, or advocacy@sts.org.

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STS Now Offers Pre-Candidate Membership

The Society of Thoracic Surgeons recently created a Pre-Candidate Membership category for medical students and general surgery residents. Benefits include a free online subscription to *The Annals of Thoracic Surgery*, discounted travel options and waived or reduced registration rates for STS educational events, as well as access to a growing number of resources available via www.sts.org. Membership dues are only \$25. With a rolling admissions process, new Pre-Candidate Members can take advantage of STS membership benefits almost immediately. [Click here](#) for more information, and please share with any potential members the latest installment of [Pre-Op: A Cardiothoracic Surgery Newsletter for Medical Students](#).

STS also offers Candidate Membership for residents who are matched or enrolled in an ACGME-accredited cardiothoracic surgery education program. Membership benefits include reduced registration and networking opportunities at the STS Annual Meeting, a subscription to *The Annals of Thoracic Surgery*, and advocacy efforts in Washington, DC. Annual membership dues are only \$100. For more information, visit the [Candidate Membership section of www.sts.org](#), and please share with any potential members the latest installment of [Candidate Connection: A Newsletter for STS Candidate Members](#).

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ACGME Offering Basics of Accreditation for New Program Coordinators

Registration is now open for the August 9, 2010 Basics of Accreditation workshop for new coordinators with less than two years of experience as a thoracic surgery residency program coordinator. This one-day intensive workshop will help new coordinators understand the basics concerning ACGME accreditation of thoracic surgery residency programs.

[Click here](#) for more information and to register.

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Save the Date

TSDA General Session
Saturday, January 29, 2011
San Diego, CA

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