

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

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).

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. With chapters written by more than 40 thoracic surgery residents from different programs around the country and edited by the TSRA, this book will be published as an electronic book and provided free of charge. All chapters have been written and are currently in the process of being edited by the TSRA. The plan is to publish the text by the end of January 2011.

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 Society of Thoracic Surgeons (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 is to identify the main characteristics that make a cardiothoracic surgery program outstanding. By identifying those characteristics, efforts can be focused on promoting those traits within training programs, thereby enhancing the education and training of thoracic surgery residents around the country. The survey has been designed and will be distributed in January 2011.

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) has been appointed as the person in charge of updating the different areas of the website.

- Thoracic Surgery News. The TSRA has been invited to publish a monthly piece in 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. The TSRA has been participating in this project since November. Robroy MacIver, a member of the Communications Committee, has been appointed as the TSRA liaison to Thoracic Surgery News.

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. This year, the TSRA received 11 nominations for the Socrates Award. Dr. Lyle Joyce, from Mayo Clinic, will be 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 during the AATS Annual Meeting in May.

In-service exam survey

Every year, the TSDA provides an opportunity for the TSRA to edit and modify a series of questions that need to be answered by all thoracic surgery residents prior to taking the annual in-service exam. The survey focuses on important aspects of training, workforce, and career planning of residents. The survey has been modified for the next in-service exam in April. The results of previous surveys will be 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 is currently available at the TSRA website. The TSRA is working with CTSNet to reformat the database to make it more user-friendly and find ways to keep the information on the database updated.

Relationship with international cardiothoracic surgery trainee organizations

The TSRA is actively exploring ways to participate with other international trainee organizations. As part of this effort, members of the TSRA will be meeting with the respective organizations from Europe, Japan, Brazil, and Spain in an effort to create an international network for cardiothoracic surgery trainees.

TSRA letter on duty hours

The Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) recently proposed a new set of standards regarding duty hour requirements. After careful analysis of those requirements, the TSRA formulated and sent a letter to the ACGME expressing particular concerns on the new proposed guidelines. The letter can be found on the TSRA website. In addition, the TSRA cosigned a letter with the other major cardiothoracic surgery organizations reiterating its concerns.