THE ASSOCIATION OF WOMEN SURGEONS FOUNDATION

Looking Forward to Move Forward

womensurgeons.org
AWSF MISSION

To provide opportunities for the educational and professional growth of women in surgery.

PURPOSE

The AWS Foundation is a 501(c)3 organization founded in 1994 to fund fellowships, research awards, and scholarships that advance the careers of women surgeons. The Foundation also recognizes individuals who are supportive of the AWS mission.

PROGRAMS

- Women Scholars
- Travel Grants
- Education Grants
- Visiting Professor
- Annual Awards
- AWSF Gala

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GENEROSITY IN ACTION

Women Scholars Program

Africa and Southeast Asia have a quarter of the world’s population, the highest burden of surgical disease, and yet only one surgeon for every 200,000 people. Although women make up more than 50% of the population, they represent only 7% of the surgical work force.

Presented in collaboration with the American College of Surgeons, the Women Scholars Program provides women surgical trainees with access to the training and board examinations provided by the College of Surgeons of East, Central and Southern Africa Scientific Conference (COSECSA). Since 93% of COSECSA surgical graduates remain on the African continent, this program improves access to optimal surgical care in that area.

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EMPOWERING SURGEONS AROUND THE WORLD

AWSF Travel Grants

Thanks to the generosity of donors, AWSF provides travel grants to enable women surgeons to attend the Annual College of Surgeons of East, Central and Southern Africa conference and Women in Surgery Africa events.

Congratulations to Dr. Kabelele Sipalo, recipient of the 2023 AWSF Travel Award:

“Through this opportunity, I was able to meet like-minded female surgeons who have a keen interest in research in various areas, not only from within Africa but from all over the world. I also had the opportunity to present our research on surgical outcomes of head injuries at a rural hospital in Zambia. I am eager to continue to pursue research activities locally and now have a network of female researchers who are available to assist me in refining my ideas. I am grateful for this once in a lifetime opportunity.”

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ADVANCING CAREERS IN EMERGING ECONOMIES

AWSF Educational Grants

Since 2016, the Foundation has been offering educational grants to women surgeons living in areas categorized as Low and Middle Income Countries. Awardees are empowered to participate in a workshop, career development activity, or another educational opportunity.

In 2021, AWSF supported Dr. Wairiuma Ndegwa, a surgeon and educator at the Mama Lucy Kibaki Hospital in Kenya, in pursuit of a Masters Degree. Dr. Ndegwa shared that because of this scholarship, made possible by AWSF donors, “we are one step closer to the realization of what could be a legacy for the people I am eager to serve in my home country.”

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ELEVATING INSPIRING SURGICAL EDUCATORS

Visiting Professor Program

The AWSF Kim Ephgrave Visiting Professor Program provides an established surgeon the opportunity to be a positive role model for women in surgery. The visiting instructor shares their professional and personal experiences with faculty, residents, and students at a select host institution through grand rounds, lectures, research presentations, and more.

The 2022 AWS Visiting Professor, Leah C. Tatebe, MD, FACS, shared this about her experience:

“Thank you for the opportunity to serve as the AWS Visiting Professor this year! It was a tremendous experience that I will treasure. The medical students at Western Michigan University spearheaded the application and organized the visit. The future is indeed bright with such fantastic rising stars!”

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RECOGNIZING EXCELLENCE IN SURGERY AND ALLYSHIP

AWSF Awards

Each year the AWS Foundation recognizes exemplary surgeons, surgeons-in-training, and non-surgeons who support the mission of AWS. Made possible through the generous support of donors, the awards include:

- Dr. Patricia Numann Medical Student Award
- Dr. Nina Starr Braunwald Award
- Dr. Olga Jonasson Distinguished Member
- Dr. Sally Abston AWS Distinguished Member
- Past Presidents Honorary Member
- Dr. Hilary Sanfey Outstanding Resident
- Dr. Charles W. Putnam Distinguished Mentor

“Being named the Hilary Sanfey Outstanding Resident in 2013 was such a tremendous honor, and one of the standout achievements of my career to date.”

-Meera Kotagal, MD, MPH

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SHAPING THE FUTURE OF SURGERY

Donors Making a Difference

Dr. Patricia Numann
ACS Past President
AWS Founder

“For over 50 years watching women not get their fair share, I feel compelled to contribute to causes that specifically support women. The many uses of the AWS Foundation funds make an important difference. Women must support women.”

Dr. Ron Maier
AWS Honorary Member

AWSF is A, if not THE, major supporter of gender equity and diversity in surgery today. The programs, opportunities, fellowships and community provided are having a daily impact. Becoming a foundation donor was a great way for me to support and enhance these critical activities.

Dr. Robin Williams
AWSF Donor

“The key word in the mission of the AWS Foundation is ‘opportunities.’ Sometimes, all one needs to succeed and thrive is an opportunity. It is a joy for me to support other women in the pursuit of their educational and professional aspirations via the AWSF.

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HONORING OUR MENTORS
By Supporting Future Surgeons

AWS members recognize the mentors who played pivotal roles in shaping their professional growth. Each mentor was acknowledged with a gift made in their honor to the AWS Foundation, ensuring the continuation of their impact on future women in surgery.

Dr. Lola Fayanju
Honored by Dr. Sara Ginzberg

Dr. Sharon Lum
Honored by Dr. Esther Yung

Dr. Marion Henry
Honored by Dr. Christina Colosimo

Dr. Christine Laronga
Honored by Dr. Nell Maloney Patel

Dr. Margaret Dunn
Honored by Dr. Paula Termuhlen

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SUPPORTING MILESTONES

AWS Resident Travel Awardees

In 2023, four exceptional women surgeons were granted financial scholarships, made possible by Foundation donors, to attend the AWS Annual Conference in Boston.

““This generous donation allowed me to present my work at the Top Papers session, connect with many amazing women surgeons, and dive deeper into the association. Thank you for making it possible!”

Dr. Isabella Faria

“This organization has been pivotal in getting me involved and connected with countless amazing surgeons and mentors. It is an amazing opportunity to network, learn, and gain perspective for all the opportunities the field of surgery has to offer.”

Dr. Natalia Correa

“This was such an impactful experience for me having the chance to network with other women surgeons, learn from their experiences, and become more involved with the AWS. I am so grateful for this opportunity and look forward to continuing to work with the AWS throughout my career.”

Dr. Lauren M. Janczewski

“AWS' Annual Conference has quickly become a personal favorite as I gained new skills to help me be a better version of my authentic self AND in turn a better surgeon, thanks to the women who have paved the way before me.”

Dr. Andrea Riner

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