



2025



**2024 - 2025
ANNUAL REPORT**

2024 - 25 Executive Committee



Salewa Oseni
MD, FACS
President



Simone Betchen
MD, MBA, FACS
President - Elect



Marion Henry
MD, FACS
Vice - President



Chantal Reyna
MD, MHA, FACS
Secretary



Heather Yeo
MD, MBA, FACS
Treasurer



Toni Beninato
MD, MS, FACS
Director



Kandace McGuire
MD, FACS
Immediate Past President



Sharon Stein
MD, FACS, FASCRS
Past President



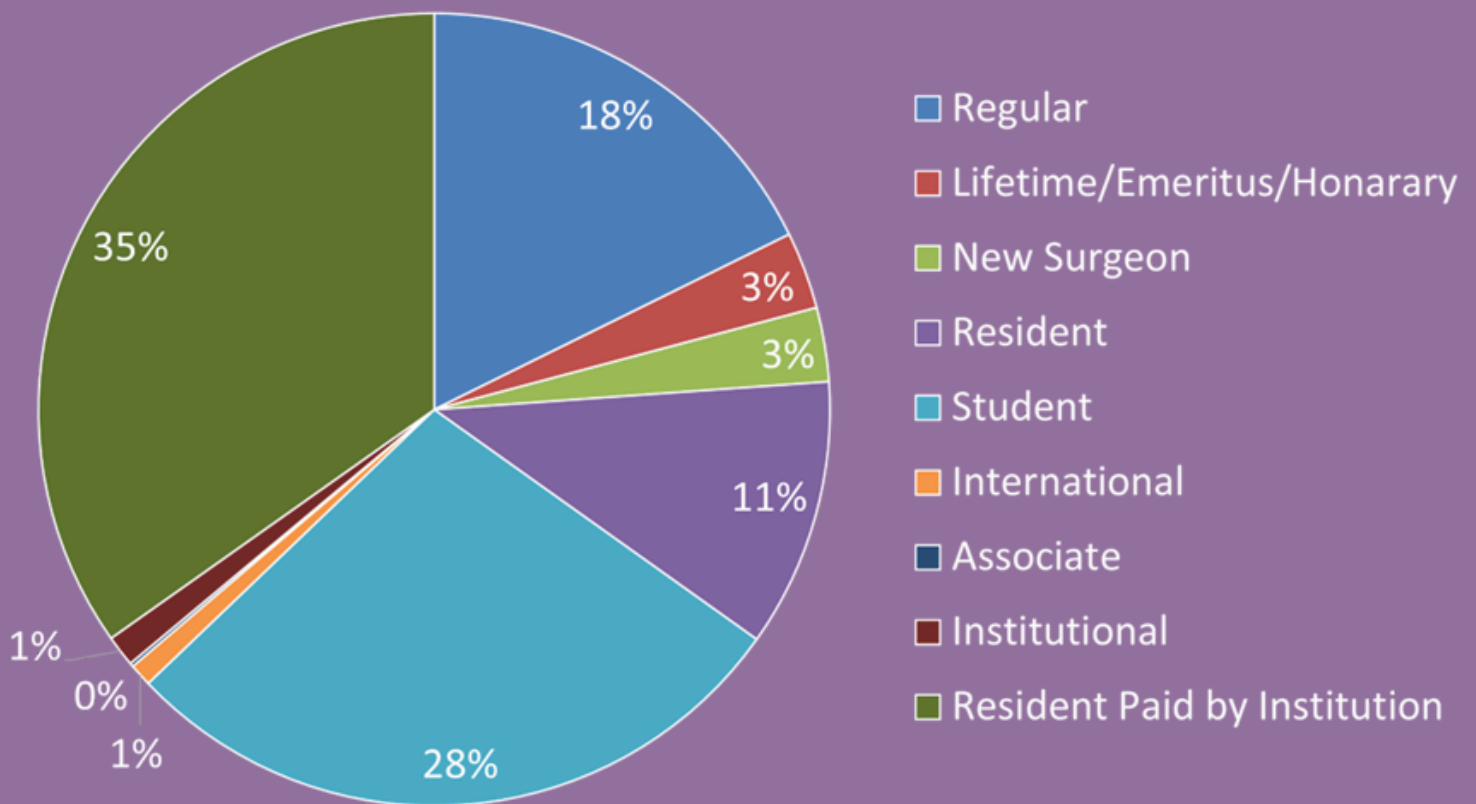
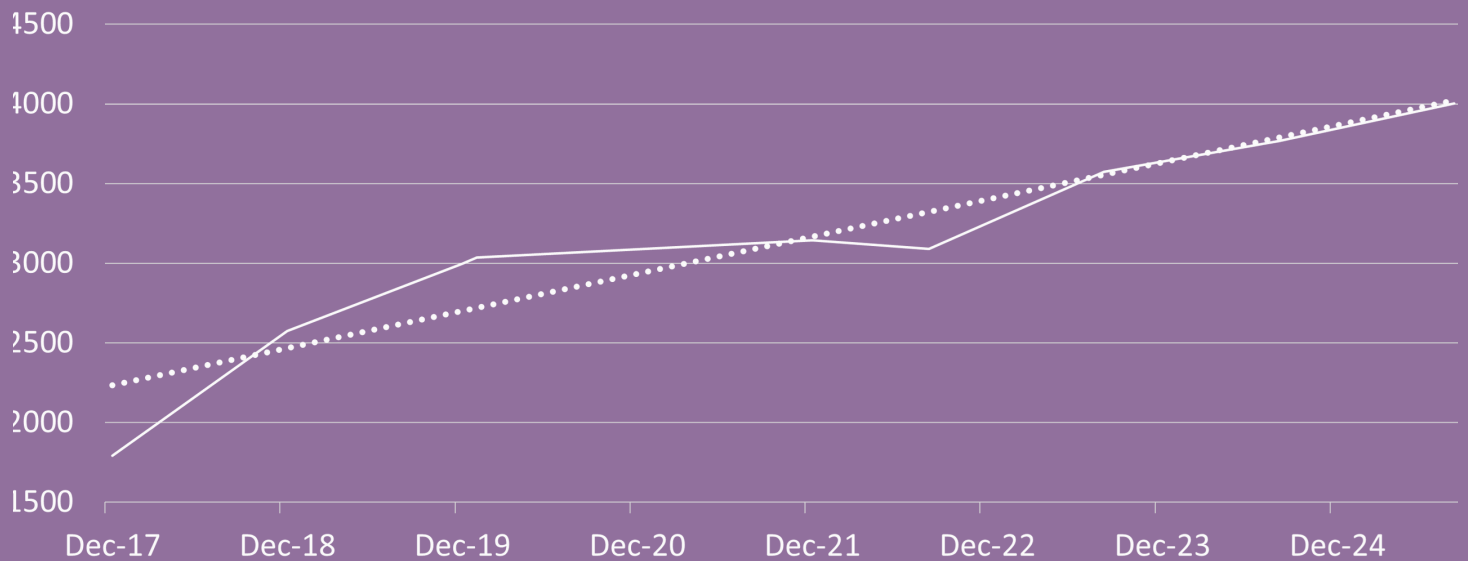
Marybeth Hughes
MD, FACS
ACS Governor



Nancy Gantt
MD, FACS
AWS Foundation Chair

AWS Membership

Total Members



Career Development Committee



**Emily Keung,
Chair**

In alignment with the mission, AWS created three programs: Signature Speaker Series, Shining Star Leadership Coaching Program, and Breaking the Glass Ceiling Leadership Development Program. Thank you to Intuitive for supporting these important programs!

The **Signature Speaker Series** develops and promotes women speakers on a national platform. This year's series included formal training by a renowned speaking coach, Patrick Combs, and slide creation expert, Brigitte Callahan. Nine speakers were trained this year and are now being promoted for speaking opportunities through partner societies' program committees and leadership. The 2025 Signature Speakers are:

Dr. Tanya Anand	Dr. Amanda Kirane
Dr. Abbey Fingeret	Dr. Lauren Kopicky
Dr. Carmen Fong	Dr. Shannon Small
Dr. Annabelle Fonseca	Dr. Irlna Tantchou
Dr. Danielle Holt	

The Signature Speakers database has been updated on the AWS website. It includes brief speaker bios, areas of interest and contact information for those wishing to invite them.

Career Development Committee (cont.)

The **Shining Star Leadership Coaching Program** develops a leadership pipeline by providing junior women surgeons with leadership skills and/or aspirations with the necessary training and professional development to take their careers to the next level. The 2024-2025 AWS Shining Star Leadership Program worked with Dr. Mamta Gautam. Congratulations to the participants selected:

Dr. Lisa Cannada	Dr. Aparna Rege
Dr. Christine Castater	Dr. Chantal Reyna
Dr. Akiko Chiba	Dr. Tanaz Vaghaiwalla
Dr. Cristina Feather	Dr. Ming-Li Wang
Dr. Marion Henry	Dr. Stephanie Worrell
Dr. Marybeth Hughes	Dr. Heather Yeo
Dr. Alexis Moren	

The **Breaking the Glass Ceiling Program** provides senior women surgeons an opportunity to develop their leadership skillset by subsidizing attendance at leadership programs. This year, we were able to support two outstanding women:

Dr. Brenessa Lindeman
Dr. Denise Lo

Finally, the Career Development Committee wishes to thank the Executive Council for providing funding for the 2026 cycle of the **AWS Research Grant** as we transition our industry support. The 2023 Grant Recipient, Dr. Holly Lewis presented her research at the 2024 Annual Conference and Dr. Nimmi Kapoor will present on *HER2 Discordance Between Primary Breast Tumor and Nodal Metastasis and Relationship to Oncotype Score* at the 2025 Annual Conference.

The 2026 Grant Recipient selected was Lauren Krumeich, MD, MS for her project: *NSCLC adrenal metastasis growth: how p53 status governs the immunosuppressive microenvironment and tumor response to glucocorticoids*.

Clinical Practice Committee



**Lisa Reid,
Chair**

The Clinical Practice Committee (CPC) supports and promotes female surgeons in different practice areas to include those in academics, private practice, military and rural surgery.

The committee oversees several programs to include:

- **AWS Coaching program:** Trains surgeons to be peer coaches to residents. The training program is robust, and is led by Dr. Sharon Stein. The feedback from residents has been consistently positive. The first session for this year will be during the AWS annual meeting.
- **SCALPELS:** The 2025 Surgeon Career and Leadership Professional Education Lecture Series (SCALPELS) was held virtually via three sessions each in the months of May, June, and July. The sessions included two talks and a panel with esteemed faculty each month. The topics covered were Redefining success, Advocacy and Leadership, as well as Practice Management. The series was well attended and CME credit was available.

Communications Committee



**Kathleen
Romanowski,
Co-Chair**

The Communications Committee continues to engage members with unique content across all of its accounts including Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, Blog, Podcast, LinkedIn and YouTube.

Our Instagram page has 63K lifetime followers with 836K views in the past 3 months. There we continue to celebrate diversity with the IG live interview series, introducing new recurring posts with #TeachingThursdays and #TuesdayTips. Instagram content continues to be shared to Facebook for our followers who prefer that platform.

The Podcast continues to grow. We are excited to be planning a series on Career Development, and we are exploring sponsorships as well. The blog has entered its 11th year of publication and continues to provide a voice for our members to write about topics that are important to them.



**Erin King-
Mullins,
Co-Chair**

Our Twitter/X committee has begun to build a following on Bluesky. Currently Twitter/X has 41K followers and hopefully soon the Bluesky account will begin to mirror that. We hope to resume Tweetchats as they were widely popular.

YouTube has grown to 447 subscribers up from 392. LinkedIn presence continues. We have also created dedicated space on all of our platforms for trainee and medical student voices, with content being created specifically for them, all easy to find with the hashtag #AWSStudentSurgeons. Future goals include better collaboration with other committees to ensure we spread the word on all the important work that is happening throughout the organization.

Editorial Committee



**Akiko
Chiba,
Co-Chair**

The Editorial Committee is a new committee as of January 2025, and we have completed the selection of committee members in March 2025. Since the start of the committee, we have identified interested members to participate in the committee.

The committee reviewed 15 submissions prior to submission to the Executive Committee for final AWS approval.

Additionally, the committee completed the call for abstracts for the AWS edition of AJS. We have received 86 abstracts and invited 46 abstracts to submit a full manuscript for consideration for publication in AJS. Of those not selected for consideration for AJS, an invitation was sent to 39 authors to submit a full manuscript for the AWS edition of AS.

The Reviewer Academy facilitated another successful year with 12 new mentees.



**Sophie
Dream,
Co-Chair**

Reviewer Academy Mentors and Mentees for 2025

Libby Weaver - Chair

Amelia Maiga - Vice Chair

Mentors

Maria Altieri
Kristy Broman
Christina Colosimo
Catherine Davis
Megan Delisle
Rishi Dholakia
Sophie Dream
Patricia Martinez Quinones
Lauren Nosanov
Jennifer Plichta
Samantha Ruff
Minna Wieck

Mentees

Devi Bavishi
Justine Broecker
Victoria Ivankovic
Carolina Larrain
Alexa Lisevick
Claire Ostertag-Hill
Nicole Rademacher
Jacqueline Seoane
Madigan Stanley
Krysta Sutyak
Crystal Taylor
Grace Thompson



**Nancy Gantt,
Chair**

Foundation

AWSF Roster 2023 – 2024

Nancy Gantt (Chair)
Kristalyn Gallagher (Vice-Chair)
Dixie Mills (Secretary)
Christine Laronga (Treasurer)

Margaret Dunn
D'Andrea Joseph
Ann Lowry
Anne Mosenthal
Lauren Nosanov

Salewa Oseni
Nell Maloney Patel
Patricia Roberts
Elizabeth Shaughnessy
Michaela West

Kim Ephgrave 2025 Visiting Professor

2025 Kim Ephgrave Visiting Professor: Dr. Lisa Cannada
2025 Host Site: Geisinger Medical Center, Danville, PA.

2025 Awards Gala

Sunday October 5, 2025 immediately following the ACS WiSC sponsored cocktail reception at the Hyatt Regency McCormick Place in Chicago.

AWS/ACS Women Scholars Program

In partnership with ACS H.O.P.E. supports women surgeons in Africa to travel to and take their mandatory COSECSA examinations. Up to fifteen Women Scholars are supported yearly.

AWSF WiSA Travel Grants

Support two African women surgeons to attend the annual WiSA and COSECSA meetings.

AWSF LMIC Travel Grant

Allows a surgeon to participate in an educational event. 2025 Recipient Dr. Tsion Tilahu Girma, completing an Endocrine & Breast Surgery Fellowship at Christian Medical College in Vellore, India. She is an Assistant Professor of General Surgery at Yekatit 12 Hospital Medical College Surgery Department, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

2025 AWS Foundation Award Recipients



**Carla M. Pugh, MD,
PhD, FACS, MAMSE**

Dr. Nina Starr
Braunwald Award



**Thomas K. Varghese,
Jr., MD, MS, MBA,
FACS, MAMSE**

Past Presidents
Honorary Member
Award



**Carlos A. Pellegrini,
MD, FACS,
FRCSI(HON),
FRCS(HON),
FRSCED(HON),
FWACS(HON)**

Dr. Charles W. Putnam
Distinguished Member
Award



**Ava C. Yap,
MD, MHS**

Dr. Hilary Sanfey
Outstanding Resident
Award



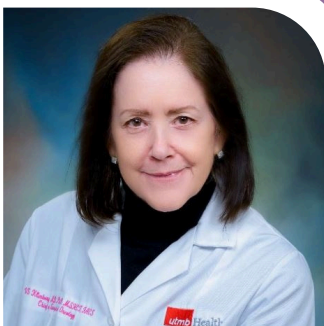
**Susan E. Pories,
MD, FACS**

Dr. Olga Jonasson
Distinguished Member
Award



**Isabella Gomes,
MPH, MA**

Dr. Patricia Numann
Medical Student
Award



**V. Suzanne Klimberg,
MD, PhD, MSHCT,
FACS, MAMSE**

Dr. Sally Abston
Distinguished Member
Award



**Lisa Cannada,
MD, FACS**

Dr. Kim Ephgrave
Visiting Professorship

Medical Student Committee



**Ryann
Maciejewski,
Chair**

The AWS National Medical Student Committee continues to support and elevate female medical students interested in surgery, with the ultimate goal of improving diverse representation and equity within surgery. The 25'-26' medical student committee is composed of 28 highly dedicated and talented medical students from around the world.

This year, our committee's overarching goals are to:

- Enhance our national chapter toolkit to provide comprehensive guidance and support to chapters worldwide
- Foster robust collaboration with identity focused partner surgical societies especially on diversity focused initiatives
- Re-envision our committee workflow to foster collaboration on major projects, strengthen inter-committee relationships, and elevate national committee roles to ensure sustainable, high-quality performance
- Promote cross-committee collaboration within AWS to advance key initiatives and deliver measurable impact

Our committee designs, organizes, and implements numerous annual projects that engage medical students throughout the world. These include the Dorothy Brown & Maria Garcia Sancho Surgical Mentoring Program, Starr Research Forum held at the annual conference, Knots for Thoughts podcast, National AWS Medical Student Journal Club, National Day of Service virtual event for K12 URM high school students, in-person K12 outreach event for BIPOC high school girls at the annual conference in collaboration with SBAS, Instagram live events for heritage months celebrating the diversity in surgery, in-person student reception at the annual conference, quarterly zoom events on various topics relevant to a career in surgery, and 14 regional yearly conferences throughout the world. We currently have over 200 active AWS chapters around the world and continue to grow.

All of our projects have grown and improved throughout the years and continue to be highly successful. We have to-date paired over 250 medical students with mentors and have reached 50+ high school students just in the past year through our various programming. We have also released 8 podcast episodes with more

Medical Student Committee (cont.)

underway with guest speakers and have successfully continued the national journal club. Our Starr Research Forum continues to be a highly sought-after event at the annual conference and showcases the excellent work of 11 medical students and 10 residents with the highest-scoring abstracts. Our virtual events via social media and Zoom continue to grow in attendance and serve as an excellent way to connect with students throughout the country. Many of our regional conferences now feature research presentations to foster innovation, knowledge exchange, and professional growth among attendees. Our social media presence has also hugely grown, and we now have our own dedicated posting times on Instagram where we will be sharing more about the medical student initiatives and stories within AWS, as well as the growth of region-specific Instagram presence, highlighting regional and local initiatives.

New this year, we look forward to enhancing our national chapter toolkit to streamline AWS chapter initiation, growth, and renewal, while ensuring clear communication of the processes needed to achieve these goals. We are also eager to develop a centralized database to capture and consolidate successful NMSC initiatives, providing future members with proven strategies to support their success and growth. We will be continuing to refine and implement our IMG-specific mentorship program. Our team is currently evaluating the outcomes of our mentorship program and journal club through ongoing research projects, with hopes of improving the program in future years based on the feedback received. We will also be expanding our resources and podcasts to include guest speakers who also have their own podcasts and focus on topics such as common situations encountered by women on the wards, perspectives from current DEI leaders in surgery, being international in medicine, etc.

Member Services Committee



**Gayle DiLalla,
Chair**

- 134 Regular Member Autorenewals
- Regular Members increased 13.2% July 2025 over July 2024
- Established new membership fees for LMIC student and international institutional members
- Established a more specific policy and procedure for attaining Emeritus Membership
- Outreach to small programs and community practice surgeons to increase engagement. Specific opportunities at annual conference to engage together.
- Ongoing outreach to lapsed members with successful conversions to active membership
- Acknowledgement of Institutional Members with large placard at annual conference
- Continue to increase numbers of memberships on automatic renewal
- Recognized our sustaining members with Anniversary Pins to be presented at the annual conference- will present again in Chicago

Outreach Committee



**Christen
Russo,
Co-Chair**

The Outreach Committee (combined Outreach + He for She) has had a productive year.

- Travel Awards & Visiting Professorships with multiple affinity groups
- AWS Brochure ready for distribution (@ annual mtg?)
- Mentor Moments Podcasts recorded and distributed
- Cutting Edge Convos: webinars with affinity groups scheduled monthly Better Mentor, Bigger Impact Cross Mentoring Training: curriculum created, applications open, faculty being recruited for future launch, 6 hours of CME possible



**Shannon
Small,
Co-Chair**

Publications Committee



**Lisa
Cannada,
Chair**

The publications committee has had a productive year. This was the first year with a separate Editorial Committee and we have kept them busy reviewing our work. We have a schedule for monthly submissions to AJS for “My Thoughts” papers, facilitated by Caitlin Hicks. The topics are discussed and

selected from committee member ideas on current topics affecting Women in Surgery. A few include Redefining Academic Surgery, What to Do with Your First Paycheck, Article Processing Fees and NIH Funding Changes.

Over the past year, we have had quarterly webinars including “How to Teach Effectively,” “How to Meet Effectively with Leadership,” “Ergonomics,” and “Preparing for Fellowship.” In December, we hope you can join our Webinar Collaboration with the Resident Committee on “Branding as a Surgeon: Finding One’s Niche and Showcasing Personal Skills.”

There are several other projects in progress, including the continuation of a series on Women with Resilience, Emotional Intelligence, and Surgical Innovators. New topics include Surgical Lifestyle and its Effect on Family; Speak Up Culture on the Weaponization of Patient Safety Reporting, Conferences in States with Comprehensive Pregnancy Care, Fertility Preservation, and starting a project on Artificial Intelligence and Ethics in Surgery.

We are looking for new members to join and contribute ideas. We are grateful for the committee members and AWS staff for all of their work to make a difference!

Resident & Fellow Committee



**Camila
Guetter,
Chair**

The AWS Resident and Fellow Committee continues to support surgical trainees through education, mentorship, and advocacy, with the ultimate goal of expanding opportunities, enhancing resources, and fostering a strong, connected community among residents and fellows in surgical specialties.

This past year has been one of tremendous growth and impact for our committee. We held consistent monthly calls, which served as a collaborative platform to share ideas, launch initiatives, and build connections across trainees of different institutions and training levels. We also continued our bi-monthly webinar series, which has become a cornerstone of our programming. Each session addressed critical challenges facing surgical trainees, attracting participants from across the country and abroad. Highlights included discussions on fertility preservation and family planning in surgical training, strategies in crafting your research years, parental leave in surgery, navigating the intern year, shaping a surgical career, and contract negotiations.

To extend the reach of these educational sessions, we partnered with the AWS Blog Committee to create companion blog posts summarizing key takeaways and linking to resources. This year, the committee also started writing manuscripts for academic publication on topics such as fertility preservation and supporting trainees through their fertility journey, reflecting our commitment to both advocacy and scholarship.

New initiatives included the launch of a monthly Resident and Fellow's Corner in the AWS newsletter, offering tips, highlights, and curated resources tailored to surgical trainees. A welcome packet for newly matched residents is also in development to support the transition into residency and connect trainees with AWS resources early in their surgical careers. Collaboration has remained central to our mission. This year, we partnered with the Medical Student Committee to co-mentor journal club presentations, moderate discussions, review abstracts for the

Resident & Fellow (cont.)

AWS Annual Conference scientific session (Starr Forum), and co-host the Resident and Student Mixer at the upcoming 2025 Annual Conference.

As we look ahead, we remain committed to supporting the needs of residents and fellows at every stage of training. Whether through mentorship, webinars, research, or community-building, our committee strives to amplify trainee voices and ensure they are equipped to thrive in surgical careers.

Association for Academic Surgery



**Christie
Buonpane,
AAS Liaison**

The Association for Academic Surgery (AAS) works with the AWS DEI/Outreach Committee and other liaisons (SBAS, AOSA, SAAS, LSS) on Intersectionality Initiatives. The AAS continues to collaborate and participate in AWS initiatives through cross-promotion of events, webinars, and opportunities.

AWS and AAS facilitated a Cutting Edge Conversation webinar on Academic promotion, research resources/funding, and the associated bottlenecks specific to women in academic surgery with prestigious speakers such as Drs. Patricia Numann, Elizabeth Gleeson, Callisia Clarke, Theresa Rohr-Kirchgraber, and Sylk Sotto.

Additionally, Dr. Buonpane recorded and published a Mentor Moments podcast with her mentor, Dr. Mo Shabahang.

Council Liaisons



Stephanie Bonne,
MD
Women In Surgery



**Patricia Martinez
Quinones, MD, PhD**
Resident & Associate



Christie Buonpane,
MD
AAS



Amy Vertrees,
MD, FACS
ACS General Surgery



Annabelle Fonseca,
MD
SAAS



Alexis Moren,
MD, MPH, FACS
AOSA



Susana Vargas-Pinto,
MD, FACS
LSS



Christine Castater,
MD, FACS
SBAS

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Association of Women Surgeons ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2025

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS • OCTOBER 3-5, 2025

Women Surgeon Pioneers:

Shaping the Future of Surgery

2025 Conference Chair Sponsors

The Association of Women Surgeons (AWS) is grateful for the ongoing partnership of institutions that support our mission to empower women surgeons, residents, and medical students to reach their personal and professional goals. We would like to thank the surgical faculty, departments, and institutions who have already committed to generously support our organization this fall:

Gold Sponsors

- University of California-Davis School of Medicine: Diana Farmer, MD, FACS, FRCS
- Weill Cornell Medical College: Fabrizio Michelassi, MD, FACS

Silver Sponsors

- Rush University Medical Center, Department of Surgery: Alfonso Torquati, MD, FACS
- University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine: Ronald P. DeMatteo, MD, FACS
- University of Pittsburgh Medical Center: Timothy Billiar, MD, FACS
- USF Health Morsani College of Medicine: Murray L. Shames, MD, DFSVS, FACS

Bronze Sponsor

- Sidney Kimmel Medical College at Thomas Jefferson University: Charles J. Yeo, MD, FACS

2025 Joint Sponsored Travel Awardees



Cori DeLisi
AWS - AOSA Awardee



Cori DeLisi
AWS - AOSA Awardee



Dr. Evelyn Alexander
AWS - SBAS Awardee



ASSOCIATION OF
WOMEN
SURGEONS

ENGAGE. EMPOWER. EXCEL.



Marcela Gutierrez
AWS - LSS Awardee



Dr. Aurian Garcia Gonzalez
AWS - LSS Awardee



Sonal Swain
AWS - SAAS Awardee