



2023 - 2024 ANNUAL REPORT

2023 - 2024 Executive Council



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MD, MHA, FACS
Secretary



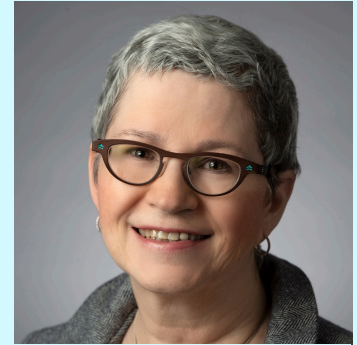
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MD, MBA, FACS
DEI Director



Marybeth Hughes,
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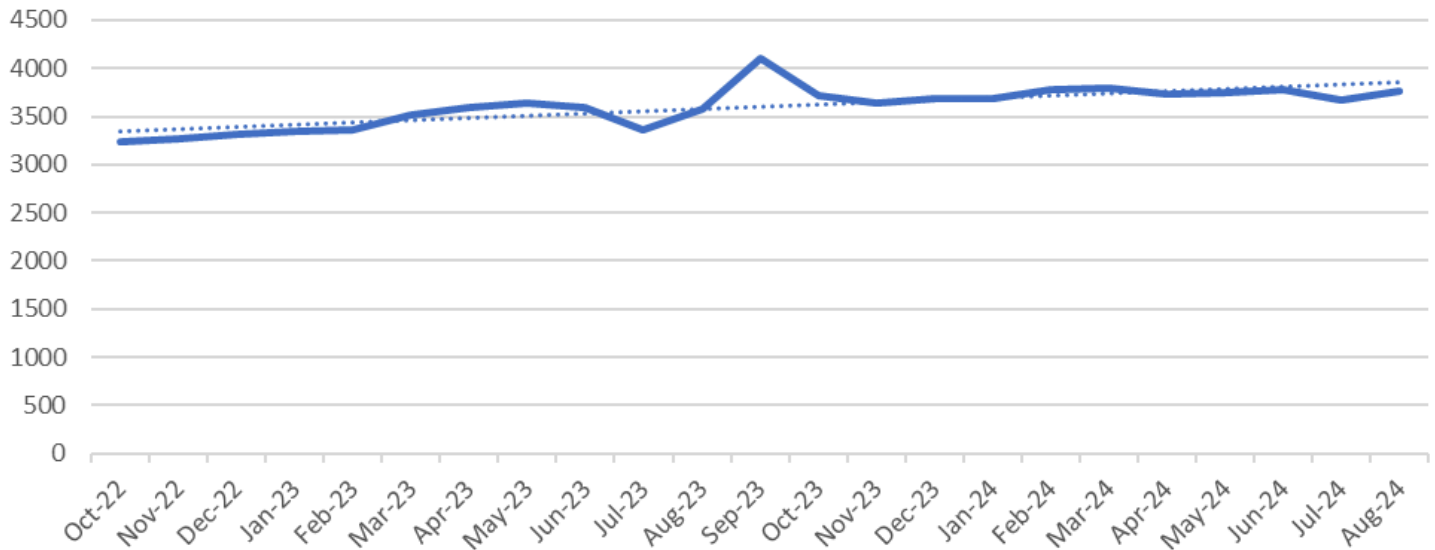
Susan Pories,
MD, FACS
ACS Governor



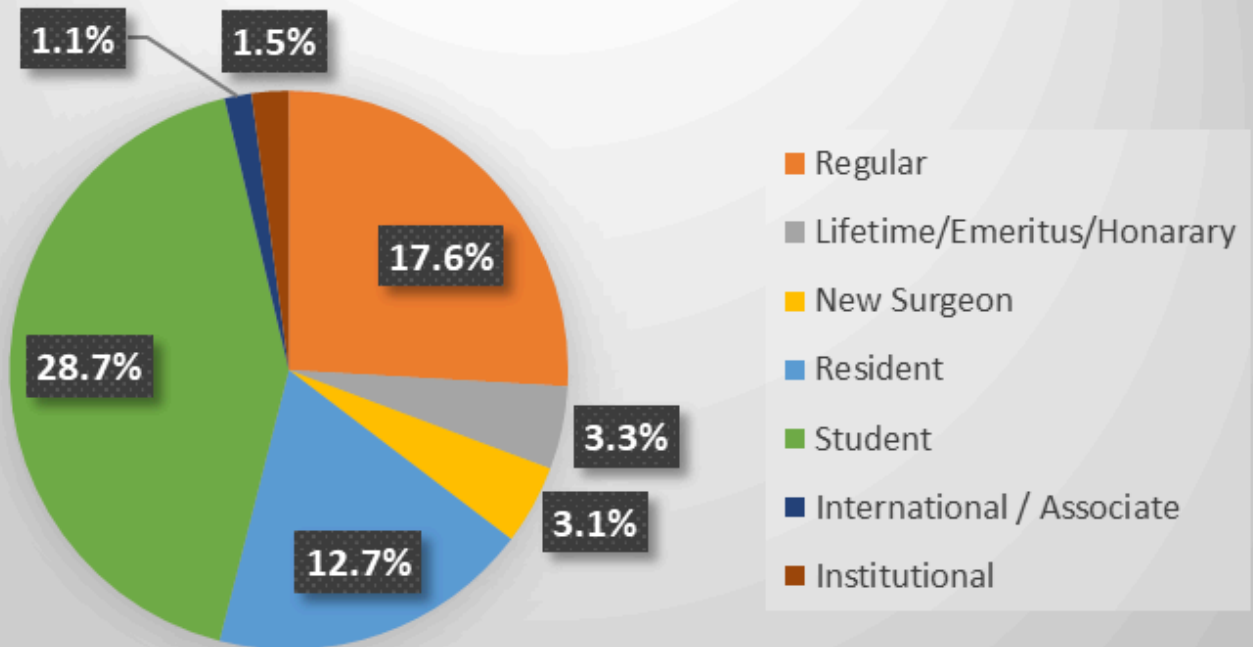
Nancy Gantt,
MD, FACS
AWS Foundation Chair

AWS Membership

Total Members



Membership by Category



Mentorship



Sponsorship

Friendship

Clinical Practice Committee



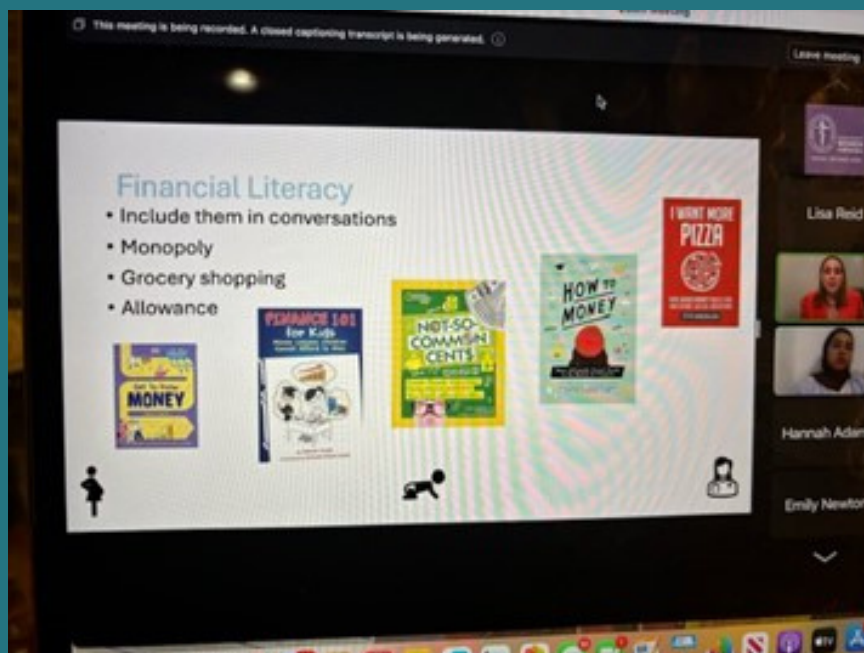
**Lisa Reid,
Chair**

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 coaches and matches them with residents. The program continues to be well received, and feedback has been consistently positive from the participants. The first session for this year starts this weekend at the AWS annual meeting.
- SCALPELS: The 2024 Surgeon Career and Leadership Professional Education Lecture Series (SCALPELS) summer series was overall themed the 4th Trimester. There were 3 sessions each held in June, July and August covering the topics of “Raising the next generation,” “The cost of being a female surgeon,” and “The fourth trimester and beyond.” The speakers and panelists shared their knowledge and expertise to a large audience and educated them in many areas, including ways to introduce financial literacy to their children.

There are plans to expand the series to have offerings other than in the summer months.



Communications Committee



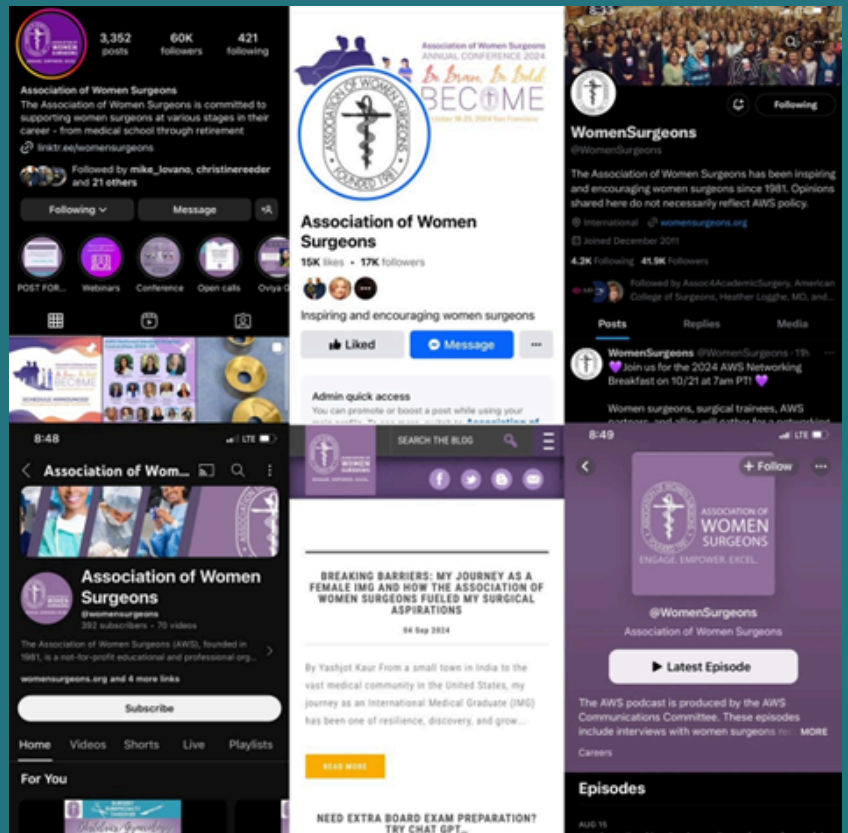
**Kathleen Romanowski,
Co-Chair**

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 had over 2.5k new followers, continued 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 with numerous new episodes, including HeForShe interviews and Knots for Thoughts episodes. We are also exploring sponsored episode content 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. Our Twitter/X committee is being revived with several new members, and our



**Rachel Lovano,
Co-Chair**

Twitter/X page continues to see engagement with our 41.9k followers and engagement in our Tweekchats. YouTube has grown to 70 videos with 392 subscribers. LinkedIn presence continues. We have also created dedicated space on all of our platforms for medical student voices, with content being created specifically for them, all easy to find with the hashtag #AWSStudentSurgeons



Grants & Fellowship Committee



**Leah Tatebe,
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, Brigette Callahan. Ten speakers were trained this year and are now being promoted for speaking opportunities through partner societies' program committees and leadership. The 2024 Signature Speakers are:

Dr. Shannon Foster
Dr. Erin Garvey
Dr. Christa Grant
Dr. Frances Mei Hardin

**Emily Keung,
New Chair**



Dr. Nimmi Kapoor
Dr. Lyndsey Kilgore
Dr. Madhuri Rao
Dr. Kathryn Rowland
Dr. Umut Sarpel
Dr. Stephanie Worrell

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.

Grants & Fellowship (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 2023-2024 AWS Shining Star Leadership Program worked with Dr. Mamta Gautam. Congratulations to the participants selected:

Dr. Toni Beninato	Dr. Maria Kowzun
Dr. Christie Buonpane	Dr. Maureen O'Shaughnessy
Dr. Gayle DiLalla	Dr. Lisa Reid
Dr. Sophie Dream	Dr. Kathleen Romanowski
Dr. Rebecca Hoffman	Dr. Susana Vargas-Pinto
Dr. Emily Keung	Dr. Jennifer Whittington

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 five outstanding women:

Dr. Akiki Chibba
Dr. Annabelle Fonseca
Dr. Lisa Marie Knowlton
Dr. Ming-Li Wang
Dr. Carmen Fong
Dr. Stefania Nolano

Finally, The Grants and Fellowship wishes to thank the Executive Council for providing funding for the 2025 cycle of the AWS Research Grant as we transition our industry support. We thank Ethicon for the 25+ years of support and 3M for their support in 2023-2024. The 2023 Grant Recipient, Dr. Holly Lewis will present her research at the upcoming 2024 Annual Conference and Dr. Nimmi Kapoor was selected as the 2024 Grant Recipient for her project: *HER2 Discordance Between Primary Breast Tumor and Nodal Metastasis and Relationship to Oncotype Score*:



Foundation

AWSF Roster 2023 – 2024

Nancy Gantt (Chair)

Kristalyn Gallagher (Vice-Chair)

Dixie Mills (Secretary)

Christine Laronga (Treasurer)

**Nancy Gantt,
Chair**

AJ Copeland

Margaret Dunn

D'Andrea Joseph

Kandace McGuire

Anne Mosenenthal

Lauren Nosanov

Nell Maloney Patel

Patricia Roberts

Michaela West

Kim Ephgrave 2023 Visiting Professor:

2024 Visiting Professor: *Jennifer Plichta, MD, Duke University*

2024 Host Site: *Rhode Island Hospital/Warren Alpert Medical School at Brown University*

2024 Awards Gala:

Sunday October 20, 2024 immediately following ACS WiSC sponsored cocktail reception at the Marriott Marquis in San Francisco.

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 attend an educational event. This year the recipient was Dr. Mumba Chalwe, MMED Urol. FCS-Uro (ECSA), Head of Urology Ndola Teaching Hospital, Zambia who attended and made two presentations at the International Surgical Week meeting in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

2024 AWS Foundation Award Recipients



**Dr. Nina Starr
Braunwald
Award:**
Mary E. Fallat,
MD, FACS, FAAP



**Past Presidents
Honorary Member
Award:**
Jeffrey B.
Matthews,
MD, FACS



**Dr. Charles W.
Putnam
Distinguished
Member Award:**
Martha A. Zeiger,
MD, FACS



**Dr. Hilary Sanfey
Outstanding Resident
Award:**
Marla A. Sacks,
MD



**Dr. Sally Abston
Association of
Women Surgeons
Distinguished
Member Award:**
Sareh Parangi,
MD, FACS



**Dr. Patricia Numann
Medical Student
Award:**
Cheryl K. Zogg, MD,
PhD, MSPH, MHS



**Dr. Olga Jonasson
Distinguished
Member Award:**
Clay Cothren
Burlew,
MD, FACS



**Dr. Kim Ephgrave
Visiting Professorship:**
Jennifer Plichta,
MD

HeForShe Committee



**Emilia Diego,
Chair**

The HeForShe Committee was formed within AWS with the goal to promote male and female surgeons as allies in the pursuit of gender equity, by collating best gender equity practices and resources, and to curate tools to ensure a safe environment and best practices in mentoring and sponsoring Women surgeons, to recognize the importance of intersectionality and disseminate effective strategies to promote Gender Equity in Surgery.

To that end, the committee has continued its mission by holding a second round of a 6-part, virtual Cross-Mentoring Workshop, co-moderated by an attending surgeon and trainee. As it has been well received by those who attend, the goal is to publish an online resource/toolkit for interested members. In addition, a series of podcasts recorded by committee members has served as a venue to interview and pay tribute to a surgeon champion for a member of the AWS, with 7 episodes to date. Lastly, in the upcoming year, a planned merger with the Outreach committee will bring fresh ideas and new initiatives that will broaden the reach and scope of the group's vision, through partnerships and collaboration with other identity organizations in the surgical field.

International Surgical Society



**Chantal Reyna,
Co - Chair**

Every two years, the Association of Women Surgeons and the Association of Women Surgeons Foundation have the opportunity to partner with the International Surgical Society, the Breast Surgical International, and the Alliance for Surgical and Anesthesia Presence to host panel sessions discussing international concepts and ideas. This year, International Surgical Week was held in Kuala Lumpur from August 25th to August 29th, 2024. AWS/AWSF had the privilege of having seven panels selected with over 20 moderators and speakers. There was also a combined networking breakfast hosted by the Association of Women Surgeons, the Association of Women Surgeons Foundation, and the Japanese Association of Women Surgeons. It was a morning of filling our lives with new friends and mentors as well as filling our bellies.



**Christine Laronga,
Co-Chair**

Medical Student Committee



**Gopika
SenthilKumar,
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 24'-25' 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:

- highlight the diversity of career-structures, opportunities, and roles available to surgeons so that students with a variety of interests and backgrounds can envision themselves in the field.
- Foster robust collaboration with identity focused partner surgical societies especially on DEI focused initiatives
- Re-envision our committee workflow to better promote collaboration across key major projects and ensure they are implemented in a sustainable manner.

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 195 active AWS chapters around the world.

All of our projects have grown and improved throughout the years and continue to be highly successful. We have to-date paired over 200 medical students with mentors and have reached 50+ high school students just in the past year through our various programming. We have also released 4 podcast episodes with more underway and have completed an entire year of the journal club. Our Star Research Forum

Medical Student Committee (cont.)

continues to be a highly sought out event at the annual conference and showcases the excellent work of 10 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 have also transitioned to in-person events since the lifting of pandemic restrictions, which has greatly helped promote local networking and camaraderie among AWS members. 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.

New this year, we look forward to implementing our IMG-specific mentorship program. We also will be hosting most of our heritage month events with partner organizations. 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 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. Our committee workflow has also been revamped to include project working groups and dedicated work time after meetings to allow for more robust collaboration throughout our projects.

Member Services Committee



**Gayle DiLalla,
Chair**

We have completed our membership survey this spring and results were shared at the council meeting. We reached out to all respondents who indicated a willingness to be contacted and are conducting one-on-one interviews to hear more fully from our members.

Drs. Koganti and Small are working on a small institutional program initiative to support and connect individuals in small academic and non-academic settings. The committee discussed the possibility of having tables at the conference and breakfast where members of small institutions can sit together to network. AWS can send information to conference registrants about this opportunity. Anyone interested in joining this initiative can contact Dr. Koganti.

To celebrate our loyal members, we will be presenting membership anniversary pins at the upcoming conference celebrating 5-year, 10 year and 20-year members. Let us know if we've missed you!

We will be focusing on regular member recruitment, and we want to reconnect with and welcome back our previous members.

Institutional members will be recognized at the National Conference with signage.

Gift memberships are available, and the number of auto-renewals are increasing monthly keeping us stay on solid financial footing.

National Recognition Committee



**Elizabeth
Shaughnessy,
Chair**

The National Recognition Committee members were contacted in early January to discuss nominees for the American College of Surgeons officers, as well as nominees for the four open Board of Regent positions. The committee met on January 26, 2024, to discuss the process and stimulate members' thoughts on potential nominees. They met again on January 29 to discuss

the process and stimulate members' thoughts on potential nominees. They met again on January 29 to discuss a potential slate and move to contact these individuals as to their willingness to serve. All but one of our initial candidates to nominate agreed. Further discussion took place by email, with nomination letters prepared for all candidates, and the candidates each preparing a list of persons to write letters in support of their nomination (up to three). All letters of nomination were submitted by the deadline as well as the letters of support. Personal statements by the candidates were also submitted, but most chose to submit these directly to ACS. All materials of all candidates were submitted in advance of the February deadline.

The committee members consisted of the past president, immediate past president, the society liaisons with AWS. Typically, the AWS Foundation chair is also a member; however, given that our current AWS Foundation Chair is an ACS officer, she is required by ACS to recuse herself from this process. She identified a substitute. There were also two additional adhoc members participating as well.

Those nominated were:

For ACS President-elect: **Leigh Neumayer, MD, MS, MBA, FACS, DABS, MAMSE**

For ACS 1st Vice President-elect: **Anne C. Mosenthal, MD, FACS**

For ACS 2nd Vice President-Elect: **Carmen Solarzano, MD, FACS**

For ACS Board of Regents:

Zara Cooper, MD, MSc, FACS

Vivian Gahtan, MD, FACS

Lisa Newman, MD, MPH, FACS, FASCO, FFSO

Edith Tzeng MD, FACS DFSVS

Outreach Committee



**Toni
Beninato,
Chair**

This year we continued to solidify our relationship with our liaison societies and discussed how to continue to build relationships with other societies. Below is a summary of our accomplishments with each society:

SAAS

Visiting Professor: Annabelle Fonseca MD – UAB

Travel Award to SAAS meeting: Priyanka Chugh, MD - Boston Medical Center

SAAS/AWS Travel Award to AWS meeting: Jyi Cheng Ng – Mayo Clinic Rochester

SBAS

Visiting Professor: Christa Grant MD – NYMC/Westchester Medical Center

Host Site – pending

DEI travel award: Tyra Albert

LSS – launched the visiting professorship this year

Visiting Professor – Mecker Moller MD, University of Chicago

Host Site- pending

DEI travel award Cayetana Lazcano Etchebarne and Cynthis Emeraude Ramazani

AOSA

DEI award – Cori DeLisi

AAS – planning to sponsor someone to attend the grant writing course

Travel awards – Morgan Town and Alizeh Abbas

Proposed updated self-identification of membership which was voted on by council

Proposed new programming to 2024-2025 – webinars with women leaders, partner societies.

Resident & Fellow Committee



Camila Guetter, Chair

The AWS Resident and Fellow Committee is committed to supporting surgical trainees throughout their journeys, from first-year residents to fellows. Our mission is to foster a community that promotes engagement, networking, and peer mentorship among members. To this end, we host webinars every two months, covering a range of topics such as intern success tips, being a resident teacher, mentorship/sponsorship, and contract negotiation. In the coming year, we plan to restructure these webinars to include a half meeting featuring a guest faculty speaker, followed by a committee meeting where we will discuss project updates and conduct a continuous needs assessment based on feedback from our members. In addition, the committee proudly selects recipients for the Annual AWS Conference Resident Travel Award and is dedicated to continuously developing resources to help trainees succeed. We have also recently established Regional Liaisons as part of our leadership board, ensuring that our initiatives reach trainees across the country and internationally, while also expanding engagement and membership across various regions and specialties.

ACS Governor



**Susan
Pories**

I am pleased to share an update on the ACS Board of Governors. For 2024, As your governor, I have served as the Chair of the DEI Toolkit Workgroup and also Chair of the Workgroup addressing Infertility concerns and Pregnancy Complications in Surgeons.

The current DEI Toolkit is available at <https://www.facs.org/about-acs/diversity-equity-and-inclusion/toolkit/> The chapters will be available soon as educational modules with CME.



The Board of Regents approved the statements our Workgroup prepared on infertility concerns and pregnancy complications in surgeons. These are outlined in the Bulletin article we wrote about this topic, available here <https://www.facs.org/for-medical-professionals/news-publications/news-and-articles/bulletin/2024/julyaugust-2024-volume-109-issue-7/acs-fosters-workplace-support-for-surgeons-building-careers-and-families/>

In addition, we crafted and administered a survey of ACS membership about the topic of family building. The results from the survey are being analyzed now and will be published.

It has been my great honor to serve as your Governor these past six years and I will always be thankful for this incredible opportunity. I feel very proud of the work accomplished for ACS on behalf of our AWS members.

I know that Dr. Marybeth Hughes will do a wonderful job as she takes over as the next Governor. I will continue as a consultant to the Board of Governors.

Association of Academic Surgeons



**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 such as the AWS Medical Student Research Webinars, the AWS Shining Star Leadership Coaching Program, and more. This year, along with other liaisons, the AAS is supporting an AWS DEI Travel Award to the annual conference. We will continue to work to promote both organizations' visibility and collaborate on webinars/Tweetchats throughout the year.

Society of Asian Academic Surgeons



**Sophie
Dream,
SAAS Liaison**

The Society of Asian Academic Surgeons continues its longstanding partnership with the Association of Women Surgeons and has worked to coordinate a Collaborative Virtual Social (SAASSips): *Navigating the Social Culture of Surgical Societies as Minority Women*

SAAS/AWS Visiting Professorship announced-Annabella Foneseca, MD

SAAS/AWS resident travel award winner- Priyanka Chugh, MD

AWS/SAAS DEI medical student travel award winner- Jyi Cheng Ng

Publications Committee



**Lisa Cannada,
Chair**

The Publications Committee has had a busy year. The AJS Editors (Jennifer Plichta, Sophie Dream, Catherine Davis) have reviewed close to 200 abstracts for manuscript consideration and Akiko Chiba, American Surgeon Editor, is working on solicitation of manuscripts. The Reviewer Academy, under Caitlin Hicks and Libby Weaver, is well into its third year. This unique program helps prepare trainees for future reviewer and editorial roles.

The Publications committee is currently working on 19 projects. A goal of working with multiple AWS Committees on collaborations has been achieved. Over the past year, we had Quarterly Webinars on “Peer Review”, “Using Pens, Not Knives”, “Finding Your Job” and “Effective Oral Presentations” with faculty from AWS Speaker Series. The committee developed a more efficient submission process for reviews to the Executive Committee. We will have made almost monthly submissions to AJS with “My Thoughts” papers, and worked with the Editor-in-Chief of the AJS (Herb Chen) to transition the handling of those My Thoughts submissions by the AWS Publication Committee Co-Chair to facilitate review and publication.

We are grateful to the committee members and AWS Staff for all of their work to make a difference!

The Publications Committee before was subdivided into an Academic and Advocacy Subgroup. We are pleased to announce the Academic workgroup’s job has transitioned to a New Committee: The Editorial Committee at the October 2024 meeting.

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



Sophie Dream,
MD
SAAS



Alexis Moren,
MD, MPH, FACS
AOSA



Susana Vargas-Pinto,
MD, FACS
LSS



Cassandra White,
MD, FACS
SBAS

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Be Brave, Be Bold, BECOME



Association of Women Surgeons
ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2024
October 18-20, 2024 San Francisco

2024 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:

DIAMOND SPONSOR

- [Weill Cornell Medicine](#), Fabrizio Michelassi, MD

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- [UC Davis Department of Surgery](#), Diana Farmer, MD, FACS, FRCS

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- [University of Pennsylvania Department of Surgery](#), Ronald DeMatteo, MD

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- [Southern Illinois University School of Medicine](#), Michael Neumeister, MD
- [Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center](#), Ariel Santos, MD MPH FRCS FACS FCCM
- [Tulane School of Medicine Department of Surgery](#), Mary T. Killackey, MD

2024 Diversity, Equity, Inclusivity Travel Awardees



Morgan Town
AWS - AAS DEI Awardee



Alizeh Abbas
AWS -AAS DEI Awardee



Cori DeLisi
AWS - AOSA DEI Awardee



**Cayetana Lazcano
Etchebarne, MD**
AWS - LSS DEI Awardee



ASSOCIATION OF
**WOMEN
SURGEONS**

ENGAGE. EMPOWER. EXCEL.



**Cynthia Emeraude
Ramazani**
AWS - LSS DEI Awardee



Jyi Cheng Ng
AWS - SAAS DEI Awardee



Tyra Albert, MD
AWS - SBAS DEI Awardee