



Women in Thoracic Surgery

Women in Thoracic Surgery (WTS) is an international organization of thoracic surgeons whose purpose is to:

- Provide quality care to our patients
- Mentor young women interested in pursuing careers in thoracic/cardiac surgery
- Provide educational opportunities for our members
- Educate the public, especially women, regarding cardiac and pulmonary health and disease

To further the achievements of women practicing thoracic surgery by providing mutual support and facilitating professional advancement

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To further the achievements of women practicing thoracic surgery by providing mutual support and facilitating professional advancement

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Women in
Thoracic
Surgery



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ORACLE

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President's Corner

By Margarita Camacho, MD



In a few weeks, during the STS meeting in Chicago, we will be celebrating our 20th anniversary with a very special dinner symposium on Saturday, January 28, at the Hilton. Since Leslie Kohman founded WTS years ago, she and other leaders have been generous advocates of women in cardiothoracic surgery, and have been instrumental in broadening our horizons. We will honor Leslie and our other founders and pioneers that evening, as well as those who have worked tirelessly to keep the Society on course. During dinner, three of our distinguished members will address us: Dr. Carolyn Reed, Dr. Carolyn Dresler, and Dr. Constance Haan. They will cover a variety of timely issues, including the progress made in the education and

training of women residents, the evolution of prevention and treatment of lung disease, and gender-related outcomes after cardiac intervention. Most of you will have received a formal invitation by mail, and we hope you will join us for a great evening of camaraderie, as we celebrate this milestone. Further details are available on our website or in the Program Section of the STS Annual Meeting (www.sts.org).

We continue to have a strong mentorship program, and are working with CTSNet.org to design a more interactive website that will enrich the program. We have provided scholarships for the last two years that allowed 12 women residents to attend national meetings. In addition, we continue to support the Nina Braunwald Fund through annual donations to the TSFRE.

Our fall retreat, originally scheduled for October 21st in Ft. Lauderdale, was postponed due to Hurricane Wilma, and re-scheduled for December 10th in Boston. Amazingly, two large snowstorms occurred that weekend - one in the Northeast and another in the west/Midwest, so many of our members could not attend. The one-

day symposium entitled "Climbing the Career Ladder: Strategies, Tools and Skills" was such a success, that we decided to hold it again in the late spring or fall of 2006 so more of you can attend this valuable session. The program was designed by two women for professional women who want to become skillful in negotiating the daily challenges of medical practice on the level of the men in our specialty. Details will be on our website - www.wts.org.

Finally, congratulations to several of our members on their prestigious appointments this year: Cindy Herrington is now the Program Director for cardiothoracic residency at the University of Minnesota, Leslie Kohman was appointed Distinguished Professor at SUNY Syracuse, Carolyn Reed just took over as President of the American Board of Thoracic Surgery, and Joanne Starr is the Chief of Pediatric Cardiothoracic Surgery at St. Barnabas Heart Center at Newark Beth Israel Medical Center. These are only some of the many achievements that have occurred this year, some of which we will share with you in a few weeks at our celebratory dinner. We are very much looking forward to seeing you there!

Fall Retreat Occurs Despite Weather:

Becky Wolfer

Despite what appeared to be attempts of Mother Nature to prevent it, the fall retreat of Women in Thoracic surgery went off, although with hitches, to a roaring success. Initially scheduled for Weston in October, it was delayed due to Wilma.

Unfortunately, Carolyn Dresler did not hear of the cancellation and ended up spending part of the hurricane at the Bonaventure Hotel!

The weather again reared its ugly head for the rescheduled date in December with a blizzard for the meeting in Boston. Despite many flight delays and cancellations we persevered.

The course was lead by Harriet Nezer, PhD, and Maureen

McNamara of Metamorphosis Consulting, LLC. This firm specializes in consulting, coaching and professional development for women. With an intimate group including Lorraine Rubis, Becky Wolfer, Kathleen Fenton, Yolanda Colson and three future cardiothoracic surgeons from the Brigham program the even went on. We were treated to an intense dynamic full day's course entitled "Climbing the Career Ladder: Strategies, Tools, and Skills." The course included a section on negotiation skills for women.

We learned how to identify career goal, set priorities, leverage our leadership competencies, and develop more control and influence

in our personal and professional lives. Through interactive sessions we were able to learn how to apply these powerful techniques to aid us in reaching our goals and becoming more effective leaders. Those involved particularly found the negotiation skills most helpful. We also spent time learning how to advance WTS as an organization.

The course was such a success that the leadership group felt that further courses need to be scheduled in order to allow all of us to benefit. All involved felt that despite the bad weather the trip was well worth the time spent.

A Brief Bio of one of our newly-certified women!

Virginia R. Litle, M.D. graduated from the Brown-Dartmouth Program-in-Medicine and completed an internship and residency in General Surgery at the University of California, San Francisco. Dr. Litle subsequently completed a Surgical Oncology fellowship at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center followed by a Cardiothoracic residency also at the University of Pittsburgh. Dr. Litle has extensive experience in thoracoscopic/laparoscopic (minimally invasive) esophagectomy,

laparoscopic anti-reflux surgery and repair of giant paraesophageal hernias and minimally invasive palliation of advanced airway and esophageal malignancies including use of stents and photodynamic therapy. Her translational research interests include molecular detection of occult metastatic disease in lung and esophagus cancer. She is currently an Assistant Professor of Surgery in the Department of Cardiothoracic Surgery at Mount Sinai Medical Center in NYC.

WTS is Pleased to Announce our 20th Anniversary Celebration!

When:

Saturday January 28, 2006, 6-9pm

Where:

Chicago Hilton

What:

Cocktails (6pm) and Dinner (7pm)

Please RSVP:

lorrainejrubismd@att.net



Lorraine practices her negotiation skills with Harriet while Stacey, Cherie, Becky and Yolanda observe.



Small group session: Stacey, Lorraine, Rose and Yolanda discuss task prioritization.

2005 Scholarship winners:

WTS congratulates the following women who are to be awarded \$1000 scholarships given by WTS to a general/thoracic surgery resident to defray expenses while attending the STS meeting in Chicago in January 2006:

Karen Gersch, MD, University of Pittsburgh Medical Center
 Katie Nason, MD, MPH, University of Cincinnati
 Rose Ganim, MD, Brigham & Women's Hospital
 Cherie Parungo, MD, Brigham & Women's Hospital

The winners were selected on the basis of their essay "Why I want to become a cardiac/thoracic surgeon." We had many fine entries. It is satisfying to know there are so many motivated, intelligent women entering the field of cardiothoracic surgery.

Lorraine J. Rubis, MD
 Chair of the Scholarship Committee

Job Opportunities

We would like to start a new column in the Oracle to list academic, private practice and training (residency/fellowship) openings. Please send information to the Oracle Editor (KathleennF@msn.com) regarding available positions. Also, we have recently heard from a first year CT resident who is looking to relocate because her program is closing. Please contact WTS if you have or know of a position that might be good for her!

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2006

Membership Application
(January 1, 2006 through December 31, 2006)

Name: _____

Hospital/Institution: _____

Mailing address: _____

Phone: (office) _____

Address: (home) _____

Phone:(best way to reach you): _____

E-Mail address: _____

What area within the organization would you like to volunteer?

Mentoring Community Education Membership Scholarships Other

Dues: Active membership \$100

Institutional membership: \$350

International membership: No dues

Associate membership (GS or TS resident): No fee (circle GS or TS)

If you are a GS, TS resident or fellow, please state your year of training _____

Emeritus membership (Retired from practice, or > 70 YO): No fee

Honorary membership: No fee

Optional: Donation to the Nina Braunwald Scholarship Fund through the TSFRE \$_____

Please remit to

Rebecca Wolfer, M.D.

4 Diamond Drive

Barboursville, WV 25504

Thank you for your support.

Visit our website: www.WTSnet.org and sign up to become a mentor
