



# ORACLE

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

## President's Corner

By Mercedes K.C. Dullum, MD



WTS has continued to flourish and has become a very important component of the Thoracic Surgical Community. Our mentoring program, under the leadership of Cindy Herrington, and our web site, under the direction of editor Shauna Roberts, have both matured and become very successful. Mary Boylan and now Kathleen Fenton have kept us connected through the Oracle. Our 2nd annual Leadership Retreat was held at the Cleveland Clinic Florida earlier this month (full report in this issue). Two of the goals accomplished were the selection of the scholarship recipients and

preliminary planning for the WTS 20th anniversary mini symposium to be held at STS 2006. We appreciate the support of our Institutional members this year and continue to work with them in encouraging young physicians entering our field. WTS has again donated \$10,000 to TSFRE for the Nina Braunwald Scholarship fund.

New officers will be elected at our membership meeting during our attendance at STS 2005. The nominees are outstanding individuals who will lead WTS to the next level.

It has been an honour to serve as president for the past 2 years and I thank everyone for their enthusiasm, dedication and support of WTS. Margarita Camacho as vice president has brought great energy and ideas to our organization. The most important person I want to thank and express my admiration for is Lorraine Rubis, our Secretary/Treasurer. Lorraine is the strength and the glue of WTS. She has worked tirelessly and has led WTS to its current position of credibility and success.

As more women enter the Thoracic surgery ranks, it will be even more important for us to be a resource and a responsible leader in our field.

## Mentoring Program Update

From C. Herrington

The first phase of the Women in Thoracic Surgery mentoring program is about to be launched on the WTS website. We have had an overwhelming response to the request for mentors: presently 46% of our active membership has completed a form and signed up to become a mentor! These bios will soon be available on the website for young faculty, residents, and students to peruse and find a mentor. We are also developing a library of reading materials on mentoring for the website.

Although the web site is not yet functional, we have had a number of young faculty and thoracic residents email looking for a mentor. We feel this is going to be a very exciting addition to our program.

If you are an active member of the WTS and you have not yet signed up to become a mentor, this is also available on the WTS website.

## Congratulations are in Order!!

**New STS members:**  
(inducted Jan 2004)

### CANDIDATE GROUP:

Shanda Blackmon  
Vicky Chappell  
Linda Bogar\*  
Jennifer Hirsch  
Elizabeth Miller  
Susan Moffatt-Bruce  
Manisha Shende  
Mary Smith

### MEMBERSHIP GROUP:

Kalliopi Athanassiadi\*  
Margarita Camacho\*  
Elizabeth Dexter  
Jessica Donington  
Jennifer Ellis  
Sophia Horn  
Jennifer Lawton  
Kathy Magliato\*  
Vicki Mahan  
Karen McGinnis  
Allison McLarty  
Manisha Patel\*  
Alice Pierce  
Jacquelyn Quin\*  
Barbara Robinson  
Lynne Skaryak  
Elaine Tseng  
Jennifer Walker  
Rebecca Wolfer\*  
Mary Wollmering

### 2004 ABTS Diplomates:

Sandhya K. Balaram, M.D.  
Lorraine D. Cornwell, M.D.  
Joy Dalesandro, M.D.  
Paula M. Flummerfelt, M.D.  
Kristine J. Guleserian, M.D.  
Elizabeth M. Kline, M.D.  
Ourania Preventza, M.D.  
Nazly M. Shariati, M.D.

\*indicates WTS member

## WTS Institutional Membership

You probably already know that WTS accepts and encourages institutional membership. You may not know how many great departments have already joined us! If your department is not a member, please encourage membership, perhaps by sharing this list. If your department is a member, please pass along thanks from all of us!

Institution	Department	Sponsor
University of Virginia	Department of Surgery	Irving L. Kron, M.D.
Massachusetts General Hospital	Department of Surgery	Douglas J. Mathisen, M.D.
University of Kentucky College of Medicine	Department of Surgery	Robert M. Mentzer, M.D.
Stanford University School of Medicine	Department of Cardiothoracic Surgery	Bruce A. Reitz, M.D.
University of California, Davis	Department of Cardiothoracic Surgery	J. Nilas Young, M.D.
Medical College of Georgia	Section of Cardiothoracic Surgery	Kevin Landolfo, M.D.
Baylor College of Medicine	Department of Surgery	Joseph Coselli, M.D.
Johns Hopkins Hospital	Division of Cardiac Surgery	William Baumgartner, M.D.
University of Texas Health Science Center	Department of Surgery, Division of Thoracic Surgery	John Calhoun, M.D.
University of Minnesota	Department of Thoracic/Cardiac Surgery	R. Morton Bolman, M.D.
University of Utah School of Medicine	Department of Cardiothoracic Surgery	David Bull, M.D.

## Mary Gregg Accepts New Position as Outcomes Director

The Foundation for Health Care Quality (FHCQ), a Seattle-based nonprofit health constituency, recently announced that Mary Gregg, MD, cardiovascular surgeon, has accepted the position of Medical Director of its Cardiac Clinical Outcomes Assessment Program (COAP). Dr. Gregg retired from her Swedish hospital practice about two years ago to return to graduate school (Masters in Health Administration, UW) and have more time available for her family. She comes with a deep background in continuous quality improvement processes and analysis, and has an unwavering commitment to patient safety and patient outcomes. She also has a strong belief that clinicians can and will improve quality over time with

the benefit of access to well presented clinical information.

The Clinical Outcomes Assessment Program (COAP) is a Washington State initiative designed to produce clinical information needed to improve quality of care and meet the growing demand for accountability in the health care industry. COAP's physician-led Management Committee, in partnership with State officials and key stakeholders, has created this program as a model of collaboration in which Washington State's cardiac community can work together toward a common goal - improving patient care and health outcomes.

Congratulations, Mary!

## In Her Own Words:

### *Carolyn Dresler tells us about her new position in France.*

I am so lucky! I recently started a new position at the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) in Lyon, France. It is a very well respected international organization that is the research branch for the World Health Organization. Next spring, IARC will celebrate its 40th year of existence.

The head of the Agency also recently began his tenure at the start of this year, and has a 5 year contract. IARC follows the UN system, and if all goes well, he will have an opportunity for a second five year contract. This ensures that at least every 10 years, there is a new director - with consequently, a new agenda. This director arrived with a very firm conviction about the importance of tobacco control as it relates to cancer etiology and treatment. Thus, he initiated a new program in tobacco control and I am the new Head of this new Group. I agree with him, that it has taken far too long for tobacco control to have the recognition of its importance to cancer research and treatment that it deserves.

Also recently, there has been an international convention developed and signed by 168 countries called the Framework Convention for Tobacco Control (FCTC). It currently is going through the ratification process, and when 40 countries have ratified, it will become international law. As I type this, 33 countries have ratified, with France being the most recent! It is hoped that by the end of 2004, 40 countries will have completed the process and the FCTC will become law, and the Council of

Parties can begin. This international convention on tobacco is the first ever health treaty and is patterned after human rights treaties.

The question always arises whether the United States will participate in international treaties, and this one is no different. During the negotiations, the United States team underwent a significant change in 2000 when the US administration changed. Subsequently, the negotiations became quite contentious and the US delegation was all but ostracized for what was considered very pro-tobacco industry stances. The rest of the world however held quite strong and resisted attempts at making the treaty weaker, and what emerged is an amazing step forward for tobacco control. It will be quite interesting to see whether the US ever becomes party to this FCTC.

All of this brings me back to my job, which will entail pursuing the various research that is called for within the FCTC. Currently, there are a multitude of pockets of research occurring around the world, but little of it is coordinated. And, few of the results are readily accessible to researchers and policy makers around the world. My job is to help initiate, coordinate, collaborate, analyze and make available the results. An exciting opportunity!

I already have participated in several international meetings and met people from every continent. It is just fascinating to learn about the different countries, their cultures, laws, and economic development - and how all of these inter-relate in determining the status of their tobacco-caused health epidemics. Everyone is very eager to work

together on this common goal of helping fewer people die from tobacco.

People are surprised to hear my very American accent when my name tag states that I am from France. My French is, as yet, still poor. But, I am taking French classes twice per week, and have occasional private lessons from my secretary! The chocolate here is also superb, with the factory of one of my favorites (Valrhona) being just south of Lyon. Of course, Lyon is also renowned for its cuisine, and the wine - well, need I say anymore? All in all, this has been an exciting move for me - a new career in a new country with a language that I do not as yet speak. I can thank my training that gave me the guts and confidence to try something new and to know, that I probably can do it! For me, it is just one more step down the path I began as a teenager, of trying to figure out how to have fewer people dying from tobacco.

### Board of Directors:

**Mercedes Dullum, MD**

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**Sauna Roberts, MD**

RobertsSh@genesishealth.com

## Winners of the WTS Scholarships

We are happy to announce the winners of the WTS \$1500 Scholarships. All the women are either General Surgery residents with an interest in Thoracic/Cardiac Surgery, or in a Thoracic Surgery training program.

The scholarships will help defray expenses, enabling them to attend the Society of Thoracic Surgeons Meeting in Tampa in January 2005. Their scholarships will be presented to them at the General Membership Meeting of Women in Thoracic Surgery on Monday evening, January 24.

There were so many entries, it was difficult to choose. Those who did not receive a scholarship this year, hopefully will apply again next year.

With support from Medtronic and Guidant, we were able to offer nine scholarships.

### **Tiffany Anthony, M.D.**

University of Texas Health  
Science Center  
San Antonio  
GS Resident PGY 4

### **Tammy Baxter, M.D.**

Medical College of Georgia  
Augusta, GA  
Will begin TS program at MCG in  
July 2005

### **Yvonne Carter, M.D.**

Ohio State University  
Columbus, OH  
CT Resident - 2nd year

### **Jeanne Cleveland, M.D.**

University of Utah  
Salt Lake City, UT  
CT Resident - 2nd year

### **Dawn Jaroszewski, M.D.**

Baylor College of Medicine  
Houston, TX  
TS Resident - PGY 7

### **Lidia Libretti**

University Vita-Salute  
San Raffaele Hospital  
Milan, Italy  
TS Resident - PGY 5

### **Farah Rahman, M.D.**

Medical College of Georgia  
Augusta, GA  
TS Resident - PGY 6

### **Betty Tong, M.D.**

Johns Hopkins University  
Baltimore, MD  
GS Resident  
Begins TS program at Duke in  
July 2005

### **Alvina Won**

SUNY Upstate  
Syracuse, NY  
TS Resident - 1st year

## Coming Up at the STS

Watch for posters at the meeting announcing the location of the WTS General Membership meeting to be held on Monday evening. Please invite friends! Non-member women who are interested in cardiac/thoracic surgery as their career choice are welcome.

We will be electing officers for the years 2005-2007.

The candidates for office recommended by the Executive Committee are:

President: Margarita Camacho  
Vice-president: Cindy Herrington  
Secretary/Treasurer: Rebecca Wolfer  
Member-at-large: Joanne Starr  
Board of Directors: (According to the By-Laws of WTS, the three executive officers shall also serve on the Board of Directors)  
Margarita Camacho  
Cindy Herrington  
Rebecca Wolfer

The following members will be completing the second of their two-year appointment on the Board of Directors: Shauna Roberts

Mary Boylan  
Carolyn Dresler  
Nora Burgess

The following member will be completing the second of her two-year term as a member-at-large: Yolonda Colson

Voting will take place by e-mail in early January 2005. Nominations from the membership will be accepted through December 28, 2004 by e-mailing Lorraine J. Rubis at [lorrainejrubismd@att.net](mailto:lorrainejrubismd@att.net)

Women in Thoracic Surgery would like to thank Scanlan International, Inc.  
for publishing the Oracle newsletter for over ten years!

## WTS President Hosts WTS Leadership Meeting and Heart Failure Symposium at Cleveland Clinic Florida



Over the long weekend of November 11-13th, the WTS Leadership Meeting took place at the Cleveland Clinic in Weston, Florida, and was immediately preceded by a Heart Failure Symposium directed and hosted by Mercedes Dullum, WTS President and Surgical Director of the Heart Failure Center at the Clinic. Mercedes has been at the forefront of the surgical treatment of heart failure, and is one of the initial ACORN investigators. Clinical results of the ACORN CorCap, a restrictive net surrounding the heart which prevents progressive dilation and causes reverse remodeling, were well received at the recent American Heart Association meeting. Another evolving therapy for heart failure, ventricular reconstruction, was one of the focal points of the heart failure symposium. Dr. Marissa DiDonato, Professor of Cardiology at the University of Florence, and Dr. Nick Smedira, Surgical Director of the Kaufman Center for Heart Failure at the Cleveland Clinic, were invited guest speakers. Along with Mercedes, they provided a timely update of the late-breaking surgical therapies for heart failure.

The WTS Leadership Retreat began with an update from Mercedes, who outlined WTS accomplishments over the past year, and future goals for the next year. Since our last leadership retreat in 2003, the Mentorship Committee has established an effective

program under its Chair, Cindy Herrington, and it will be additionally accessible through the WTS Website [www.wtsnet.org](http://www.wtsnet.org). Cindy summarized the Mentorship Committee activities over the past year. She presented the Mentorship Program to the TSDA (Thoracic Surgery Directors Association) during the 2004 STS Meeting last January, in an effort to reach out to female residents in training. The Mentoring program has reached out to newly graduated surgeons, and over the next year, will reach out to general surgery residents interested in CT surgery. WTS members who have volunteered to be mentors will have their information downloaded to the WTS Website; this will serve as an additional method to access the Mentorship Program. Cindy also plans to survey female residents and staff across the country, in an ongoing effort to keep the Mentoring program as effective and current with respect to surgeons' career and personal goals. Shauna Roberts, who Chairs the Website Committee, has done a terrific job keeping the Website current and allowing it to be a further resource for such programs as Mentorship.

This year, WTS announced that it would fund scholarships for residents to attend the STS Meeting in January 2005. Deadline for applications was November 15, 2004. Checks will be given to the winners at the WTS General Membership Meeting, held in conjunction with the STS meeting.

Perhaps one of the more exciting events in the planning is the 20th Anniversary Celebration of WTS, to be held during the STS Meeting in New Orleans in January 2006.

At that time we will honor WTS founder and constant supporter Leslie Kohman, in addition to the past leaders who have not only helped develop WTS, but who have been pioneers in our field. The program will include a two-hour CME Women's Health conference which will encompass both cardiac and pulmonary disease. Planning sessions for this event by the Executive Committee will take place over the coming year, at the STS, AATS and the Fall Leadership retreat. Announcements will take place throughout the year - we very much look forward to your joining us for this unprecedented celebration and symposium.

Kathryn Muller Phd., representing the Guidant Corporation confirmed Guidant's ongoing support of WTS. Guidant has been a leader in promoting the awareness of women and heart disease through their GROW (Guidant Reaching Out to Women) Program and has helped support WTS leadership retreats.



After a very busy but exhilarating 2 days the leadership retreat ended on Saturday afternoon, as most of us living in colder parts thanked Mercedes for her generous hospitality and planning, and reluctantly left sunny warm Florida.

Margarita Camacho  
Vice-President



# 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*



INTERNATIONAL

PUBLISHED BY SCANLAN INTERNATIONAL, INC.  
ONE SCANLAN PLAZA • SAINT PAUL, MINNESOTA 55107

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**2005**  
**Membership Dues Invoice**  
(January 1, 2005 through December 31, 2005)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Hospital/Institution: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (office) \_\_\_\_\_

Address: (home) \_\_\_\_\_

Phone:(best way to reach you): \_\_\_\_\_

**E-Mail address:** \_\_\_\_\_

Do you want your mail sent to your home or office? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you mind if we publish your e-mail address in our newsletter? \_\_\_\_\_

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

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**Thank you for your support. Visit our website: [www.WTSnet.org](http://www.WTSnet.org)**