

Meghan Halub, MD was the 2014 resident recipient of the Scanlan/WTS Traveling Mentorship Award. Meghan spent two weeks in St. Louis with Dr. Jennifer S. Lawton during the summer of 2014. Here is how Meghan summarized her experience:

This past year I was privileged to be a recipient of the Scanlan/Women in Thoracic Surgery Traveling Mentorship Award, and I was able to work with Dr. Jennifer Lawton at Barnes-Jewish Hospital at Washington University in Saint Louis. My two weeks with Dr. Lawton was spectacular, and made a huge impact on my decision to pursue a career in cardiothoracic surgery.

Throughout my intern year, I always found myself drawn to the heart and lung cases, but was never able to fully explore the field of cardiothoracic surgery. With this award, I was able to work with Dr. Lawton, her colleagues, and fellows to see what it is truly like to be a cardiothoracic surgeon. While in Saint Louis, I was able to scrub into a variety of cases including, but most definitely not limited to: CABGs with on and off bypass, VSD repair, esophagectomies, lobectomies, mitral valve repairs, aortic valve repairs, Maze procedures, aortic arch dissection repairs, heart transplants, and lung transplants. I was also able to travel with the department to a few organ procurements.

For all of these fantastic cases I was invited to scrub with Dr. Lawton or her colleagues, and actively participate during the procedures. The attendings and fellows at Barnes-Jewish Hospital took the time to discuss the indications for each case, and went through the methodology as to how cases were performed. I was actually shown and instructed how to perform a sternotomy and distal anastomoses for a CABG. When I was not in the operating room I was rounding, seeing patients in the clinic, and attending the fellow conferences. All of the attendings and fellows at Barnes-Jewish Hospital were simply fantastic to work with, and their enthusiasm for cardiothoracic surgery made me excited about the field.

Needless to say, this opportunity has solidified my drive to pursue a cardiothoracic fellowship, and I have Dr. Lawton as a mentor to thank. She showed me how exciting and magnificent this field is, and how it can significantly benefit the lives of the patients we live to serve as physicians. She is encouraging and took the time to discuss what it takes to pursue a fellowship, work as an attending, run a lab, mentor other women in medicine, have a family life, and above all she showed me it is possible be successful at it. She is truly an amazing woman, and is a person I hope to emulate in my development as a physician. I am so grateful that I was able to work with her, and find her as a mentor and friend.

I highly encourage female medical students and residents to apply for this opportunity. I promise you will have an amazing time learning about cardiothoracic surgery, and you will see it is an interesting and exciting way to help patients.



Dr. Jennifer Lawton (left) and 2014 Scanlan/WTS Resident Traveling Mentorship Award Recipient, Meghan Halub, MD.
St. Louis, MO, Summer 2014

