



Leaders in
microsurgery and
reconstruction

Reconstructive Microsurgery

THE AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR RECONSTRUCTIVE MICROSURGERY • VOLUME 32.1

Spring-Summer 2021

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What's New in RM? Highlights from an Extraordinary Meeting



Aldona Spiegel, MD
2021 Scientific
Program Co-Chair



**Bauback Safa, MD,
MBA**
2021 Scientific
Program Co-Chair

The Master Series in Microsurgery, expertly chaired by Babak Mehrara, MD showcased the most current advances in subspecialty areas which featured national and international speakers giving a global perspective on the hottest specialty topics, including breast, head and neck, hand and upper extremity, chest and abdominal wall, and lower extremity.

We had a record-breaking total of 1,044 registrants and an average of 330 participants in each session throughout the three-day event. We truly brought the microsurgical world together and had representation from 72 countries, illustrating the growing global reach of our society.

HIGHLIGHTS OF ASRM VIRTUAL SCIENTIFIC PROGRAM 2021

Together with our international co-chair Dr. Dirk Schaefer, the American Society for Reconstructive Microsurgery hosted an extraordinary educational opportunity this past January with its first virtual symposium entitled, "Bringing the Microsurgery World Together Virtually."

The symposium started off on January 15 with a collaboration with the American Society for Lymphatic Surgery on a combined session that provided focused virtual education in advanced lymphatic reconstructive surgery. The American Society for Peripheral Nerve (ASPN) and the American Association for Hand Surgery (AAHS) once again partnered with us to present informative combined programming for our societies' members.

The virtual Best Case session was the highlight of the program, as always chaired by the consummate host Dr. Michael Zenn and sponsored by Synovis. The judges did not disappoint, entertaining us with their quick wit, expert judging and making the most of the virtual program format, complete with a Hawaii virtual background. Congratulations to Drs. Kongrit Chaiyasate and Carrie Chu for the winning Best Case and Best Save presentations respectively.

The ASRM 2021 virtual meeting was a moment for the participants to relax and learn in the comfort of their homes and be presented with the most

Continued on page 6

FROM THE EDITOR

Appreciating the Intangibles



Babak J. Mehrara, MD
ASRM Secretary,
RM Editor

Wow what a year. Who knew 2020 would be so painful and that we would live through a pandemic that covered the globe and brought the world to its knees. Sadly, we all likely know someone who perished from this disease and we are still picking up the pieces. Although we had our annual meeting via teleconference and the meeting was well received, I missed the collegiality and company of my fellow microsurgeons. Somehow, wearing a Hawaiian shirt and drinking some tropical drink on Zoom doesn't come close to the real thing. Fortunately, science is on our side and we now have several highly effective vaccines giving us hope that we will soon return life back to normal and resume our in-person meetings. We will remember the healthcare workers and first responders who perished from this disease and we will have a moment of remembrance when we are together.

Although COVID was a horrible plague that disrupted all of our lives, I have tried to look on the bright side and recall the many important lessons I learned in the last year. Most importantly, I learned that work is not the number one thing in my life. Being forced to stay at home on lockdown taught me to enjoy the simple things. Dinner with my kids. Going on hikes with my dogs. My family sitting together and watching a movie. Cooking dinner with my wife. Playing board games with my kids and our dear friend Joe Dayan and his family who spent 2 months with us while life in New York City came to a halt. Spending

time – real time, not just time while I work on a laptop – with my loved ones made me realize how lucky I am (and how much I missed while I was working all these years). In short, I learned to appreciate what was always right in front of me. Even though we are now essentially back to normal with patient care, I have dialed back my clinical volume and find myself saying “no” to more things than I used to because I don't want to miss more moments with my family. I have learned that life is short and there are more important things than work. I believe that this is a generational shift and that many people have come to the same conclusions when it comes to “work-life” balance.

I have also learned how important personal interactions are: this experience has shown me the intangible benefits of our annual meetings. Though the presentations and panels in our virtual meeting were fantastic, it was not the same as being in the same room at the same time. Somehow, the Best Case/ Best Save was not as funny and I found myself more distracted. I am not sure how having drinks in the hotel lobby with my friends keeps me more focused at the meeting but that's a topic I'm willing to study more intensely in our next meeting.

Next year's meeting will be in Carlsbad, California (January 14-18, 2022) and our theme will be “Excellence Through Evidence.” A fitting theme for the events of the past year! I am looking forward to our in-person meeting and catching up with old friends. I am certain that the meeting will be our most heavily attended meeting in a generation so mark your calendars and prepare your abstracts! I for one am looking forward to less social distancing. **RM**

“Although the virtual meeting was well received, I missed the collegiality and company of my fellow microsurgeons. Somehow, wearing a Hawaiian shirt and drinking some tropical drink on Zoom doesn't come close to the real thing.”

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Fellow Members



**Guenter Germann,
MD, PhD**
ASRM President

In the spring of 2021 we are still battling COVID-19, but we hope that the glimmer of light at the end of the tunnel will get brighter and brighter as the months go by. Most of our colleagues have successfully received their vaccination and activities in hospitals and practices have resumed, although not to full capacity everywhere. Science and medicine are committed partners to the future and will succeed, to facilitate what we consider a normal professional and social life.

The American Society for Reconstructive Microsurgery is committed to the future as well and bringing education both in virtual and in-person formats. The first ASRM virtual event was a big success with a total of 1,044 registrants and an average of 330 in attendance to each session throughout the 3-day event. The attendance profile encompassed representation from 72 countries including attendees from Ethiopia, Moldova, Peru, Macedonia and Ghana to name a few to share the expanse of our outreach.

To extend the fantastic program put together by Drs. Bauback Safa, Aldona Spiegel and Dirk Schaefer, we provided online access to all sessions until mid-March which proved to be beneficial with a capture of over 2,500 hits. The ASRM leadership has decided to put a task force together led by Dr. Babak Mehrara to consider future virtual educational events to be held mid-year on a specific topic. This will be another educational pearl in the ASRM portfolio.

Additional details will be released when available.

The ASRM leadership voted and approved the extension of 1 year to all council and committee positions expired as of December, 2020. This will allow all charges put forth to the leadership and committees in 2020 to gain focus and completion in 2021. The ASRM will continue to focus on the reconstructive and microsurgery community and growth of our organization. The ASRM welcomed over 80 news members in 2020 and we look forward to their involvement in the organization as well as each and every one of our members.

**“The ASRM welcomed
over 80 news members in
2020 and we look forward
to their involvement in the
organization.”**

The ASRM leadership is very confident that we can hold the 2022 Annual Meeting in person at the OMNI Resort in Carlsbad California. We will do everything to make this meeting possible and safe for all participants and accompanying persons. You'll be informed constantly about the progress of the meeting from the Central Office

On behalf of the council and myself I thank our members and supporters for the continued commitment to the ASRM. The ASRM has a proud past, bright future and a tireless commitment to advancing the art and science of microsurgery and complex reconstruction. **RM**

RECONSTRUCTIVE
MICROSURGERY

Spring-Summer 2021

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*The mission of the
American Society for
Reconstructive Microsurgery
is to foster excellence and
innovation in microsurgery
and reconstructive surgery.
ASRM upholds the values
of Integrity, Collegiality,
Scholarship and Innovation.*

WEBSITE TASK FORCE REPORT

A Sneak Peek at What's to Come



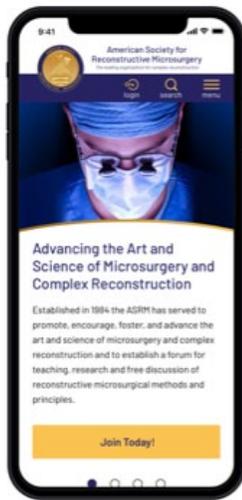
Evan Matros, MD
Reporting on behalf of the Website Task Force

The refreshed ASRM website (<https://www.microsurg.org/>) is approaching its Spring 2021 launch date! Thanks to the commitment of the Society membership and the hard work of the Website Task Force Committee, the entire update will have been accomplished in just over one year. The Spring-Summer newsletter provides an excellent opportunity to get a sneak peek of what is to come.

First and foremost, the website will be adapted for everyone to use on a tablet or smart phone (at right). This is known

as a responsive format. The same functionality will be available on any platform, which is especially helpful for plastic surgeons constantly on the move.

Overall the website is going to provide a greater historical perspective of the ASRM organization.



Responsive format for phones and tablets

Videos will be included from our current Historian, Dr. Joan Lipa, showcasing microsurgical transformations and changes to our Society. A “must see” video is by Dr. Allen Van Beek, one of the five original founding members of ASRM, who eloquently and passionately describes how the organization



Video featuring Dr. Allen Van Beek

coalesced at its inception (above). It's a very compelling story and I would strongly encourage everyone to view it.

A timeline of “firsts” in microsurgery has also been compiled into an interactive format with a scroll function (shown below). It takes the viewer through major innovations in our discipline, starting from Alexis Carrel up to more recent concepts such as composite tissue allotransplantation.

Continued on page 5

History of Microsurgery

1902 French surgeon and biologist Alexis Carrel reports the triangulation technique for end-to-end vascular suturing.

1960 Dr. Harry J. Buncke begins experimenting with replanting and transplanting tissues in rabbits and rhesus monkeys.

1962 Donald A. Malt and Charles F. McKhann perform the first upper extremity replantation. Chen Zhongwei performed a similar surgery the following year.

WEBSITE TASK FORCE REPORT

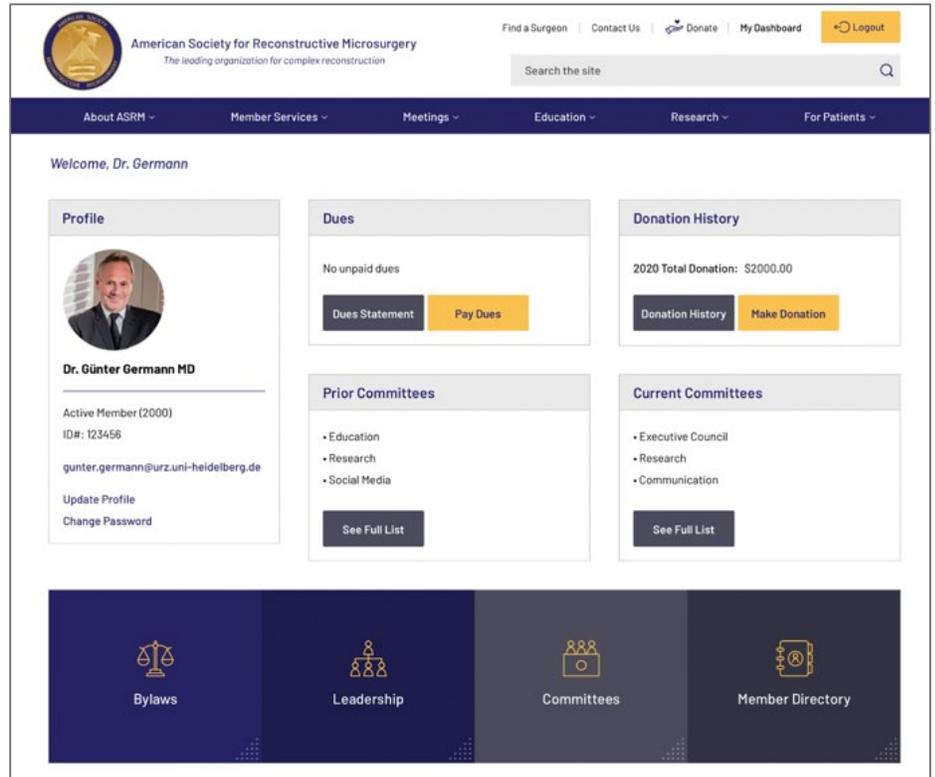
NEW WEBSITE SNEAK PEEK

Continued

For our members, you will now have your own personal dashboard (at right) enabling you to see/pay your dues and donations as well as view past and present committee obligations. The member directory will be much more accessible, enabling you to easily reach out to friends and colleagues within the organization. For the first time, the website will also feature a job posting page to recruit new faculty. This will be especially useful to candidate members who seek employment.



Section with society's historical photos



Each member's personal dashboard

The website will contain links to previous meetings, including abstracts and award winners. Prominent lectureships, including the Buncke and Godina traveling

fellowships, will have a fresh look that will include historical pictures of these luminaries (at left) as well as past years' winners (below).

Continued on page 6

Godina Traveling Fellowship

Dr. Marko Godina was a visionary reconstructive microsurgeon, an insightful and enthusiastic teacher, and a remarkable man. Despite his abbreviated career, tragically cut short at the age of 43, he led the way for a generation of microsurgeons in understanding the care and treatment of complex extremity injuries through early reconstructive microsurgery. ASRM established the Godina Traveling Fellow to allow a deserving individual, chosen by the ASRM, to travel among numerous microsurgical centers around the world.

Each year a candidate is selected as the Godina Traveling Fellow. The applicant must have completed a surgical residency and/or fellowship (i.e. plastic surgery, orthopedic surgery, general surgery, otolaryngology, hand and/or microsurgical fellowship), must be a member of ASRM, and submit at least three letters of recommendation from members of the ASRM or the World Society for Reconstructive Microsurgery. All nominations must be received by October 1st. Email application form to: asradmin@isms.org



2020
Adam Maciejewski, MD, PhD



2019
Bauback Safa



2018
Yixin Zhang, MD



2017
Liza C. Wu, MD

Godina Lecture page to be updated regularly

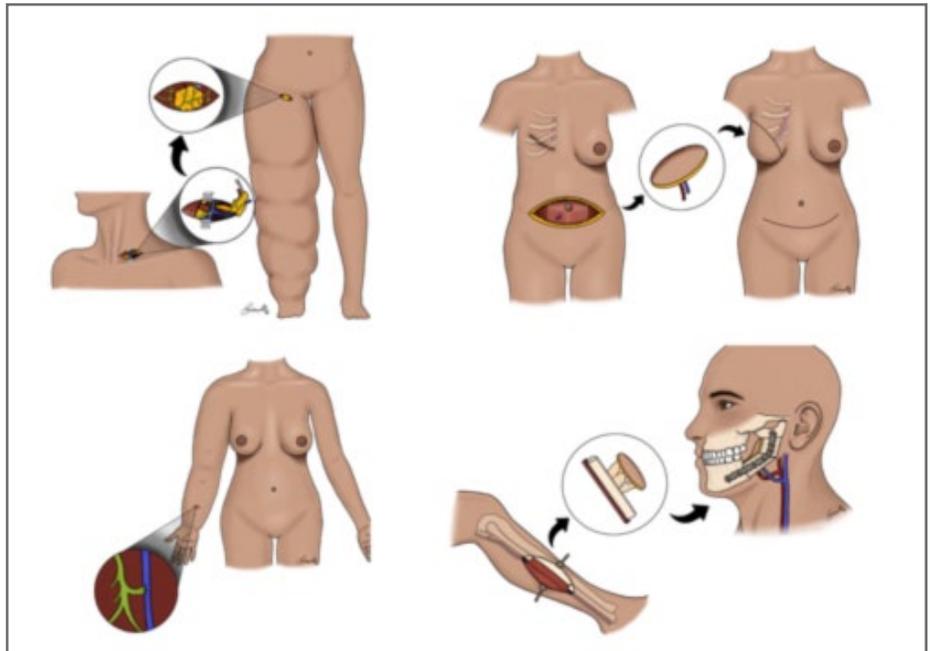
WEBSITE TASK FORCE REPORT

NEW WEBSITE SNEAK PEEK

Continued

For patients who visit the website to learn more about how microsurgical procedures can improve and save lives, this section has been completely reformatted. Simple explanations of common microsurgery procedures have been formatted by the ASRM Education Committee and figures (at right) have been drawn to illustrate many of the procedures performed by ASRM microsurgeons.

We eagerly anticipate the official launch of the website and welcome any feedback from the membership to improve or develop new areas. Be on the lookout for requests to update your profile or provide pictures of past meetings! **RM**



Illustrations of procedures for reference

ASRM 2021 ANNUAL MEETING IN REVIEW

MEETING HIGHLIGHTS *Continued*

updated information presented by international experts. It was also an opportunity to connect with friends and colleagues over Zoom breakout rooms. We also had Zoom sessions for YMG as well as WMG which were enthusiastically attended.

The success of the ASRM 2021 Virtual meeting would not be possible without the support of the participants, society members, the hardworking society staff as well as our industry sponsors. We are enthusiastically planning our next meeting in Carlsbad and look forward to seeing you there in person next year. **RM**

BEST CASE OF THE YEAR WINNER:

Kongkrit Chaiyasate, MD
OUWB School of Medicine,
Beaumont Health,
Auburn, MI

Facial Reconstruction after Blast Injury

BEST SAVE OF THE YEAR WINNER:

Carrie Chu, MD
University of Texas, MD
Anderson Cancer Center,
Houston, TX

When Supercharging is Not Enough: A Tale of 3 Flaps

OUTSTANDING PAPER AWARDS:

Melissa A. Mueller, MD
University of Texas, MD
Anderson Cancer Center,
Houston, TX

Free Fibula Flap Reconstruction of Oncologic Extremity Defects in the Pediatric Population

Travis J. Miller, MD
Stanford Hospital and Clinics,
Palo Alto, CA

Free Venous Flaps for Traumatic Hand Defects: Techniques and Outcomes from 52 Consecutive Cases

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Stephen Kovach, MD

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Deana Shenaq, MD

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Charles Butler, MD

MICROSURGICAL PEARLS

Helping Trainees Learn the Patient-Physician Decision-Making Process



**Michele Manahan,
MD, MBA, FACS**
Education Committee
Chair

As COVID-19 continues to require us all to limit interpersonal interactions, it is, perhaps, inevitable that we ponder more carefully each relationship we have. Accordingly, this issue's "Pearls" relate to patient education, shared decision-making, and the achievement of truly "informed" consent.

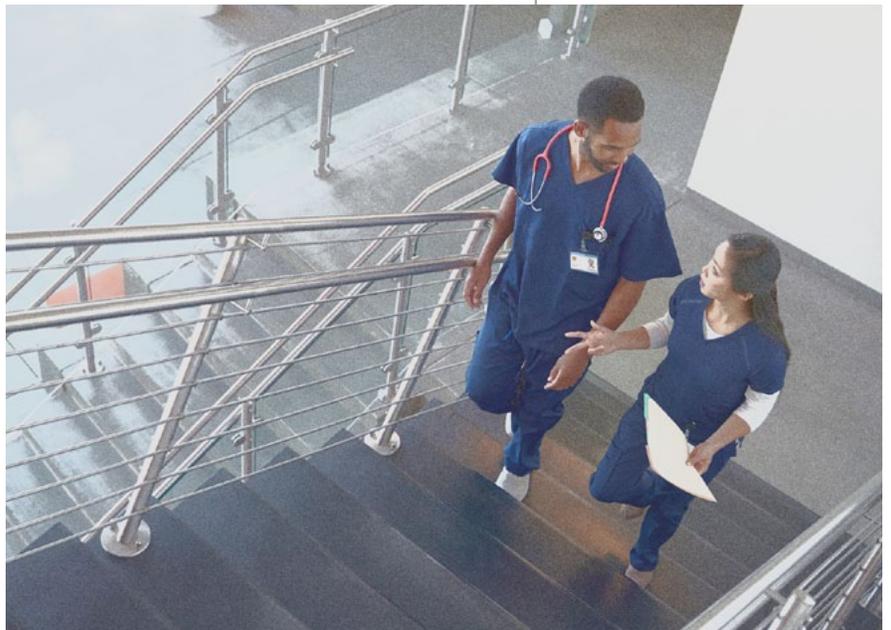
It's well-known that patients who feel connected to their physicians tolerate the vagaries of the illness experience with greater aplomb, and less-litigious behaviors, than those patients who feel disenfranchised. When we reflect, we probably can all think of instances where our connection to our patients has been easy and organic... like in any other sphere, sometimes people just click. How do we best handle the "other" times? How do we teach our trainees to recognize subjective patient emotional, social, and mental needs after a few minutes of clinical interaction? How do we learn to morph our personalities to try to be the character the patient needs and then teach this skill?

These are, of course, unanswerable questions when evaluating the totality of the issues. Utility may exist solely in consideration and increased awareness. Likely our trainees may benefit from frank discussions of the difficulties these issues create. Stories possess power. Trainees can benefit from observing and experiencing the lived reality of

these educational and shared decision-making patient-physician partnerships. Increasing trainee access to clinic and emphasizing to them the critical nature of this component of perioperative care fosters education.

We see the pitfalls. The breast implant safety debate has been one of the most recent and public examples of the need to adapt our counseling practices. Just prior to that, we experienced the concurrent and overlapping surgery question. When we feel comfortable that patients not just hear, but also understand, not just risks, benefits, alternatives, and timing of treatment, but also the structure of their perioperative experience, then we will move toward achievement of the holy grail of truly informed consent. **RM**

"How do we teach our trainees to recognize subjective patient emotional, social, and mental needs after a few minutes of clinical interaction?"



SOCIAL MEDIA TASK FORCE UPDATE

Social Media Reach Continues to Grow



Melissa Poh, MD
Chair, Social Media
Task Force

Our Society's presence on social media continues to grow! In fact we accrued over 130 followers on the ASRM Instagram account just over the week of the Annual Meeting. Our other accounts on Twitter and Facebook also showed similar upticks.

The Task Force has been working to showcase a variety of content on social media, such as highlighting the events

of the Annual Meeting and YMG Virtual Fellowship Roundtables earlier this year and announcing upcoming microsurgery conferences endorsed by the Society. We plan to add more scientific content and hopefully share some of our Godina fellow and Zamboni Visiting Professor travels as the world slowly opens up later this year.

The Task Force continues to support ASRM by providing information to our members and others and highlighting events or material related to our Society. Let us know if you have any questions or comments or interesting content by contacting us at ASRMposts@gmail.com. Hope to see everyone next year in Carlsbad! **RM**

"We plan to add more scientific content and hopefully share some of our Godina fellow and Zamboni Visiting Professor travels as the world slowly opens up."



NOW ACCEPTING ABSTRACT SUBMISSIONS

Submission Deadline / July 5, 2022 11:59pm CDT

For submission information, visit www.microsurg.org/events/meeting/

FUTURE GROWTH FUND COMMITTEE

Spring 2021 Update



Michael Klebuc, MD
Chair, Future Growth Committee

Exciting things are happening in the Future Growth Committee. The committee is currently exploring a series of new initiatives to foster the continued health and growth of the

fund. Consideration is currently being given to creating a bi-annual ASRM publication. The new periodical would highlight advanced techniques in microsurgery and complex reconstruction while serving to showcase the organization’s talented membership. Royalties generated from the project could help provide a financial engine to advance research and education. Stay tuned for more details in the upcoming months. **RM**

“The committee is currently exploring a series of new initiatives to foster the continued health and growth of the fund.”

THANK YOU TO OUR INDUSTRY PARTNERS FOR THEIR CONTINUED SUPPORT OF THE ASRM

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YOUNG MICROSURGEONS' GROUP

YMG Makes Overcoming Obstacles Easier



James A. Butterworth, MD
Young Microsurgeons'
Group Chair

As I tossed around the idea of how to formulate the spring column, I recognized that there are many who may not appreciate the scope and charge of the Young Microsurgeons Group. So, I thought that I may take the opportunity to clarify and expound.

The YMG is a subsection of the ASRM dedicated to promoting our younger members. Anyone who is within 8 years of completing training and is a candidate or active ASRM member, technically is in the YMG, whether they have applied or not. After 8 years of from training, one matriculates out of the club and into the general body of more established microsurgeons. At its core, the YMG is an opportunity to get involved in this incredible society that we all know and love. It can sometimes be a difficult task, as a junior member in any society, to try to overcome obstacles to make contributions to professional groups at a meaningful level. All too often, these opportunities are dependent on prior professional connections or being in the right place at the right time.

In an attempt to alleviate obstacles and integrate junior microsurgeons into the society as contributing members, the forward thinkers and pioneers of the ASRM developed the young microsurgeons group and tasked it with real responsibility. The YMG offers social engagements through the YMG reception at the annual meeting where prospective and current fellows can mingle, socialize, and network with YMG and ASRM members. As the YMG

steering committee, we are charged with submitting 4 instructional courses and 2 panels to the annual meeting program committee, allowing us to make substantial contributions to the conference and leaving our own unique mark. In addition to idea submission and a YMG member serving on the program committee, another member works with a senior ASRM member in organizing the Masters Series.

Aside from the annual meeting, YMG steering committee members make recommendations and suggestions regarding micro fellowships and the match, act as voting members on the Godina selection committee, participate in the nominating and by-laws committees, and as the YMG chair, act as representative to the Executive Council. This year we collaborated to pivot the fellowship roundtable to a virtual format, giving access to fellowship programs from Taiwan to the UK to showcase the awesome opportunities at each program. The sessions were moderated brilliantly by our steering committee members and were attended by around 100 prospective applicants per session. We have dubbed it a true success. While it is no replacement for the physical contact of our in-person meetings, we will no doubt be incorporating a version of this moving into the future.

The ASRM is the society where many of us feel most at home. Get involved, make an impact, give back to the society that gives us so much, and if you are a junior member and wondering how, the YMG is where to start. **RM**

FUTURE ASRM
MEETING
CALENDAR

JANUARY 14–18, 2022
ASRM 37TH ANNUAL MEETING

Omni La Costa Resort
and Spa
Carlsbad, California



JANUARY 20–24, 2023
ASRM 38TH ANNUAL MEETING

JW Marriott Turnberry
Resort and Spa
Aventura, Florida

HISTORIAN'S CORNER

The Month of March



Joan Lipa, MD, MSc
Historian

As I sit down in March of 2021 writing this column, I have been met with a flood of emails and media posts regarding the month of March as Women's History Month in the United States, with March 8th being International Women's Day. This, coupled with the charge of Historian to continue to document all history of the ASRM until our records are up-to-date, made me seek out what, if anything, has been documented regarding women in the history of our Society, or in the history of microsurgery.

In 2019, L. Scott Levin gave a phenomenal ASRM Invited Lecture detailing the role of Anatomy and Dissection in Microsurgery, which was a showcase of the breadth of ingenuity and the progression of anatomy to innovation in microsurgery. In reflection, there was an absence of female contributors and this inspired me to determine why – perhaps there was a paucity within this anatomical journey, but certainly there must be some that have contributed to our field in other significant ways that would not have been included in this lecture. While gender represents only one aspect of equity, diversity and inclusivity, it seems fitting for a female Historian to highlight a collection of contributions and the positive impact of this aspect of diversity on our patients, research programs and microsurgical community so that all of our membership can better see themselves represented in our history and be challenged with making future contributions.

While the entire membership of the ASRM has grown, from the time that membership rosters can be located and searched from just over 20 years ago, in 2000, there were only 11 female members of ASRM, representing about 3% of the membership. Today, there are 218 females within the total ASRM membership of 1,056 which now represents just over 20% of the membership, and a significant aspect of membership growth. Interpreted another way, women have been relative late-comers to the scene and this may be reason why their contributions have occurred more recently.

Nonetheless, our five founding members at the inception of ASRM in 1984 were James Steichen, Berish Strauch, Julia Terzis, James Urbaniak and Allen Van Beek. Not only was **Julia Terzis** there at the beginning, she went on to become the first and only woman to hold the position of President of our Society from 2002-2003. Her contributions to microsurgery are vast. In 1974, she and Rollin Daniel successfully carried out the first neurovascular free flap (dorsalis pedis) to a mutilated anesthetic hand.¹ She was at the forefront of brachial plexus and facial reanimation surgery, including surgery for

Gender represents
only one aspect of
equity, diversity
and inclusivity



Stefania M. H. Tuinder, MD PhD in the OR



Julia K. Terzis, MD practicing the transfer of neurovascular free flaps in the pig model with Rollin Daniel in the early 1970's.

blink restoration.² She received the James Barrett Brown Award of the American Association of Plastic Surgeons (AAPS) for best publication in the plastic surgery literature twice, in 1977 and in 2000. Furthermore, she proposed corneal neurotization surgery using contralateral supraorbital and supratrochlear nerves as a solution for neurotrophic keratopathy,³ which paved the way for the more recent techniques with limited access incisions using autografts or allografts.

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HISTORIAN'S CORNER

THE MONTH OF MARCH

Continued

Susan Mackinnon has established herself internationally as an expert in peripheral nerve surgery, and as an innovator in nerve transfer techniques including those to improve upper extremity function in cervical spinal cord injury.^{4,5} She too, has an expansive basic science research platform focused on nerve regeneration and allotransplantation. She performed the world's first nerve allotransplantation in 1988, transplanting a 23 cm, 10-cable sciatic nerve allograft in an 8 year old boy and maintaining the patient on Cyclosporin A for 2 years, with demonstration of functional sensibility in the foot 19 months after cessation of immunosuppressive



Susan E. Mackinnon, MD – an innovator in peripheral nerve surgery.

therapy.⁶ She was awarded the Jacobson Innovation Award by the American College of Surgeons in 2013, an award that honors living surgeons who have developed original and significant surgical techniques. A comprehensive overview of her techniques and philosophy has been captured in her book, *Nerve Surgery*.⁷ In

addition to her clinical, research, and leadership portfolios, her name is synonymous with inspiration and mentorship.

Nancy McKee was influenced by the growth trend of microsurgery, particularly with replantation and



Nancy H. McKee, MD – Surgeon-Scientist with a focus on skeletal muscle physiology and morphometry.

free functioning muscle transfers working together clinically with Ralph Manktelow and Ron Zuker. She was an early Surgeon-Scientist at University of Toronto, whose lab was focused on the physiology of muscle and skeletal muscle morphometry, and she mentored and supervised several Surgeon-Scientist trainees, such as William Kuzon. Early work in the laboratory demonstrated the protective effective of hypothermic ischemia on muscle function⁸, and that intraoperative ischemia limited to 4h of ischemia will allow for recovery of contractile muscle function in free functioning muscle transfer⁹ – two basic concepts which have become mainstream in our clinical arena. She was recognized for her research endeavors in her early career when she became Chair of the Plastic Surgery Research Council.



Maria Siemionow, MD PhD, in her microsurgery lab at the University of Illinois College of Medicine (UIC).

Maria Siemionow has been prolific in her contributions to the scientific proceedings of the ASRM and the ASRT (American Society of Reconstructive Transplantation, of which she was a Founding Member and President 2012-2014). Her research has transitioned over the years from flap microcirculation and adenovirus-mediated flap transfection studies to the pioneering of minimal immunosuppression regimens and induction of tolerance following vascularized composite allotransplantation. She, too, received the prestigious James Barrett Brown Award of the AAPS twice, in 2004 and 2007.^{10,11} This ground-breaking research translated from bench-to bedside, as she led the team of surgeons at the Cleveland Clinic in 2008 who successfully completed the world's first near-total face transplant.¹² Her contributions to the development of microsurgery and

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HISTORIAN'S CORNER



Maria Siemionow, MD PhD, leading the first US near-total face transplant surgery at Cleveland Clinic.

THE MONTH OF MARCH

Continued

transplantation have been honored with prestigious awards both nationally and internationally. She has also published a book, *Face to Face*,¹³ detailing the history of face transplantation and her journey from childhood in Poland to her successes in the United States.

Aldona Spiegel and Stefania Tuinder have championed the investigation of sensory restoration¹⁴ in autologous flaps, advancing Philip Blondeel's earlier work¹⁵ on sensory nerve coaptation in DIEP and free TRAM flaps. They have translated its effect into improvement in patient-reported outcome measures,¹⁶ and have demonstrated how collaborations have no borders and can extend across the ocean, from Texas to the Netherlands. Furthermore,



Stefania M. H. Tuinder, MD PhD, Robert J. Allen MD, and Aldona J. Spiegel, MD (from left to right) – a demonstration of the importance of friendship and collaboration.

Stefania Tuinder now supervises PhDs investigating sensory restoration and has more than 1 million Euros in grants on this topic. She has also eloquently described the septocutaneous gluteal artery perforator flap¹⁷ and the lateral thigh perforator (LTP) flap¹⁸ in collaboration with Robert Allen, and has characterized sensory restoration of the LTP flap¹⁹ when used for breast reconstruction.

Elisabeth Beahm stands out in her contributions to our understanding of the outcomes and aesthetics in autologous breast reconstruction, both in her manuscripts and in her podium



Elisabeth Beahm, MD at an ASRM annual meeting



Liza C. Wu, MD, FACS presents the ASRM Godina Lecture

presentations at ASRM. Her life and contributions have been honored with the establishment of the Elisabeth K. Beahm Best Breast Paper Award in 2014.

There are other notable societal achievements that deserve mention. **Liza Wu** was the first female to give the prestigious Godina Lecture in 2018, speaking on "Changing paradigms in the surgical treatment of breast cancer: A global Perspective". This represented the Society's recognition of her scientific contributions to microsurgery in her early career.

Women in the role of Annual Meeting Scientific Program Chair came onto the scene only in the last decade, with Joan Lipa (2011) and Liza Wu (2014) as Chairs, and with Julie Park (2018) and Aldona Spiegel (2021-22) as Co-Chairs. This also speaks to the role of supportive advocates – Peter

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HISTORIAN'S CORNER

THE MONTH OF MARCH

Continued

Neligan, Joseph Serletti, David Chang, and Günter Germann, for it is the President who determines the Program Chair for the year of their Presidency.

Also as a direct result of advocacy, the Women's Microsurgery Group was developed first as an ad hoc committee at the end of the annual meeting in Las Vegas in 2012 and then as a full committee promoting mentorship and opportunity for a growing group of our society.

This is by no means an exhaustive list, but the intention is to spotlight some current and past members of ASRM and their roles in ASRM history, to recognize that all contributors of our society stand together and build on the accomplishments of others, and to motivate and pave the way for all current and future members to continue to create Our History.

RM

Author Acknowledgement

I would like to thank Carolyn De La Cruz, representing the Women's Microsurgery Group, for her input and simultaneous recognition of the timeliness of this topic.

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WOMEN'S MICROSURGERY GROUP

New Priorities Around Personal and Professional Development



Summer E. Hanson, MD, PhD
Chair, Women's Microsurgery Group

It certainly has been an unusual year. I'll start off by applauding the Program Committee and Executive Council for the excellent virtual meeting this winter and the collaborative programming throughout the year. As expected, the ASRM was able to quickly adapt to the restrictions in place and develop a high-quality program to meet the needs of its members while keeping us engaged and entertained.

The WMG continued to expand on our current programs and have identified new priorities around personal and professional development. The collective experience of our WMG faculty members has been the strength of our mentorship program. Mentor and mentee pairs were matched based on survey questionnaire responses identifying specific needs of the mentee, similar career goals and interests, and demographic information. While we were not able to meet in person at the annual meeting this year, the mentorship program includes an optional year-long partnership. As we have quickly learned to optimize our virtual meeting capacity, virtual programming kept WMG members and mentor-mentees in touch throughout the year. Having spent time with most of the mentees, the future looks bright for microsurgery.

As we are planning the upcoming annual meeting, we look forward to the recent addition of the WMG Wellness Workshop. The inaugural pre-meeting workshop in 2020 was themed "Building Capacity: Resilience, Happiness and Masterful Self-Care." The program highlighted the importance of wellness and practical tools for building resilience at various stages in personal development. It was a huge success and we look forward to building on this initiative.

"The inaugural pre-meeting workshop was a huge success and we look forward to building on this initiative."

For more information on the workshop, WMG scholarship initiatives and mentorship program, please see the recently updated website www.microsurgery.org/WMG.

It is with great enthusiasm and gratitude that I represent the WMG this year. I truly value the mentorship and friendship that I have received from the exceptional membership of the ASRM. I learn something valuable to my practice or my well-being with every program and look forward to seeing everyone soon. Be safe!

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ASRM ANNUAL MEETING IN REVIEW

The report below was intended for the Fall issue, but was held back to run when ASRM annual meeting recaps traditionally appear, in the Spring issue. Reading Dr. Megan Fracol's account from the 2020 meeting serves as a reminder of just how impactful the in-person experience can be.

Reflections from a 2020 WMG ViOptix Travel Scholarship Winner

By Megan Fracol, MD

I was fortunate to receive the Women's Microsurgery Group ViOptix Travel Scholarship in 2020 to attend the American Society for Reconstructive Microsurgery annual meeting in Fort Lauderdale. It was a truly awesome weekend filled with education, mentorship and reunions with colleagues.

On the first day of the conference I attended the Young Microsurgery Group's informational dinner on fellowship opportunities. Fellows from over ten programs discussed openly the pros and cons of their various fellowships and gave me insight into what I should be looking for when I apply for fellowship next year. At this panel, I was lucky to meet Dr. Kate Krucoff who talked with me one-on-one about her personal experience debating whether to apply to hand versus microsurgery and her experience now at the prestigious Buncke Clinic – a fortuitous place that combines both her interests.

On the second day of the meeting I particularly enjoyed the combined panel "When Bad Things Happen to Good People." At this session, Drs. Neligan, Vedder, Van Beek and Neumeister shared personal experiences of cases gone wrong and how they managed them. This was my favorite talk of the weekend because rather than touting their triumphs, they spoke

freely of lessons they learned from their vast experiences in the field. I think sessions like this are incredibly educational for young microsurgeons. I also was able to



Northwestern residents attend the Young Microsurgery Group's Informational Session. L to R: Drs. Lindsay Janes, Lauren Mioton, Ava Chappell and Megan Fracol.



Northwestern residents and faculty gather before the "Best Case/Best Save" presentations. L to R: Drs. Ava Chappell, Lauren Mioton, Greg Dumanian, Sumanas Jordan, Marco Ellis, Jason Ko, Lindsay Janes and Megan Fracol.

practice microsurgery hands-on at the "Sewing with the Masters" session under the scope this day.

The third day of the conference was admittedly my favorite day – it had the most talks that I was excited about. I started out the day at the Facial Reanimation and Gender Affirmation panels. Next, I hopped over to a session by Drs. Stevanovic, Zuker and LeFebvre specifically on free functional muscle transfer for upper extremity function. This was a particularly timely talk for me because it helped me prepare for our own case of free functional gracilis transfer for a Volkman's ischemic contracture at my home institution. It was scheduled for my first

day back from the conference with my mentor and program director, Dr. Jason Ko. I then enjoyed the Young Microsurgery Group forum "The Good, the Bad and the Ugly: Lessons Learned from the Trenches." Similar to the panel the day prior, this talk again focused on lessons learned in each microsurgeon's early years rather than simply showcasing amazing cases that turned out perfect. As before, I found this genuine discussion of how to manage difficult situations incredibly educational. And this awesome day was rounded out by everyone's favorite part of ASRM every year – the Best Case/Best Save presentations.

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ASRM ANNUAL MEETING IN REVIEW

VIOPTIX SCHOLARSHIP *Continued*

The fourth day of the conference was a day to reflect on the bigger picture of how plastic surgery as a field interacts with the healthcare and legal systems. Dr. Lawrence Gottlieb gave an amazing talk on the ethics and legal questions surrounding separation of thoracopagus twins. Dr. Liza Wu also gave a great talk that day about her experience becoming certified to perform oncologic

resections in the breast, in addition to breast reconstruction, and got us thinking about how shifts in referral patterns and availability of microsurgeons in other specialties can affect our practice. Last but not least, Dr. Bauback Safa gave a heartwarming lecture on his experience over the past year as the Godina Fellow, highlighting the importance of funding fellowships like this to share knowledge and promote collaboration in the field of plastic surgery.

Overall, the ASRM weekend was an outstanding experience. It not only inspired me to work harder and think about how I can contribute to this awesome field, but it also solidified my belief that I am so lucky to be a part of this mind-blowing group of people. I want to thank the Women's Microsurgery Group and ViOptix for this great opportunity. Thank you! **RM**

MICROSURGERY FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE REPORT

The Match Season is Underway!



Jay Agarwal, MD
Chair,
Microsurgery
Fellowship

The Microsurgery Fellowship Committee continues to remain busy with regular meetings to review last year's match outcomes and to plan for the upcoming match this season. The 2020 match season was a success with a record 48 fellowship positions offered with 70 match applicant registrations, 48 rank lists submitted, and an 81% match rate.

The committee conducted a post-match survey aimed at both applicants and fellowship program directors to better understand their thoughts on the virtual interview format. Both applicants and programs felt the virtual format had benefits, particularly during this pandemic. Both

survey respondents felt that the cost and time saving afforded by the virtual format helped to streamline the interview process. While the virtual format didn't allow for direct face to face contact or for a visit to the institution, the majority of respondents were in favor of choosing virtual interviews over in-person interviews if given the choice. Applicants felt that they were still able to get a good feel for the different fellowship programs despite the virtual format.

Based on review of the 2020 post match data and the current status of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Microsurgery Fellowship Committee has once again asked all fellowship training programs to conduct virtual interviews for this 2021 match season. This guidance comes after careful deliberation and a central focus on health and safety of our applicants, their families and the fellowship programs. With a full year of experience navigating virtual

platforms, we anticipate an even smoother virtual interview season this year.

The 2021 match season is currently underway. We have resumed the normal timeline with rank lists due on June 3, 2021 and match results available on June 10, 2021 for July 2022 positions. The virtual nature of interviews allows applicants to accept more interviews due to ease of scheduling and less time constraints without the need to travel. While this has its benefits, it can be detrimental to some great applicants if programs limit the number of applicants they are willing to interview. My hope is that the virtual format will allow programs to interview more applicants and choose from the full spectrum of outstanding fellowship applicants. I'm excited to see that more and more outstanding plastic surgery graduates are seeking fellowship training in microsurgery. I look forward to another exceptional fellowship match season.

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WORLD SOCIETY FOR RECONSTRUCTIVE MICROSURGEONS UPDATE



**David Chang,
MD**
President of
WSRM

The World Society for Reconstructive Microsurgery (WSRM) is an international community of surgeons that strives to improve and elevate the standards of practice and surgical endeavors in reconstructive microsurgery.

The WSRM is aimed “to stimulate and advance knowledge of the science and art of Microsurgery” and aims to “provide an international forum for the exchange of ideas.” The WSRM Congress brings together practitioners and scientists to build and develop thriving scientific societies, health care agencies, and academic institutions in all parts of the world and to integrate their knowledge toward a common language of accepted standards and practice in reconstructive

microsurgery. During the WSRM Congress, members of the international microsurgery community have the opportunity to share and learn about new research and best practices in the field.

UPCOMING WSRM VIRTUAL EDUCATIONAL SYMPOSIUM

The WSRM will host its first Virtual Education Event on June 12, 2021. The program will start at 7:30am CST (US and Canada). Registration will be free to WSRM members. More information can be found by visiting **www.wsrn.net**.

Education event topics will cover:

TIPS AND TRICKS FOR BREAST RECONSTRUCTION

Moderators: Jaume Masia, MD (Spain); Jian Farhadi, MD (UK)

Panelists: Liza Wu, MD (USA), Venkat Ramakrishnan, MD (UK); Jin Sup Eom, MD (Korea); Susana Correa, MD (Colombia)

CLINICAL AND PERSONAL CHALLENGES FOR YOUNG MICROSURGEONS

Moderators: Hollie Power, MD (Canada), Hinne Rakhorst, MD (Netherlands)

Panelists: Hollie Power, MD (Canada); Adrian Ooi, MD (Singapore); Andres Maldonado, MD (Spain/Germany); Betty Kushida, MD (Mexico)

MASTER VIDEO SERIES

Moderators: Greg Evans, MD (USA); Robert Walton, MD (USA)

Speakers: Isao Koshima, MD (Japan); Marco Innocenti, MD (Italy); Ron Yu, MD (USA)

MICROSURGERY PRACTICE IN EMERGING COUNTRIES: SHARING THE CHALLENGES AND FINDING WAYS TO HELP

Moderator: David Chang, MD (USA)

Panelists: Abeje Brhanu, MD (Ethiopia); Ajani Abdul, MD (Nigeria); Pedro Ciudad, MD (Peru); Amir Bajracharya, MD (Nepal); Gazi Althubaiti, MD (Saudi Arabia); Trieu Vu Nguyen, MD (Vietnam)

WSRM-IMC-JRM BEST CASE COMPETITION

RM

WORLD SOCIETY FOR RECONSTRUCTIVE MICROSURGERY



Spring 2021

I hope you and your family are doing well, as we are trying to return to a normal way of life in the midst of recovering from this pandemic.

As you are aware, the WSRM has decided to postpone the 11th Congress of the WSRM to June 1-4, 2022, in Cancun, Mexico. I would like to thank the meeting host Dr. Eric Santamaria and his organizing team who had to make adjustments and are working hard to plan wonderful scientific and social programs in beautiful Cancun. I expect it will be an amazing WSRM meeting, as always. In the meantime, we have organized a one-day Virtual Educational Symposium on June 12, 2021. We have an exciting program covering topics such as Tips & Tricks for Breast Reconstruction, Clinical and Personal Challenges for Young Microsurgeons, Master Video Series, Microsurgery Practice in Emerging Countries and the Best Case Competition. I invite all of you to join us for this symposium.

This has been a very difficult time in our history with unique challenges. However, I do believe that we will rise from this pandemic even stronger and better.

Thank you and I wish you and your family the best.

Sincerely,

David W. Chang
President of WSRM

www.wsrn.net

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New Members in 2020

ACTIVE

Elizabeth L. Dale, MD
Cincinnati, OH

Nidal Al Deek, MD
Guishan, Taoyuan, Taiwan

Brent M. Egeland, MD
Austin, TX

Jhonatan Elia, MD
Jerusalem, Israel

Donald J. Harvey, MD
Cleveland, OH

Ryan D. Katz, MD
Baltimore, MD

Eric Lai, MD
Kansas City, KS

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Kettering, OH

Margaret Roubaud, MD
Houston, TX

Dirk Schaefer, MD
Basel, Switzerland

Jens Ahm Sorensen, MD
Odense, Denmark

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Toronto, Canada

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