

# WMG

Women's Microsurgery Group



WMG Luncheon Panel discusses "Defining Career Successes and Preventing Burnout"

## NEWSLETTER

### 2019 ASRM Annual Meeting Highlights:

The warm sun of Palm Desert provided a very productive environment for the Women's Microsurgery Group (WMG). The WMG Luncheon was very well attended. Our international panel of female microsurgeons

shared their personal experiences on defining career success and preventing burnout. The powerhouse panel consisted of Dr. Sinikka Suominen, Dr. Maria Siemonov, Dr. Stefania Tuinder, Dr. Joan Lipa, Dr. Julie Park, and Dr.

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#### Membership

WMG membership is easy to obtain. Join now and enjoy the benefits of the group.

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#### Mentorship

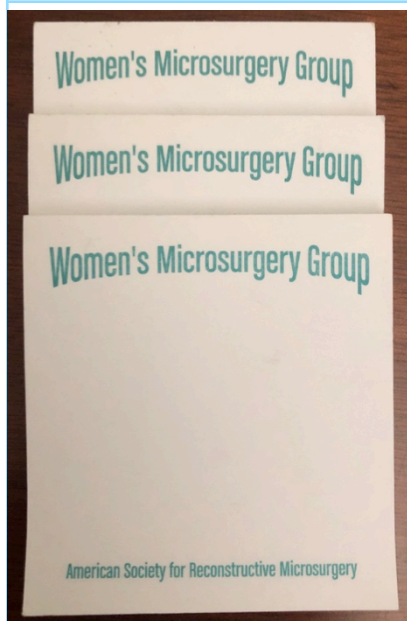
WMG is proud to continue the Mentor-Mentee program at the 2020 ASRM meeting.

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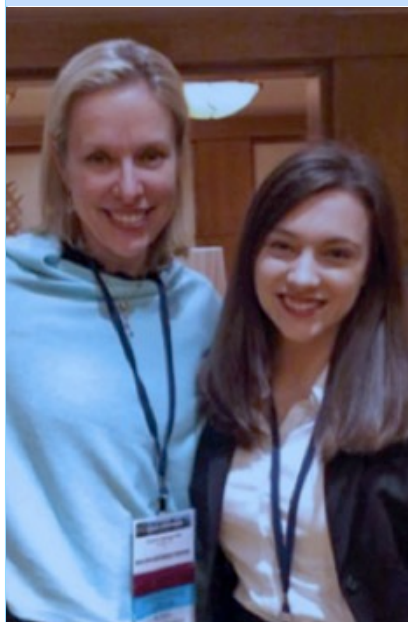
#### Featured WMG MD

Dr. Lydia Helliwell is a microsurgeon, setting new goals in surgical training.

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2019 Women's Microsurgery Group ASRM Promotional Give-Away Post-It notes



2019 ViOptix Travel Scholarship Awardee, Cara Black (right), spends time with her Mentor, Aldona Spiegel, MD, at the WMG cocktail party.

## WMG Formalizes Membership

The WMG is an inclusive and collaborative group with a common mission to support women microsurgical and reconstructive surgeons. This support helps women achieve their professional and personal aspirations. Membership is open to any female member or candidate member of ASRM. Membership is free and is simple to attain. New this year – register to join WMG on our website with one easy click:

<https://www.microsurg.org/WMG/>

JOIN WMG

Become a member now to see how the WMG can help you in obtaining your next career goals!

## ViOptix Travel Scholarship

The ViOptix Travel Scholarship is coordinated by the WMG in collaboration with funding from ViOptix, Inc. This scholarship fosters early interest in reconstructive microsurgery in women medical students or residents. The awardee is supplied travel to the ASRM, hotel costs, and ASRM meeting registration fees (please see our website for further details). The 2019 Scholarship Awardee was Cara Black, a medical student at Georgetown University School of Medicine. Regarding the fellowship, Cara stated “WMG is composed of talented female microsurgeons who value passing their knowledge and compassion onto other aspiring microsurgeons as part

of their legacy in plastic surgery. Meeting the many professors, leaders of professional organizations, and innovative researchers in WMG was inspiring and provided me with tangible role models to emulate in the field.”

Due to overwhelming demand, ViOptix, Inc. will generously be sponsoring two travel scholarships to the 2020 ASRM Annual Meeting in Fort Lauderdale, FL.

Please see our website for further details:

[www.microsurg.org/grants/womens-microsurgery-group-scholarship/](https://www.microsurg.org/grants/womens-microsurgery-group-scholarship/)





Harvard plastic surgery residents and WMG mentees, Dr. Erin Taylor (left) and Dr. Lisa Gfrerer (center) enjoy the WMG cocktail party with Dr. Stephanie Caterson (right), WMG mentor and committee member.

## Women Helping Women: WMG Mentorship Program

The WMG Mentorship Program began in 2017 with the vision of fostering professional and personal relationships among female microsurgeons. The program is open to all women medical students, residents and fellows to participate as mentees. Mentors partake on a volunteer basis.

Mentees can specify what type of mentorship they are seeking, and every effort goes into the match process between mentor and mentee. Program participation has been steadily increasing, with consistent positive feedback.

At the 2019 ASRM Annual Meeting, 17 mentees were matched with 12 mentors. A

post-meeting survey was positive, with quotes such as “My mentor was phenomenal” and “I’ve rarely had a chance to discuss my future plans with any female plastics surgeon until now, thank you”.

For 2020, the WMG Mentorship Program goals are to better fine-tune the matching process, provide guidelines for mentorship and encourage continued collaboration beyond the ASRM Annual Meeting.

If you are interested in participating in this exciting program, please visit the WMG website:

<https://www.microsurg.org/WMG/>



### WMG Committee Members enjoy the 2019 ASRM Live Auction

Carolyn De La Cruz. We are looking forward to the ASRM 2020 WMG Luncheon panel entitled “Having It All” which will focus on family planning, taking risks, and mastering the art of multitasking. We hope to see you there!

The WMG cocktail reception was fun for all and provided a relaxed venue for networking. The tradition will continue in Fort Lauderdale, as ASRM kicks off on Saturday January 11, 2020. Please join us to catch up with colleagues and meet new friends.

The WMG also hosted a ASRM panel entitled “Reinventing Yourself”, moderated by Drs. Aldona Spiegel and Summer Hanson. The broad discussion ranged

from partnering with industry to developing new clinical programs. Panelists included Drs. Michael Zenn, Ed Ray, Loree Kallianinen and Melissa Poh.

The WMG Mentoring Program continued to match interested participants and will continue at ASRM 2020. With a recent effort to formalize WMG membership, the Group hopes to expand the Mentoring Program accordingly (see Pages 2-3).

### Social Media Efforts:

The ASRM Women's Microsurgery Group is expanding their social media footprint!

The WMG has started a private Facebook group to encourage open communication among our members. Share your complex cases for discussion, personal challenges for solutions, and accomplishments for encouragement. The WMG Facebook group is for WMG members only, so please join WMG to enjoy the benefits.

Stay tuned for Instagram connections, coming in 2020.



## Featured ASRM/WMG Microsurgeon:

Lydia Helliwell, MD  
Brigham and Women's Hospital  
Boston, Massachusetts

### **Q&A with Dr. Helliwell:**

*How many years have you been in practice?*

I am about to start my third year in practice. It is amazing how quickly the time passes.

*What type of cases do you do?*

After integrated plastic surgery residency, I completed hand and microsurgery fellowship. My goal is to have a practice that is about 60% hand and 40% complex reconstruction, including microsurgical reconstruction. At the moment, I am probably closer to 40-50% hand and 50-60% general reconstruction. I purposely avoid breast and cosmetic surgery, for two reasons. First, the breast surgery volume is incredibly high at my institution and I think it could consume my entire practice if I did any. Secondly, I think in order to be successful at building hand volume (especially in a market where orthopedic hand surgery is extremely strong), I feel it is important to brand myself as a "hand surgeon" as much as possible.

*What is the most challenging thing about being a female microsurgeon?*

I think my answers to this question would apply to both men and women! Microsurgical cases come with a certain amount of unpredictability. They can take much longer than planned. There are unexpected returns to the operating room. All of this can make scheduling your personal and professional life difficult. I think that unpredictability can be the toughest part. I don't have children, but I have many friends that do and completing long microsurgical cases while pregnant or breastfeeding is no easy feat!



Dr. Helliwell on vacation with her fiancé, Dr. David Miller.

*What motivates you?*

It sounds cliché, but the patients are the most motivating factor. Taking care of patients through all stages of a complex microsurgical case (the complex explanation preop, guiding them through the sometimes stressful and tough inpatient stay, and seeing them frequently postop) is one of the most rewarding parts of my job.

*Do you have any advice to up and coming female microsurgeons?*

My best advice is to find great mentors. Mentors can guide you on your career path, help you make connections with important people in your field, and even advise you on work-life balance. Although senior faculty often have the experience and connections to be great mentors, don't discount more junior faculty who have experienced what you are going through more recently. Find people who will be your champion but also give you tough feedback when needed.

# WOMEN'S MICROSURGERY GROUP 1<sup>ST</sup> ANNUAL WELLNESS WORKSHOP

January 9, 2020



We are excited to announce the first WMG pre-ASRM workshop devoted to Wellness. We are planning on a great program to help you devote the day for yourselves, reinvigorate, learn self-care tips, success strategies, build bonds, and lasting friendships!

7:30am - 8:30am	Yoga on the Beach
8:30am - 9:00am	Breakfast and Coffee
9:15am - 9:30am	Welcome and Introductions
9:30am - 11:15am	Resilience and Happiness Part 1
11:15am - 11:30am	Coffee Break
11:30am - 12:45pm	Resilience and Happiness Part 2
12:45pm - 1:45pm	Lunch
1:45pm - 3:15pm	Masterful Self Care
3:15pm - 4:15pm	Wisdom Cafe
7:30pm - 9:00pm	Dinner at Sea Level Restaurant

**Attendees will receive a custom-made WMG scrub cap!**

Register on our website now before the workshop fill up!

## ASRM/WMG Member Highlights

- Many WMG members were participants of the 10<sup>th</sup> Congress of World Society for Reconstructive Microsurgery in Bologna, Italy in June 2019 (photo to the right)
- Dr.s Summer Hansen, Kristen Rezak, and Amy Moore were invited faculty to the 2019 Duke Flap Course sponsored by Dr. Scott Hollenbeck
- Angela Cheng, MD, WMG Committee Member, was recently promoted to Associate Professor at Emory University Hospital

