
The Western Thoracic Surgical Association

The Western Thoracic Surgical Association 2011 Annual Meeting in Review

The 37th Annual Meeting of the Western Thoracic Surgical Association (WTSA) was held at the Broadmoor Hotel, June 22 to 25, 2011. The meeting included oral presentation of 22 original articles, panel discussions, a postgraduate course, and 24 additional articles presented during concurrent forums in the disciplines of adult cardiac, general thoracic, and congenital heart disease. The Annual Meeting attracted approximately 200 physicians and allied health professionals and provided an outstanding educational program with ample opportunities for open discussion, scientific debate, and the collegiality characteristic of the WTSA Annual Meeting.

Educational highlights of the program included a “Controversies in Thoracic Surgery” session that debated whether “We Are Headed for a Crisis in Manpower in CT Surgery by 2020” and was moderated by Mark T. Metzdorff, with Douglas J. Mathisen presenting the pro side and Sean C. Grondin presenting the con side. The session presented factors that are considered to contribute to the perception of an upcoming thoracic surgeon shortage in the United States and explored how alternative healthcare delivery models can influence manpower needs. In addition, the Presidential Address, given by Robbin G. Cohen, was entitled “Denying Our Default Future.”

Simultaneous Breakfast Sessions were also held in 3 practice-based areas. “Improving Your Reimbursement” with Norm Brooks explored the rapidly changing rules for reimbursement for computed tomography services that not only threaten the ability to maintain practice revenues but also place the unknowledgeable practitioner at risk for Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services noncompliance. “Working for Someone Else: What You Should Know About Contracting and Compensation,” with John R. Voigt, informed physicians who might have limited training in business and law what really takes place when, in this changing financial climate, a computed tomography group sells its practice to a hospital, both at the time of sale and afterward

with regard to what they think or hope might happen. “Managing Conflict and Giving (Receiving) Feedback: A Leadership Challenge,” with Ross M. Ungerleider and Jamie Ungerleider, taught leaders to communicate feedback in ways that invite change and progressive growth toward the leadership vision, and to view conflict as an opportunity to learn from others as opposed to a battle that needs to be won.

The C. Walton Lillehei Point/Counterpoint Session debated whether “Public Reporting Is Harmful and Should Be Abolished” and was moderated by David A. Fullerton with Ross M. Ungerleider arguing in favor and David M. Shahian opposing. The Postgraduate Course, sponsored by White Memorial Medical Center and Foundation, Lyman A. Brewer, III, Fund, featured Robert C. Myrtle from the University of Southern California School of Policy, Planning, and Development in Los Angeles, California, asked “Why Would Anyone Want to Be on Your Surgical Team?” The session examined effective individual, group, and other influences on surgical team performance.

Several awards were presented during the meeting. The Donald B. Doty Educational Award was given to Gordon A. Cohen, from Seattle Children’s Hospital, for his proposal on “Teaching Simple and Complex Congenital Heart Surgery: A New Method for Creating Detailed Anatomy Models of Congenitally Abnormal Hearts Based on Dynamic Contrast Image or MRI Data”; the Norman E. Shumway Award for the Best Paper co-authored by a WTSA member was awarded to Agustin E. Rubio of Seattle Children’s Hospital for his presentation “Comparison of Modified Blalock-Taussig Shunt and Ductal Stenting for Palliation of Duct-Dependent Cardiac Lesions”; and the Samson Resident Prize Essay Award was given to Jessica A. Yu from the University of Colorado, for “Lung Cancer Cell Invasion and Expression of Intercellular Adhesion Molecule-1 (ICAM-1) Is Attenuated by Secretory Phospholipase A2 Inhibition.”

The 2011-2012 Officers elected during the meeting include President Robert C. Robbins, Stanford, California; Vice President and Governor, American College of Surgeons, John C. Chen, Honolulu; Immediate Past President Robbin G. Cohen, Los Angeles; Secretary Thomas A. Burdon, Stanford, California; Treasurer John D. Mitchell, Aurora, Colorado; Councilors-at-Large Ross M. Bremner,



2010-2011 WTSA Council (seated, left to right) Marvin Pomerantz, Lawrence H. Cohn, Robbin G. Cohen, Robert C. Robbins, Arthur N. Thomas, Michael S. Mulligan; (standing, left to right) J. Scott Millikan, John D. Mitchell, Thomas A. Burdon, Patricia A. Thistlethwaite, and Ross M. Bremner.

Phoenix, James I. Fann, Stanford, California, and Michael S. Mulligan, Seattle; Councilor/Founder Arthur N. Thomas, Hillsborough, California; Historian Marvin Pomerantz, Denver; and Editor Lawrence H. Cohn, Boston.

Also during the 37th Annual Meeting, 19 new members were elected to WTSA membership: David Affleck, MD, Salt Lake City; Jehangir J. Appoo, MD, Calgary, Alberta; Matthew G. Blum, MD, Colorado Springs, Colorado; Michael E. Bowdish, MD, Los Angeles; Phillip T. Burch, MD, Salt Lake City; Curtis T. Hunter, MD, Los Angeles; James Jagers, MD, Aurora, Colorado; Dawn E. Jaroszewski, MD, Phoenix; Robert C. Kincade, MD, Sacramento, California; Jasleen Kukreja, MD, San Francisco; John R. Mehall, MD, Colorado Springs, Colorado; Michael J. Moulton, MD, Tucson, Arizona; Ashraf I. Osman, MD, Fresno, California; Jerry W. Pratt, MD, Sacramento, California; Jeffrey P. Schwartz, MD, Maywood, Illinois; Gulshan K. Sethi, MD, Tucson, Arizona; Frederick A. Tibayan, MD, Portland, Oregon; Thomas K. Varghese, Jr, MD, Seattle; and Jon-Cecil M. Walkes, MD, Fremont, California.