

TO SUSTAIN THE BEST IN SURGICAL SCIENCE, PRACTICE AND SERVICE

Yale Surgical Society

FALL 2023

President's Corner

Warren Widmann, MD



It is an honor to serve as the new President of the Yale Surgical Society, especially now as we are emerging from the COVID limitations of the past few years. I am fortunate that Bob Schlessel, MD, did such an outstanding job as the prior President of YSS—he kept it going, expanded its membership, and was able to

restore the Annual Meetings and Grand Rounds. I am also fortunate in having Bauer Sumpio and Walter Longo along with the others on our Executive Board who together provide continuity and purpose to our society.

YSS, now in its 30th year, is dedicated to preserving the tradition of surgery at Yale which has seen successive generations of surgeons grow to clinical maturity, excellence, and service. This tradition is remembered to preserve the camaraderie, the sacrifice and the ambition of trainees, faculty, and staff. The tradition is further served by offering stewardship to subsequent generations who are challenged to attain and sustain the best in surgical science, practice, and service. By now you should have received a notice requesting payment of dues. You also might be wondering what YSS does with its dues. The major expense of YSS is the awarding of prizes recognizing individuals who have been outstanding in their careers—be they residents, practicing surgeons, or faculty. We recognize philanthropic activities, community improvement, service to the underserved as well as service to colleagues, exceptional teaching, and with the newly established Travelling Fellowship, we have a new role.

The intent and spirit of the Yale Surgical Society Travelling Fellowship is to provide funding to a promising second year surgical resident for a clinical experience to travel to another

academic center to gain outside experience through, for example, observing teaching rounds, working rounds, multidisciplinary clinics, and operative procedures. PGY2 surgical residents who will be in 12 or more months of research are eligible to apply for this award. Expenses for the week of travel are reimbursable, up to \$5,000.

As we move forward, I hope that we can count on the continued support of the membership through dues as well as through donations. Please use the following website:

<https://tinyurl.com/2p8enuva>

Warren D. Widmann, MD

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Alumni News



Annabelle Fonseca, MD, MHS graduated from the Yale general surgery training program in 2015. She is a surgical oncologist with a clinical focus on hepatopancreatobiliary surgery and a research focus on improving the delivery of complex oncologic care in vulnerable populations. She obtained a Master of Health Science degree while completing a residency in general surgery at Yale. Following this she completed a fellowship in complex general surgical oncology at MD Anderson Cancer Center where she also completed a T32 research fellowship. Her research program focuses on the development of a systems-based approach to decreasing barriers in access to complex oncologic care for patients with foregut cancers. She is funded by an NIH K23 grant. She was the recipient of the Society for Surgery of the Alimentary Tract Jeffrey and Joan Matthews Developing Leaders Program. She is currently an Associate Professor in the Department of Surgery at the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB), with joint appointments at the UAB Institute for Cancer Outcomes and Survivorship, the O'Neal Comprehensive Cancer Center and the Center for Clinical and Translational Science.

Arnar Geirsson, MD has been named Director of the Cardiovascular Institute and Surgical Heart Valve Program at New York-Presbyterian and Columbia. He will also serve as Professor of Surgery in the Division of Cardiac, Thoracic, and Vascular Surgery at Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons. Dr. Geirsson served as surgeon-in-chief of cardiac surgery of the Heart and Vascular Center at Yale New Haven Hospital. Among his notable milestones, he performed the first minimally right thoracotomy mitral valve surgery (a minimally invasive surgical technique with smaller incisions between the ribs) at Yale New Haven Hospital in 2009 and the hospital's first robotic mitral valve surgery in 2018.



Dr. Geirsson earned his undergraduate degree from Hamrahlid College, Reykjavik, Iceland, and his medical degree from the University of Iceland. After completing his residency in general surgery and cardiothoracic surgery at Yale-New Haven Hospital and Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania, respectively, he joined Yale as the director of minimally invasive cardiac surgery. From 2013 to 2016, he served as a cardiothoracic surgeon in Iceland, until his return to Yale. Dr. Geirsson's research interests include both basic and clinical science, with a focus on mitral valve prolapse and new techniques in mitral valve repair. He has authored more than 170 manuscripts published in leading, peer-reviewed journals and serves on the editorial boards of *Journal of Thoracic and Cardiovascular Surgery*, and *Annals of Thoracic Surgery*. He also serves on numerous committees, including as the chair of the Task Force on Robotic Cardiac Surgery for the Society of Thoracic Surgeons, and he is an active fellow of professional societies that include the American College of Surgeons and the American Heart Association.



Timothy D. Murtha, MD, MHS is a surgeon at Brown Surgical Associates and a faculty member in the Department of Surgery, Brown University, specializing in the field of surgical oncology in both the research laboratory and the clinical setting. Dr. Murtha earned his MD from Tufts University School of Medicine. He then joined and completed the surgical residency program at Yale. In addition, he completed a post-doctoral research fellowship at the Yale Endocrine Neoplasia Laboratory and obtained a Masters of Health Science studying the genetic drivers of Adrenocortical Carcinoma. Dr. Murtha went on to round out his training through the Complex General Surgical Oncology Fellowship program at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center. He is interested in improving the diagnosis and treatment of malignancies of the pancreas, liver, and biliary system. He is currently exploring the role of circulating exosomes in detecting pancreatic cancer in high-risk populations.

Alumni News *(continued)*

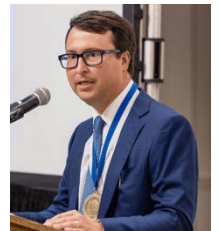
Peter Yoo, MD has recently accepted the position of Associate Chief Academic Officer at Hartford Healthcare, Hartford, Connecticut. Peter received his MD at SUNY Stony Brook in 2003. He completed his General Surgery residency (2003-2010) at Yale and then went on to a fellowship in Transplantation at University of Pennsylvania 2010-2012. He returned to Yale as a faculty member in the Division of Transplantation rising to Associate Professor of Surgery. He was Associate Program Director in Surgery 2013-2018 and then Program Director 2019-2023. Peter was renowned for his superlative technical skills and no-nonsense approach to teaching surgery. As the PD, he led the residents through a very difficult time during the pandemic. Additionally, through his leadership and research, he transformed the way we think about the well-being of trainees, worked that gained him national recognition in surgical education. Peter is an associate of the Academy of Master Surgeon Educators. Peter is also a Councilor of the American Board of Surgery and an Officer of the New England Surgical Society.



Steven Williams, MD, board-certified plastic surgeon and founder of Tri Valley Plastic Surgery in Dublin, Calif., was named president of the American Society of Plastic Surgeons (ASPS), the world's largest organization of board-certified plastic surgeons. He also became the first African American President of this prestigious organization. Dr. Williams took office at the American Society of Plastic Surgery's (ASPS) Plastic Surgery Society's annual scientific meeting, on Oct. 30 in Austin, Texas. Dr. Williams will serve in the position for one year. Dr. Williams earned his undergraduate degree at Dartmouth College and completed medical school and residency at Yale University, where he was the first African American to graduate from Yale's plastic surgery program. He has been an active ASPS

member for more than 15 years and has served as chair of the ASPS Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee, vice president of Aesthetic Surgery and Private Practice and vice president of Membership. A cornerstone of Dr. Williams' plans as ASPS president will be to bring more advanced technology to ASPS's member surgeons, to further improve and advance the world of reconstructive and cosmetic plastic surgery. Another area of critical importance to Dr. Williams is diversity and inclusion. He plans to expand the organization's reach to ensure the needs of both physicians and patients from diverse backgrounds are met and that all voices are heard.

Marc Walker, MD was recently awarded the Songcharoen Professor of Surgery at the University of Mississippi. This was part of a 5M hand surgery gift creating the Jabaley-Songcharoen Center at UMMC. Dr. Walker is a graduate of Harvard Medical School after graduating summa cum laude from the University of Mississippi. He completed his post-doctoral training at Yale University in Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery followed by fellowship training in hand and microsurgery at Yale as well.



In Memoriam



Stephen M. Schonholz, MD H.S.'87

The Yale Surgical Community and the Yale Surgical Society was saddened to learn of the recent passing of Stephen "Steve" Schonholz. Steve was a graduate of our General Surgery Residency in 1987. He went on to a fellowship in Gastrointestinal Surgery that involved the early years of Laparoendoscopic Surgery. An extremely talented surgeon, he went on to focus his career on Breast Surgery, with a huge practice and large patient following in Western Massachusetts with major leadership roles. He was an avid swimmer and aquatic enthusiast throughout his whole life. He was an excellent teacher and one of the nicest and amicable individuals you would ever meet. A true family man all the way. Steve was 67 years old.

Yale Surgical Society Celebrates Its 30th Year

On April 12th, 1994, Ronald C. Merrell, MD, Chairman of the Department of Surgery, Yale School of Medicine and Chief of Surgery, Yale-New Haven Hospital, and Robert K. Houlihan, MD, Associate Chief of Surgery, Yale-New Haven Hospital, convened a committee at the Race Brook Country Club to discuss the creation of the fellowship of graduates and faculty of the training program in surgery at YSM/Y-NHH. Present in addition to Drs. Merrell and Houlihan were Drs. Marvin Arons, Phillip Dickey, James Dowaliby, Steven Stein, Nina Horowitz, Richard Stahl, Harold Stern, Bauer Sumpio, Andrew Graham and Ms. Jo Ann D'Agostino and Ms. Doris Farquhar.



Ronald C. Merrell, MD



Andrew Graham, MD

training program at YSM/Y-NHH. Doris Farquhar took on the role of Executive Director, supporting the fledgling organization through the Chairman's office. Robert Houlihan, who had just retired as Associate Chief, continued in his role as consultant.

After a short discussion, it was decided that this organization would be called the Yale Surgical Society. Membership would be granted to all who had trained in the YSM/Y-NHH Surgery Program as well as all teaching faculty, both community and University. Andrew J. Graham was elected as President and Phillip Dickey as Vice-President. Robert Houlihan was selected to be consultant.

In the fall of 1995, a logo was designed for the society that would represent something that all surgeons, no matter their specialty, would recognize. It was a curved surgical needle with a swedged on thread. The main goal of forming YSS was alignment.... alignment between community and full-time academic surgeons. The alignment was regarding the primary missions: patient care, scholarly activity, and education. Fostering collegiality was also a major, primary goal.

The leadership group was instructed to form a board of directors, create a mission statement and to write by-laws to comply with state and federal mandates for establishing a non-profit organization. Nina Horowitz agreed to be treasurer and Barbara Ward became secretary. The first board of directors included, in addition to the officers mentioned above, two ex officio members, Chief of Surgery Ronald Merrell and Associate Chief of Surgery Richard Stahl as well as at large members James Dowaliby, John Eleftheriades, Ralph Stroup, and Bauer Sumpio. This gave the Society ten members chosen from the community and full time faculty ranks representing all sections of the department. It was agreed that all board members, except the ex officio designates, were to be nominated from the ranks of former members of the surgical

In October 1994, in its first organizational activity, the YSS hosted a reception at the American College of Surgeons meeting in Chicago. It was decided, based on the strong positive response, that the reception held on the first Monday evening of the ACS autumn meeting would become an annual event. During the winter of 1994-95, committees were formed to write by-laws, establish criteria of membership, and to fulfill the state and federal requirements establishing YSS as a legitimate nonprofit organization.

A newsletter was published in March 1995. This quickly became the YSS Bulletin which is now published two times annually. Over time the content expanded to include a president's column, a chairman's column and guest columns recounting activities of its members as well as events in the YSM/Y-NHH training program at the Medical School and the hospital. When C. Elton Cahow became seriously ill in the winter of 1996-97, Dr. Merrell called upon the YSS to enlist its membership to rapidly contribute enough money to inaugurate a lecture to be named in Dr. Cahow's honor. This was the first successful effort by the YSS at major fundraising for the department.

Robert Udelsman, MD, became Chairman/Chief on June 1, 2001, and a new era began for YSS. New projects were undertaken in 2002. First there was the Hall of Honor. The plan which required major research to find residents from the 1920's, 30's and 40's, was fully accomplished by 2006. Portraits of all of the previous Professors of Surgery had already been placed on the walls outside of the office of the chairman. Plaques listing the names of all the chief residents were placed under the chairmen starting with Samuel Harvey and including Gustaf Lindskog, Jack Cole, Arthur Baue, William Collins and Ronald Merrell.

Secondly, was the creation of the annual Sam Harvey Award. This award includes a substantial check, a plaque to

Divisional Spotlight: Otorhinolaryngology (ENT)



Benjamin Judson, MD, MBA

The Division of Otolaryngology (ENT) was developed by the pioneering work of Drs. John Kirchner and Clarence Sasaki. In 2019, Ben Judson, MD assumed the role of Division Chief. Dr. Judson attended Middlebury College, obtained a master's degree

at the University of Pennsylvania, and graduated from Jefferson Medical College. He completed a residency at Georgetown University Hospital in otolaryngology-head and neck surgery, and a fellowship at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in head and neck surgical oncology. In addition, Dr. Judson became the Charles W. Ohse Professor. Dr. Judson was this year's recipient of the Walter E. Longo MD - Departmental Citizenship Award which is presented annually to a faculty member in recognition of their contributions and citizenship to the Department of Surgery.

Specialty care within the Division is offered in the following areas: General and pediatric ear, nose and throat care, Head and Neck Cancers, Laryngology, hearing and balance testing and treatment, pediatric otolaryngology, facial and plastic reconstruction, sinus and allergy disorders, skull base disorders, otology and neuro-ontology, snoring and sleep apnea care and voice, speech and swallowing conditions. The division provides a robust and very successful resident training program under the leadership of R. Peter Manes, MD There is also opportunity for fellowship training in Head and Neck Oncologic and Reconstructive Surgery. Otolaryngology research led by Joseph Santos-Sacchi, PhD, includes clinical and basic research involving several diverse topics, done both by PhD scientists and clinicians, and is funded primarily with NIH grants. These include, but not limited to head and neck cancer, speech pathology, taste psychophysics, taste genetics, and dietary behaviors which have grown under Dr. Judson's leadership.

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Yale Surgical Society

Update: Lawrence and Memorial, Westerly Hospitals

In 2020 Geoffrey Nadzam assumed the role of Chief of Surgery of LMW. Both L&M and Westerly Hospitals are part of the Yale-New Haven Hospital Health System. L&M is a 308 bed hospital located in New London, Connecticut. Westerly Hospital is a 125 bed hospital located in Westerly Rhode Island. Physician healthcare providers are a mixture of physicians in private practice as well as academic physicians from the Yale School of Medicine. Both hospitals serve a large volume of captured lives within the region.



Geoffrey S. Nadzam, MD

There has been many changes in the LMH healthcare system since COVID. Over the last 31/2 years as Chair of Surgery, Dr. Nadzam has worked closely with the executive teams at both hospitals to secure two additional DaVinci surgical robotics systems. Since these acquisitions, robotic volumes have more than tripled across both campuses. With these systems and the recruitment of specialists in urology, acute care surgery, bariatric and MIS surgery, gynecology and gynecologic oncology, the population of New London and southern Rhode Island benefits from the most advanced robotic surgeries.

L&M is also in the process of accreditation as an ACS level 3 trauma center and as a MBSQIP bariatric center of excellence. In addition to both institutions providing state of the art care involving medicine, surgery, radiology and pathology services, there is a robust cadre of nurses, Physician Assistants and other ancillary services such as Rehabilitation and Patient Care Coordination initiatives. As more full time physicians are being employed who carry with them expertise in sub-specialization, multidisciplinary program development will occur in areas such as breast oncology, urologic oncology, male infertility, women's health and digestive health. It is anticipated that residents from the various surgical training programs will be on various clinical rotations in the future.

In addition to the two main campuses, LMH and WH, there is an ambulatory surgery center, Pequot Surgery Center, located mid-way between both hospitals. PSC is an outpatient location that offers ophthalmology, pain services, foot & ankle surgery, and general surgery in an ambulatory setting. Patients and surgeons both enjoy PSC and efforts are being made to increase use of this vital resource. Richard Lisitano, Pharm D, a long-standing hospital executive within the health system, has just been appointed the new president for Lawrence and memorial Healthcare.

Where Are They Now?



Mary H. McGrath, MD, MPH was born in New York. She attended the College of New Rochelle and then St. Louis University where she received her MD. This was followed by completing a General Surgery Residency at the University of Colorado and subsequently a fellowship in Plastic Surgery at Yale University and finally a fellowship in Hand surgery at that time the University of Connecticut-Yale University Hand Fellowship Program in 1978. She was initially Associate Professor of Surgery at Yale from 1978-1980 and then Assistant Professor of Surgery at Columbia Presbyterian from 1980-1984. She then moved



to George Washington University where she rose to Professor of Surgery as well as Program Director in Plastic Surgery from 1984-2000. After spending the next three years at Loyola University, she became Professor of Surgery at the University of California San Francisco from 2003-present.

Mary has served on numerous Professional Committees and received numerous awards for teaching, service and excellence. She was president of the American Society of Plastic Surgeons. She has been a consultant for the Federal Drug Administration for well over thirty years. She has also been a reviewer for the National Institute of Health for many Study Sections. She has also been academically productive with numerous peer review manuscripts, national presentations, Visiting Professorships, and provided countless hours in University Service.



Robert S.D. Higgins, MD, MSHA, was named President of Brigham and Women's Hospital and Executive Vice President at Mass General Brigham on December 2021. Prior to this Bob served as Surgeon-in-Chief at Johns Hopkins Hospital and the William Stewart Halsted Professor of Surgery and Director of the Department of Surgery at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine. Bob earned his bachelor's degree from Dartmouth College and medical degree from Yale School of Medicine. He completed a residency in general surgery and served as Chief Resident at the University Hospitals of Pittsburgh. He was a Winchester Scholar and completed a fellowship in cardiothoracic surgery at the Yale School of Medicine and earned a master's degree in health services administration at Virginia Commonwealth University.

Prior to joining Hopkins, Higgins served as Department of Surgery Chair and Director of the Comprehensive Transplant Center at The Ohio State University Medical Center and served as a senior registrar in transplantation at the renowned Papworth Hospital, the United Kingdom's largest cardiothoracic surgical program and main heart-lung transplant center. He also served as a Major in the United States Army Reserve Medical Corps for 13 years and while doing so, supported the Richmond Veterans Administration transplantation program.

Bob has served in numerous national professional leadership roles including the President of the Society of Thoracic Surgeons, President of the United Network for Organ Sharing, President of the Society of Black Academic Surgeons, President and founding member of the Association of Black Cardiovascular and Thoracic Surgeons and as a member of the Board of Directors of the American Board of Thoracic Surgery. Bob is a highly regarded and accomplished leader, Higgins is a leading authority in heart and lung transplantation, minimally invasive cardiac surgery and mechanical circulatory support. He is renowned as a world class researcher and is recognized nationally and internationally for his research in the areas of heart and lung transplantation and disparities in outcomes in cardiac surgery.

We would love to hear from you!

Please stay in touch and send us updates on your current practice, family, and life events such as hobbies or retirement activities. Pictures (recent and past) are welcome. Please include your surgical program (specialty) and where you trained, and years when you trained and the year that you completed your training
Send your information to: Walter.longo@yale.edu

Where Are They Now?



Frederick L. (Rick) Greene, MD received his Bachelor of Arts in English in 1966 from University of Virginia and his MD degree from the University of Virginia School of Medicine in 1970. Donna and Rick were married two days prior to starting his surgical internship at Yale! Rick completed his residency in General Surgery at Yale University School of Medicine. He was also an American Cancer Society Clinical Research Fellow at Yale. After spending six years in New Haven, Rick served in the US Navy as the surgeon on the USS Nimitz (CVN-68) during its first deployment. Rick was also an attending surgeon at the Naval Regional Medical Center in Portsmouth, VA. Rick also spent time at the Veterans Administration in many leadership roles and was early on identified as a leader in career development. Rick was a member of the surgical faculty of the University of South Carolina for 17 years, developing the division of surgical oncology and serving as Chief of Surgical

Services at the Dorn Veterans Administration Medical Center in Columbia, SC.

Over the ensuing years, Rick and Donna have had the joy of living in Maryland, South Carolina and, for the past 26 years in Charlotte, North Carolina where Rick has served as Chairman of Surgery at Carolinas Medical Center (now Atrium-Wake Forest Baptist School of Medicine), surgical residency director and currently, Medical Director at the Levine Cancer Institute in Charlotte. In addition, Rick continues to serve as medical editor of General Surgery News and hosts three podcasts dedicated to oncology themes. Rick served as a site reviewer for the American College of Surgeons Committee on Cancer for 25 years in which he promoted the value of accreditation. His support and guidance have been essential to assisting cancer programs with improving patient outcomes through research, education, and standardizing high-quality care. As editor of the AJCC TNM Cancer Staging System over the past 25 years, he has also promoted the importance of accurate cancer staging and the value of cancer registries.



The UVA Medical Alumni Association recognized Rick with the 2019 Outstanding Medical Alumnus Award. As a student, he was co-founder and past president of the School of Medicine's student government organization, the Mulholland Society, and remains an active supporter today. He is also the creator and host of the UVA Medical Alumni Association's faculty video interview series. Donna and Rick also take great pleasure in living close by to their children, Stephanie and Adam and three grandchildren, Sybil, Davis and Leo. In recounting his days at Yale, Rick notes that "my Yale surgical experience has given me the grounding for everything that I have accomplished in my career".

American College of Surgeons 2023 - Boston, MA



From left to right: Ira Leeds, MD, James Farrelly, MD, Maija Cheung, MD, Haddon Pantel, MD



From left to right: Loren Berman, MD, Alan Dardik, MD, PhD, Tamara Fitzgerald, MD, PhD

New Faculty Spotlight – *Adriana Ramirez, MD MPH*



Adriana Ramirez, MD, MPH, is an Assistant Professor of Surgery (Endocrine). Dr. Ramirez received her Bachelor of Science from Emory University in 2009 in Physical Anthropology and Human Biology. This was followed by receiving her Doctor of Medicine, in 2013 from the Medical University of South Carolina. She completed her general surgery training, including a post-doctoral research fellowship, at the University of Virginia. During her training, she received a Master of Public Health from the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health focused on health policy and systems analytics. Most recently, Dr. Ramirez completed an American Association of Endocrine Surgeons (AAES) fellowship in Endocrine Surgery through Emory University.

Dr. Ramirez cares for patients with benign and malignant thyroid, parathyroid, and adrenal tumors, as part of the multidisciplinary Endocrine Program at Smilow Cancer Hospital in New Haven. Her clinical and research interests are focused on identifying health disparities among vulnerable populations and eliminating inequities in access, care, and outcomes. She has served on multiple departmental, institutional, and national Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion committees. She and her team at the University of Virginia were the recipients of the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Health System Award for embodiment of values and teachings in cultural competence, healthcare disparities, and in fostering an environment of inclusiveness. She is a member of the American Association of Endocrine Surgeons, the Latin Surgical Society, the American College of Surgeons, and the Association of Women Surgeons.

Yale Surgical Society Celebrates Its 30th Year *(continued)*

the recipient and a listing on a plaque placed in the Hall of Honor. Winners are chosen by a ballot distributed to the entire surgical house staff in which they vote to recommend to the executive committee one of the chief residents or fellows. The third initiative involved a complete revamping of the database.

To support Yale medical students who might be considering careers in surgery, YSS began, in 2006, to give active assistance to the Yale Surgical Interest Group. YSS Treasurer John E. Fenn was its faculty advisor. With the enthusiastic encouragement of Nancy Angoff, Associate Dean for Student Affairs, the international and domestic travel award scholarships were initiated. The international award has now been named the Gustaf E. Lindskog International Travel Award and a solicitation of funds for this unique opportunity has been very successful ensuring that this program will be available in perpetuity. The Yale Surgical Society has been established and continues to be a vital part of the Yale School of Medicine and the training program at Yale-New Haven Hospital. All contributions to YSS are now fully tax deductible and will continue to fund the present activities. The expected growth of the endowment under the superb management of the investment arm of Yale University will allow the society to prosper and to add other beneficial endeavors. The society has begun its 30th year and continues with its many achievements and its future secure.

-Ronald C. Merrell, MD and Andrew Graham, MD

Save
the
Date

Yale Surgical Society Events:

Thursday, May 16, 2024:

Yale Surgical Society Annual Dinner
(Formal invitation to follow)

Friday, May 17, 2024:

- YSS Grand Rounds Special Guest Speakers:
 - Mary McGrath, MD, MPH
 - Robert S.D. Higgins, MD, MSHA
 - Frederick L. Green, MD

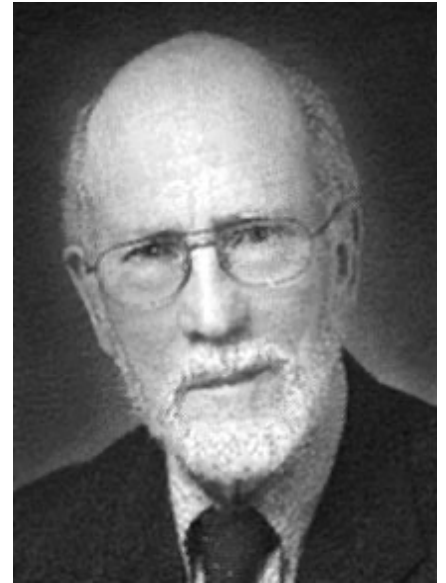
Centennial: Donald P. Shedd, M.D. Celebrates his 101st Birthday

Warren Widman, MD

Donald P. Shedd was born on August 4, 1922 in New Haven, Connecticut. Shedd earned his bachelor's degree at Yale in 1944 and began his study of medicine in an accelerated program during World War II, when faculty members were leaving to serve in the military and medical students were hired to deliver emergency anesthesia at night. He was on active duty from September 1947 until August 1949. He completed his general surgery residency in 1953 and that year became certified by the American Board of Surgery.

From 1953-1967 he was on faculty at Yale and rose to Professor of Surgery. During his 14 years on the Yale faculty, he became increasingly interested in the care of head and neck cancer patients. He moved to Roswell Park in 1967. "The job offer in Buffalo was an excellent one," Shedd said. "It was one of the best positions in the field in the country." He became chief of head and neck surgery at the Roswell Park Cancer Institute in Buffalo, New York, and serving as national president of the Society of Head and Neck Surgeons, in 1977, which became the American Head and Neck Society in 1998. Now professor emeritus at SUNY Buffalo, Shedd attended for many years, weekly tumor board meetings. He also maintains a database of head and neck operations at the cancer institute, where he was chief of head and neck surgery for 29 years. In 2007, the department published his fifth book, a history of head and neck surgery at Roswell. Shedd is also the author of *Historical Landmarks in Head and Neck Cancer Surgery* and *The Early History of Hospice Buffalo*.

Dr. Shedd and his late wife Charlotte, a nurse, co-founded the Buffalo Hospice initially working from their dining room table, which eventually led to the pioneering of the hospice movement. In addition to his clinical work and research, Shedd helped train fellows and residents who began their careers at Roswell Park. In addition to training numerous fellows in Head and Neck Surgery, he was involved in medical service in Peru and Nicaragua, as well as short surveys of oral cancer research in India, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. He also held a visiting professorship in South Africa. Dr. Shedd was the most recent winner of the Yale Surgical Society Distinguished Alumni Award and still lives in his hometown of Buffalo, NY.



How Things in the OR Have Changed in the Past 70 Years

Warren Widman, MD

- IV solutions were made in-house and reusable bottles used
- No monitoring of the patient other than blood pressure (anesthesiologist's BP case on anesthesia stand)
- Observer and scrub nurse are wearing skirts
- Observer is not wearing shoe covers--the special white shoes were themselves conductive because explosive agents were in use (ether, cyclopropane)
- Face mask anesthesia (endotracheal anesthesia came later in the 1950's)
- Surgical team is wearing hoods, only anesthesia staff wore caps and masks
- All drapes and gowns were cloth and not disposable
- The anesthesiologist's left hand is likely squeezing a bag for ventilation, mechanical ventilation did not come into use until 1952
- The gas cylinders and connections were all the same size; because of errors in connection, they are now different in size to avoid accidental misconnections



Yale New Haven Hospital
Operating Room
1950

Yale Surgical Society - 2023 Reception

“It has been my pleasure to serve as the Yale Surgical Society president for the past two years. I enjoyed helping the Society grow, by welcoming more members, expanding the number of our awards and deepening our commitment to collegiality and professional development. We are now in the strong capable hands of Dr. Warren Widmann joined by the tireless board of directors who will continue to advance our mission.



At our Annual Meeting on May 18, 2023, at the New Haven Country Club, we recognized and celebrated excellence in our faculty, alumni and residents. We welcomed new members into the YSS with certificates and lapel pins at our dinner ceremony. We presented several awards to recognize extraordinary achievement.

The Sam Harvey Award in memory of the Department’s chairman was given to Dr. Jolanta Gorecka. She was selected by a vote of the entire surgical house staff and confirmed by the YSS Executive Committee. She was noted to be an excellent surgeon, teaching resident and investigative scientist. She is now at the University of Washington as a cardiothoracic fellow.

The Deepak Narayan Award named to reflect Dr. Narayan’s leadership, multidisciplinary work and clinical skills, was given to two deserving residents: Dr. Brooks Udelsman of thoracic surgery now at USC and Dr. Andy Brahmadam from Vascular surgery now at Northwestern. They were selected by their section chiefs in their subspecialty and voted on by a committee of the YSS board.

The Distinguished Service Award was presented to Dr. Stephan Ariyan, who continues to give of his time generously to support and advance collegiality and offer professional development opportunities to our current and past trainees.

Our newest award, presented for the first time this year, is in recognition of a Yale trainee with 20 or more years of experience who has made significant contributions to the science of surgery and who has been recognized for excellence. We were delighted to honor Dr. Donald Shedd, Yale Medical School graduate 1946 and surgical resident 1953, with the Distinguished Alumni Award. He had been Chief of Head and Neck surgery at Roswell Park Cancer Institute in Buffalo, New York.

The following morning we convened for YSS Grandrounds at Fitkin Auditorium. Our presenters who were introduced at the Annual Meeting were all past surgical residents who stepped outside the traditional role to pursue fascinating and successful careers. In their talk “Careers Outside the Operating Room”, each speaker captivated the full house with their professional journey.

Dr. Jonathan Gertler described his path from Yale general surgery, to a vascular fellowship at Harvard to a career as a successful venture capitalist. Dr. Jon Lewis shared his fascinating journey from Yale general surgery to Memorial Sloan Kettering for a fellowship in oncology, leading to the development of several companies in Biotech, Pharma and philosophies in medical care. Dr. Pauline Chen outlined her path from general surgery, to oncology to transplantation, which she chronicled as a columnist for the New York Times and shared a story from her acclaimed book, “Final Exam: A Surgeons Reflection on Morality.” Our speakers were an inspiration and a testament to the remarkable impact one can make outside the operating room.

My thanks to the board and the professional staff Kelchia Aviles and Ania Shea, who worked behind the scenes. Special thanks to Drs. Walter Longo and Bauer Sumpio who helped guide me through my two years serving this Society.

Robert Schlessel, MD, FACS
Immediate Past President, YSS”

Destinations: Recent Departmental Graduates

RECENT DEPARTMENT GRADUATES

General Surgery, Categorical

Vanessa Baratta, MD	Fellowship, Colon and Rectal Surgery Fellowship; Lahey Clinic, Burlington, MA
Mark Echardt, MD	Fellowship, Surgical Oncology; Brigham and Women's Hospital, Boston, MA
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Sara Ulrich, MD	Fellowship, Pediatric Colorectal Surgery; Cincinnati Children's Hospital, OH

Vascular Surgery, Integrated

Anand Brahmandan, MD	Northwestern Hospital, Chicago, IL
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Plastic Surgery, Integrated

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Rajiv Iyengar, MD	Fellowship, Hand Surgery; Vanderbilt, Nashville, TN
Jenny Yang, MD	Fellowship, Craniofacial Surgery; Stanford, Palo Alto CA

Cardiothoracic Surgery, Integrated

Sora Ely, MD	Faculty, George Washington University
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Otolaryngology

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Vishal Narwani, MD	Private Practice, Atlanta, Ga.

FELLOWSHIPS

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