

President's Perspective – David A. Spain, MD

Dear AAST Members,

I hope everyone had a joyous holiday season and got to spend time with those who are important to you. There are just a few things I wanted to provide updates on.

The 2020 Annual Meeting: Due to the projected growth of our Annual Meeting and changes at the hotel venues, 2020 will likely be our last meeting in Hawaii. Thus, we anticipate the room block will fill up quickly and we will have to use an overflow hotel. Reserve your room early to attend the 2020 meeting. The abstract system is now open for submissions and will close on March 1, 2020. Send in your best science so we can celebrate it in Hawaii.

Associate Members: The associate members had their first webinar already with very good participation. The second one is scheduled for January 21 when we'll discuss education opportunities in the AAST, as well as the Annual Meeting. Over the course of the summer, the associate members, along with Sharon Gautschi, will be developing their own structure and governance. This continues to be an exciting new venture for our association, and I think it will continue to develop into one of our most important missions.

Scholarships: We are now accepting research scholarship applications. The AAST will fund up to three scholarships, each providing \$50,000 in support. As a past recipient (twenty-five years ago), I can tell you that this funding and recognition can be an incredible jump start to your academic career in acute care surgery.

Membership: The membership application portal is now open and will close on May 1. Please think about colleagues, collaborators, etc., who you think would enhance our association and encourage them to join. For those involved in training residents and fellows, please encourage any interested trainees to join as Associate Members. Actually, I will throw down a challenge: *Stanford* led all programs, by far, in this first year with twelve of their trainees becoming associate members (the next closest number was four members). If a program can top that, I'll come up with some creative recognition at our Annual Meeting.

Research Proposal Consultation Program: As announced at the Annual Meeting in Dallas, under the leadership of Dr. Todd Costantini, we are developing a Research Proposal Consultation Program. Essentially, you will be able to send in a two-page proposal, complete with background, hypothesis, and specific aims. Your proposal will be reviewed by an experienced investigator who will provide you with feedback and constructive suggestions on how to improve your proposal and make it more competitive for funding.

Achievements and Life Events: We would like to have more robust and frequent acknowledgements of our members' accomplishments, both professional and personal (this includes our associate members). For example, Dr. Rachel Callcut recently received NIH funding to investigate using AI to optimize trauma resuscitations. This is a *huge* accomplishment. We

want to celebrate all of our members who receive significant funding, achieve major professional accomplishments (teaching awards, named lectures, and the like), and reach major life milestones. I'll go first. In December I celebrated my 60th birthday and our office staff went overboard:



We all work incredibly hard and are doing stressful, important work. It is imperative that we celebrate our successes and accomplishments.

I look forward to seeing all of you in Hawaii to celebrate.