

VESS

Vascular & Endovascular Surgery Society

NEWSLETTER

Volume 13 • Issue 3 • Fall 2021



President's Corner by Jason T. Lee, MD



Hard to believe we're several months past our successful return to in-person meetings with our significant presence at the Vascular Annual Meeting in San Diego. Kudos to our membership for filling up the main session ballroom on the opening day afternoon VESS session at VAM showcasing the scientific prowess and talent of our members as well as the sponsorship and mentorship of our vascular trainees. Recall *the VESS mission is to improve the quality and safety of vascular & endovascular surgical procedures and general vascular care through education, scholarship, advocacy and leadership*. And in fact, we've now further come up with our new slogan: "The Next Generation of Vascular Innovators". Thanks to our amazing executive council and the creativity and leadership they provide to further efforts in our society.

And as we're well into fall, the most exciting news is the preparation for our Annual Meeting in Aspen/Snowmass January 27-30, 2022. Our program committee, led by **Karan Garg** and **Jeanie Ruddy**, reviewed one of the most competitive abstract submission processes in history, and created a comprehensive program covering all aspects of vascular surgical care filled with all the latest and greatest science, innovations, and ideas from our membership. Please look at the website to see all the incredible work being put forth by our membership. We will continue to have our traditional Fellows program and Tech Forum, led by **Venita Chandra** and **Joe Haurani**, and our ever-popular Medical Student program, led by **Nathan Orr**. New this winter, the brainchild of **Gaby Velazquez**, will be the General Surgery Resident program, further highlighting the strength of VESS as the premiere meeting for the pipeline of our specialty. I encourage you to find a mentee to sponsor to apply for one of the many travel awards to our meeting.

Finally, by the time you receive this, I truly hope you have started making your travel plans to Aspen/Snowmass, the first time we have been at this location since the first PVSS meeting I attended 14 years ago, and once again I hope to see each and every one of you in person, in what will likely be the most epic VESS ever! I have personally missed the camaraderie, esprit de corps, chance conversations with the next amazing vascular trainee, and most of all learning from all my wonderful colleagues across the country during this meeting. The membership of VESS is what makes this group special, and through efforts led by **Kristine Orion**, our membership chair, we have crossed well over 1000 active members! There continue to be so many opportunities for our membership to get involved, and I hope you all will seek out volunteer efforts to make your VESS even better. Enjoy the fall and we'll see you soon.

VESS Slogan Winner

We want to thank everyone who sent in suggestions for a new VESS Slogan. We are proud to announce the final verdict:

**VESS: The Next
Generation of
Vascular
Innovators!**

Respectfully,
Jason T. Lee MD
2021-22 VESS President

46th Annual Winter Meeting

The VESS looks forward to hosting our annual winter meeting. With COVID-19 still lurking and resulting in ongoing travel restrictions, we will be hosting both a live, in-person event as well as an on-line, virtual component for those unable to attend.

VESS 46th Annual Meeting in beautiful Snowmass, Colorado – January 27-30, 2022

An outstanding program has been planned – watch your mail for the Preliminary Program brochure. For full meeting registration & hotel information visit the VESS website – www.vesurgery.org

REGISTRATION INFORMATION

Registration options include:

- **Register to attend in-person:**
 - In-person registration is on a first come, first serve basis. We can put you on a waitlist once this option is full. *(The final # of in person attendees is yet to be determined due to social distancing guidelines at the time of the event.)*
 - If you are on the waitlist and a spot opens up to attend in-person, we will notify you ASAP.

- **Register to attend virtually:**
 - We will broadcast all presentations via Zoom in real-time during the conference dates. You will be able to ask speakers questions via the Chat feature.

Cancellation Policy

If VESS needs to cancel the meeting for any reason, we will refund your registration fee, but you will be responsible for any travel-related costs incurred (flight & hotel deposits, etc.). Most airlines and hospitality companies are working with customers on COVID-related cancellations.

HOTEL INFORMATION

Marriott Viewline Resort

On behalf of attendees the VESS has secured special discounted room rates at the **Marriott Viewline Snowmass Resort** (formerly the Westin Snowmass) and **The Wildwood Snowmass**.

Reservations must be made by 5:00 pm (Eastern) Monday, December 27, 2021. After this deadline, or if the VESS block of rooms sells out prior to the above mentioned deadline, availability and rates cannot be guaranteed. Please mention the VESS 2022 Annual Meeting to ensure the discounted rate. Both properties have online registration links which can be found on the Hotel Info tab of the Winter Meeting page of the VESS website along with room rates & descriptions.

We strongly recommend making your reservations as early as possible. We anticipate selling out of our discounted rooms early.



COVID-19 PRECAUTIONS

We understand that a degree of uncertainty exists around traveling and attending in-person events because of COVID-19. We are closely monitoring the situation and working with the Marriott Viewline Snowmass Resort to ensure the safety of everyone attending.

PROOF OF VACCINE IS REQUIRED TO ATTEND ALL VESS SESSIONS & FUNCTIONS

On-site precautions will include:

- **Mask mandate** – All attendees are required to wear masks during presentations and while in common areas at the resort.
- **Social distancing** – we have reserved enough space within the resort to allow attendees to maintain social distancing.
- **Sanitizing stations** – the resort has multiple hand sanitizing stations throughout the property, and we'll have additional stations set up within our meeting space.

VESS 2022 Annual Meeting *At-A-Glance*

Thursday, January 27, 2022

7:30 am – 12:15 pm	VESS Vascular Surgery Fellows Program
7:30 am – 12:15 pm	VESS General Surgery Resident Program
7:30 am – 2:00 pm	VESS Next Generation Student Mentor Program
1:00 pm – 3:30 pm	VASCULAR TECHNOLOGY FORUM - All welcome to attend
4:00 pm – 6:00 pm	SCIENTIFIC SESSION I
6:00 pm – 7:30 pm	WELCOME RECEPTION / EXHIBITOR SHOWCASE

Friday, January 28, 2022

6:00 am – 7:00 am	Continental Breakfast
7:00 am – 9:05 am	SCIENTIFIC SESSION II
9:30 am – 11:00 pm	Interesting Case Report Session
1:00 pm – 2:00 pm	Ask the Experts: Practice Guide to Your First 3 Years
3:30 pm – 4:00 pm	Coffee/Snacks
4:00 pm – 6:00 pm	SCIENTIFIC SESSION III
6:00 pm – 7:00 pm	VESS MEMBER BUSINESS MEETING
6:15 pm – 7:30 pm	<i>Industry Sponsored Symposium</i>

Saturday, January 29, 2022

6:00 am – 7:00 am	Continental Breakfast
7:00 am – 8:15 am	SCIENTIFIC SESSION IV
8:15am – 9:00am	Award Session
9:00 am – 9:15 am	Introduction of the President – Ravi Veeraswamy, MD
9:15 am – 10:00 am	PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS – Jason Lee, MD
10:30 am – 11:30 am	Interesting Case Report Session
1:00 pm – 3:00 pm	Ask the Experts: TBD
3:30 pm – 4:00 pm	Coffee/Snacks
4:00 pm – 6:00 pm	SCIENTIFIC SESSION V
7:00 pm – 10:00 pm	PRESIDENT'S DINNER

VESS Spotlight on Award Winner

Each year, the VESS awards a Travel Grant, an Early Career Faculty Research Grant and a Resident Research Grant. Here, we catch up with previous awardees to find out how they used their funds and what impact the award had on their career. We hope this inspires members to apply for VESS grants and continue the tradition of high achievement that the VESS is proud to support. For more information on how to apply, visit <http://vesurgery.org/grants-awards>.



Frank Davis
Chief Integrated Vascular
Surgery Resident
University of Michigan



1. How did you use the funding from the Resident Research Award?

As the recipient of the 2018 VESS Resident Research Award, I used the funds to explore the mechanistic causes of abdominal aortic aneurysm (AAA) formation. AAA are a life-threatening cardiovascular disease characterized by an inflammatory macrophage phenotype that contributes to pathological vascular remodeling and predisposes patients to the potentially fatal consequence of aortic rupture. Identifying the mechanisms regulating macrophage-mediated inflammation during AAA development are of critical importance to developing novel pharmacological therapies to prevent AAA progression. Recent evidence indicates that epigenetic enzymes, specifically the histone demethylase JMJD3, play a critical role in establishing tissue macrophage phenotype. Using both human tissue samples and a mouse model of AAAs, we uncovered that JMJD3 regulates macrophage inflammation and pathological aortic dilation. Further we established that pharmacological inhibition of JMJD3 could prevent AAA development.

2. How did the Resident Research Award help you in your professional development? What professional achievements came from this Award?

The Resident Research Award was extremely important for my professional and academic development. From a research standpoint this award provided me with the finances to establish a murine aortic aneurysm model at our institution and pursue novel single cell sequencing analysis from human tissue samples collected from the operating room. Through these projects I was able to collaborate with multiple faculty in Departments of Immunology, Pathology and Dermatology in order to build my research network and allow me to acquire new research techniques. The data generated from this grant was presented at multiple national meetings including the Society of Vascular Surgery Vascular Research Initiatives Conference, the Society of Vascular Medicine Conference during which we were awarded the resident research prize, and the Association of Immunology Conference. During these conferences, I was able to network with other vascular surgeon-scientists and obtain insights on career development topics such as time management, the benefits and pitfalls of acquiring administrative roles, and maximizing grant funding opportunities. Most importantly, the work from this Award was published in the *Journal of Experimental Medicine* (PMID 33779682) and provide the key preliminary data for obtain a National Institutes of Health RO1 grant for which I am a Co-Investigator.

3. What advice would you have for young vascular surgeons who are starting out and applying for grants?

As you embark on a career as a surgeon scientist, applying for research grants, including IRB regulation, data collection, and manuscript publication, is a valuable lesson for an academic vascular surgery. Indeed, it is still one I am constantly learning each day. When working on grant applications, first it is essential to establish a diverse mentorship team consisting of senior surgeons and research scientists who will help you navigate the waters of clinical obligations and research goals. These trusted advisors can provide important advice on the overall progress of your research pursuits, review specific aims, and aid in the establishments of connections that allow you to accomplish your experimental goals. Second, it is important to take advantage of all opportunities to present your data at departmental or interdepartmental research meetings to get diverse and meaningful feedback. After all, during grant study sections (both at the national and societal level) a diverse array of experienced researchers will be evaluating your submission. By presenting you data broadly and hearing multiple opinions before the submission you can improve your grant so that it will be well received by a diverse audience. Lastly, and probably most importantly, persistence is key. Like surgery, perfection in research and grant writing comes with continual practice, incorporating grant critiques into new experimental ideas, and ultimately turning weaknesses into strengths.

4. Looking back, how did the VESS Resident Research Award influence your career?

This award was instrumental in launching my academic career. Perhaps mostly because it taught me the process of grant writing and showed me the value in identifying good mentors. Further it allowed me the opportunity to take an experimental plan and bring it to completion while experiencing all the trials and triumphs that come along with a research career. The VESS Resident Research Award gave me the opportunity to confirm my desire to enter the field of a vascular surgeon-scientist and I am very grateful to VESS for this.

5. What do you see as the most valuable thing the VESS has to offer the young surgeon?

VESS is a fantastic organization for junior surgeons to become involved in prominent national society at an early point in their career. Through its diverse community of faculty, fellows/residents, and medical students, it provides a valuable platform for surgeons to meet colleagues, establish mentorship, share excitements and concerns all while grow together in the field of vascular surgery. I look forward to many more VESS meetings in the future.

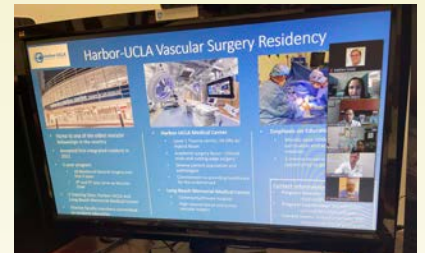
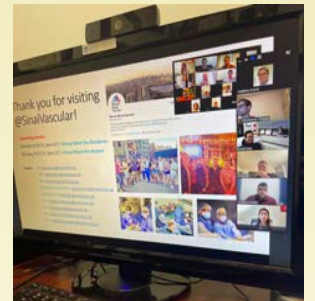
Social Media Update



Our social media presence continues to expand. We have nearly **2,500 Twitter followers** and almost **700 Instagram followers**, and send posts on topics pertaining to our society **2-3 times per week**. Since starting our YouTube channel in April 2020, we have had almost **4,000 views of 42 videos** that have been uploaded. These include educational and surgical technique videos as well as presentations from the VESS Winter Meeting that are uploaded every week. If you missed the meeting or want to review one of the talks you saw, check it out and be sure to subscribe to get updates on newly uploaded videos. This valuable resource can be accessed via **YouTube** directly or our website (<https://vesurgery.org/>). If you haven't already, follow us on **Twitter** (@VESurgery) and **Instagram** (@VESurgery), and feel free to tag us in Tweets/Instagram posts pertaining to our society, meetings, and vascular topics! Send any recommendations for social media topics to the communication committee; we are always looking for ways to engage our membership and remain current.

Virtual Residency Fair

The second annual VESS virtual residency fair was held in September of this year. **138 medical students** took part in this experience which included a residency panel discussion about the match and interview process with current vascular trainees followed by time to visit with individual programs via separate Zoom rooms. **Forty-six integrated vascular surgery programs** participated from across the country, and interested students had the opportunity to see short descriptions of the participating programs on the VESS website. The descriptions also contained the individual program's website links allowing a more in depth investigation of programs. The participating students were enrolled as "student members" in the VESS and will hopefully stay involved in the society as they move through their training. One participating student reported, *"I absolutely loved this residency fair. I hope it continues for many years and I would be willing to help make that happen. The residency fair attendance by faculty, residents, and trainees was phenomenal and I appreciate the opportunity to visit a few more programs than I otherwise would have."* Given the success of the event, the VESS is looking into hosting a virtual fellowship fair later in the year for current general surgery trainees entering the vascular surgery fellowship match. Stay tuned for more information!



2021 Spring Meeting Recap



Despite the prediction that the pandemic would fizzle out by the summer of 2021, it would seem that the pandemic is still alive and well. However, this thankfully did not prevent the SVS and VESS from having a successful in-person meeting this past August in San Diego. It was clear by the robust attendance that Zoom fatigue was very real and there was a great yearning for the energy and camaraderie of an in-person meeting. The excitement of being in-person (for many the first time in over a year) was palpable.

The VESS had a very successful session held on Wednesday August 18th, 2021 from 12:45 – 6:30 pm. Unlike prior years, the VESS session this year was held in the main ballroom and the turnout for the event did not disappoint. The session was complete with the return to live discussants and despite a COVID surge in parts of the United States, only 2 presentations had to be converted to the preloaded version.

We congratulate the VESS Spring Program Committee led by **Dr. Shang Loh** (Chair), and included **Drs. Caitlin Hicks, Bjoern Suckow, and Karen Woo**, who are completing their second year on the program committee. They were joined by **Drs. Sharon Kiang, Nathan Liang, and Jeffrey Siracuse**, who are in their first year of the two-year commitment. They worked with the SVS/VESS Joint Program Committee led by **Dr. Andy Schanzer** to select a spectacular line-up of papers for our session.

A total of **662 abstracts** were submitted to VAM. We selected **twenty-six (26) abstracts** for the Spring Program. This included five presentations on aortic disease, four presentations on cerebrovascular disease, three presentations on peripheral vascular disease, with the remainder of the **14 abstracts** covering topics in vascular education, surgeon wellness, venous disease, reno-visceral occlusive disease, trauma, and disparities. All of the presenter did an excellent job with great audience engagement. **Seventeen discussants** were selected consisting of senior trainees and first year attendings who did an outstanding job asking insightful questions and stimulating discussion.

We were extremely excited this year to be able to compile a very inclusive program and worked hard to ensure that we were able to include participants from a wide number of institutions. We had authors spanning across **21 different institutions** with discussants selected from 16 different institutions. Together, the presenters and discussants represented **34 unique institutions** which is outstanding to be able to represent so many different institutions. This inclusiveness really demonstrates VESS' commitment to diversity and promotion of the young vascular surgeon. All projects will be considered for potential publication in the *Journal of Vascular Surgery*.



2022 VESS Call For Leadership Volunteers



The Vascular and Endovascular Surgery Society continues to grow and be THE Society for Early Career Vascular Surgeons. The Executive Council is pleased to announce an open **Call for Volunteers** to serve on one or more of the many VESS Committees. Both nominations of other members and self-nominations are invited.

Active members in good standing are eligible to serve as are Candidate Members. Kindly let us know if you would like to participate by emailing the Administrative Office and include which Committee would be of interest. Though not required, including a brief paragraph indicating why you would like to serve may be helpful to the Nominating Committee and Executive Council members who will consider all appointments.

Unless otherwise indicated, most terms begin in February of each year with most committee business being conducted by conference call. In many instances, committee members rotate up to chair during their final year. Committee chairs and Society representatives are invited to attend the Executive Council meetings twice annually during the Annual Meeting in the winter and the spring meeting held at VAM.

To volunteer visit the VESS website (www.vesurgery.org/about/officers-committees) by Wednesday, January 5, 2022.

The following committees have openings for nominations:

SPRING PROGRAM COMMITTEE (2 Year Term)

Committee members work collaboratively with the SVS Program Committee to select abstracts for the VESS spring meeting in conjunction with VAM. Term begins in June, 2021.

ANNUAL (WINTER) PROGRAM COMMITTEE (2 Year Term)

Committee members review and select abstracts for the Annual Meeting and assist in the development of the scientific program.

COMMUNICATIONS: WEBSITE SUB-COMMITTEE (2 Year Term)

Reviews existing website, suggest changes and updates and new ideas.

COMMUNICATIONS: NEWSLETTER SUB-COMMITTEE (2 Year Term)

Develop, write and review content for three issues of the VESS Newsletter annually.

WOMEN & DIVERSITY COMMITTEE (4 Year Term)

The purpose of this committee is to identify and promote ways to address minority issues in vascular surgery and encourage women and minorities to actively participate in the Society and its committees. It is also responsible for fostering the VESS Mentor Program each year.

FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE (3 Year Term)

Research and implement comprehensive fundraising campaigns to support Society initiatives. Assist in the fundraising for the annual winter meeting. Help to identify industry with an interest in vascular surgery that may want to support the Society in some way.

GRANTS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE (2 Year Term)

Review applications and select winners for awards (Travel, Resident Research and Early Career Faculty). Also review any requests to survey the VESS membership and submit recommendation to the Executive Council.

MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (2 Year Term)

Assist with member recruitment strategy when necessary. Review list of applicants and present nominations for membership to the Executive Council for review before final vote during the Annual Business Meeting.

BYLAWS COMMITTEE (3 Year Term)

Review the by-laws from time-to-time as directed by the Council and make recommendations regarding amendments. Assist with the development of official policies & procedures for Society business.

VASCULAR RESIDENCY ISSUES COMMITTEE (2 Year Term)

Develop programs (i.e.: Technology Forum, Fellows Program) and address issues of vascular trainees.

STUDENT EDUCATION COMMITTEE (2 Year Term)

Develop program and address issues for medical students interested in a vascular surgery career.

Vascular and Endovascular Surgery Society
100 Cummings Ctr., Suite 124A
Beverly, MA 01915



SAVE THE DATES!



ANNUAL
SPRING
MEETING

(in conjunction with VAM)

June 15-18, 2022
Hynes Convention Center
Boston, MA