As I complete my term as president-elect and program chair and assume the role as the 55th president of the Society of Women in Urology, it is done with a great sense of pride, humility, and responsibility. I want to thank Dorrie Lamb for her tremendous leadership as president this last year, as well as the SWIU board and staff of WJ Weiser for contributing to such a successful year.

We are an organization dedicated to the professional development of women in all areas of urological practice and research. Recognizing unique challenges faced by women due to gender-defined differences in communication and leadership styles, we acknowledge the need for dedicated training in the areas of professional and leadership development to enable women to truly “lean in,” to maintain an influential seat at the table and realize their full career potential. We are indebted to the women who blazed many trails before us and look to foster women who will blaze many more in the future.

The 2017 year was great for SWIU; we have a lot to be proud of. At our 6th Annual Clinical Mentoring Conference in Fort Lauderdale January of 2017, we had the largest participation thus far. Thanks to our national female experts in urology, we provided a robust educational program with didactics and hands-on cadaver training for a wide variety of male and female pelvic floor disorders and reconstructive surgery. We added more opportunities to highlight resident and fellow accomplishments via abstract podium presentations, while furthering their future ability to shine by incorporating timely constructive feedback relating to effective presentation skills for all participants.

Furthering our goal of fostering the WHOLE female urologist, Shelley Hammell, president of Sage Alliance, a Leadership Performance Company (thesagealliance.com), shared tips about professional presence, effective and powerful communication, and the importance of personal “branding.”

Other highlights included SWIU member Hadley Wood, MD, who led a workshop on mindfulness and gratitude to introduce the health/stress management benefits of mindful and appreciative inquiry practices, and SWIU member Jen Anger, MD, who got us all moving and grooving with a heart-pumping, soul-filled, Latin-inspired Zumba routine.
PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE CONTINUED

Our 7th Annual Clinical Mentoring Conference will be in Las Vegas, Jan. 19-21, 2018. Program Chair and President-elect, Teresa Beam, MD, has been hard at work putting together another great program. The theme for this meeting is “A Day in the Life of a General Urologist,” and will call on national experts to provide practical tips on a wide variety of urological conditions, both adult and pediatric. Hope to see you all there!

We were honored to have both AUA Secretary Monoj Monga, MD and AUA President Brantley Thrasher, MD, who provided an inspirational summary of the tremendous contributions of women in the field of urology, at our SWIU Annual Breakfast Meeting in Boston. Kathleen Cooney, MD, chair and professor of internal medicine at the University of Utah (the first woman to hold this position!) further discussed the positive impact of having more women in leadership positions, both academic and otherwise. Women are changing the statistics as many medical school classes are now at least 50 percent women, and urology programs today include 25 percent women. Here we also celebrated the election of the first woman to the AUA Board of Directors, Ann Gormley, MD, professor of surgery (urology) at Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center in New Hampshire. Congratulations, Dr. Gormley!

I recently came across yet another article that points out the inequality between men and women in the professional setting, which is attributed to unconscious gender bias. In this multi-institutional study between Northwestern, University of Kentucky, and Stanford, a significant unconscious bias against female residents was recognized in the degree of surgical autonomy given to thoracic surgery trainees, even when controlling for factors such as case difficulty and level of training. Furthermore, talented women tend to underestimate their skills, and perhaps even second-guess themselves with thoughts such as, “Are we good enough? Is there a possibility of failure?” Whereas equally talented men are more likely to either overestimate or inflate their skills. This unsupported overconfidence, however, can lead to bias favoring men, and can keep women from getting opportunities that will keep them on track for top leadership roles. It is therefore important to recognize that unconscious bias and gender inequality exists and ensure more education and introspection to encourage conscious, dedicated effort that facilitates more autonomy to female trainees and support for those on a career path for “their corner office.”

Our mission at SWIU is to help provide women urologists – where ever they are on their career path – with the tools and skills necessary to set themselves up for future success via mentorship, professional, and leadership development training, and ever-so-important networking. SWIU provides an environment to cultivate and nurture professional relationships that prove enlightening and empowering, enabling women to THRIVE!

I look forward to seeing you at our 7th Annual Clinical Mentoring Conference – Viva Las Vegas!

Suzette

Please consider supporting our female urologists (and researchers) in training to enable them to attend the SWIU Clinical Mentoring Conference!

The SWIU board actively seeks support for resident travel awards to our SWIU 7th Annual Clinical Mentoring Conference. These travel awards are primarily made possible through the generous donations of SWIU members and through educational grants by industry. Several AUA sections also actively support the travel of female resident members to the SWIU Annual Clinical Mentoring Conference. To support a travel awardee, the donation is $750.

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Lifetime Member Publishes First Novel

Congratulations to Martha Boone, MD, a lifetime member of SWIU, who just published her first novel entitled, “The Big Free.”

This hilarious book describes the medical humor and drama in the life of one of the first women surgeons in the busiest trauma surgery program at Charity Hospital in New Orleans in 1982.

The excitement and dark humor of the inner city emergency room is the background for this coming of age story.

Only a great storyteller with inside knowledge can capture the intimacy of the lives of doctors, nurses, and their patients.

Readers will laugh and cry and long to know more of the spirited, young, female-doctor protagonist.

Check it out on Amazon.

Dr. Boone will be available for a book signing at our 7th Annual Clinical Mentoring Conference in Las Vegas.

If you have any SWIU member updates, an article or item of interest you would like considered for publication in the 2017 SWIU Winter Newsletter, please send submissions to info@swiu.org.
The 2017 SWIU Annual Meeting at the AUA was held at the Boston Westin on Sunday, May 14, 2017. The keynote speaker, Kathleen Cooney, MD, is the University of Utah School of Medicine Department of Internal Medicine Chair.

In her presentation, “Women in Urology: Changing the Statistics,” Dr. Cooney discussed the current status of women in the urologic workforce, her personal journey of leadership in academic medicine, and strategies for improving the work of women in urology through education on implicit gender bias and mentoring.

Dr. Cooney’s path in academic medicine began with her undergraduate degree in biochemistry at Dartmouth College in New Hampshire.

She then attended medical school at the University of Pennsylvania and completed an internal medicine residency and hematology/oncology fellowship training at the University of Michigan where she also served as division chief of hematology/oncology.

This brought her to her current position at the University of Utah as a professor and chair of the department of internal medicine. Her research focuses on the genetics, epidemiology, and treatment of localized and advanced prostate cancer.

She manages a sprawling clinical enterprise among the divisions of internal medicine, has an active and funded research operation, and provides administrative and organization leadership for the department.

With this impressive context of leadership in clinical medicine, she carefully examined the current state of women within the field of urology.

- Women are a small but growing percentage of the urology workforce. As of 2016, there were 1,032 women urologists (8.5 percent).
- The majority of women urologists are less than 45 years old, most are white, and the majority work in populations with more than one million people.
- Women trainees now represent 23 percent of residents, are more likely to pursue fellowship in areas of female pelvic medicine and pediatric urology.
- Women urologists are more likely to work in academic medical centers where there are few female urologists in senior positions, with the highest representation of women at 19 percent in the rank of assistant professor.
- There are three women in the position of urologic chairs: Dr. Cheryl Lee at Ohio State University, Dr. Eila Skinner at Stanford, and Dr. Martha Terris at Medical College of Georgia.
- Research funding rate and amount appears equal across gender within urology, and first and last female authorship has shown a remarkable increase.
- Women urologists earn less than men by approximately 20 percent.
- Women report high rates of satisfaction in life and with the decision to enter urology and equal rates of burnout.

Dr. Cooney spoke from experience and expertise that implicit gender bias operates subconsciously and can affect women in the workplace, negatively impacting opportunity, self-confidence, and the perception that success is possible. We can, however, become more aware of these implicit stereotypes that influence opinions of women in male-dominated fields.

She proposed mentoring throughout the career trajectory as a method of bolstering the success of women and adding light to the path forward.

She urged the audience to select a mentor, set goals, act upon feedback, and encourage those positioned to sponsor others through introductions and recommendations for key opportunities.

SWIU would like to thank Dr. Cooney for her thoroughly referenced presentation of the vital statistics of women in urology and for her call for action on education of implicit bias and mentoring as solutions that are critical to the career advancement of women.

We commend her on a career of achievement in rising through the ranks of academic medicine. Her example is a source of inspiration! We congratulate her as an honorary SWIU member.
Elizabeth Pickett Research Award Winner

The Elizabeth Pickett Research Award recognizes research achievements of trainees working in urologic research. It serves not only to commemorate the lifetime achievements of the first board certified female urologist in the United States, but also to highlight the contributions of these young trainees working in urologic research. The award is supported by a generous contribution by Dr. Pickett’s estate, as well as donations by friends and colleagues. This year’s award winner is Dr. Courtney Shepard from the University of Alabama School of Medicine.

Dr. Shepard’s work focuses on defining the experiences of sexual health care of young women with spina bifida and their urologists. Interestingly, although very few women with spina bifida over the age of 18 have ever discussed reproductive health with a physician, nearly half of them are sexually active by the age of 25.

Surprisingly, many young women with spina bifida (SB) feel that because of their disability, the sexual education taught in school does not apply to them. Most surprising is that more than 90 percent of these young women do not use any form of contraception, putting them at risk for unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases. Dr. Shepard will test the hypothesis that, although pediatric urologists report interest in providing sexual health education, they may have discomfort with addressing it, in part due to a lack of knowledge about sexual and reproductive health specific to SB, a poor understanding of what the young women would like to discuss, and that there are barriers to providing such care. She also hypothesizes that young women with SB will lack knowledge or have misconceptions regarding their sexuality and reproductive health while being sexually active or interested in sexual activity. During the course of her studies, she will seek to discover and analyze both the urologists’ perspectives on their preparedness to provide information to spina bifida patients on their sexual and reproductive health and will learn what the patients themselves wish to know about this topic. The goal is to utilize a questionnaire to a large sample of pediatric urologists to determine their training needs.

Dr. Shepard received her MD in 2010 from the University of Missouri at Columbia School of Medicine. She then did her urology residency training at the University of Alabama-Birmingham from 2010-2015. Since July 2015, Dr. Shepard has been a pediatric urology fellow at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan. Dr. Shepard has received a number of awards and honors both during her residency, medical school, and undergraduate training. Her publication and her medical volunteer experiences attest to her passion for clinical urology and specifically the challenges for spina bifida patients, as well as her commitment to volunteer her time and effort to helping patients in need.

Dr. Pickett was the first female surgeon who completed a fellowship in urologic oncology at Memorial Sloan Kettering Hospital. She passed her general surgery boards in 1961 and became the first female board certified urologist in 1962. Despite the few women who followed her in those early years to become urologists, she pursued her career with vigor and enthusiasm. It is fitting that this award honors this outstanding urologic researcher.

To find out more about this award and download the application and submit nominations, visit swiu.org/awards/elizabeth-pickett-research-award.aspx.
In January 2018, SWIU is hosting its 7th Annual Clinical Mentoring Conference at the beautiful Hilton Lake Las Vegas Resort & Spa in Henderson, Nevada. This meeting has grown steadily over the past six years, and one of the most enthusiastic groups of participants are residents. They are particularly appreciative of the collegial and supportive environment in their research, network with other women students, residents, and fellows during his tenure there.

In addition, Dr. McCammon has been extremely active in IVUMed and worked with many residents abroad in countries such as Senegal, Kenya, and Nigeria, offering a unique perspective for trainees. He continues to serve as both a personal and professional role model for both female and male urologists making him quite deserving of the Christina Manthos mentorship award. This year, competition for the Manthos Award was particularly strong. Dr. McCammon was selected for the positive influence and support he provides to his trainees.

Residents Receive Important Opportunities With Travel Awards; Donate Today!

In the words of his nominator, Dr. Jennifer Bepple, a urologist with Central Maryland Urology Associates, “Dr. McCammon was always the attending that we could depend on for his surgical skill and knowledge, but equally important was how he modeled a relationship with his staff and patients that we could strive for in our future careers. There was never a doubt that he had our backs.”

SWIU congratulates Dr. Kurt McCammon on this accomplishment and for embodying the qualities of Christina Manthos in his continued advocacy for and guidance to women in urology.

Please consider making a donation to the Resident Travel Award Fund. Individual awards are for $750, which includes $100 for meeting event fees, so award recipients can participate in all aspects of the meeting. A donation can be made securely online at wjweis.association-service.org/securesite/swiu/awards/travel-donation.aspx.

You will be recognized for your generosity both on the SWIU website and at the meeting – and you will also know that you positively contributed to a young woman’s career.
Dr. Susan Kasper received the 2017 SBUR/SWIU Award for Excellence in Urological Research. Dr. Kasper’s academic path was diverse. She first studied in the department of forestry at the University of British Columbia for two years prior to attending the Bodenseehof School in Friedrich Shafen, Germany. In 1981 she received her MSc in physiology/endocrinology from the department of physiology, faculty of medicine at the University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. She continued her training at Winnipeg and then received her PhD in physiology in 1984. She stayed on as a PhD fellow prior to moving to the Farber Cancer Institute at Harvard Medical School, where she was a Medical Research Council of Canada Postdoctoral Fellow. She then undertook additional post-doctoral fellowship training at the department of molecular medicine, New England Medical Center Hospital in Boston, which was also funded by the Medical Research Council of Canada. After about eight years as an assistant professor in the department of urologic surgery and departments of cancer biology and cell and developmental biology at Vanderbilt University Medical Center in Nashville, TN, she moved to be a tenured associate professor in the department of environmental health at the college of medicine at the University of Cincinnati in Ohio.

Dr. Kasper is best known for her work in the field of prostate cancer research. She is well-funded for her work in prostate cancer. Her research studies have asked basic questions concerning the control of prostate growth and the signaling pathways altered in prostate cancer. She used advanced molecular technologies to understand prostate functions most recently focused on human prostate stem-progenitor cells and the differences in the stem cell niches in the normal and disease states. Her recent work also focuses on estrogen regulation of these human prostate stem-progenitor cells. Throughout her career, her research focused on using a variety of animal and in vitro models to understand the mechanisms of progression of prostate cancer to androgen-independence, as well as basic regulation of prostate development and growth stimulation and inhibition through several signaling pathways.

Susan has received a number of awards and honors. Most notably, she has received support from the National Institutes of Health (NCI, NIDDK, NICHD), the USAMRMC Prostate Cancer Research Program (DOD), and various foundations such as CaPCURE. She has reviewed prostate cancer grants for the DOD and the NIH, completing many grant reviews each year. Susan has been extremely active in the SBUR, serving on the planning committee for numerous annual meetings, as chair of the byLaws and membership committees, and also as member at large on the SBUR Executive Board. She is also active in the Endocrine Society and contributes her time tirelessly to these responsibilities. Of note, Dr. Kasper is also a singer who was a Soprano II at the Nashville Symphony Chorus for more than 10 years, so she is definitely a woman of many talents!

In recognition of these achievements and for her contributions to urologic research in general, and prostate cancer research in particular, the Society for Basic Urologic Research and the Society of Women in Urology honor Dr. Kasper with this year’s Award for Excellence in Urological Research. Congratulations, Dr. Kasper!
Apply for the Resident Travel Award

Applications are due no later than September 25, 2017.

SWIU is proud to offer Resident Travel Awards to enable residents to attend the SWIU 7th Annual Clinical Mentoring Conference. This Award serves to subsidize the travel expenses for a female resident to attend the conference.

Awardees attend the entire meeting January 19 – 21, 2018.

The monetary value of the SWIU Resident Travel Award is $650. Recipients also receive complimentary registration worth $100.

For more information and to apply, visit swiu.org/awards/resident-travel-award.aspx

Call for Abstract Submissions

Submission Deadline: September 15, 2017 at 11:59 p.m. CT (US and Canada).

SWIU is pleased to announce the return of the scientific podium session during the 7th Annual Clinical Mentoring Conference exclusively for urology residents, fellows, and interested medical students.

Abstracts submitted to other meetings in the previous 12 months are acceptable, but previously published works are not eligible. Duplicate abstracts from the same date set/patient cohort will be outright rejected. The podium and poster sessions will serve not only as a forum for dissemination of original research, but also provide a learning opportunity as the presenters receive feedback on presentation style and quality of slides in a separate session.

Topics include: benign prostatic hyperplasia, epidemiology/socioeconomic, infertility, sexual dysfunction, oncology, pediatrics, trauma, reconstruction, stone disease, lower urinary tract disorders, pelvic floor disorders, practice management, quality improvement/safety, and education.

The applications and complete submission rules can be found at abstracts.swiu.org

AUA Accepting Applications for the 2018 Research Scholars Program

The application deadline is September 13, 2017.

The AUA Research Scholar Program is accepting applications for at least 16 funding opportunities which provide $40,000 per year for one- and two- year mentored training. These awards are the leading funding opportunity available through the Urology Care Foundation and AUA. Funding is available for clinical and postdoctoral fellows who are no more than five years beyond completing a doctorate or residency and early career investigators who are in the first five years after beginning a faculty position.

For more information and to apply, visit auanet.org/research/funding-opportunities/research-scholar-award
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