



Vision. Leadership. Scholarship.

AATS Update

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR THORACIC SURGERY

VOL. 2 | ISSUE 1 | MARCH 2020



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Vaughn A. Starnes, MD

Given recent events, the AATS Aortic Symposium and AATS 100th Annual Meeting will not take place in April 2020. I would like to thank the 2020 Program Committees for their tireless efforts in developing an innovative scientific program. It is my hope, perhaps even by the time you are reading this, that the meetings will be rescheduled.

The decision not to hold our meetings in April was made after careful and thoughtful deliberations and the rapid developments around the spread of COVID-19 — including travel bans by many institutions preventing presenters and members from attending, as well as the State of Emergency declaration in New York.

The health, safety, and well-being of our attendees, members, exhibitors, staff, and vendors are of paramount importance. We thank you for understanding the extreme complexity of this decision and for your commitment to the success of AATS and its meetings.

As the 100th president of the Association, I am honored to play a part in marking this important moment in our history, and I hope that you and our fellow surgeons will join us when our next Annual Meeting takes place. We will continue to learn together and engage in important dialogue with our current and future innovators.

AATS asks for patience as we evaluate our next steps and all possible options. Stay tuned for more information, which will be communicated as it becomes available. ▼



SECRETARY'S REPORT

David R. Jones, MD

Throughout the last quarter, the Board has focused its attention on continuing to provide meaningful volunteer leadership positions for AATS members.

Education Committee

A taskforce has been established to reassess the Education Committee's role within the Association and identify ways to increase communication and coordination across all AATS educational activities. The taskforce, led by Drs. J. William Gaynor, Education Committee Chair, and Todd K. Rosengart, Education Director, and comprised of Drs. Gorav Ailawadi, Alexander A. Brescia, Edward P. Chen, Stephanie Fuller, Daniela Molena, and Y. Joseph Woo, will conduct an assessment on AATS educational offerings across all platforms to identify their best serving oversight role. This group's mission is of the utmost importance as the dissemination of knowledge and commitment to lifelong learning continues to be a core value of our organization and members.

AATS Online Committee

In December 2019, the AATS Board appointed Drs. Frederick Y. Chen and Edward P. Chen to serve as Co-Chairs of the AATS Online Committee, succeeding Dr. Hartzell V. Schaff in this capacity. Drs. Chen

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AATS Update

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AATS Board of Directors

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University of Pittsburgh

Todd K. Rosengart

Baylor College of Medicine

Y. Joseph Woo

Stanford University

2020 New Members

The following individuals were accepted into membership for the 2019-2020 membership cycle:

Martin Andreas, MD

Pedro Becker, MD

Pramod Bonde, MD

Walter Douglas Boyd, MD

DuyKhanh Pham Ceppa, MD

Xin Chen, MD

Shiv Kumar Choudhary, MD

Michael D. Crittenden, MD

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Fadil Gradica, MD

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Masatsugu Hamaji, MD

Jeremiah Hayanga, MD

Narutoshi Hibino, MD

Tatu Juvonen, MD

David James Kaczorowski, MD

Fernando Lucchese, MD

Allison McLarty, MD

Olaf Mercier, MD

Robert E. Merritt, MD

Bart Meuris, MD

Thomas Modine, MD

Pradeep Narayan, MD

Ikenna Okereke, MD

Yoshio Otaki, MD

Jay D. Pal, MD

Sunil Prasad, MD

V Seenu Reddy, MD

R Taylor Ripley, MD

Florian Schoenhoff, MD

Pranava Sinha, MD

Harmik J. Soukiasian, MD

Kazuo Tanemoto, MD

George Tolis, Jr., MD

David Scott Winlaw, MD

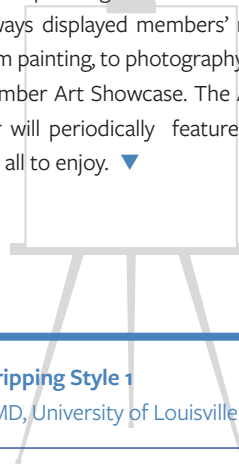
Hiroshi Yamamoto, MD

Haibo Zhang, MD

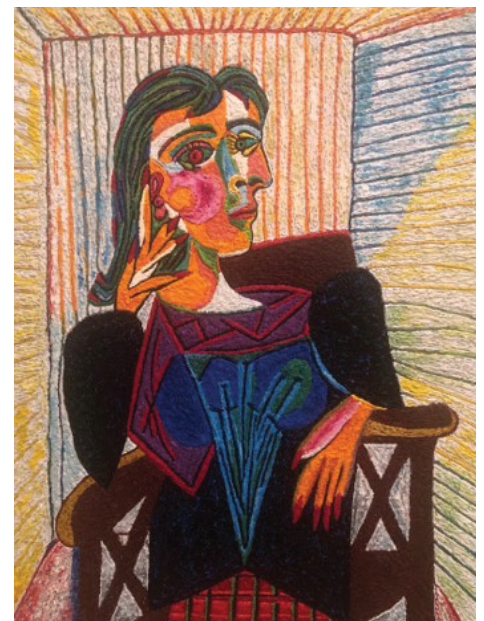
Daniel Zimpfer, MD

AATS Member Art Showcase

The AATS values the talents of our members both in and outside of the operating room. AATS Annual Meeting has always displayed members' many artistic talents, from painting to photography, and beyond, in the Member Art Showcase. The AATS Update newsletter will periodically feature submitted artwork for all to enjoy. ▼

**Picasso Pollack Dripping Style 1**

Bahaaldin Alsoufi, MD, University of Louisville



AATS

Surgical Treatment for Arrhythmias and Rhythm Disorders

**Save the Date**

October 2-3, 2020
Westin Boston Waterfront
Boston, MA, USA

aats.org/stars



New Member Profile

Bart Meuris, MD

New AATS members can participate in the Association in a variety of ways. Bart Meuris, MD, a Professor of Cardiac Surgery at the University Hospitals Leuven, became a member in 2020. He shares his thoughts on the AATS and how he plans to engage with the organization.

What was your first experience with the AATS? I remember going to my first AATS meeting in San Diego in 2001. I was still in training for surgery, and I combined that with work in our facility for Experimental Cardiac Surgery, which allowed me close access to various research projects. In my opinion, the AATS Annual Meeting has always offered the highest level of scientific content, both in the pure clinical field and in basic science.

How do you plan on becoming involved and engaged in the AATS organization? As a European surgeon, I can plan to contribute in the review processes for either the Annual Meeting or for submissions to JTCVS. I am convinced that some “transatlantic” crosstalk between North American surgeons and European experts really contributes to better knowledge creation and an improved transaction of experience.

How did your mentors impact your career? I am grateful for the impact my mentors have had on my career. My main activity apart from the clinical work is doing a lot of animal experimental work. I fondly recall how Dr. Patrick McCarthy once introduced me in a session on new valves as “the guy who even makes talking about sheep interesting”. This is a statement I still take as a compliment! Of course, I am very much indebted to Dr. Willem Flameng, who truly taught me everything I know.

What was the first paper you had published in the JTCVS? The first paper I had published in the JTCVS was a large paper on the pre-clinical evaluation of tissue valves. One of my main points of interest has always been the experimental evaluation of new devices, valves, and materials. Since 1999, we have been expanding our animal facility to perform several research projects which can be either academic (investigator-driven research) or industry-driven. Given the scope of all journals, JTCVS is the one we primarily submit our research to because the quality and efficacy of the review process is high. I believe it is one of the most read and respected journals in our field.



What are your interests outside of

cardiothoracic surgery? Since the agenda is always quite full, I like to spend as much as possible free time with my family. My wife works as a pharmacist and runs her own business, and I have three kids in high school. We love to travel, see the world, and above all, we love great food! ▼

NEWS



Dr. Kazu Yasufuku of Toronto General Hospital receiving award from Prime Minister of Japan, Mr. Shinzo Abe

Yasufuku Receives Award

AATS Member Dr. Kazu Yasufuku from Toronto General Hospital, University of Toronto, together with Olympus Corporation, was awarded the third Japan Medical Research and Development Grand Prize, Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare Award from the Government of Japan. Of note were the achievements in the “development of EBUS-TBNA (endobronchial ultrasound-guided needle biopsy) system”, recognizing the remarkable and significant national and global impact to society and health care. The award was presented by the Prime Minister of Japan, Mr. Shinzo Abe, at his official residence on January 10, 2020.

Dr. Yasufuku is a thoracic surgeon in the Division of Thoracic Surgery at Toronto General Hospital, University Health Network (UHN). He is the Director of the Interventional Thoracic Surgery Program and the Director of Endoscopy at UHN. He is also a Professor in the Department of Surgery at the University of Toronto. His clinical and research interests are in thoracic oncology, focusing on innovations in advanced diagnostics, staging, and ultra-minimally invasive surgery. ▼



2020-2021 Meetings



Cardiovascular Valve Symposium
September 19-20, 2020
Shanghai, China



Surgical Treatment for Arrhythmias and Rhythm Disorders
October 2-3, 2020
Boston, MA, USA



Clinical Trials Methods Course
October 22-24, 2020
Durham, NC, USA



International Thoracic Surgical Oncology Summit
October 30-31, 2020
New York, NY, USA



AATS/JATS Mitral Conclave
November 1, 2020
Nagoya, Japan



Focus on Thoracic Surgery: Lung and Esophageal Cancer
November 21-22, 2020
Fuzhou, China



AATS/ASCVTS Postgraduate Course
March 3, 2021
Nara, Japan



Mitral Conclave
April 29-30, 2021
New York, NY, USA



101st Annual Meeting
May 1-4, 2021
Seattle, WA, USA

Secretary's Message continued

and Chen were selected for this role as a result of their continued service on AATS activities as volunteer leaders, and their expertise and knowledge of digital platforms. On behalf of the Board, I am proud to say that Drs. Chen and Chen will continue to build on the hard work and leadership that Dr. Schaff has provided this Committee in the past and will help navigate the Association in the digital age. Among many tasks on the Committee's purview, they will focus their efforts on continuing to improve the Association's online presence and provide unique digital offerings for the membership and the cardiothoracic surgical community.

Committee Self-Nominations

All AATS members have the opportunity to submit a self-nomination to participate on AATS and AATS Foundation committees and representative positions. Both Boards consider self-nominees when identifying members to serve in volunteer positions with vacancies. In addition to submitting your self-nomination, we also encourage you to update your cardiothoracic interests on your AATS Member Account to help the Board better understand your areas of focus. Throughout the year, the Association receives requests from affiliate organizations for AATS members to serve as representatives on workforces/meetings and will refer to the listing of self-nominees along with their interests to identify a member for each position. Your Board will be finalizing the 2020 Committee appointments in March but will continue to keep the self-nomination portal live year-round to ensure that any member who is interested in becoming involved in AATS activities can be considered. The link to the nomination portal resides under the "membership" section of AATS.org. Although there are a limited number of open positions each year, your Board established a benchmark that at least 40% of all open positions are filled with self-nominees.

All members of our Association have a proven record of distinction within the specialty and have made significant contributions to the care and treatment of cardiothoracic disease throughout the world. The Board hopes that you each continue to bring that level of commitment and leadership to your engagement in our Association. Thank you for encouraging self nominations amongst your peers to foster an inclusive and engaged leadership. ▼



International Initiatives

Marc R. Moon, MD

Since its inception, the American Association for Thoracic Surgery has truly been an international organization. The inaugural officers in 1917 were all originally from outside America: President Samuel Meltzer from Russia, Vice-President Willy Meyer from Germany, and Secretary-Treasurer Nathan Green from Sri Lanka (Ceylon). The first member who practiced outside North America was Georges Dehelly of LeHavre, France, who became a member at the first AATS meeting in 1918. In addition, the first paper ever published in the *Journal of Thoracic Surgery* in 1931 (renamed *The Journal of Thoracic and Cardiovascular Surgery* in 1959) was from China. In its 103 year existence, the AATS has had 100 presidents, 11 of whom were born outside of America.

Historically, approximately 50% of attendees at the AATS Annual Meeting are international. As such, the AATS Board has determined that international outreach should be a focus of interest of the Association. Marc R. Moon, AATS President-Elect, feels strongly that the AATS mission should foster international relations. "While a great number of attendees to our Annual Meeting come from outside North America, there are countless surgeons from around the world who do not have the means for international travel." Supporting the international focus, he goes on to say, "AATS leadership believes strongly that it is our responsibility to bring our educational offerings to those who cannot attend the Annual Meeting in person through a series of international outreach programs around the globe."

Recent initiatives have included AATS postgraduate courses in Brazil, India, China, Thailand, Taiwan, Russia, Japan, and Argentina, with plans underway for the Middle East. "I feel very strongly that AATS Vision, Leadership, and Scholarship should not be limited to North America, but should be shared around the globe." The AATS is dedicated to continuing support for international educational programs that promote bidirectional learning and foster a global thoracic surgical community. ▼

COMMITTEE HIGHLIGHTS



AATS Wellness Committee

Ross M. Bremner, MD

Chair, AATS Wellness Committee

How well are you? The literature is now full of the pervasive problem of burnout in medicine. Certainly the latest literature suggests that more than 40% of physicians in the United States have some degree of burnout.

The arduous nature of our work, the multiple changes that are occurring in medical bureaucracy, the loss of autonomy we experience, the EHR, and the potential challenges we face in our future reimbursement, all contribute in some way to this phenomenon. What is less clear is how pervasive this problem is within our own specialty, and among members of our association. What are the levels of our own resilience, and what tools are being used to prevent burnout? Further, for those that are not yet burned out, can they be doing something to increase their own resilience to prevent this problem as well as experience more joy in their day-to-day life?

The topic of wellness may seem somewhat ethereal to many of us, but the data now shows that well and happy physicians are better doctors, and better parents and spouses. What resources do we have, and what do we need to move the needle? I believe it is time that we took this conversation to the next level.

Although the April meeting has been put on hold, the association will be sending out a survey regarding wellness this year. We urge you to participate so that we can learn more about the issue among our membership, and what needs can be addressed! ▼



AATS Foundation Update

Contributions totaling \$1.3M from 455 generous donors and partners allowed the AATS Foundation to surpass the 2019 fundraising goal. An additional \$266,000 of funding was provided through the AATS matching grant, resulting in a total of \$1.6M invested in the next generation of cardiothoracic surgeons.



Funding will profoundly impact individual surgical scholarship, advance patient care in cardiothoracic surgery around the world, and continue our mission of supporting cardiothoracic surgeons in research and education. In the coming months, AATS Foundation leadership will be striving to expand the Foundation's reach and will encourage global academic exchange through structured programs and partnerships.

The 2020 AATS matching grant remains active. Each individual one-time gift of \$5,000 or more will be doubled, making each dollar you contribute twice as valuable. Make your donation today by visiting aatsfoundation.org. ▼

Impact the Future

Since its establishment in 2014, the AATS Foundation Surgical Investigator program has supported both clinical and translational research by providing young cardiothoracic surgical investigators with funding for projects focused on quality and outcomes research, studies of new and innovative

therapies, procedures, and technologies in cardiothoracic surgery. To date more than \$5M in NIH funding has been received by 23 recipients in the years following their receipt of the award, showing the phenomenal impact seed funding can have on the careers of young surgical scientists. In 2018, Dr. Nathalie Roy of Boston Children's Hospital was



Dr. Nathalie Roy, MD
Boston Children's Hospital

awarded the Oz Lemole Surgical Investigator Award for her project titled, "Improving the Value of Surgical Care with an Enhanced Recovery Program in Congenital Heart Surgery", and below is a summary of her experience.

I have always been interested in research, whether it was basic molecular biology during medical school, translational research in residency and fellowship, or now clinical research focused in critical and perioperative care. During my training and in my early career, I have had the honor to be mentored by many AATS past presidents and leaders of this association who have encouraged and fostered this

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Spring Award Applications

AATS Foundation Spring awards will be accepting applications shortly. Review the upcoming programs below to learn more about opportunities that may be of interest.

MULTI-SPECIALTY

Evarts A. Graham Memorial Traveling Fellowship

For international academic cardiothoracic surgeons to spend one year of study in North America.

AATS Foundation Gardner Lectureship

Bring an AATS member lecturer to your ACGME cardiothoracic surgery residency program.

ADULT CARDIAC

Advanced Valve Disease Educational Fellowship

Sponsored by Medtronic

For international early-career cardiothoracic surgeons to observe valvular heart disease specialists to enhance their knowledge of treatment and technical skills, and management of perioperative patients.

Denton A. Cooley Fellowship

For North American early-career cardiothoracic surgeons to study at the Texas Heart Institute and Baylor St. Luke's Medical Center.

Every Heartbeat Matters Valve Fellowship

Sponsored by Edwards Lifesciences Foundation

For international early-career cardiothoracic surgeons who are treating the underserved to

Continued on page 6

In 2019, the AATS Foundation provided **nearly 200** practicing surgeons, fellows, and residents with opportunities to **enhance their overall surgical knowledge and technical skills.**

advance their heart valve disease training and education at a host site in North America.

Honoring Our Cleveland Clinic Mentors Program

For North American cardiothoracic surgery residents in their penultimate year of training to participate in a full-day program at the Cleveland Clinic to obtain an understanding of the steps necessary to secure their first full-time position.

CONGENITAL

Aldo R. Castaneda Fellowship

For early-career Latin American congenital heart surgeons to train at a host institution in North America for up to three months.

Marc R. de Leval Fellowship

For North American early-career congenital heart surgeons to train at an institution in Europe or the United Kingdom for four to six weeks.

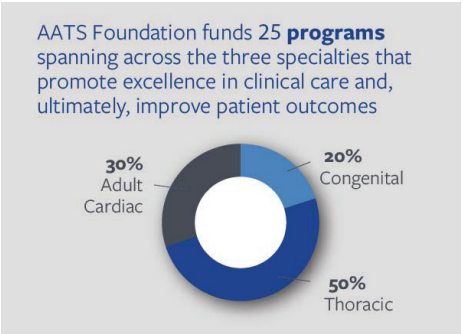
THORACIC

F. Griffith Pearson Fellowship

For young general thoracic surgeons who have finished their residencies to advance their clinical techniques at a North American host institution.

Jack A. Roth Fellowship in Thoracic Surgical Oncology

For early-career thoracic oncologic surgeons, or those interested in thoracic surgical oncology, to train at University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center for two to four weeks. ▼



interest. I started my career at the Massachusetts General Hospital where I focused on critical care and mechanical support. I was recruited back to Boston Children's Hospital by Dr. Pedro J. del Nido at the end of 2017 to help develop the surgical critical care and perioperative program. At the time, I was proposing ideas for perioperative care that required multidisciplinary collaborations across the heart center, and it was critical for me to obtain independent funding to develop the project further.

The AATS Surgical Investigator Program is designed to support outcomes and quality improvement research, so I felt that my project would be a good fit and applied.

The ERAS Cardiac program at Boston Children's hospital is a comprehensive evidence-based approach, targeting optimization throughout the patient's entire surgical journey, and aimed at the reduction of perioperative stress and inflammation. The goals are to accelerate functional recovery, reduce complications, shorten length of stay, improve patient and family satisfaction, and thus increase the value of surgical care.

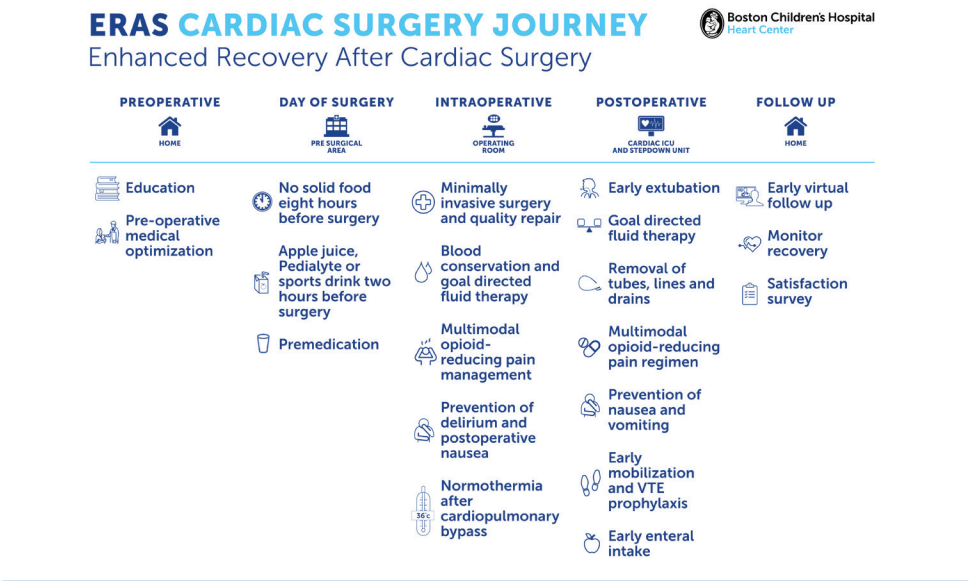


Figure 1. Major components of the ERAS C 1

In the year leading to the program, a multidisciplinary group led by a cardiac surgeon (NR) and a cardiac anesthesiologist reviewed literature in perioperative care pertinent to congenital cardiac surgery and our institution's data. Through an iterative process, we agreed on major components of a pediatric ERAS cardiac program based on evidence (Figure 1). We developed specific guidelines and metrics for our program and began discussions with providers across the heart center. ▼

To learn more about the various programs, visit aatsfoundation.org

Follow Us

The AATS is active on several social media channels. Follow us on:



AATS Foundation Congratulates the Following Awardees

Summer Intern Scholarship

Supported by Scanlan

Provides first- and second-year medical students with an eight-week summer internship in an AATS member's cardiothoracic surgery department.

2020 Recipients

Cameron Best

The Ohio State University College of Medicine

Host: Toshiharu Shinoka

Irina Kolesnik

University of Maryland School of Medicine

Host: Bartley P. Griffith

Syed Raza

University of Alabama at Birmingham

School of Medicine

Host: James K. Kirklin

Katherine Whitehouse

University of Louisville School of Medicine

Host: Rosemary F. Kelly

Matthew McGoldrick, II

Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine

Host: Ahmet Kilic

Richard Chaulk

University of Saskatchewan

Host: Gail Darling

Steven Yang

Washington University in St. Louis

Host: Marc R. Moon

Zihan Feng

University of Colorado

Host: Brett B. Reece

Mohammed Dairywala

McGovern Medical School at UTHealth

Host: Tom C. Nguyen

Ahmad Hider

University of Michigan

Host: Jules Lin

Nebojsa Oravec

University of Manitoba

Host: Rakesh C. Arora

New Editor for Operative Techniques

M. Blair Marshall, MD, Associate Surgeon, Division of Thoracic Surgery, Brigham and Women's Hospital, has been appointed Editor of *Operative Techniques in Thoracic and Cardiovascular Surgery: A Comparative Atlas (OpTechs)*. Previously, she was the Thoracic Associate Editor for *OpTechs*.



M. Blair Marshall, MD
Editor of *Operative
Techniques in Thoracic and
Cardiovascular Surgery*

Dr. Marshall is a graduate of Brown University and received her medical degree from Georgetown University School of Medicine, where she also completed a residency in general surgery. She completed her cardiothoracic fellowship at the University of Pennsylvania. She stayed on as faculty before being recruited to Georgetown as Chief of

Thoracic Surgery, where she received multiple awards for her teaching. She was subsequently recruited to Brigham and Women's Hospital and is currently the Michael A. Bell Family Distinguished Chair in Healthcare Innovation and the Associate Chief for Quality and Safety in the Division of Thoracic Surgery at Brigham and Women's Hospital, as well as Associate Surgeon at the V.A. Boston Health Care System.

Dr. Marshall's research and clinical interests include minimally invasive and robotic techniques for complex thoracic procedures, simulation, surgical education, and patient safety. ▼

Seminars in Thoracic and Cardiovascular Surgery to Receive Impact Factor

We are pleased to announce Clarivate Analytics now indexes *Seminars in Thoracic and Cardiovascular Surgery (Seminars)* in the Science Citation Index Expanded. Starting with Volume 29 (2017), all articles published in the journal will be available through the Web of Science platform.

In June 2020, *Seminars* will receive a 2019 Impact Factor. Based on a projected 2018 Impact Factor of 1.6, we expect *Seminars* to debut a similar Impact Factor later this year. Please join us in congratulating the Editors of *Seminars* and *JTCVS* on achieving this prestigious milestone for the Journal. ▼

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JTCVS TECHNIQUES
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Important Dates

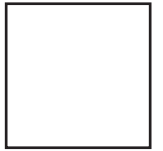
| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Tuesday, March 31 | <i>Operative Techniques in Thoracic and Cardiovascular Surgery</i> Associate Editor (Thoracic) Applications Due |
| Wednesday, April 15 | Membership Application Site Opens |
| Thursday, April 30 | <i>Seminars in Thoracic and Cardiovascular Surgery</i> (Cardiac, Congenital, and Thoracic) Editors Applications Due |
| Thursday, May 7 | Abstract Site Opens: Surgical Treatment of Arrhythmias and Rhythm Disorders |
| Sunday, May 31 | Annual Meeting Manuscript Submission Due |
| Spring 2020 | Abstract Site Opens: International Thoracic Surgical Oncology Summit |



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AATS ONLINE

Presentations from the 2020 Mechanical Support for the Heart and Lung Symposium
and 2019 Focus on Thoracic Surgery are now available.

Advance Your Knowledge
aats.org/aatsonline

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