

Welcome to La Jolla, California! San Diego's "Jewel of the Sea". Known for its rugged coastline, La Jolla has sweeping ocean views, world-class surfing and popular cove beaches and wildlife. We are so happy to be holding our first in-person meeting since 2019, in this beautiful venue for the 38<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Academy of Surgical Research! I am happy to have us all back together and returning to this unique opportunity to network, learn and "brainstorm" with each other, meet with the top vendors in our industry and establish new or reunite with lifelong friends and colleagues.

I want to recognize and thank this year's Program Chair, Amy Martunas for her hard work, ingenuity, and creativity in planning our meeting. Amy and the entire Program Committee, wet and dry lab instructors, assistants, and speakers deserve a huge THANK YOU for volunteering their time to help make this meeting a success.

Our wet labs are especially exciting this year as we are holding them at a State-of-the-Art facility, the University of California San Diego's Center for the Future of Surgery. We have the opportunity to instruct on endoscopy, fluoroscopy and rodent microsurgery in a venue we do not always have available to us. I would like to thank the staff at the UCSD's Center for the Future of Surgery, for their excellence in providing the means for us to learn and supporting our large group of students and volunteers!

Please take the time to visit with each of our exhibitors and take advantage of this intimate forum to meet them, discuss your needs or interests and see what great goods they have to offer! This is wonderful opportunity for direct networking with these individuals and to spend as much time with them as you need!!

Our exhibitors and corporate sponsors are a major arm of the Academy. Their continued support of the Academy, year after year, is a catalyst to our growth and sustainability. THANK YOU to all our exhibitors and corporate sponsors!! We appreciate you!

I am very fortunate to have served as your President this year. Every year our amazing and talented Board of Directors work closely with the Presidents to implement and maintain existing initiatives, further the growth of the Academy, find new ways to support the current membership and streamline our processes to keep current with technology and new ideas. One positive thing I can say about the change in the social climate since the pandemic began is our ability to communicate more efficiently, creatively, and effectively with each other using new technology, web-based forums, and social media. Although this is not a substitute for the positive things that come from meeting, talking, and sharing in person, we intend to integrate this technology into our meetings, certification exams, webinars, and communications as we go into the future.

With that said, this year we have changed our exam certification grading process and simplified it to allow for quicker, accurate grading and an opportunity for our Certification Committee volunteers to participate in other exam day activities such as afternoon wet labs and exhibitor meet and greets.

We have also moved our official journal to a new publication forum, "Surgeries". Our journal is now accessible online for convenience and simplicity.

Finally, as you will see, our printed meeting program is now online on our website so we can update the schedule quickly if needed, save in printing costs, and have all the information at your fingertips wherever you may be. Yay progress!!

Welcome! Thank you so much and enjoy your meeting and stay in La Jolla!!



**Leslie J. Stoll**  
**ASR President 2021-2022**