The 7th Annual Meeting of the Society of Asian Academic Surgeons

John A. Burns School of Medicine
University of Hawai‘i
Honolulu, Hawai‘i
September 16-19, 2022

Host: Kenric M. Murayama, MD, MBA
Chair, Department of Surgery, JABSOM
Program Chair: Jennifer Kuo, MD
Local Arrangements Chair: Russell K. Woo, MD

SOCIETY of ASIAN ACADEMIC SURGEONS

JOHN A. BURNS SCHOOL OF MEDICINE · UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII MANOA ·

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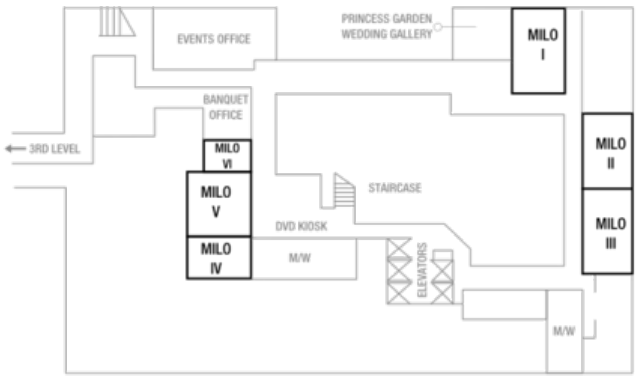
Maps

MEETING VENUE

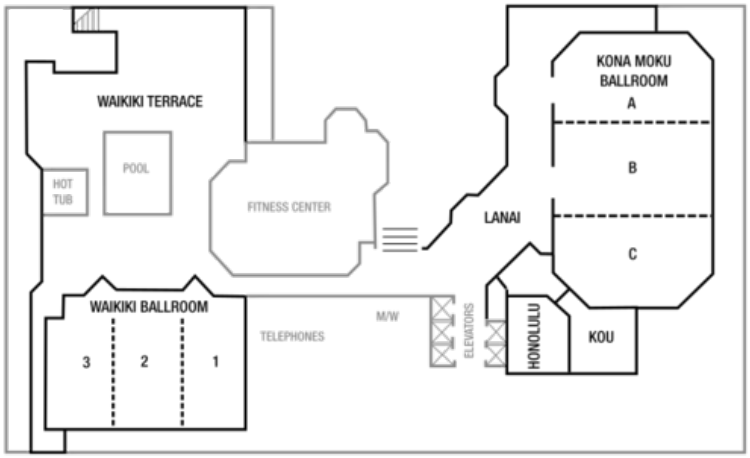
Local Program Friday, September 16, 2022
John A. Burns School of Medicine
University of Hawai‘i

Meeting Venue September 17-19, 2022
Waikiki Beach Marriot Resort and Spa
2552 Kalakaua Avenue
Honolulu, Hawaii 96815

PAOAKALANI TOWER - SECOND FLOOR



PAOAKALANI TOWER - THIRD FLOOR



Our Mission

The objectives of the Society of Asian Academic Surgeons shall be to cultivate, nurture and support the advancement of Asians in academic surgery. To achieve these objectives, the Society shall:

1. Enhance the personal and professional development of Asians in academic surgery.
2. Promote diversity and inclusion within the leadership of academic surgery.
3. Encourage and assist in the study of issues of importance to the Asian community.

Our History

The founding of SAAS can be traced to the Presidential Session on Unconscious Bias in Academic Surgery that took place during the 6th Annual Academic Surgical Congress (ASC), directed by then-Society of University Surgeons (SUS) President Dr. Dai Chung. Dr. Don Nakayama presented an eye-opening talk on the lack of Asians in the leadership of American academic surgery and would later publish that data in the *Annals of Surgery* [Nakayama, DK. Asian Americans in leadership positions in academic surgery. Ann Surg. 255(3):583-8. 2012]. As it turned out, Dr. Chung was the first Asian to ever be elected to the SUS presidency.

That October, during the American College of Surgeons (ACS) Clinical Congress in Washington, DC, a group of nine Asian academic surgeons gathered to talk about the implications of that talk. This group of nine would become the founding members of SAAS (see below). During that meeting, they agreed to pay the initial dues that would provide the seed money to create a new society. After the initial tongue-in-cheek suggestion of naming it the Asian Surgical Society, it was decided to call it the Society of Asian Academic Surgeons.

At first, it was unclear what role we would serve to our membership. The first thought was that we would serve more as a social society that would allow members of the Asian community to meet and network. However, we soon realized that there were important issues facing our community, and we soon changed our focus to the personal and career development of Asian academic surgeons with the belief that the best way to increase Asian representation in the leadership of academic surgery was to prepare future generations to succeed.

Towards this end, we raised money to provide scholarships for both trainees and junior faculty to help them with their career development. We also initiated awards for the best research submitted by members to the ASC to showcase the advances being made by Asians in the field.

From the beginning, our society has been fully inclusive. We defined “Asian” in the broadest sense to include not only those from East, Southeast, and South Asia, but also Persians, Arabs, Turks and any other nationality from the Asian continent.

Furthermore, membership in SAAS is open to anyone of any ethnicity who has an interest in promoting underrepresented populations in any arena of academic surgery.

Our membership quickly grew by word of mouth, and we hosted get-togethers at the ACS Clinical Congress and at the ASC. It soon became apparent that we needed to take the next step of organizing our own meeting focusing on the issues important to our membership. The Inaugural Annual Meeting was held in 2016 and hosted by Dr. Mary Hawn and the Stanford Department of Surgery. 2017 has seen a significant increase in participation in the Annual Meeting with over twice the number of abstracts submitted. The membership continues to grow and interest has never been stronger.

Founding Members
Herb Chen, MD
Dai Chung, MD
Dev Desai, MD, PhD
Lillian Kao, MD, MS
Tien Ko, MD
Paul Kuo, MD
Nipun Merchant, MD
Jennifer Tseng, MD, MPH
George Yang, MD, PhD

Officers and Executive Council

Allan Tsung, MD, President

Allan Tsung, MD, is the Chair of the Department of Surgery at the University of Virginia School of Medicine. Dr. Tsung was the Professor and Chief of the Division of Surgical Oncology in the Department of Surgery at The Ohio State University College of Medicine. He was also Director of the Microscopy Shared Facility and Co-Director of the Gastrointestinal Clinical Trials portfolio at the Ohio State James Comprehensive Cancer Center. Prior to that, he held the endowed Roberta G. Simmons Professorship and was the Vice Chair of Research for the Department of Surgery at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine, as well as the Co-Director of the UPMC Liver Cancer Center. His clinical interests center on the comprehensive care for all forms of liver, bile duct, and pancreas cancer. His primary research interests are directed toward hepatobiliary and pancreas cancer clinical trials and the role of the tumor micro-environment in the progression of these cancers. In recognition of his research accomplishments, Dr. Tsung has been honored with the American College of Surgeons Excellence in Research Award, the University of Pittsburgh Innovators Award, and the Doris B. xwell Research Award. His research has been supported by HHMI, the National Institutes of Health, the Society of University Surgeons, and the American College of Surgeons. He is a Past President of the Society of University Surgeons, and a member of the Society of Surgical Oncology, the American Hepato-Pancreato-Biliary Association, and the American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases.

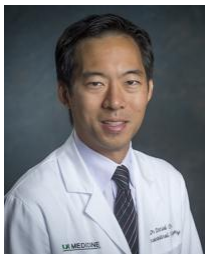
Susan Tsai, MD, MHS, President-Elect

Susan Tsai, MD, MHS is a Professor in the Division of Surgical Oncology, Department of Surgery and the Director of the LaBahn Pancreatic Cancer Program at the Medical College of Wisconsin (MCW). She completed her medical school and residency training at the University of Michigan. During residency, she completed a clinical research fellowship at the National Cancer Institute in the laboratory of Suzanne Topalian. After residency, she completed a Surgical Oncology Fellowship at the Johns Hopkins Hospital. While in fellowship, she also received a Master's in Clinical Investigation from the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. Her clinical practice focused on GI oncology and pancreatic cancer. She serves as the Director of the MCW Surgical Oncology Biorepository and Pancreatic Cancer Clinical Database. Her research interests include blood-based biomarkers in pancreatic cancer and investigator-initiated clinical trials. She also serves as the Associate Program Director of the Complex Surgical Oncology Fellowship Program.

Eugene S. Kim, MD, Secretary

Eugene S. Kim, MD, received his undergraduate degree in Biochemical Sciences from Harvard University and his medical degree from Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons. He completed his residency in general surgery at Columbia University Medical Center, New York-Presbyterian Hospital, in New York City. Dr. Kim subsequently completed a fellowship in pediatric surgery at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center, Cincinnati, Ohio. Currently, Dr. Kim is Professor of Surgery and Pediatrics, Division Chief of Pediatric Surgery and Vice Chair in the Department of Surgery at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center in Los Angeles, California. Dr. Kim's clinical expertise is in pediatric surgical oncology and the surgical management of complex solid tumors, the surgical repair of chest wall deformities (pectus excavatum), and anorectal malformations. In addition, Dr. Kim is the principal investigator of a basic science laboratory focused on novel preclinical therapeutics for the aggressive childhood malignancy, neuroblastoma. Dr. Kim's research interests are focused on a novel cancer stem cell population in neuroblastoma and its role in tumor recurrence and metastatic disease. He is also studying mechanisms of recurrent metastatic disease in high-risk neuroblastoma.

Daniel Chu, MD, MSPH, Secretary-Elect



Daniel Chu, MD, MSPH, is an Associate Professor in the Division of Gastrointestinal Surgery at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. He completed his undergraduate at Yale and medical school at The Johns Hopkins School of Medicine. After residency at Boston University Medical Center, he completed a colon and rectal surgery fellowship at the Mayo Clinic. His clinical practice specializes in the spectrum of colorectal disease including inflammatory bowel disease, colorectal cancer, diverticular disease, and anorectal disorders. His NIH-funded research interests focus on identifying, understanding, and reducing health disparities in surgery with particular attention to health literacy.

Tejal Brahmbhatt, MD, Treasurer

Tejal S. Brahmbhatt, MD, is Chief and Program Director of Surgical Critical Care in the Division of Trauma, Acute Care Surgery and Surgical Critical Care of the Department of Surgery at Boston Medical Center/Boston University. He completed his internship at Washington University of St. Louis and residency in General Surgery at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, TN. He completed a Fellowship in Trauma, Emergency General Surgery, and Surgical Critical Care at the

Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia, PA. Additionally, he has advanced doctoral training in music theory and composition and currently serves as a consultant for several film production companies in the US and abroad. His clinical and research interests include surgical education, psychological stress of trauma surgical practice, and trauma and emergency surgery resource appropriation in an environment of dwindling resource allocation.

Vikas Dudeja, MD, Councilor-Active Member

Vikas Dudeja, MD, is a tenured associate professor of Surgery, and Director of the Division of Surgical Oncology in the Department of Surgery at UAB. He has spent the last 14 years evaluating the pathobiology of pancreatic cancer and devising strategies to address its progression and metastases. He is an expert in the immune and stromal biology of pancreatic and other hepatobiliary malignancies. Research in his laboratory has demonstrated the role of stromal pathway in creating an immunosuppressive environment in pancreatic cancer. His work has also demonstrated that gut microbiome modulates anti-cancer immune response and that its modulation can emerge as novel therapy against cancer. His research has been supported by grant funding from the NIH, Department of Defense, VA Merit Program and society foundations including the Society of Surgical Oncology and National Pancreas Foundation.

Anai Kothari, MD, MS, Councilor-Associate Member

Anai N. Kothari, MD, MS, is an assistant professor in the Division of Surgical Oncology, Department of Surgery and a member of the Collaborative for Healthcare Delivery Science at the Medical College of Wisconsin. He grew up in Manitowoc, WI and received his BS and MD at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Dr. Kothari completed his General Surgery training at Loyola University Medical Center where he also earned a Master's degree in Epidemiology. This was followed by a fellowship in Complex General Surgical Oncology at the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center. Dr. Kothari's clinical expertise is the surgical treatment of upper gastrointestinal cancer and advanced cancers of the GI tract. He is a member of several national societies including the Society of Surgical Oncology, American College of Surgeons, and Society of Asian Academic Surgeons. He is an active researcher with a focus on using advanced analytics to improve cancer care.

Ankush Gosain, MD, PhD, Recorder and Journal of Surgical Research Society Editor

Ankush Gosain, MD, PhD, is an NIH-funded Pediatric Surgeon-Scientist with a basic & translational science laboratory studying the enteric nervous system and gastrointestinal mucosal immune development and function as they relate to congenital colorectal disease (e.g., Hirschsprung disease) and aberrant intestinal homeostasis, with the overarching goal of developing novel therapies. Dr. Gosain is a tenured Professor of Surgery and Pediatrics at the University of Tennessee Health Science Center. He serves as the Vice-Chair for Academic Affairs in the Department of Surgery, Senior Surgical Advisor for Quality & Safety at Le Bonheur Children's Hospital, and Director of Surgical Research at the Children's Foundation Research Institute. He serves on the Executive Councils of the Surgical Research Committee of the American College of Surgeons, the Association for Academic Surgery, the Society of University Surgeons, and the Society of Asian Academic Surgeons. He is an elected member of the Society of Clinical Surgery and the American Society for Clinical Investigation, platforms which he uses to advocate for the Surgeon-Scientist phenotype.

Kenric M. Murayama, MD, MBA, Past-President, (2015-2016)

Kenric Murayama, MD, MBA, is Chair and Program Director of the Department of Surgery at the John A. Burns School of Medicine of the University of Hawaii where he attended medical school. He is the Thomas J. Whelan, Jr., MD Professor of Surgery. He completed his surgery training at Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine during which time he did a two-year research fellowship in pancreatic physiology. He received his MBA from Marist College in May 2019. Dr. Murayama serves on the American College of Surgeons Board of Governors as the Society of Asian Academic Surgeons representative. He recently completed his term on the General Surgery Board of the American Board of Surgery and is an Associate Member to the ACS Academy of Master Surgeon Educators. Dr. Murayama was the inaugural President of the Society of Asian Academic Surgeons, was President of the Southwestern Surgical Congress, and was a longstanding Board member for the Society of American Gastrointestinal and Endoscopic Surgeons. Dr. Murayama is on the Board of Directors for the Hawaii Medical Services Association and the Blood Bank of Hawaii, having recently completed his term as Board Chair. Recently, Dr. Murayama was appointed to the role of Chair of the Clinical Program in Surgery and Medical Director for Surgical Services for The Queen's Health System. His clinical interests are in minimally invasive surgery for treatment of foregut disorders, biliary disease, and abdominal wall hernias. Dr. Murayama has a longstanding commitment to surgical education and leadership development in surgery.

Paul Kuo, MD, MBA, Past-President (2016-2017)

Paul C. Kuo, MD, MBA, is Professor of Surgery, Vice Chair for Faculty Development and Academic Affairs and Assistant Dean for Research Program Development at the University of South Florida, Morsani College of Medicine, Professor of Information Systems and Decision Sciences at the University of South Florida Muma College of Business and Chief of Surgery at Tampa General Hospital. Immediately prior to this, he was the John P. Igini Professor of Surgery and Chair of the Department of Surgery at Loyola University Medical Center. He is a 1985 graduate of the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine. He trained at the Brigham and Womens Hospital in general surgery, and at the New England Deaconess Hospital (now the BI-Deaconess) in Hepatobiliary/Transplant Surgery, and spent three years as a postdoctoral research fellow at Harvard Medical School under Joseph Loscalzo, MD, PhD. Dr. Kuo is also a dedicated member of the U.S. military who supported Afghanistan's Operation Freedom as a member of the 697th FST/GHOST Team in 2017 and again with the 909th FST in 2019, and currently serves as a general surgeon with the United States Army Reserve Medical Corps.

Nipun Merchant, MD, Past-President (2017-2018)

Nipun Merchant, MD, is the Alan S. Livingstone Endowed Professor of Surgery in the University Of Miami, Department Of Surgery, Vice Chair of Surgical Oncology Services and the Chief of the Division of Surgical Oncology. He is also the Chief Surgical Officer and Director of Surgical Oncology Research of the Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center. He is a recognized leader in the clinical management of hepato-pancreatico- biliary and neuroendocrine malignancies. Dr. Merchant has an active basic science and translational research laboratory investigating signal transduction and tumor- stromal interactions in pancreas cancer. He has served on several study sections for the NIH and chaired the NCI-F Study Section. He is also a member of the Pancreas Task Force of the GI Steering Committee of the National Cancer Institute, the Commission on Cancer and the National Comprehensive Cancer Network (NCCN) Pancreatic Adenocarcinoma Panel Member. He serves on the Editorial Boards of the Annals of Surgery, Annals of Surgical Oncology, Surgery, American Journal of Translational Research and is an Associate Editor for BMC Cancer.

Jennifer F. Tseng, MD, MPH, Past President (2018-2019)

Jennifer F. Tseng, MD, MPH, is the Utley Professor and Chair of the Department of Surgery at Boston University School of Medicine, and Surgeon-in-Chief at Boston Medical Center in Boston, Massachusetts. Prior to being recruited to Boston University School of Medicine/Boston Medical Center in July 2017, Dr. Tseng served as the chief of surgical oncology at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center (BIDMC) and as a professor of surgery at Harvard Medical School. Of note, Dr. Tseng was the first female full professor of surgery at BIDMC and only the fourth in the history of Harvard Medical School. Dr. Tseng has published more than 120-peer reviewed journal articles on reducing surgical risk, cancer biomarkers, and developing models for cancer treatment-sequencing strategies, with a strong focus on racial and socioeconomic disparities in care. Dr. Tseng is on the editorial board of several journals and was appointed Deputy Editor of JAMA Surgery. She currently serves as the President of the Society for Surgery of the Alimentary Tract (SSAT). Dr. Tseng is the first woman as well as the first nonwhite person to serve as chair and chief of surgery at an academic medical center in Boston, and one of a modest percentage nationally.

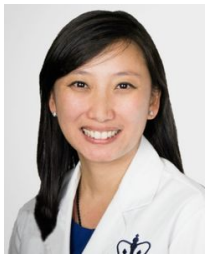
Tracy S. Wang, MD, MPH, Past President (2019-2021)

Tracy S. Wang, MD, MPH, FACS, is currently Professor of Surgery, Vice-Chair of Strategic and Professional Development, and Chief of the Section of Endocrine Surgery in the Department of Surgery at the Medical College of Wisconsin (Milwaukee, WI). Dr. Wang is the Program Leader for the Endocrine Cancer program at the Froedtert Hospital/Medical College of Wisconsin Cancer Center. Her clinical practice is focused on the surgical endocrine disease of the thyroid, parathyroid, and adrenal glands, including inherited endocrine syndromes. Dr. Wang has published >150 peer-reviewed manuscripts and book chapters. She currently serves as Treasurer of the American Association of Endocrine Surgeons and is a Councilor for the Central Surgical Association. She is the recent past-President of the Society of Asian Academic Surgeons. She is on the Board of Directors for the Surgical Biology Club II. She also serves as an Associate Editor for the American Journal of Surgery and on the Editorial Boards of World Journal of Surgery and the Journal of Surgical Research.

Herb Chen, MD, SAAS Foundation President

Herbert Chen, MD, obtained his BS from Stanford University with Honors and with Distinction in 1988 and graduated from Duke University School of Medicine Alpha Omega Alpha in 1992. Dr. Chen then completed a general surgery residency followed by a surgical oncology and endocrinology fellowship at The Johns Hopkins Hospital. Dr. Chen is Chair of the Department of Surgery at University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB), and the Surgeon-in-Chief of UAB Hospital and Health System. He is a Professor of Surgery, Pediatrics, and Biomedical Engineering, and holds the Fay Fletcher Kerner Endowed Chair. His clinical interests include endocrine surgery and he is a pioneer in radioguided parathyroid surgery. Dr. Chen's lab has been continuously funded for over 21 years and studies the role of Notch signaling in thyroid and neuroendocrine cancers. He is the American Cancer Society MEN2 Thyroid Cancer Professor. Dr. Chen is the Editor-in-Chief of the American Journal of Surgery. He has held several leadership positions in major academic societies including President of the Society of Asian Academic Surgeons Foundation, President of Association for Academic Surgery, President of the Society of Clinical Surgery, President of the American Association of Endocrine Surgeons, and President of Surgical Biology Club II. Dr. Chen has mentored over 130 faculty, post-doctoral fellows, residents, medical students, and undergraduates in his lab. He has published over 600 original research and review articles and has edited 28 textbooks. He is well-known for his passion for teaching and mentoring the next generation of surgical leaders. Dr. Chen has also been recognized as a champion for diversity, equity, and inclusion. Dr. Chen and his wife Harriet, a freelance photographer, reside in Mountain Brook, AL. His son Alex is medical student at Yale University while his daughter Liz is a graduate student in Graphic Design at NC State.

Jennifer Kuo, MD, Chair, Program Committee



Jennifer H. Kuo, MD, is a board-certified surgeon-scientist nationally recognized for her expertise in the surgical treatment of thyroid, parathyroid, and adrenal diseases. Dr. Kuo is an accomplished, high-volume surgeon in minimally invasive surgical techniques, including trans-oral thyroidectomy and robotic adrenalectomy. She is one of the leading international experts in ultrasound-guided radiofrequency ablation of thyroid nodules and spearheaded the new Interventional Endocrinology program at Columbia. Dr. Kuo also serves as Program Director of the Endocrine Surgery Fellowship Program and the Endocrine Surgery Research program. Her research focuses on the use of predictive algorithms to

improve and optimize care for endocrine patients, and is internationally recognized as a pioneer in the safe adoption of new technology in surgical care. She serves as Associate Editor for the Journal of Surgical Research, and serves on the Editorial Board for The World Journal of Surgery and VideoEndocrinology. Her commitment to excellent, innovative, and personalized care has been repeatedly recognized by Super Doctors and New York Magazine's Top Doctor Awards.

Sameer Patel, MD, Chair, Scholarships Committee

Sameer Patel, MD, is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Surgery, Division of Surgical Oncology at the University of Cincinnati College of Medicine, and was named one of the country's '40 Under 40' in Cancer. n 2017, Dr. Patel joined the UC College of Medicine faculty after a three-year complex general surgical oncology fellowship at the MD Anderson Cancer Center in Mansfield, Ohio. He received his medical degree from the Emory University School of Medicine where he also completed his research fellowship and general surgery residency.

Sophie Dream, MD, Chair, Communications Committee

Sophie Dream, MD, is Assistant Professor and Program Director of the Endocrine Surgery Fellowship Program at the Froedtert & Medical College of Wisconsin. Dr. Dream grew-up in Ohio and completed her undergraduate coursework at the University of Cincinnati. She began her medical education at the University of Cincinnati College of Medicine, graduating in 2013. She completed her surgical residency at Henry Ford Hospital and went on to finish her endocrine surgery fellowship at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. Dr. Dream's research interests focus on health services and outcomes in patients with thyroid, parathyroid, and adrenal disorders.

Lindsay Kuo, MD, MBA, SAAS Representative to the Association for Academic Surgery

Lindsay Kuo, MS, MBA, is an endocrine surgeon and an Assistant Professor of Surgery at the Lewis Katz School of Medicine at Temple University. She received her general surgery training at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania, followed by an endocrine surgery fellowship at Brigham and Women's Hospital. From there, she went on to found the endocrine surgery section at Temple University where she has built a robust, high-volume program. Dr. Kuo is also an Associate Program Director for the general surgery residency program, where she enjoys working with and mentoring residents.

Emily Keung, MD, SAAS Representative to the Association for Women in Surgery (AWS)

Emily Keung, MD, is Assistant Professor of Surgery in the Department of Surgical Oncology at The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center. Her clinical practice focuses on the care of patients with soft tissue sarcomas and cutaneous malignancies. Dr. Keung received her undergraduate degree from Harvard College and her medical degree from Harvard Medical School. She completed her general surgery residency and surgical critical care fellowship at Brigham and Women's Hospital and fellowship in Complex General Surgical Oncology at MD Anderson Cancer Center. Her primary research focus has been to investigate the role of immunotherapy for the treatment of soft tissue sarcoma and melanoma and to study the role of the epigenome in soft tissue sarcoma.

Yumi Hori, BA, Executive Director

Yumi Hori is the Executive Director of the Society of Asian Academic Surgeons and Director of Education for BSC Management. She is a management executive with more than 20 years of nonprofit education planning experience. Yumi has worked with the Society of American Gastrointestinal and Endoscopic Surgeons (SAGES), The Fellowship Council, the Society of University Surgeons (SUS), and the Association for Surgical Education (ASE). She previously worked at UCLA in public policy education, as well as in the Japanese American National Museum (JANM) Education Department. She graduated from the University of California, Los Angeles.

SAAS Committees

Communications Committee

Sophie Dream, MD, Chair (2021-2023)
Haejin In, MD, Vice-Chair (2018-2023)
Lyen Huang, MD (2020-2022)
Apoorve Nayyar, MD (2020-2022)
James Wu, MD (2021-2023)
Alex Kim, ND (2021-2023)
Ji Fan, MD (2021-2023)

Program Committee

Jennifer Kuo, MD, Chair (2019-2022)
Russell Woo, MD Vice Chair (2018-2022; 2022 Local Arrangements Chair)
Ankush Gosain, MD, PhD, ex officio (2019-2023)
Gina Adrales, MD (2019-2023; 2023 Local Arr. Co-Chair)
Jinny Ha, MD (2019-2023; 2023 Local Arr. Co-Chair)
Hari Nathan, MD (2019-2022)
Julia Tchou, MD, PhD (2019-2022)
Tiffany Lee, MD (2019-2022)
Nancy Cho, MD (2021-2023)
Neha Goel, MD (2021-2023)
Chee Chee Stucky, MD (2021-2023)
Bonnie Chow, MD (2021-2023)

Publications Committee

Ankush Gosain, MD, PhD Chair (2019-2023)
Harveshp Mogal, MD (2019-2022)
Sanda Tan, MD (2019-2022)
Hee Soo Jung, MD (2019-2022)
Kevin Koo, MD (2019-2022)
Victoria Lai, MD (2021-2023)
Clara Park, MD (2021-2023)
Mihir Shah, MD (2021-2023)
Areeba Saif, MD (2021-2023)

SAAS Committees

Scholarships Committee

Sameer Patel, MD, Chair (2020-2022)
Nikhil Panda, MD (2020-2022)
Melissa Wong, MD (2020-2022)
Emily Keung, MD (2020-2022)
Melanie Ongchin, MD (2018-2022)
Priya Dedhia, MD (2021-2023)
Neal Bhutiani, MD (2021-2023)
Romeo Ignacio, MD (2022-2024)
Hop Tran Cao, MD (2022-2024)
Lily Cheng, MD (2023-2025)

Visiting Professors

The Society of Asian Academic Surgeons Foundation Visiting Professorships are open for SAAS Active Members who are faculty members at the Assistant or Associate Professor level and are within the first 10 years of their faculty appointment. It will support their travel to host institutions to give grand rounds and will increase the national visibility of rising stars in academic surgery.

2022-2023 SAAS Visiting Professorships

- City of Hope (Host: Yuman Fong, MD)
    - *City of Hope - SAAS Lectureship*
    - **Priya Dedhia, MD** (The Ohio State University)

- Mayo Clinic Jacksonville (Host: Mike Edwards, MD)
    - *Raymond and Rose Tseng-SAAS Lectureship*
    - **Carlos Chan, MD** (University of Iowa)

- Tulane University (Host: Mary Killackey, MD)
    - *Mike and Faye Yang - SAAS Lectureship*
    - **Erika Rangel, MD** (Brigham and Women's)

- University of Michigan (Host: Justin Dimick, MD)
    - *Wen-Hain Wang - SAAS Lectureship*
    - **Heather Wachtel, MD** (University of Pennsylvania)

- University of South Florida (Host: Paul Kuo, MD)
    - *Ashvin Shah - SAAS Lectureship*
    - **Shailesh Agarwal, MD** (Brigham and Women's)

- Yale University (Host: Nita Ahuja, MD)
    - *Association of Women Surgeons-JNS Ahuja Lectureship*
    - **Shipra Arya, MD** (Stanford University)

In Memory of George Yang, MD, PhD

George Yang, M.D., Ph.D., went to undergraduate and medical school at Northwestern University. He earned his Ph.D. in molecular genetics at the University of Illinois at Chicago. He completed his residency in general surgery at Stanford University and remained at Stanford as faculty until coming to UAB in 2018.

George ran a successful laboratory that focused on mechanisms of injury repair. His caring nature and surgical skill helped countless patients not only at UAB but at the Birmingham Veterans Affairs (VA) hospital – a place where his dedication to his patients, peers and staff was unparalleled.

In addition to his clinical and research leadership, George was known across the community as someone who acted on his values. He was motivated, inclusive, and humble, and the field of surgery took note. In 2021, George was named the Society of University Surgeons Inaugural Trailblazer Award Winner. The SUS noted that he was nominated and selected by his peers based on his leadership and contributions to the SUS as well as his unwavering vision, commitment, and dedication to the promotion of the Asian American and Pacific Islanders (AAPI) community in academic surgical leadership.

George has always been an advocate for underrepresented groups in medicine. In 2010, he was a founding member of our very own Society of Asian Academic Surgeons (SAAS) and was named our first executive director in 2016. George will always be known for championing social justice and diversity, equity, and inclusion. He believed in building groups of individuals with shared experiences and creating deep community. He believed in created spaces where everyone felt safe. In 2021, SAAS honored George by creating and bestowing him the George Yang SAAS Trailblazer Award.

Let's honor George by lifting up those around us, giving back, and moving the field of surgery forward.

George Yang, MD, PhD Trailblazer Award

An award that recognizes a surgeon for contributions to surgical science and for paving the way for the next generation of surgeons.

2018	Quan-Yang Duh, MD – University of California, San Francisco
2019	Steven Stain, MD – Albany Medical Center
2021	George Yang, MD, PhD – University of Alabama, Birmingham
2022	Herbert Chen, MD – University of Alabama, Birmingham

Resident/Fellow Development Scholarship

The SAAS Resident/Fellow Development Scholarship is a travel grant supporting attendance of a surgical trainee at the Association for Academic Surgery's Fall Courses, held each year just prior to the American College of Surgeons' Clinical Congress. The recipient of this award serves a two-year term as a Resident member of the Scholarships Committee.

2014	Vikas Dudeja, MD, PhD – Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center
2015	Lyen Huang, MD, MPH – Stanford University
2016	Zhi Ven Fong, MD, MPH – Massachusetts General Hospital
2017	Deepa Cherla, MD – Cleveland Clinic
2018	Emily Keung, MD – M.D. Anderson Cancer Center
2019	Chi-Fu Jeffrey Yang, MD – Stanford University
2020	Nikhil Panda, MD - Massachusetts General Hospital
	Linda Pak, MD - Brigham and Women's Hospital
	Selena Li, MD - Massachusetts General Hospital
	Bhuwan Giri, MD - University of Miami
2021	Neal Bhutiani, MD PhD - The University of Texas – M.D. Anderson Cancer Center
	Heather Lyu, MD - The University of Texas – M.D. Anderson Cancer Center
	Rowza Rumma, MD - Brigham and Women's Hospital
	Ahmad Hamad, MD - The Ohio State University
	Jessie Ho, MD - Northwestern University
2022	Calvin Chao, MD- Northwestern University

Junior Faculty/Early Career Development Award

The SAAS Junior Faculty/Early Career Development Award is a travel grant supporting the attendance of a faculty member within 5 years of their first appointment at the Surgical Investigators' Course at the Academic Surgical Congress. The recipient of this award serves a two-year committee on the Scholarships Committee.

2015	Peter Chang, MD – Beth Israel Deaconess
2016	Daniel I. Chu, MD – University of Alabama at Birmingham
2017	Ching-Wei David Tzeng, MD – M.D. Anderson Cancer Center
2018	Eric Sheu, MD – Brigham and Women's Hospital
2019	Aslam Ejaz, MD – The Ohio State University
2020	Emily Keung, MD - The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center
2021	Priya Dedhia, MD, PhD - The Ohio State University
2022	Lily Cheng, MD - Texas Children's Hospital
	Mihir Shah, MD - Emory University
	Annabelle Fonseca, MD - University of South Alabama

Esther Tsai Sugg Research Award

The Esther Tsai Sugg Research Award is granted to the highest scoring abstract submitted by a SAAS member as either first or senior author to the annual Academic Surgical Congress.

2015	Chris Goodenough, MD (Presenting author)
	Michael Liang, MD (Senior author)
	University of Texas – Houston
2016	Jason Castellanos, MD (Presenting author)
	Nipun Merchant, MD (Senior author)
	University of Miami
2017	Syed Nabeel Zafar, MD (Presenting author)
	Nabil Wasif, MD (Senior author)
	Howard University
2018	Daniel ("Brock") Hewitt, MD, MPH (Presenting author)
	Anthony Yang, MD (Senior author)
	Northwestern University
2019	Apoorve Nayyar, MD (Presenting author)
	Kristalyn Gallagher, DO (Senior author)
	University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill
2020	Aaron Baer, MD (Presenting author)
	David Shibata, MD (Senior author)
	University of Tennessee, Memphis
2021	Sourav Bose, MD, MBA (Presenting author)
	William Parenteau, MD (Senior author)
	Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, Philadelphia
2022	Vivek Pamulapati, MD (Presenting author)
	Karen Ho, MD (Senior author)
	Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine, Chicago

SAAS Annual Meeting Travel Award

The SAAS Annual Meeting Travel Award is a travel grant, awarded to the first author of the highest scoring abstract submitted by a SAAS member to the annual meeting.

2016	Julie Goswami, MD (presenting author) Allan Tsung, MD (senior author) University of Pittsburgh
2017	Michael Fenlon, MD (presenting author) Kasper Wang, MD (senior author) Children's Hospital of Los Angeles
2018	Zhi-Ven Fong, MD (presenting author) Motaz Qadan, MD, PhD (senior author) Massachusetts General Hospital
2019	C. Ann Vitous (presenting author) Amy Pasithorn Suwanabol, MD (senior author) University of Michigan
2021	Serena Day (presenting author) Benzon Dy (senior author) Mayo Clinic
2022	Jaewon Lee (presenting author) Paola Guerrero (senior author) UT MD Anderson/Cedars Sinai

ASA – SAAS Surgical Leaders Fellowship Grant

This award is sponsored by the American Surgical Association and SAAS to provide funds to travel to an ASA member's home institution for a shadowing experience of being a surgical leader in academic surgery. A SAAS member will be selected every other year, on even years.

2020	Tracy Wang, MD, MPH - Medical College of Wisconsin, Milwaukee
2022	Ankush Gosain, MD, PhD - UT Memphis

Mid-Career Award

The SAAS Mid-Career Award is a grant supporting the attendance of a faculty member to the Society of University Surgeons' (SUS) Mid-Career Academic Surgery Professional Development Course. This grant was made possible by a generous contribution from Past President Tracy Wang. The recipient of this award serves a two-year committee on the Scholarships Committee.

2022	Hop Tran Cao, MD - The University of Texas – M.D. Anderson Cancer Center Romeo Ignacio, MD - University of California – San Diego Chee-Chee Stucky, MD - Mayo Clinic Arizona

SAAS – SUS Leadership Agility Program Scholarship

Sponsored by SAAS in partnership with the Society of University Surgeons, this award funds the tuition to the annual Society of University Surgeons (SUS) Leadership Agility Program. The Tseng Family Award, endowed by Dr. Jennifer Tseng, provides the annual SAAS contribution for this award.

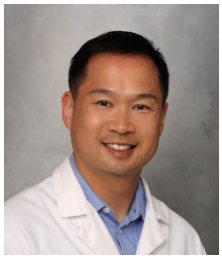
2019	Linwah Yip, MD - University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh
2022	Romeo Ignacio, MD - University of California, San Diego

Local Hosts

Kenric Murayama, MD, MBA, Chair of Surgery, John A. Burns School of Medicine of the University of Hawai'i

Kenric Murayama, MD, MBA, is Chair and Program Director of the Department of Surgery at the John A. Burns School of Medicine of the University of Hawaii where he attended medical school. He is the Thomas J. Whelan, Jr., MD Professor of Surgery. He completed his surgery training at Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine during which time he did a two-year research fellowship in pancreatic physiology. He received his MBA from Marist College in May 2019. Dr. Murayama serves on the American College of Surgeons Board of Governors as the Society of Asian Academic Surgeons representative. He recently completed his term on the General Surgery Board of the American Board of Surgery and is an Associate Member to the ACS Academy of Master Surgeon Educators. Dr. Murayama was the inaugural President of the Society of Asian Academic Surgeons, was President of the Southwestern Surgical Congress, and was a longstanding Board member for the Society of American Gastrointestinal and Endoscopic Surgeons. Dr. Murayama is on the Board of Directors for the Hawaii Medical Services Association and the Blood Bank of Hawaii, having recently completed his term as Board Chair. Recently, Dr. Murayama was appointed to the role of Chair of the Clinical Program in Surgery and Medical Director for Surgical Services for The Queen's Health System. His clinical interests are in minimally invasive surgery for treatment of foregut disorders, biliary disease, and abdominal wall hernias. Dr. Murayama has a longstanding commitment to surgical education and leadership development in surgery.

Russell Woo, MD, Professor and Chief of Pediatric Surgery, John A. Burns School of Medicine of the University of Hawai'i



Russell Woo, MD, is a Professor of Surgery and Chief of the Division of Pediatric Surgery at the University of Hawaii, John A. Burns School of Medicine. Dr. Woo is a graduate of the Yale University School of Medicine. He completed his general surgery residency at Stanford University as well as research fellowships in surgical robotics and biotechnology innovation. He then completed his subspecialty fellowship training in pediatric surgery at Children's Hospital Los Angeles. Dr. Woo's clinical interests include general and thoracic pediatric surgery, neonatal surgery, and pediatric vascular anomalies. In addition, he has an active research and teaching program aimed at developing new technologies for use in minimally invasive surgery.

Local Hosts

Dean J. Mikami MD, Professor of Surgery and Associate Chair of Clinical Affairs, John A. Burns School of Medicine of the University of Hawai'i

Dean Mikami, MD, attended college at the University of Hawaii at Manoa earning a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Zoology and then went on to attend medical school at the University of Kansas. He graduated from the University of Kansas School of Medicine in 1997 and completed his general surgery training at The Ohio State University in 2003. Dr. Mikami was named the Department of Surgery Resident of Year in 2003. He completed a fellowship in minimally invasive surgery at The Ohio State University and was on the faculty at Ohio State from 2004 to 2016. He is currently a Professor of Surgery and returned home to be Chief of Surgery, Associate Chair for Clinical Affairs and Associate Program Director for the University of Hawaii Department of Surgery at the John A. Burns School of Medicine. Dr. Mikami has continued his work in minimally invasive surgery of the GI tract, hernia repair, bariatric surgery and advanced endolumenal therapies. He is one of the pioneers in endolumenal bariatric surgery and specializes in complex abdominal wall repair, surgical endoscopy, and bariatric surgery. He has over 100 publications, abstracts and book chapters and is one of the editors of "Evidence Based Minimally Invasive Surgery". He is an active member of the American College of Surgeons, SAGES, and the American Society for Metabolic & Bariatric Surgery. He is currently a board member for SAGES, Chair of the ASMBS Flexible endoscopy committee and Editor in Chief of Bariatric Surgical Practice and Patient Care.

Implementing the Provider Awareness and Cultural Dexterity Toolkit for Surgeons (PACTS) at Surgical Training Programs

Gezzer Ortega, MD, MPH, Brigham and Women's Hospital

Gezzer Ortega, MD, MPH, a Brooklyn native, born to immigrant parents from the Dominican Republic, is the Lead Faculty for Research and Innovation for Equitable Surgical Care at the Center for Surgery and Public Health (CSPH), Brigham and Women's Hospital (BWH), Harvard Medical School. Dr. Ortega is also Adjunct Faculty at the Patient Reported Outcomes, Value & Experience (PROVE) Center at BWH. Dr. Ortega received his medical degree from Howard University College of Medicine, Master of Public Health from the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, and Bachelor of Science from Syracuse University. Dr. Ortega is a health services researcher with a focus on developing and implementing solutions to address surgical inequities.
Dr. Ortega is the Project Director for the Provider Awareness and Cultural dexterity Toolkit for Surgeons (PACTS) Trial, which aims to develop and evaluate a curriculum for surgical residents to improve communication and engagement during cross-cultural encounters. Within the work to eliminate health disparities, Dr. Ortega has focused on improving surgical care for patients with limited English proficiency. His inspiration for comes from his background and motivation to diversify the medical workforce. In doing so, Dr. Ortega is a Co-Founder of the Latino Surgical Society, which aims to cultivate, nurture, and support the advancement of Latino surgeons. He also serves as faculty and mentor to the Building the Next Generation of Academic Physicians and Tour for Diversity in Medicine organizations. Dr. Ortega is also a Co-Director of the CSPH and Program for Global Surgery and Social Change Research Fellows Summer Course, which provides a foundation of health services research skills for trainees. Dr. Ortega's commitment to service extends to the global community as he has conducted and planned surgical education courses and advocacy programs in the Dominican Republic, Ghana, Liberia, and Malawi. Promoting education and health through research, innovation, and service at multiple levels is ingrained in Dr. Ortega's core. As a physician-scientist, his focus is to contribute to the field of surgery and eliminate health inequities through research and humanitarian efforts.

Implementing the Provider Awareness and Cultural Dexterity Toolkit for Surgeons (PACTS) at Surgical Training Programs

Rachel Atkinson, MD, Brigham and Women's Hospital

Rachel Atkinson, MD is a PGY-3 general surgery resident at Brigham and Women's Hospital. She received her undergraduate degree from Amherst College and her medical degree from the Geisel School of Medicine at Dartmouth. Her clinical and research interests include minimally invasive surgery, surgical education, disparities in surgical patient outcomes, gender equity in the surgical workforce, and identifying and mitigating surgeon barriers to starting a family.

Maria Chun, PhD, University of Hawaii

Maria B.J. Chun, Ph.D. is a Faculty Specialist and Associate Chair for Administration and Finance in the University of Hawaii at Manoa's (UHM) Department of Surgery. In 1996, she obtained her doctoral degree in community and cultural psychology from the UHM Department of Psychology. During her graduate studies, she researched factors influencing the educational attainment of Asian Americans and issues facing multicultural education. When she started in her current position in 2006, she focused her scholarly activities on cross-cultural healthcare in medicine. Her primary research focus has been on the development of a standardized tool to assess the efficacy of "cultural competency" or cross-cultural health care training. This includes work on the development of a cultural standardized patient exam for use as an assessment tool in the department's general surgery residency program. Highlights of Dr. Chun's research efforts include being invited to speak at the American College of Surgeons Clinical Congress' first-ever panel session on cultural competency in 2014 and on a subsequent panel in 2021. She was also invited to serve as a consultant on Brigham and Women's Hospital's Provider Awareness and Cultural dexterity Toolkit for Surgeons (PACTS) project, which aims to create a standardized curriculum for general surgery residents to enhance their ability to care for culturally diverse patients.

Professional Development Session: Business of Healthcare

Kenric Murayama, MD, MBA, Chair of Surgery, John A. Burns School of Medicine of the University of Hawai'i

Kenric Murayama, MD, MBA, is Chair and Program Director of the Department of Surgery at the John A. Burns School of Medicine of the University of Hawaii where he attended medical school. He is the Thomas J. Whelan, Jr., MD Professor of Surgery. He completed his surgery training at Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine during which time he did a two-year research fellowship in pancreatic physiology. He received his MBA from Marist College in May 2019. Dr. Murayama serves on the American College of Surgeons Board of Governors as the Society of Asian Academic Surgeons representative. He recently completed his term on the General Surgery Board of the American Board of Surgery and is an Associate Member to the ACS Academy of Master Surgeon Educators. Dr. Murayama was the inaugural President of the Society of Asian Academic Surgeons, was President of the Southwestern Surgical Congress, and was a longstanding Board member for the Society of American Gastrointestinal and Endoscopic Surgeons. Dr. Murayama is on the Board of Directors for the Hawaii Medical Services Association and the Blood Bank of Hawaii, having recently completed his term as Board Chair. Recently, Dr. Murayama was appointed to the role of Chair of the Clinical Program in Surgery and Medical Director for Surgical Services for The Queen's Health System. His clinical interests are in minimally invasive surgery for treatment of foregut disorders, biliary disease, and abdominal wall hernias. Dr. Murayama has a longstanding commitment to surgical education and leadership development in surgery.

Heather Miyasato, Assistant Vice President Health Finance, HMSA

Heather Miyasato has been working in finance and accounting for over fifteen years. She's the AVP of Health Finance at the state's largest health plan, HMSA. Her work provides the financial foundation for programs that improve the health of HMSA members and the state of Hawaii. She began her career in public accounting, working on audits and consulting for over seven years. Heather gained experience in business process improvement, risk assessment and mitigation, and fraud examinations. She then joined a local health care startup to build their finance and management capabilities, and gained experience in acquisitions and clinic administration. Heather was a Regent Scholar at the University of Hawaii at Manoa and earned a Masters of Business Administration, Bachelor of Business Administration in Accounting and Finance, and a minor in Information Computer Science from the Shidler College of Business. She is passionate about giving back and

Professional Development Session: Business of Healthcare

improving the health of the community. Heather serves on the Board of Directors for the Shidler College of Business Alumni Association and on the Finance Committee for the YWCA O'ahu. In her spare time, she enjoys walking with her twin babies and dancing with her six-year old daughter to maintain her good health.

Ferris Serio, MD, General Surgery Resident, University of Hawaii

Farris Serio, MD, is currently in his fifth year of training at the University of Hawaii general surgery residency program, with plans for a fellowship in Surgical Critical Care. He is originally a California native, having studied biochemistry at the University of California San Diego for his BS, followed by a medical degree from Touro University's College of Osteopathic Medicine in Vallejo, California. He is also an avid home-brewer, having formulated and brewed over 50 original recipes of beer, cider, and mead. As a "capstone" project for the "Business in Medicine" curriculum, he and a group of fellow residents designed a business model for a micro-brewery dubbed the "microbe brewery".

Kui and Wai Fong Keynote Lectureship

Honoring all parents who have supported the careers and success of academic surgeons.

David Hu, PhD

David Hu, PhD is a mechanical engineer who studies the interactions of animals with water. He has discovered how dogs shake dry, how insects walk on water, and how eyelashes protect the eyes from drying. Originally from Rockville, Maryland, he earned degrees in mathematics and mechanical engineering from M.I.T., and is now Professor of Mechanical Engineering and Biology and Adjunct Professor of Physics at Georgia Tech. He serves on the editorial boards for Proceedings of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences, Scientific Reports, and Journal of Experimental Biology.

His research has been featured in The Economist, The New York Times, Saturday Night Live, and Highlights for Children. He is a recipient of the National Science Foundation CAREER award for young scientists, the Ig Nobel Prize in Physics (twice), and the Pineapple Science Prize (the Ig Nobel of China). He is the author of the book "How to walk on water and climb up walls," which earned the American Institute of Physics Science Communication award and was finalist for the AAAS/Subaru Prize for Excellence in Young Adult Science Books. He lives with his wife and two children in Atlanta, Georgia.

Kuo Family Keynote Lectureship

Debbie Lum

Debbie Lum is a San Francisco-based filmmaker whose films give voice to the Asian American experience and other unsung stories. *TRY HARDER!,* her most recent feature documentary, is a New York Times Critic's Pick, premiered at the 2021 Sundance Film Festival, and is now broadcasting on PBS' Independent Lens. The film received many accolades and is a Cinema Eye Honors Audience Choice Nominee, Winner of the Audience Award at the San Diego Film Asian Festival, Best Family Film at DocEdge in New Zealand and the Special Jury Prize for Inspiration at the Calgary International Film Festival, among others. Lum was nominated for the "Truer Than Fiction" Independent Spirit Award. Alongside a theatrical and wide release with community partners, the film team developed an impact campaign to promote student mental health and AAPI stories.

Lum's previous feature documentary, *SEEKING ASIAN FEMALE,* premiered at SXSW Film Festival, was a "fan favorite" on PBS' Independent Lens, won Best of Fest (Silverdocs) and was featured in This American Life, among other awards. Lum's editing credits include *A.K.A DON BONUS* (POV, Emmy-winner) and *KELLY LOVES TONY* (POV) among others. She's also directed two short comedies, *A Great Deal!* and *Chinese Beauty* and is currently in development on a documentary called "*My Tiger Mom*" and producing *My Uncle The Fugitive*, a personal political tale about modern Taiwanese democracy with director Kathy Huang.

George Yang, MD, PhD Trailblazer Award

In recognition of contributions to surgical science and for paving the way for the next generation of surgeons.

Herbert Chen, MD

University of Alabama at Birmingham
Birmingham, Alabama

Upcoming Meetings

2023

September 14-15, 2023
The Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine
Baltimore, MD
Host: Andrew Cameron, MD, PhD, Surgeon-In-Chief, Department of Surgery
Local Arrangements Chairs: Gina Adrales, MD and Jinny Ha, MD

2024

September 5-6, 2024
Tulane University Department of Surgery
New Orleans, LA
Local Host: Mary Killackey, MD, Chair, Department of Surgery
Local Arrangements Chairs: Jessica Zagory, MD and David Yu, MD

The Journal of Surgical Research

Official Publication of the
Society of Asian Academic Surgeons