



# THE BEST YET

Another successful meeting of minds at the 2014 SAS and SRS Meeting

**RICHARD HANNEY**  
CHAIR ACADEMIC SURGERY

The College November Academic meetings, held in Adelaide in 2014, were the most successful in recent years. Long-term host, the hard-to-impress Guy Maddern, was delighted with both the attendance and standard of work presented. The calibre of presentations at the 51st annual meeting of the Surgical Research Society (SRS) was so high that John Windsor questioned whether it was, in fact, the best ever.

This year's international visitors, Professors George Chang and Taylor Riall, hailed from the MD Anderson Cancer Center and the University of Texas in Galveston, respectively. They were delighted to congratulate Dr Deborah Wright from Auckland, on her winning the Young Investigator Award at the meeting; as a result, they will host her at their Academic Surgical Congress in Jacksonville, Florida, in 2016.

Now an annual two-day event, the meetings comprise a mid-career workshop for academic surgeons followed by a meeting of the Heads of all Academic Departments of Surgery in Australasia, together with other interested participants. The Academy of Surgical Educators hosts a dinner forum preceding the SRS meeting the following day.

The academic stimulation and international networking opportunities, welcoming registrants from the level of medical students and prospective surgical Trainees through to the College's most senior academic surgeons, arguably represent the best value meetings provided by the College. In 2015 they will be held in Sydney on Thursday and Friday, November 12 and 13, before being held in Melbourne in 2016.



Young Investigator award winner Deborah Wright

Andrew Hill again oversaw the Academic Mid-Career course on Thursday morning. Highlights included an elegant reflection by Marc Gladman on addressing the triple/ quadruple threat in academic practice, with Taylor Riall giving her keynote address on emerging trends in surgical research – think patient-centred outcomes.

Leigh Delbridge outlined how to make an international impact, and I addressed the definition of an academic surgeon: a leader who has chosen to acquire specific training and experience in research and/or education, and to make these dimensions a significant part of their career.

James Lee thoughtfully structured the Heads of Departments meeting around three constructive workshops:

Minimum research requirements in SET training – a subject into which many groups have input and interest. Jonty Karpelowsky has now convened a working party to follow on from earlier work, looking at surgeons as consumers of research, and at existing competency requirements. There will be an interim report provided to the Academic Section Executive in February.

Academic career pathways – this followed an international summit held in Sydney the previous day, convened by the College President, Professor Michael Grigg. Julian Smith will chair a Steering Committee to develop academic career pathways, with members also from the RACP, AMC, Medical Deans of Australia and New Zealand and an AMA Council of Doctors in Training representative.

College scholarship funding – Stan Sidhu and Alan Saunder looked at the \$1.5 million RACS scholarship funding provided last year and explored ways to further enhance this figure, recognising that the RACP provides roughly twice this amount annually.

College Dean of Education Stephen Tobin welcomed attendees to the dinner forum centred around professionalism in training and practice, with thought-provoking addresses by David Hillis and Alison Jones. The relaxed atmosphere and excellent food led to a relaxing and valuable discussion.

Leigh Delbridge chaired Friday's Surgical Research Society meeting. Visiting guest Taylor Riall spoke on translating outcomes research in pancreatic cancer

into practice, further refining patient selection and George Chang spoke on reducing margin positivity in the resection of rectal cancer. The 23 oral and seven poster presentations were of very high standard, with award winners listed in the table.

Deborah Wright's award winning talk highlighted that the error rates reported of up to 27 per cent in the datasets of cancer databases impact significantly on translational research findings from these same databases. Julian Smith's Jepson Lecture provided a thoughtful perspective on a continually evolving career as an academic cardiothoracic surgeon. The DCAS award to the highest scored presentation by a medical student or prevocational doctor remained popular and was well won by Cameron Wells.

The evaluation forms from the meetings suggested the registrants found the hectic two day schedule valuable and well worthwhile. The generous financial support from Covidien, as Foundation sponsors of academic surgery, produces excellent value for attendees and we look forward to welcoming this year's registrants to the Sydney meeting.



Award winners Cameron Wells, middle Pramudith Sirimanna, right Anannya Chakrabarti.

## Congratulations on your achievements

Award	Recipient	Institution(s)	Abstract Title
Young Investigator Award	Dr Deborah Wright	Dunedin Hospital, School of Medical Sciences, the University of Auckland, New Zealand	Impact of Inconsistencies in Clinicopathological Data on Survival and Molecular Analyses
Developing a Career in Academic Surgery Award	Mr Cameron Wells (Medical Student)	Department of Surgery, the University of Auckland, New Zealand	Temporary Diversion Ileostomy is an Independent Long-Term Predictor for the Development of Anterior Resection Syndrome
Travel Grant	Dr Steven Due	Department of Surgery, Flinders University, Adelaide, South Australia, Australia	The Oestrogen Receptor: a Novel Therapeutic Target in Oesophageal Adenocarcinoma.
Travel Grant	Dr David Liu	Surgical Oncology Research Laboratory, Division of Cancer Surgery, Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre, University of Melbourne, Victoria, Australia	APR-246/PRIMA-1met Delays Growth and Induces Apoptosis in Oesophageal Adenocarcinoma Expressing Mutant P53
Travel Grant	Dr Pramudith Sirimanna	Academic Colorectal Unit, Sydney Medical School - Concord, University of Sydney, Australia	Validation of a Virtual Reality Simulation Model for Laparoscopic Appendectomy and Incorporation into a Proficiency-Based Curriculum
Travel Grant	Dr Anthony Glover	Kolling Institute Of Medical Research, University Of Sydney, Royal North Shore, Hospital and Engeneic Ltd, Sydney, Australia	Restoring Expression of Microrna-7 Inhibits the MAPK and Mtor Pathways and Offers a Novel Therapy for Adrenocortical Cancer
Best Poster Award	Dr Anannya Chakrabarti	Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre, University of Melbourne, Victoria, Australia	Targeting Minimal Residual Disease in Breast Cancer