



Women in Neurosurgery

Winter 2023 Newsletter





Executive Leadership



Chair: Sharona Ben-Haim, MD
UC San Diego Health,
La Jolla, CA



Chair-Elect: Maryam Rahman, MD
University of Florida
Health, Gainesville, FL



Secretary: Laura Snyder, MD
Barrow Neurological
Institute, Phoenix, AZ



Treasurer: Kimberly Price Kicielinski, MD
Medical University of
South Carolina,
Charleston, SC



Member-At-Large: Aurora S. Cruz, MD, MBA
University of Louisville,
Louisville, KY



Member-At-Large, Faculty Editor: Rupa Juthani, MD
Neurosurgeons of New
Jersey, NYU Langone,
New York, New York



Faculty Editor: Alia Hdeib, MD
Case Western Reserve
University,
Cleveland, OH

Additional Contributors



Marissa Kruk, MS3
WINS Medical Student
Committee Newsletter
Coordinator

- Sandra Yan, MD, PGY-5
- Kate Becker, MS4
- Caren Stuebe, MS4
- Sangami Pugazenthi, MS3

Chair's Message

We are so pleased to welcome you to the WINS Winter 2023 Newsletter.

In this issue, you will find community updates highlighting the impressive accomplishments of our practicing neurosurgeons, fellows, residents, and medical students. Read our new *WINS in Art and Literature* piece to learn more about author Dr. Sheri Dewan and artist Dr. Kathryn Ko's unique work. We are also honored to feature Dr. Karin Muraszko as she shares many wise words in this segment of the *Legacy Interview* series.

We are pleased to highlight the many ways in which Women in Neurosurgery were well represented this year at CNS 2023, including at our Executive Committee Meeting, WINS Symposia, as well as the inaugural Dorothy K. Nash Lecture.

Our virtual community continues to thrive with increased educational content, including the Virtual Residency Event Series, the Research Event Series, and our new WINS Quarterly Happy Hour Series. Catch up on the latest WINS social media initiatives and events in our *Stay in the Loupe* piece, and visit us at neurosurgerywins.org for a comprehensive list of our upcoming events.

As we approach the end of 2023, we reflect on the strong support system and many successes of the WINS community with gratitude. Looking ahead to 2024, we are excited to see the progress Women in Neurosurgery will continue to make.

With our warmest regards, we wish you and your family a holiday season filled with happiness, health, and personal growth.

Sincerely,

Sharona Ben-Haim, MD

Associate Professor, UC San Diego School of Medicine
Chair, Women in Neurosurgery

Community Updates

Attendings

WINS Women of the Month

Enjoy these highlights and photos from our recent WINS Woman of the Month social media posts:



Dr. Lola Chambless:

Dr. Chambless is the Neurosurgery Residency Program Director and Professor of Neurological Surgery at Vanderbilt University. When asked what accomplishments she is most proud of, Dr. Chambless reflected on her successful academic career, clinical practice in skull base surgery, pride in training the next generation of neurosurgeons as the Vanderbilt Residency Program Director, work in planning 3 CNS Annual Meetings, and role leading the SNS Medical Student Committee. She stated that her top priorities are her two brilliant, independent, and joyful daughters - Harper (age 11) and Sims (age 9). Her favorite surgical procedure to perform is an endonasal resection of a craniopharyngioma. A fun fact about Dr. Chambless is that she embarked on a multi-day expedition to climb Grand Teton in Jackson, Wyoming.



Dr. Stravropoula Tjoumakaris:

Dr. Tjoumakaris is a Professor of Neurosurgery and Chair of Academic Affairs at Thomas Jefferson University. She is the first female dual-trained cerebrovascular neurosurgeon in the United States. She developed an early passion for neurosurgery while observing her father who practiced as a radiologist near the island of Corfu, Greece. Her greatest accomplishment is her family - her spouse is an academic orthopedic hand surgeon, and they are very proud of their two children, Yianni and Scarlett. At a national level, she is most proud of her election as Chair-Elect of the CNS/AANS Cerebrovascular Section, her leadership participation in the Society for Neurointerventional Surgery SNIS, serving as Co-Chair of the Joint Guidelines Committee for CNS/AANS, and participating in the AHA/ASA Guidelines Committee and the FDA new product committee. Dr. Tjoumakaris' advice for women interested in pursuing neurosurgery is to stay engaged and never give up!



Dr. Ellen Air:

Dr. Air is the Chair of Neurosurgery at Henry Ford Health in Detroit, Michigan. She makes history as the fifth woman to chair an academic neurosurgery department in the United States and one of three women currently serving in this role. One of her proudest accomplishments is serving as a WINS representative on the Neurosurgery Summit Professionalism Task Force, which established a policy for standards of behavior at all events sponsored by organized neurosurgery. As a woman in neurosurgery, she has learned to embrace her uniqueness - a fabulous pair of shoes turns out to be a great ice-breaker with a distressed patient! Dr. Air's favorite surgical case to perform is a microvascular decompression for trigeminal neuralgia, because the anatomy is beautiful and the procedure has a great impact on the patient.



Dr. Nnenna Mbabuik:

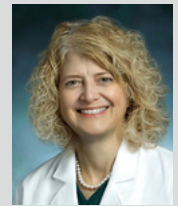
Dr. Mbabuik is a Clinical Assistant Professor of Neurosurgery at Central Michigan University College of Medicine and cerebrovascular/endovascular neurosurgeon at Ascension St. Mary's of Michigan. She is proud to be one of the founders of the American Society of Black Neurosurgeons (ASBN) and the 2022-23 President of ASBN. In establishing ASBN, she and her co-founders have created a safe space for advocacy, recruitment, retention, and support of Black neurosurgeons. Dr. Mbabuik's favorite neurosurgical cases involve treating cerebral aneurysms. Her advice for women pursuing neurosurgery is not to shy away from your femininity or authentic self. She explained that the biggest obstacle you will face is self-doubt and when you conquer that, there is no man or woman who can tell you otherwise!

Spotlight on

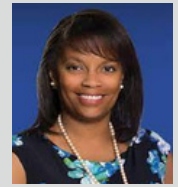


A Celebration of Success:

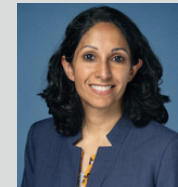
Congratulations to Dr. Shenandoah Robinson on being named the next President of the American Academy of Neurological Surgery.



Congratulations Dr. Holly Gilmer on being elected Chair of the Michigan Board of Medicine.



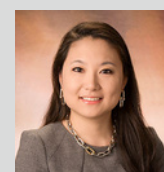
Congratulations to Dr. Maryam Rahman on being awarded the 2023 Tumor Paper of the Year for her prospective trial of levetiracetam duration in postoperative brain tumor patients.



Congratulations to Dr. Mariangela Goncalves on being elected as the President of the Brazilian Congress of Neurosurgeons.



Congratulations to Dr. Tracy Flanders and Dr. Maya Bhattachan on receiving the 2023 Future Women Leaders in Neurosurgery Scholarship.



Community Updates

Fellows + Residents + Medical Students

Congratulations **Corner:**

Congratulations to Dr. Victoria Clark, Neurosurgical Oncology Fellow at MD Anderson Cancer Center, on being awarded the Sherry Apple Travel Scholarship.



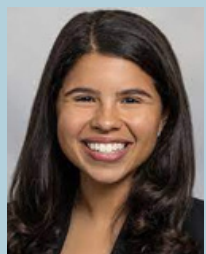
Congratulations to Dr. Joelle Hartke, PGY-5 at Barrow Neurological Institute, for being named a Brain Aneurysm Foundation Research Grant Recipient.



Congratulations to Dr. Natasha Ironside, PGY-5 at the University of Virginia, on receiving the 2024 CNS Scholarship in Data Science.



Congratulations to Gabriela Ruiz Colon, MS4 at Stanford University, for being awarded the Neurosurgery Paper of Year and presenting “A Protocol for Reducing Intensive Care Utilization After Craniotomy: A 3-Year Assessment” at the CNS Annual Meeting.



Trainee Tuesday Features

Dr. Elizabeth Nyabuto:

Dr. Elizabeth Nyabuto is a PGY-4 at the University at Buffalo. Her current research interest is in spine, but she has many interests including pediatrics that she will be pursuing research in. Dr. Nyabuto is a born and raised Texas girl who has fallen in love with Buffalo. She enjoys taking care of the patient population in Buffalo. She hopes to continue to improve the healthcare field and people's personal experience with medical professionals, one patient at a time.



Dr. Randi Barnett:

Dr. Randi Barnett is a pediatric neurosurgery fellow at UT Memphis/Le Bonheur Children's Hospital/St. Jude. In August 2024, she'll be joining the faculty as a Pediatric Neurosurgeon and Assistant Professor at the University of Kentucky Department of Neurosurgery/Kentucky Children's Hospital. Her clinical and research interests include Pediatric Brain Tumors, Complex Neuroendoscopy, Fetal Surgery for Myelomeningocele Repair, and Investigating Social Determinants of Health. Dr. Barnett is passionate about teaching and mentoring the next generation of aspiring neurosurgeons!



Dr. Samantha Parker:

Dr. Samantha Parker is a PGY-7 at University of Texas, Houston. Her clinical interests include spine and socioeconomics, specifically women in neurosurgery and systems-based resource utilization. She was selected as a CSNS Socioeconomic Fellow in 2020. When she is not at the hospital, she is usually working out, cooking, or traveling. Her advice is to find someone that will support you and your career wholeheartedly - a partner will make or break you.



Dr. Jessica Campos:

Dr. Jessica Campos is a PGY-5 at the University of California Irvine. She grew up in the Chicagoland area, studied Chemical Engineering at Vanderbilt University, obtained her medical degree from Loyola University Chicago, and later completed a postdoctoral research fellowship within the Department of Neurosurgery at Johns Hopkins University. Her interests include clinical outcomes and technical nuances of treating cerebrovascular disease. She will look towards a post-graduate Endovascular Neurosurgery Fellowship at the University of Southern California in 2026.



Dr. Michelle Lin:

Dr. Michelle Lin is a PGY-5 at Keck School of Medicine of USC. Dr. Lin is interested in vascular neurosurgery. She is planning to apply for a post-graduate endovascular and an open vascular fellowship. Her research interest is in inflammation in ischemic injury. Outside of the hospital, Dr. Lin enjoys buying books that she doesn't get around to reading, swimming, and listening to CCR.



Dr. Rukayat Taiwo:

Dr. Rukayat Taiwo is a PGY-5 at Stanford University. Dr. Taiwo is interested in Neuro-oncology and is currently conducting research focused on identifying novel nucleic acid biomarkers in cerebrospinal fluid of patients with glioblastoma and other high-grade brain neoplasms. Dr. Taiwo was born in Lagos, Nigeria. She enjoys experiencing new cultures via traveling and spending time in nature through hiking.



Women in Neurosurgery

Legacy Interview

Featuring Dr. Karin Muraszko

The Legacy Interview is a feature of the WINS Newsletter aimed at highlighting veteran members of the WINS community. We had the pleasure of interviewing Dr. Karin Muraszko, Julian T. Hoff Professor of Neurosurgery at the University of Michigan, the first female chair of a neurosurgery department in the United States, and founding member of WINS:



How would you describe your journey in neurosurgery?

I knew I wanted to be a doctor from the time I was 4-5 years old. Frankly, I thought I wanted to be a psychiatrist, because I really like the mind and I liked helping people. When I got to medical school, I quickly figured out that psychiatry did not match my personality at all. I did a lot of lab work at Columbia and began to see that I really liked neuroscience and working with my hands. When I was on my neurology rotation, I spent some time in neurosurgery while following one of my patients. To be honest, I had one of those thunderclap moments! The first operation I saw was a cervical medullary tumor resection. To this day, I get extraordinarily excited every time I look at the brainstem and posterior fossa. I still find tremendous joy in operating and taking care of patients.

Even yesterday while I was working on a difficult case, I reflected on the fact that although it was tough, there is a part of me that always enjoys the challenge of it. Neurosurgery is a constant puzzle. It is a demanding and taxing field, but it allows one to constantly grow, solve complicated problems, and take care of people in complex circumstances. Because of the anatomy and individual patient characteristics, every day as a neurosurgeon is different – that is extraordinary and great fun!

I am not what you would expect in a neurosurgeon. At least when I started, there were not many women in neurosurgery and there have not been many people with disabilities that have become surgeons. I never thought I would be a Chair – it was not something I had originally considered as a goal for my career. I was fortunate that it happened. There was a chance, and with luck, things fell into line.

Throughout my journey, I have loved working with the types of people who are in neurosurgery. They are very bright, thoughtful, and care about their patients. I still enjoy having conversations with my partners about cases. I view myself as very fortunate. I have had great mentors who were very helpful at Yale as an undergraduate, at Columbia as a medical student, and throughout my residency. Ed Oldfield was one of those people who was very inspirational when I was at the NIH. Since coming to Michigan, I have worked with terrific people. I like the fact neurosurgeons stay true to the ideal that we need to constantly push the field forward. Research is intimate to that. I have stayed in an academic practice because I enjoy teaching and seeing the development of the next generation.

I have been at it long enough now that I have begun to see the products of that effort. At this stage in my career, I am also seeing the output of the fact that I have taken care of children. My patients have grown up to become adults and have their own kids - seeing that scope of life has been so exciting.

Throughout the course of your career, what are some of the accomplishments you are most proud of?

Getting through a residency program back in the day – that is something I am very proud to have accomplished! I am also proud to have led a department. Being the first woman to do so, there was a certain amount of pressure. I feel very privileged to have worked with incredible individuals at Michigan. Together, we assembled a great group of faculty members and made the department a better place. In doing so, we also maintained an outstanding surgical program, cutting-edge research, and a sense of camaraderie.

In neurosurgery, the volume that we learn is so enormous. It is valuable that we have organizations to help us sort through this knowledge and find the pearls that every neurosurgeon needs to know about. Being on the American Board of Neurological Surgeons, RC for neurosurgery, and a president of the SNS was a privilege. The quality of the people I worked with and what we did was so important. We protected patients, made sure neurosurgeons were well-trained, and ensured that residency programs do the right things.

I have made great friends in neurosurgery, many of whom are in WINS. I am proud that WINS has grown into an organization that does not just speak to women in neurosurgery but speaks to broader, important questions. These include leadership development, building the right workforce, and embracing inclusivity so that neurosurgery will attract the best and brightest.

I am proud of the success I have had in my career, but I am also proud of the fact that I continue in it. There are so many ways to keep contributing to neurosurgery!



As a trailblazing woman in neurosurgery, what are some of the challenges you faced? How did you overcome them?

In the beginning, there were not many women in neurosurgery. When you train and are developing, you look to role models. I did not have role models who were like me, so I had to borrow from a lot of different role models who were men. WINS started because as women we felt isolated, and we had a need to come together.

I have a group of women who have been my friends since the early days of my career. Among them are Deb Benzil, Edie Zusman, Gail Rosseau, and Emily Friedman. We get together regularly and talk. I look at them, along with all women in WINS, and I think about how much we have gone through. Often when we would walk into rooms, we would be the only woman. We have now entered a stage where women have reached the highest echelons of neurosurgical organizations and leadership roles at academic institutions.

In overcoming challenges, I am the tortoise and definitely not the hare. I am someone who moves through situations slowly, deliberately, and thoughtfully. It is never easy. Many times, it is a matter of work, effort, and hope in that you are changing things for the better.

What does the “Spirit of WINS” mean to you? How have you embodied that throughout your career?

For me, the Spirit of WINS has always been about inclusiveness and seeing the value in people who are not like you. It means recognizing that important questions need to be asked in an unafraid fashion and answers found to difficult problems. The face of neurosurgery is changing, and that is a good thing. It reflects our broader appeal as a specialty to a wide variety of individuals. We are evolving and leading – neurosurgery is a specialty that always aims to do better.

What are your aspirations for the future of WINS and the field of neurosurgery as a whole?

I once said it and I meant it – the goal of WINS is to make itself obsolete. At some point, we will not need to have an organization that celebrates women in neurosurgery. The focus of WINS is no longer just about women in neurosurgery – it encompasses the work-life balance, discrimination, harassment, DEI initiatives, building and sustaining a practice, succeeding in academics, and creating a fulfilling life in neurosurgery. These issues affect everybody. Because some of the questions that have been asked within WINS have resonance across neurosurgery, it puts us in a valuable place to provide answers. It has been a great joy to see WINS members called on as resource experts in certain areas to help larger organizations. In the future, I think the members of WINS will continue to lead and find ways to address important issues in our field. At some point, WINS may no longer want to be identified as a separate group, but merely recognized as having brought forth a group of individuals to serve as leaders in neurosurgery.

What words of wisdom would you like to share with WINS members?

Be kind to yourself – recognize that none of us are perfect! Constantly keep learning. Understand that knowledge is extraordinarily important and even random knowledge can become helpful to you in a variety of ways. Stay humble – the ability to learn and recognize mistakes is something that should never escape us. Be honest with yourself. Be honest about the things you are doing well and be honest about the areas you need to improve on. Seek honesty and truth in the working relationships you have with others. For me, it has been a joy to realize how many spectacular individuals are in neurosurgery. In the process of working with them, you can better yourself.

Stay excited about what you are doing! The greatest gift is to find an area where you stay engaged and fulfilled day after day. Always feel that neurosurgery is a place for you. You have a right to be here. You have a right to be happy and succeed within neurosurgery.

What is your most cherished WINS memory?

At the last AANS meeting, I was struck by all the amazing women at WINS Anniversary Celebration. I never thought I would see a room full to the brink of overflow with women in neurosurgery and our supporters within my lifetime. I was impressed by elegance, knowledge, sophistication, breadth, and depth of the women I have met through WINS. So many of them I had trained with, mentored, worked with, done research with, or written with. We came together to celebrate each other and the existence of WINS, but also to look to the future with optimism for all of the things that WINS and its membership could and should be.

Dr. Muraszko, we sincerely thank you for your insight and advice!

CNS 2023

WINS Executive Committee Meeting:

The 2023 Congress of Neurological Surgeons Annual Meeting was an incredible event for the Women in Neurosurgery community. The WINS Executive Committee Meeting was the largest in our organization's history! Dr. Sharona Ben-Haim, Dr. Laura Snyder, Dr. Kimberly Kicielski, Dr. Maryam Rahman, and Dr. Jamie Ullman reported on the progress WINS has made. Dr. Katie Kearns provided an update on the WINS Mentorship Program. WINS Resident Committee President, Dr. Nina Yoh, and WINS Medical Student Committee Co-Presidents, Caren Stuebe and Sangami Pugazenthi, delivered updates on the recent successes of their committees.

WINS Symposia:

This year's WINS Symposia began with the Neurosurgeons as Trailblazers session moderated by Dr. Rupa Juthani and Dr. Rushna Ali. The session highlighted the breadth of opportunities available to neurosurgeons with an emphasis on parallel career paths. Dr. Kathryn Ko shared some of her spectacular artwork and discussed her transition from "blade to brush" when she obtained a Master of Fine Arts degree as an attending at a Level I Trauma Center in the Bronx. Rachel Prero, a neurosurgery recruitment consultant at Rosman Search, presented on the changing landscape of our field and expansion of employment options for neurosurgeons. Dr. Gail Rousseau, a trailblazer in global neurosurgery and Chairman of the Board of Directors of the G4 Alliance, discussed the core responsibility we share in making neurosurgical care accessible to everyone, everywhere. Dr. Kimberly Hoang shared an enlightening presentation on engineering and innovation from the perspective of a surgeon-scientist. Dr. Sonia Eden highlighted the importance of equity and representation in neurosurgery. She shared the success of her groundbreaking Neuro Mentoring Matters program, which currently serves 64 mentees. Dr. Deborah Benzil reflected on her remarkable journey pursuing a career in neurosurgery and her leadership experiences. She emphasized the critical role leadership plays in addressing structural biases and making neurosurgery better for everyone. Dr. Sheri Dewan shared insight on building relationships with the media and establishing a parallel career path as an author.

The Symposia continued with the Maximizing Your Neurosurgical Employment Opportunities session for senior neurosurgery residents and graduating fellows. Speakers included Dr. John Braca, Dr. Andrew Cogner, Nancy Cusick, Dr. Anand Germanwala, Dr. Michele Johnson, Dr. Timothy Lucas, Dr. Joseph Neimat, Dr. Justin Singer, Dr. Jennifer Sweet, Matthew Vuckovich, and Dr. Kristin Weaver. The faculty discussed topics relevant to job applicants from the perspective of chairpersons, program directors, and recruiters. Attendees had an opportunity to have their CVs reviewed and obtain interview tips from experts in this area.

WINS Reception:

The WINS Reception was a fantastic evening of fellowship and celebration of community on Monday, September 11th. The event featured an inspiring message from speaker Patti Solis Doyle. Doyle is a nationally recognized political organizer, campaign strategist, and CNN political commentator with over 30 years of experience. She served as campaign manager for Senator Hillary Clinton's presidential bid in 2007-2008, making her the first Hispanic woman to run a presidential campaign. She was later the Chief of Staff for Vice Presidential operations for now President Joe Biden in the 2008 general election and advisor to the Obama-Biden campaign during the 2012 presidential election. Thank you to Gold Sponsor Medtronic and Silver Sponsors Stryker and Johnson & Johnson Medical Devices for making this event possible!

Dorothy K. Nash Lecture:

The first ever Dorothy K. Nash Lecture featured renowned lawyer, global human rights advocate, and New York Times Magazine Woman of the Year, Amal Clooney. In a moderated discussion with Dr. Lola Chambless and Dr. Martina Stippler, Clooney reflected on her journey to becoming a female barrister in England with a focus on human rights. She described how her passion for defending women, journalists, and victims of genocide transformed her career into one focused on international advocacy. In 2016, she and her husband George co-founded the Clooney Foundation for Justice, an organization that gathers evidence and provides free legal support for victims of human rights violations. Throughout her talk, Amal Clooney drew parallels between her human rights work and neurosurgery. She challenges the neurosurgical community to reflect on their local and global impact, and empowered them to pursue their passions.

WINS Resident and Medical Student Socials:

Our Resident and Medical Student Socials fostered a strong sense of community among the next generation of WINS. These events were well-attended by WINS members of all genders and backgrounds. The WINS Resident Social, held at Compass Coffee, allowed attendees to catch up, spark conversations with new colleagues, and enjoy caffeinated beverages. The WINS Medical Student Social was a fun-spirited, outdoor event held at Datcha Beer Garden. The social featured a raffle for coveted neurosurgical textbooks and other educational materials. We were quite impressed by the enthusiasm and large turnout at these events! The "Spirit of WINS" is evident in our resident and medical student members. We would like to thank faculty members, such as Dr. Deborah Benzil and Dr. Angela Richardson, for attending these socials and supporting the next generation of WINS.

Making a Difference – Mentorship Matters:

Mentorship was a key area of focus at the 2023 CNS Annual Meeting. To help engage students and trainees, WINS, ASBN, and the CNS Diversity, Equity and Inclusivity Committee co-sponsored the DEI Breakfast Seminar: Mentoring 101. In addition, the WINS Medical Student Committee piloted the Mentorship in a Minute Program. This initiative connected female medical students with a resident mentor for a 15-minute meeting at CNS focused on career development. Through encouragement and advice, CNS mentorship programs helped provide the resources needed to empower our young members. We are making a difference and enhancing diversity in neurosurgery, one mentorship meeting at a time.



WINS in Art and Literature



Book Q&A with Dr. Sheri Dewan



We had the pleasure of speaking with Dr. Sheri Dewan about her book *Cutting A Path: The Power of Purpose, Discipline, and Determination*:

What inspired you to become an author and at what point did you decide to start writing?

I started writing *Cutting A Path* when I was a fifth-year neurosurgery resident. I was having incredible experiences in neurosurgery – saving lives, being involved in surgeries with amazing results – and at the same time, I was pregnant with my daughter. The experience of motherhood and becoming a neurosurgeon was so unique to me. I had never read any literature or seen any books published about a woman brain surgeon going through pregnancy and having a family during residency, so I decided to start writing *Cutting A Path* at that time.

What is your general approach to writing? How do you integrate it into your busy schedule?

My general approach to writing is when I have time, I sit down at the computer and do it. A lot of writers will carve out time during their days to write. With the life of a busy mother, neurosurgeon, and wife, I had to take the opportunities when they came. I would write when I was on call and there was down time or if I was between surgical cases. Most of the time I recorded voice memos and later had them transcribed into a Word document, which is actually how I wrote the book.

What was the path to publication like? What was the most rewarding and most challenging part?

My path to publication began not only when I wrote the book, but when I secured a literary agent. That process was very difficult. It took several years to finally meet the right fit. I ended up signing with the O'Shea Agency and they later secured my deal with the publisher. The most rewarding aspect was when I held the book in my hands for the first time and saw the cover – it was an incredible moment! The most challenging part was dealing with multiple rounds of rejection. I was rejected by multiple publishers and had to rewrite the manuscript at least 3 times.

How did you decide on the title *Cutting A Path: The Power of Purpose, Discipline, and Determination*? What does it mean to you?

As a neurosurgeon, I wanted to integrate the practice and art of neurosurgery, thereby writing *Cutting A Path*. The subtitle was really driven by the three principles that I utilized in my life – purpose, discipline, and determination. Without those three principles, I would never have been able to become a neurosurgeon, have a family, and become a published author.

In sharing your journey to neurosurgery, how do you hope to inspire others?

I hope that people read the book and understand that they are capable of pursuing whatever dream they have despite overcoming obstacles, naysayers, and the noise that is surrounding them. If you have a true goal, there is nothing that can't be done!

Has writing and publishing a book changed the way you see yourself as a woman in neurosurgery?

Absolutely. Becoming a published author, a neurosurgeon, and having a family has allowed me to feel even more well-rounded and balanced in my life. The book became a bestseller, reaching national and international press. Over the past 6 months, I have had the opportunity to interact with incredible people around the world and feel very fortunate to do so.



Dr. Kathryn Ko and Studio AMWA:

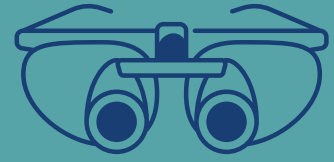
Dr. Kathryn Ko is an ambidextrous neurosurgeon who currently practices in New York City. She received her medical degree from the University of Hawaii John A. Burns School of Medicine and completed her neurosurgery residency at Mt. Sinai Medical Center. As a resident, she combined her anatomic and artistic interests to create metal holograms of the human brain using a pulsed ruby laser. She has served as Chief of Neurosurgery at numerous Level I Trauma Centers in NYC. Dr. Ko earned a Master of Fine Arts degree from the American Academy of Art University. From the OR to the art studio, Dr. Ko's creativity fuels her career. She serves as the Senior Curator for the American Medical Women's Association online gallery, Studio AMWA. Studio AMWA features artwork by women who practice the art and science of medicine. The following pieces are testaments to Dr. Ko's incredible talent. They can be found on the Studio AMWA website:



Call for WINS Artwork

Are you a woman in neurosurgery passionate about art? Do you channel your talents into drawing, photography, painting, or writing? Submit your artwork to be featured in upcoming editions of the WINS Newsletter! Submissions can be emailed to Marissa Kruk, WINS Medical Student Committee Newsletter Coordinator: mkruk2@buffalo.edu

Stay in the Loupe



Read the latest update on WINS social media initiatives and events:

Women in Neurosurgery Virtual Symposium Series:

The Women in Neurosurgery Virtual Symposium Series continued with its final webinar, Longitudinal Mentorship – Examining the Importance of Mentorship Throughout Your Neurosurgical Career Journey, on October 4th. The program, organized by WINS in partnership with Northwell Health and the Zucker School of Medicine, featured insightful discussions with female neurosurgeons and their mentees. Thank you to Playback Health for sponsoring the series and promoting equity and diversity in neurosurgery!

#WINSxResearchMonday:

Our social media team continues to amplify scientific advancements impacting the WINS community with weekly posts. We recently highlighted “The Progression of Diversity: Black Women in Neurosurgery”. In this study, Bryant et al. conducted interviews with Black female neurosurgery attendings and residents to examine the underrepresentation of Black women in neurosurgery and explore possible solutions for increasing diversity. In order to uplift Black women in neurosurgery, the authors proposed these 5 key efforts: improved data collection to better assess the state of equity in the field, implicit bias training, mentorship and recruitment through pipeline programs, global outreach, and promotion of Black women into positions of leadership. One recent post featured “Incidence of Infertility and Pregnancy Complications in US Female Surgeons” where Rangel et al. found that 42% of female surgeons reported at least 1 pregnancy loss. This is more than double the rate reported in the general population of women aged 30 to 40 years. We also shared the results of “Gender Differences in Medicare Practice and Payments to Neurosurgeons” - Oshinowo et al. found that when performing the same primary procedure, female surgeons were reimbursed less than male surgeons.

Are you conducting research related to diversity, health equity, and novel science in neurosurgery? Share your work with our WINS team by adding #WINSxResearchMonday to your research posts!

WINS Medical Student Committee Events:

The WINS Medical Student Committee Residency Match Series provided students with necessary resources and advice for this year’s match process. ERAS 101 for the Neurosurgery Applicant: Maximizing Your Application for the Match presented strategies for tackling the experiences section on ERAS, letters of recommendation, and signaling. The discussion featured experts Dr. Christopher Graffeo, Dr. Laura Snyder, and Dr. Akash Patel. Acing the Interview – Tips for the Neurosurgery Match was held on October 4th with insight and live interview practice from Dr. Carolyn Quinsey, Associate Program Director at UNC Chapel Hill, and UNC residents Dr. Allie Harbert, Dr. Boyi Li, and Dr. Sierra Smalley. The WINS Medical Student Committee Guide to Research for Medical Students program continued with Part 3 – Taking a Gap Year on October 11th. Dr. Jennifer Strahle, Dr. Elizabeth Wicks, and Gabriela Ruiz-Colon led the conversation. The new International Medical Graduate Series began with Charting the Path: Voices of Female IMG Neurosurgeons featuring Dr. Rushna Ali, Dr. Jihad Abdelgadir, and Dr. Halima Tabani on October 18th.

How to Get Involved

Are you passionate about equity, diversity, and representation in neurosurgery? Would you like to stay connected with the WINS community? Become a member of WINS! Attendings, fellows, residents, and medical students can follow these instructions to become an official member of the WINS roster:

<https://neurosurgerywins.org/membership/>