

August 2024 | Monthly Newsletter



MURIEL STEELE SOCIETY



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*Sponsored by the UCSF Department of Surgery*

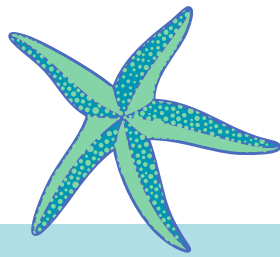
Newsletter by Reta Behnam



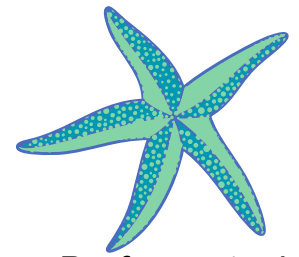
# MURIEL STEELE SOCIETY

**Happy August** to all our Muriel Steele Society members!

We hope the “summer” has been treating you well. Below you’ll find updates, celebrations, and highlights of MSS members across specialties!



## NEW SPOTLIGHT: DR. GRACE BANIK!



THE MSS SPOTLIGHT SERIES

AVAILABLE NOW!



**Dr. Grace Banik**

Interviewed by  
Sophia Yin

Dr. Grace Banik is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Otolaryngology at UCSF. She completed a fellowship in Pediatric Otolaryngology at the Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia. She is especially interested in cancerous and noncancerous head and neck growths, including pediatric thyroid cancer.

Below is an excerpt from her spotlight that is **live now on the MSS Website!**

**“I would absolutely not be where I am now without the help of so many mentors along the way. One of my attendings in residency taught me early on to treat every single surgery, no matter how big or small, as the biggest case of your life. Because for the patient, it is.”**





## Congratulations to our MSS Members in the 2024 Class of John A. Watson Faculty Scholars and Recipients of the Dean's Diversity Fund Awards!

The UCSF School of Medicine Dean's Diversity Fund was established in 2015 to support the recruitment and retention of faculty who share the university's commitment to diversity and the belief that we have the responsibility to care for culturally diverse and medically underserved populations. The awards provide faculty with three-year, \$75,000 per year support to develop their academic interests, as well as pursue activities that contribute to the community.



**Caitlin Collins, MD, MPH**  
Assistant Professor, Surgery

A Surgical Critical Care Fellow, Dr. Collins completed her General Surgery residency training at UCSF in 2022. Her research has focused on alternative payment models, health equity, and quality improvement within surgical populations. Under the mentorship of Dr. Liza Wick, she has explored the impact of bundled payment reimbursement models within a general surgery population. She has also worked on the implementation of a quality improvement platform for trauma patients in Southwestern Cameroon under the guidance and mentorship of Dr. Catherine Juillard and Dr. Alain Chichom Mefire.

**Daisy Leon-Martinez, MD, MAS**  
Assistant Professor, Obstetrics,  
Gynecology & Reproductive Sciences

A perinatologist, Dr. Leon-Martinez is a specialist providing care when pregnant people and developing fetuses have conditions requiring expert management. She also works in labor and delivery and cares for pregnant people who require hospitalization. In her research, Dr. Leon-Martinez seeks to understand how maternal conditions, such as diabetes, infections and autoimmune diseases, can affect the placenta's development. She also studies disorders that arise from high blood pressure during pregnancy, such as preeclampsia, and has a special interest in interventions to reduce disparities in health around the time of childbirth due to preeclampsia.





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## Congratulations to our MSS Members in the 2024 Academy Class of The Haile T. Debas Academy of Medical Educators!

The Haile T. Debas Academy of Medical Educator's (Academy or AME) core value is supporting the people who advance the education mission of UCSF by fostering an organizational culture that values education and accelerates advances in teaching and learning to improve health with an emphasis on community, diversity, advocacy, service, and innovation. There are 255 members across the schools of medicine, dentistry, nursing, and pharmacy.



**Celebration of New Members will be on Zoom and in-person in Mission Bay in Byers Auditorium, Genentech Hall and Zoom on Wednesday, September 11th, from 2:30-5pm**

**Rita Mukhtar, MD**  
Associate Professor,  
Department of Surgery



Dr. Rita Mukhtar specializes in breast surgery and general surgery for urgent conditions. Dr. Mukhtar conducts research on breast cancer genetics and risk reduction. She also specifically studies lobular breast cancer and ductal carcinoma in situ.

**Jolie Chang, MD, MEng**

Associate Professor, Department of Otolaryngology, Head and Neck Surgery

Dr. Jolie L. Chang is an otolaryngologist who specializes in surgery to treat obstructive sleep apnea. She serves as chief of the UCSF Division of Sleep Surgery. Dr. Chang's research interests include decision making in health care and improvements for sleep apnea therapy and sialendoscopy. She has written on topics related to hearing loss, salivary obstruction symptoms and treatment, otolaryngology resident perspectives, and smell and taste changes related to COVID-19. She serves as the director of resident research for otolaryngology – head and neck surgery.





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## Congratulations to Dr. Hannah Decker and Dr. Marissa Boeck on their ZSFGH Highlight!

Over the past two years as a UCSF surgery resident, Dr. Decker has been working to improve health outcomes for patients who have surgical problems and who are experiencing homelessness. Through her clinical care and research, she identified that appointment scheduling is a significant barrier for patients to receive surgery and follow-up care. To gain more insight from on how to improve the delivery of care to patients experiencing homelessness, Dr. Decker connected with Dr. Barry Zevin, Medical Director of the DPH's Whole Person Integrated Care (WPIC) program. This led to a collaboration between WPIC'S nurses, social workers, street care teams, and clinicians from ZSFG's surgery department to develop a drop-in clinic model for surgery, with a pilot of this program starting later this summer. As part of this team, Dr. Marissa Boeck, assistant professor of surgery, has worked with to increase awareness of WPIC resources and the street medicine team in order to ensure patients receive appropriate peri-operative care.



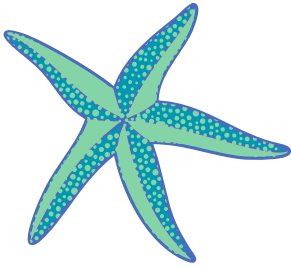
## Congratulations to Dr. Merisa Piper, the New Associate Program Director of Assessment and Wellness!

As Medical Director for cancer reconstruction at Mission Bay, Dr. Piper leads initiatives on Quality Improvement, Enhanced Recovery After Surgery (ERAS), and Operating Room scheduling. Her research, centered on breast reconstruction and including a groundbreaking clinical trial on mastectomy patients' microbiome, underscores her commitment to advancing patient care. Dr. Piper is also a respected reviewer for numerous journals, serving as Breast Section Editor for the Annals of Plastic Surgery, and holds key roles in national and regional plastic surgery organizations such as the American Society of Plastic Surgery, the American Society of Reconstructive Microsurgery, the American Council of Academic Plastic Surgeons, and the California Society of Plastic Surgery. She is deeply dedicated to resident education and well-being and her appointment reflects her exemplary dedication to clinical excellence, research innovation, and nurturing the next generation of plastic surgeons.

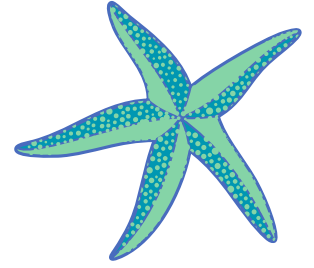




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## AWS Institutional Benefits



**UCSF's AWS Institutional Membership benefits have been renewed for the upcoming year!**

To all our faculty, residents, and trainees—don't miss out on the **invaluable resources** available through membership in the **Association of Women Surgeons (AWS)**. If you have any questions or need assistance in utilizing your benefits, feel free to reach out to the MSS Communications Committee.

### Mark your Calendars!!! 2024 AWS Annual Conference



Save the date for **#AWS2024!** The **AWS Annual Conference** provides educational content, presentations by leaders in surgery, mentoring opportunities, and professional development.

Join us right here in **San Francisco from Friday, October 18 to Saturday, October 19.**

#### Faculty:

AWS colleagues invite you to join them as a member of the Association of Women Surgeons.



Learn more!

#### Residents:

All UCSF residents in the Department of Surgery are institutional members of AWS through UCSF—we encourage you to fully leverage the diverse range of benefits AWS membership offers.



Learn more!

#### Medical Students:

Medical students are encouraged to join AWS for a fee of \$25—becoming a member will provide multiple networking opportunities for students at the AWS conference taking place in SF later this year!



Learn more!

## AWS Benefits

#### Networking Opportunities:

Connect with a global community of female surgeons, fostering collaboration and mentorship.

#### Educational Resources:

Gain access to exclusive webinars, workshops, and publications to stay informed on the latest advancements.

#### Mentorship Programs:

Benefit from mentorship opportunities that can provide guidance and support at every stage of your career.

#### Career Development:

Access resources aimed at enhancing your professional skills and advancing your career in surgery.

Thanks for reading!

**MSS Communications Committee:**

*Resident Leads:* Alexis Colley, Fernanda Romero-Hernandez

*Medical Student Lead:* Aileen Gozali

*Newsletter:* Allison Chang, Reta Behnam

*Social Media:* Rachel Huynh, Nikki Mahendru, Reta Behnam

**If you have anything you would like to feature (publications, advice, work photos and achievements, family or personal photos and achievements, etc) in this new section of our newsletters, please send an email to [themurielsteelesociety@ucsf.edu](mailto:themurielsteelesociety@ucsf.edu)!**

The Muriel Steele Society is an inclusive community dedicated to inspiring, supporting, and promoting women and other gender minority surgeons so they can thrive at all stages of their careers. We will be hosting events throughout the year to foster a strong community of allies and to achieve the goal of continued excellence at UCSF. The Muriel Steele Society is dedicated to diversity, equity, and inclusion of colleagues, trainees, and learners at UCSF and beyond, who identify as women, transgender, and nonbinary in surgical fields. Our overarching goal is to advocate for a culture of belonging - free of bias and discrimination - that is focused on expanding the advancement of all genders and the broader LGBTQ+ community in surgery. All women and gender minority surgeons or medical students interested in surgery are included in the society but we recognize that some may have been inadvertently left out of these emails. Please forward to anyone who you think might like to be included in the MSS. If you are interested in membership, please email us at [themurielsteelesociety@ucsf.edu](mailto:themurielsteelesociety@ucsf.edu).

For more information about the Muriel Steele Society,  
**please visit our website or follow us on Twitter and Instagram.**

Have an opportunity or event that you'd like to share with the MSS membership?  
**Email us at [themurielsteelesociety@ucsf.edu](mailto:themurielsteelesociety@ucsf.edu).**

Want to become more involved with the Muriel Steele Society?  
We especially welcome women and other gender minorities in other surgical departments to join our Executive Council! **Email co-chairs Mika Varma ([mika.varma@ucsf.edu](mailto:mika.varma@ucsf.edu)) or Lucy Kornblith ([lucy.kornblith@ucsf.edu](mailto:lucy.kornblith@ucsf.edu)) for more information.**



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