

November 2025 | Monthly Newsletter



MURIEL STEELE SOCIETY



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Sponsored by the UCSF Department of Surgery

Newsletter by: Grace Kloss



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Happy November!

We've had a busy and inspiring month! Check out some of the recent highlights, event recaps, and what's coming up next.

✦ 2025 AAMC Emerging Organization Leadership Award ✦

We're thrilled to announce that the Muriel Steele Society has been selected as the **2025 Emerging Organization Leadership Award** recipient by the **AAMC Group on Women in Medicine and Science (GWIMS)**. This award recognizes an organization that has advanced women in medicine and science for fewer than ten years.

Since our founding in 2018, MSS has grown from a group of seven individuals to a community of all surgical specialties at UCSF and over 600 individuals. This award celebrates the incredible commitment, collaboration, and impact of our community.

Thank you to every member of MSS, this achievement is yours!



Inclusive community dedicated to inspiring, supporting, and promoting surgeons so they can thrive at all stages of their careers

Read the AAMC post here





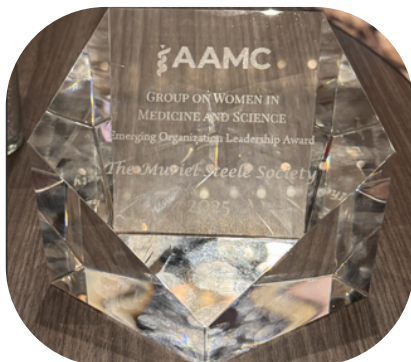
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❖❖❖ 2025 AAMC Emerging Organization Leadership Award ❖❖❖

Dr. Lucy Kornblith and Dr. Julie Ann Sosa traveled to San Antonio this past weekend to accept the GWIMS Emerging Organization Leadership Award. Below are excerpts from Dr. Kornblith's acceptance speech.

Congratulations once again to Dr. Mika Varma and Dr. Lucy Kornblith, who have led this organization from the start, Dr. Caitlin Collins who is stepping into MSS leadership, and to our entire MSS community for contributing to this incredible recognition!

"This award is not just a recognition of what we've done, but rather a call to continue this work with even greater intention. Because while progress has been made, we know the journey is far from complete. To the AAMC and GWIMS community: thank you for shining a light on organizations like ours. To Dr. Sosa, our UCSF colleagues, mentors, and allies: thank you for believing in this mission from the beginning. Most importantly, to our community: the students, residents, fellows, faculty, and staff who show up every day to mentor, sponsor, advocate, and lead, this award belongs to you."



"Dr. Muriel Steele left doors open for those that came behind her, and we accept this award in the spirit of Muriel Steele. We are committed to keeping those doors open, wide, and welcoming for generations to come."





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✦ ✦ ACS and AWS Recap ✦ ✦

Last month, UCSF had a strong showing at the American College of Surgeons (ACS) and Association of Women Surgeons (AWS) meetings! Enjoy a look back at some memorable moments and join us in celebrating the many honors earned by our faculty and residents.



✦ ✦ Association of Women Surgeons Awards ✦ ✦



Congratulations to Ava Yap, MD, MHSc for being awarded the **Dr. Hilary Sanfey Outstanding Resident Award**, awarded to a surgical resident who demonstrates potential as a future leader in surgery.



Shraddha Pandey presented a Muriel Steele Society project on Barriers and Facilitators for Advancement among Underrepresented Groups in Surgery at the AWS Starr Research Forum. The project was awarded runner-up for **Best Medical Student Presentation!** Congratulations to Shraddha, along with fellow student contributors Katherine Miclau, Jacqueline Friskey, and Maithili Diaz, on this outstanding achievement.





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✦ American College of Surgeons Awards ✦



We are incredibly proud to share that Nancy Ascher, MD, PhD, FACS was distinguished as an “Icon in Surgery” at this years ACS meeting. This prestigious honor celebrates exceptional surgeons who have made contributions to the legacy of surgery.



Please watch the official ACS video highlighting her outstanding achievements!

Congratulations to Tasce Bongiovanni, MD, MPP, MHS, FACS for being awarded the **Joan L. and Julius H. Jacobson II Promising Investigator Award**.

This award recognized outstanding surgeons engaging in research and advancing patient safety in the practice of surgery



Congratulations to Nathan Brand, MD for being awarded the **ACS/Pfizer Resident Surgical Volunteerism Award**. This award is given to recognize surgeons who are committed to giving back through significant contributions to surgical care through volunteer activities.



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Congratulations to the UCSF Faculty who were inducted as Fellows of American College of Surgeons at the Clinical Congress in Chicago last month!



Sarah Cairo, MD, MPH
Pediatric General Surgery



Melissa Coleman, MD
Thoracic Surgical Oncology



David Gendelberg, MD
Orthopedic Surgery



James Iannuzzi, MD, MPH
Vascular Surgery



Bao-Quynh Julian, MD
Reconstructive Plastic Surgery



Rachel Koch, MD
General Surgery



Charles Rickert, MD, PhD
Transplant Surgery



B. Mark Zhao, MD
Colon and Rectal Surgical
Oncology



Society of University Surgeons Award



Tammy Chang, MD, PhD was the recipient of the 2025 SUS Mid-Career Award! Her research proposal rose to the top of a highly competitive year and earns her funding for the next phase of her groundbreaking research in surgical science. Learn more about Dr. Chang's Research here





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New Spotlight: Dr. Clara Starkweather

THE MSS SPOTLIGHT SERIES

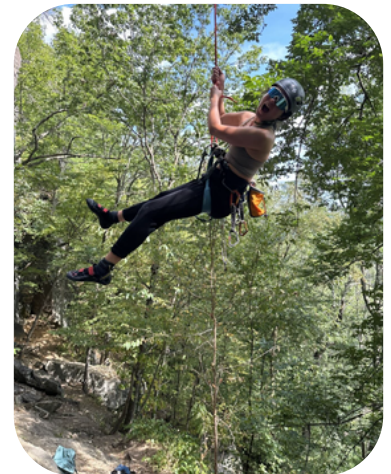
COMING SOON!

**Clara Starkweather, MD, PhD**

Dr. Clara Starkweather is a PGY-6 Neurosurgery Resident at UCSF. She earned her MD and PhD from Harvard Medical School. Her work focuses on understanding the brain signaling that drives decision making and advancing targeted neuromodulation approaches for psychiatric disorders.

Below is an excerpt from her spotlight, conducted by medical student Parisa Jahangirizadeh that is **coming soon to the M**

"...It was an emotional moment for the patient. Seeing that kind of impact was very addictive to me. It's just so cool that the work we do has an immediate impact. That very short time course of - we showed up today, and we did our best to fix this problem, and sometimes it is fixed - that's magical to me."



"I feel a sense of wonder always, even in the simplest cases...What we operate on is personal; it's what makes you a person."



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✦✦ AWS Visiting Professor ✦✦

The Muriel Steele Society had the pleasure of welcoming Dr. Miral Grandhi, Associate Professor of Surgery at Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School, Program Director of the Complex General Surgical Oncology Fellowship Program, and Director of Hepatobiliary Surgery at Rutgers Cancer Institute, for lunch. Attendees enjoyed connecting with Dr. Grandhi and hearing her perspectives on surgery and mentorship.



✦✦ Upcoming Event! ✦✦

The Muriel Steele Society invites you to our Fall Gowning and Gloving event on Sunday, December 14th from 10am-12:30pm at Mission Bay (MH-1401/1402)

This workshop will be an orientation to the operating room, where you'll learn about sterile procedure in the OR, learning how to glove and gown, scrub, and be an effective and engaged team member in cases. This will be a great opportunity to meet surgical residents and prepare for surgery rotations on the wards!

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Previous attachment

December 14

MSS GOWNING AND GLOVING WORKSHOP

10 am to 12:30 pm

Join us for an orientation to the OR and the fundamentals of scrubbing in, taught by our wonderful surgical residents!

MISSION HALL
MH1401/MH1402

☒ SIGN UP HERE:
<https://forms.gle/edaJaJR44URH8HoA7>

Questions? email
rachel.huynh@ucsf.edu

Sign up here





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AWS Membership Resources

To all 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.

Upcoming Opportunities:

- **DEADLINE: November 7th**, apply to joining the AWS-SURGERY Reviewer Academy as a mentor or mentee 
- **DEADLINE: November 20th**, apply to be the Latino Surgical Society and Association of Women Surgeons Visiting Professor 
- **November 11th** 5am-5:30am PST: AIS Coffee with Dr. Chantal Reyna
- **November 11th** 5pm-6pm PST: Resident & Fellow Webinar: Scrubbed in for the ASBITE
- **November 17th** 4pm- 5pm PST: AWS Cutting Edge Conversations with EAST
- **November 18th** 4pm-8pm PST: Better Mentor, Bigger Impact! AWS Surgical Cross Mentoring Program- Gender Differences with Dr. Shannon Small and Dr. Priyanka Chugh
- **November 20th** 5pm-6:30pm AWS Journal Club- Fall 2025 Session
- See the AWS Events list for additional details: 

AWS Membership:

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

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.

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!

AWS Benefits

Networking Opportunities:

Connect with a global community of 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: Allison Chang
Newsletter: Grace Kloss, Faaizah Arshad
Social Media: Alex Lopes, Rachel Huynh



If you have anything you would like to feature (articles, advice, work photos/achievements, family/personal photos/achievements, etc) in this new section of our newsletters, please send an email to themurielsteelesociety@ucsf.edu.

The Muriel Steele Society is an inclusive community dedicated to inspiring, supporting, and promoting 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. Our overarching goal is to advocate for a culture of belonging that is focused on expanding the advancement of all surgeons. All are welcome.

For more information about the Muriel Steele Society, please visit our [website](https://murielsteelesociety.ucsf.edu).

Have an opportunity or event that you'd like to share with the MSS membership? Email us at themurielsteelesociety@ucsf.edu.

Want to become more involved with the Muriel Steele Society? Email us at themurielsteelesociety@ucsf.edu.



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