

THE SOCIETY OF CARDIOVASCULAR ANESTHESIOLOGISTS FOUNDATION (SCAF)

The SCA Foundation (SCAF) was established in 2006 as a vehicle for funding research grants in cardiothoracic and vascular anesthesia. Its creation was the culmination of the work of a Task Force led by Drs Christine Mora Mangano (then SCA President) and Nancy Nussmeier, assisted by a consulting group (Campbell & Co), with Mr John Melleky as its first Executive Director.

In 2004 Dr Bruce Spiess had initiated a program to investigate patient safety in the cardiac operating room and coined the term **FOCUS** (Flawless Operative Cardiovascular Unified Systems). After a request for proposals, the first study supported by an SCA Foundation grant was “Locating Errors through Networked Surveillance (LENS)”, with Primary Investigator Dr Peter Pronovost of the Johns Hopkins Armstrong Institute for Patient Safety and Quality.

In July 2007, Dr Joyce Wahr was appointed the first Chair of the SCAF, which became a separate 501(c)(3) organization. The first SCAF Board included Drs Wahr (Chair), Nussmeier, Judith Fabian, Ellise Delphin, John Ellis, Steven Konstadt, and Salwa Shenaq.

Over the next five years SCAF raised pledges of some \$2m, including \$1m from Dr Michael Roizen. When approached, Dr Joel Kaplan suggested that SCAF should also raise money to fund leadership grants for SCA members who were not career researchers. As a consequence, and with a matching donation from Dr Jane Fitch, the Kaplan Leadership Grants were established. In 2008 Dr Konstadt (SCA President-Elect) and Dr Robert Sladen (Chair, IARS Board of Trustees) met and agreed that the 2009 contract would replace the IARS *Anesthesia & Analgesia* royalty to SCA with a \$200k annual IARS contribution to the Foundation specifically assigned to cardiothoracic and vascular anesthesia research projects (total \$1m over 5 years).

The SCAF support for Dr Pronovost and his group at the Armstrong Institute on the LENS project was extremely fruitful. It enhanced the development of FOCUS and its research productivity, generating no fewer than seven major publications. It also fostered ground-breaking interdisciplinary collaboration in a project funded by the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) to improve patient safety through more effective cardiac operating room teamwork. Notable participants included Dr Thor Sundt (Chief of Cardiac Surgery at the Massachusetts General Hospital), David Fitzgerald (Past-President of the American Society of ExtraCorporeal Technology, AmSECT), Patricia Seinfelt RN (Past-President of the Association of periOperative Registered Nurses, AORN) as well as Drs Spiess, Nussmeier and Jake Abernathy, representing SCA. This cadre formed the core of the writing group that the American Heart Association (AHA) convened for the AHA Scientific Statement on Patient Safety in the Cardiac Operating Room: Human Factors and Teamwork [Wahr, J. A., et al. *Circulation* 2013; 128: 1139-69]. The publication was ranked by Dr Paul Barash as one of the top 10 journal articles in cardiac anesthesia in the previous decade, representing the first cogent approach to patient safety in the cardiovascular operating room.

In 2013 the leadership of SCA and SCAF questioned the advisability of having two separate 501(c)(3) organizations. This disparity tended to create confusion regarding the focus of

support from partners such as the Society of Thoracic Surgeons (STS), American Society of Anesthesiology (ASA) and AORN. In 2014 the decision was made to dissolve SCAF and move its funds back into SCA as the SCA Endowment under the leadership of Dr David Reich. SCAF leadership became members of the Endowment Oversight Committee, now chaired by Dr Isobel Russell.

Notable SCAF initiatives that remain in place today include the Kaplan Leadership Grants and the endowed Earl Wynands Lecture at the SCA Annual Meeting (co-sponsored by the SCA and the Canadian Anesthesia Society). They also include the annual Past-Presidents Luncheon, originally suggested by Dr Fabian as a forum to engage the experience and wisdom of Past-Presidents on an ongoing basis. Last but not least is the Annual SCA Gala, a fund-raising event that involves new SCA members - especially graduating Adult Cardiothoracic Anesthesiology (ACTA) Fellows - in the Society's mission.