

CARDIOTHORACIC
GENERAL
MINIMAL INVASIVE
PEDIATRIC HEART
PEDIATRIC
PLASTIC & RECONSTRUCTIVE
SURGICAL ONCOLOGY
THORACIC
TRANSPLANT
TRAUMA & CRITICAL CARE
VASCULAR



THE STITCH

The Newsletter of the
Department of Surgery



AUGUSTA UNIVERSITY

MEDICAL COLLEGE
OF GEORGIA

June 2025



Chatter with the Chair

Finally! We have reached the end of the academic year and we gather to celebrate our departing Chief Residents in Surgery. All five members of this year's class are headed to fellowships ranging from minimally invasive surgery to plastic surgery. Best wishes for their continued training and we are excited to have you representing our residency program at MCG.

We enjoyed an exciting celebration dinner at Augusta Country Club and shared the experience with family, friends and alumni. Some of our guests included prior surgery Chair Dr. Charles Howell and prior interim Dean of MCG, Dr. Betty Wray (widow of another Surgery Chair, Dr. Charles Wray). We were blessed to have them share in this event and we extend our thanks for their continued support of the department.

Our training program is continuing to grow. First, we welcome our new Chief of Trauma and Acute Care Surgery, Dr. Andrew Lawson. Dr. Lawson has been part of our faculty

since 2019 and brings some great home-grown talent to our leadership team. Please join me in congratulating him. He starts this new position in August when Dr. Terence O'Keefe relinquishes the reigns. Many thanks are extended to Dr. O'Keefe for the leadership and service that he has provided to our department since 2019. He will also continue as an active clinician working on a reduced schedule. We have even more surgeons expected to join our faculty in the coming months. Stay tuned as we introduce the new ones in the future newsletters.

We are constantly "passing the reigns" to another as we celebrated our graduating chiefs and welcome a new intern class. This process reminds me of the Hippocratic oath, when we pledge to teach our craft to the next generation. A 1964 version of that oath reads, "I will respect the hard-won scientific gains of those physicians in whose steps I walk, and gladly share such knowledge as is

mine with those who are to follow."

Our commitment to teaching excellence in surgical care continues. We are reminded to learn from those who have treaded this path before us and assist those who come after us.

Teamwork!

William D Jordan, Jr., MD

*Professor and Chair,
Department of Surgery
Medical College of Georgia
Surgeon in Chief*



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CONGRATULATIONS

The American Society for Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery (ASMBS) is proud to recognize **Dr. Renee Hilton-Rowe** as the first recipient of the Advocacy Award.

This prestigious new award honors Dr. Hilton-Rowe for her unwavering dedication and outstanding contributions to advancing access to care and advocacy efforts on behalf of patients and the field of metabolic and bariatric surgery.

Please join us in congratulating Dr. Hilton-Rowe for this well-deserved recognition. The award was presented June 18th at TREO's *Starlight Star Night Gala*.



TRAUMA AND ACUTE CARE SURGERY



We are pleased to announce the appointment of **Dr. Andrew Lawson** as Division Chief of Trauma and Acute Care Surgery and Clinical Service Chief of the Adult Trauma Service, effective August 1.

Dr. Lawson brings a wealth of experience and a strong commitment to advancing trauma care. Since rejoining MCG as faculty in 2019, he has distinguished himself as a clinical leader, educator, and innovator.

Currently, Dr. Lawson serves as Director of Surgical Critical Care at Wellstar MCG, where he oversees both the Surgical Trauma Intensive Care Unit (STICU) and the Surgical Intensive Care Unit (SICU). As Program Director of the Surgical Critical Care Fellowship, he has led significant improvements in the fellowship's curriculum, call structure, and overall training experience. His service on numerous departmental, institutional, and national committees reflects his deep dedication to both clinical excellence and academic leadership.

We would also like to extend our heartfelt thanks to **Dr. Terence O'Keeffe** for his outstanding leadership as Chief of Trauma and Acute Care Surgery since 2019. His contributions have been instrumental in shaping the program's success and growth.



■ First year medical student **Yash Jani** presented with **Dr. Zabel** at the annual meeting of the Wound Healing Society/Society of Advancement in Wound Care (SAWC) in Grapevine, Texas at the end of May. Their poster presentation was titled, *Salvaging exposed lightweight hernia mesh in complex Ventral Hernia Repair: A case series of advanced wound care techniques*.

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Congrats to all!



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