



ASSOCIATION FOR SURGICAL EDUCATION FOUNDATION

ANNUAL REPORT 2025

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear ASE Members and Friends,

It has been an exciting year for the ASE Foundation! We have now raised a total of \$618,957 through your generous contributions to support the innovation, research, and professional development programs of the ASE and its members.

We look forward to announcing our awards at the upcoming ASE meeting, including 12 CESERT research grants and our Dr. Deb DaRosa Career Development Scholarship!

Please allow me to provide a few important updates on our work, funded by YOU- our fantastic donors!

- For the second year, we are awarding 2 travel grants for the annual meeting: the Clerkship Coordinators Scholarship and the LMIC Scholarship, designed to support the participation of these important groups.
- We had a record 35 applications for our CESERT grant program! We are thrilled to announce 12 awards ranging from \$500 to our two \$25,000 giant robot grants generously supported by Intuitive, totaling \$71,030 in funding.
- We have raised \$15,775 thus far for the Dr. Patty Numann Scholarship for LMIC surgical educators, which will support international collaboration through a mentored project and attendance at the ASE meeting. We have \$84,225 to go to reach full endowment!
- Currently, 8% of the ASE membership has donated to the Foundation, an increase of 2% since 2024-25. Please help us reach our goal of 20% by supporting us today!

Donate now to support ASE Foundation programs:
www.surgicaleducation.com/your-donation

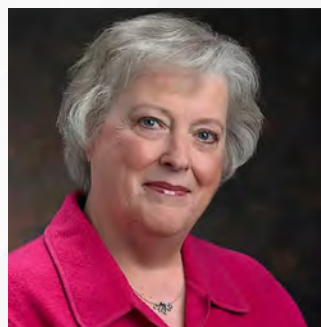
In addition to voicing my heartfelt thanks to each and every one of our donors, I would like to personally thank our board members and Christelle Menetrier, our ASE Foundation Executive Director, for their hard work and support of our mission.

Lastly, we have some fun surprises in store at the annual meeting, including trivia, ASE swag, and custom items for the Arts & Accolades Auction. We can't wait to see you there!

Warm regards,

Megan Miller, MD
President, ASE Foundation

DR. PATRICIA NUMANN SCHOLARSHIP FOR LMIC SURGICAL EDUCATORS



This inaugural scholarship was established to honor Dr. Patricia Numann's profound impact on surgical education as a pioneering surgeon and tireless advocate for advancing the field globally. Funded by the ASE Foundation, this scholarship supports surgical

educators from low- and middle-income countries in pursuing professional development, collaboration, and contribution to the global surgical education community.

The scholarship seeks to enhance learning opportunities and build enduring partnerships between international scholars and established institutions, promoting a dynamic exchange of knowledge that elevates surgical education worldwide.



Dr. Patricia Numann gives the first donation to her named fund to Dr. Kimberly Brown (right) at the ASE Foundation table during the Seattle 2025 ASE Meeting.

We are deeply grateful to the donors who honored Dr. Patricia Numann by helping launch this fund — raising \$15,775 in 2025 — and we are committed to growing it in the years ahead.

2025 CESERT PYRAMID GRANTS

INTUITIVE™

*Thank you to Intuitive for Sponsoring two
Giant Robot Grants!*

We are pleased to highlight a selection of our 2025 CESERT awardees, offering a glimpse into the breadth and impact of this year's funded projects.

GIANT ROBOT (\$25,000) Sponsored by Intuitive

Determining the Effectiveness of Tailoring Robotic Surgery Skills Training to Learner Cognitive Load on Skill Acquisition: A Randomized Control Trial

Noosha Deravi, MD | Dimitrios Stefanidis, MD, PhD | Nicholas Anton, MS | Nathan Behrens, MD | Indiana University

Proficiency-based training is the current gold standard in surgical simulation, yet it does not account for the role of cognitive load in learning and performance. This randomized controlled trial evaluates a novel approach by testing whether training to expert-derived cognitive load levels—measured through EEG and eye tracking—leads to improved robotic surgery skill acquisition compared to standard methods. By incorporating cognitive load as a training target, this work aims to enhance skill transfer from simulation to the operating room, with the potential to establish a more effective training paradigm that ultimately improves surgical performance and patient safety.



Left to right: Nathan Behrens, Nicholas Anton, Dimitrios Stefanidis, Noosha Deravi — reviewing study protocol and brainstorming key design elements.

GIANT ROBOT (\$25,000) Sponsored by Intuitive

The Impact of Gesture-Based Feedback on Trainee Intestinal Robotic Anastomosis Skills

Sofia Garces Palacios, MD | Ganesh Sankaranarayanan, MD
Patricio Polanco, MD | UT Southwestern Medical Center

This project integrates gesture-based feedback into a proficiency-based robotic intestinal anastomosis curriculum to enhance residents' technical skills and accelerate progression toward proficiency. During the reporting period, the team secured IRB approval, established the study framework, and initiated annotation and grading of surgical videos to develop performance benchmarks. Early analyses show improvement across most gestures, while highlighting persistent gaps compared to expert performance. By focusing on gesture-level performance rather than global rating scales, this approach provides more precise, actionable feedback to help trainees refine technique and better prepare for real-world surgical practice.



Left to right: Patricio Polanco, Ganesh Sankaranarayanan, Sofia Garces Palacios

PLATINUM (\$10,000)

Quality and Equitability of Surgical Subinternships

Sophia McKinley, MD | Jonah Thomas, MD | Motaz Qadan, MD
Massachusetts General Hospital / Harvard Medical School

Using a mixed-methods design, this study surveys fourth-year medical students to assess whether their surgical subinternship experiences align with recently published consensus standards — and whether disparities exist across demographic groups. Follow-up interviews with visiting subinterns explore barriers and strategies for improvement. The goal: generate the first national data to drive more standardized, equitable subinternship experiences for all students entering surgery.

VISION AND MISSION STATEMENTS

VISION: Advancing Careers and Scholarship in Surgical Education.

MISSION: Provide sustainable support for innovation, research, and professional development programs of the Association for Surgical Education and its members.

“Through this grant, I have been able to formalize my training and scholarship in surgical education, which is directly supporting my long-term goal of becoming a funded surgeon-educator.”

— Sophia McKinley, MD

DIAMOND (\$2,500)

Transforming Operative Notes into Large-Volume Assessment Tools Using Natural Language Processing

Ruchi Thanawala, MD | Phillip Jenkins | Steven Bedrick
Julie Doberne | Oregon Health & Science University

Every day, surgical residents write operative notes, yet these have never been tapped to assess learning. This project uses natural language processing and large language models to evaluate resident knowledge, judgment, and procedural understanding from routine documentation. By combining human assessment frameworks with automated analysis, the team turns everyday notes into a low-burden, high-frequency educational signal. CESERT funding supported annotation, pilot testing, and the computational infrastructure to bring the model from concept to reality.

GOLD (UP TO \$1,000)

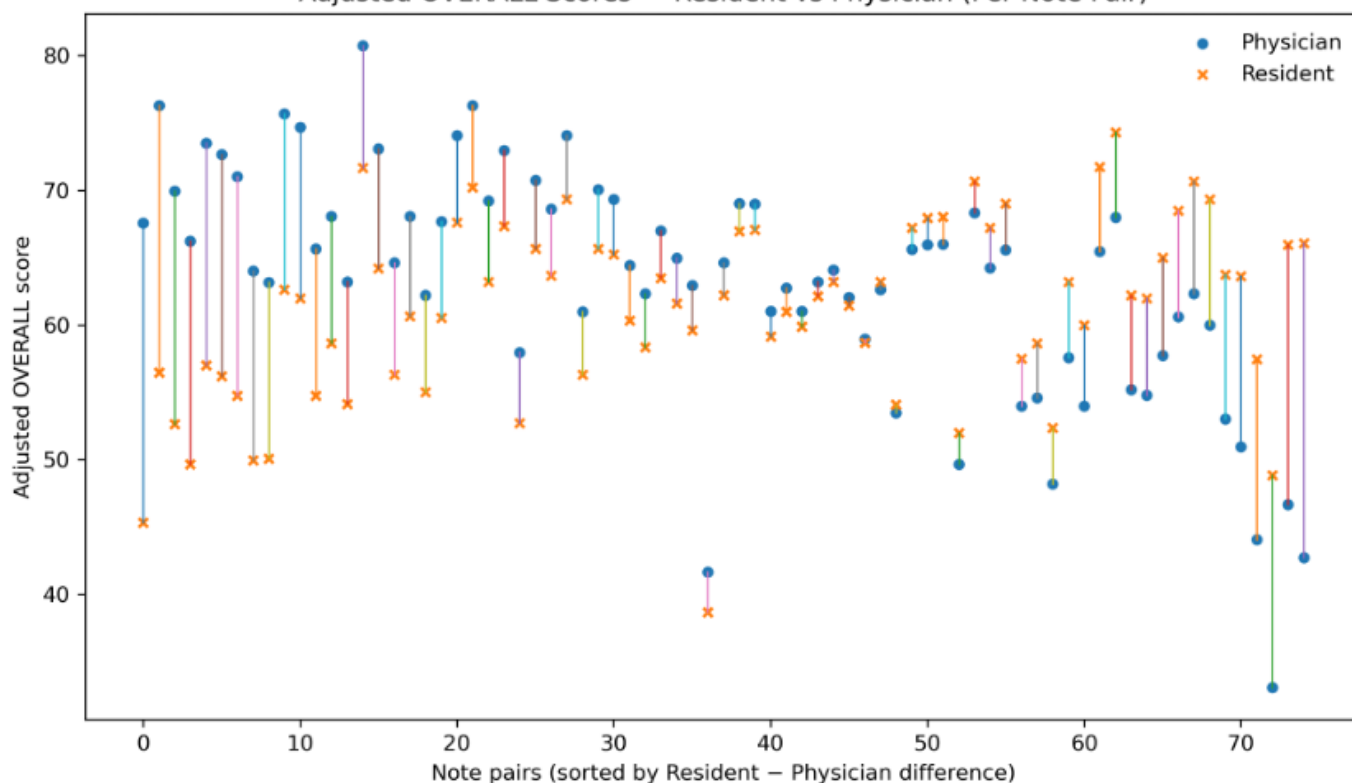
Comprehensive Evaluation of the Vascular Surgery Leadership Development Program

Tiffany Bellomo | Roy Phitayakorn, MD MHPE FACS |
Massachusetts General Hospital / Harvard Medical School

This mixed-methods study evaluates the SVS Leadership Development Program (LDP) using the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI), comparing vascular surgeons before and after the program to matched controls. CESERT funding supported LPI licensing and participant incentives, achieving a 60% response rate, with qualitative interviews adding context to the findings. The study establishes a scalable, data-driven framework for evaluating surgical leadership programs and demonstrates that structured mentorship and training drive meaningful, field-wide improvements.

We look forward to announcing the 2026 grant awardees at the ASE Arts and Accolades Reception in Atlanta!

Adjusted OVERALL Scores — Resident vs Physician (Per Note Pair)



Comparison of overall scores between resident and physician operative notes per note pair, highlighting documentation gaps detectable at scale using NLP (Thanawala et al., OHSU).

YOUR SUPPORT HELPS FUND OUR GRANTS FOR ASE MEMBERS

www.surgicaleducation.com/your-donation

GOLD (UP TO \$1,000)

Creation of an Artificial Intelligence Tutor for Promoting Surgical Educator Use of Growth Mindset Language

Rebecca Hoffman, MD | Michael Furey, DO |
Geisinger Medical Center / Bucknell University

What if every piece of surgical feedback could simultaneously teach and motivate? In collaboration with senior design students at Bucknell University, this project developed an AI tutor app that runs alongside surgical feedback tools, helping faculty integrate growth mindset language in real time. CESERT funding supported coursework, cloud infrastructure, and app hosting, translating growth mindset from theory into a practical, deployable tool. By making growth mindset language automatic, the app improves feedback quality and boosts trainee motivation — tackling a key challenge in competency-based education.



The Hoffman Lab — left to right: Raymond Sternrich, Andrew Myers, Brittney Ehrlich, Ayobami Fatunmbi, Rebecca Hoffman, Alice Matthai, Dylan Carmichael, Michael Furey, Denise Torres.

GOLD (UP TO \$1,000)

From the Perspective of Graduates: Exploring Participation and Impact of the ACS-AEI Accredited Fellowship Program

Michael Healy, Ed.D. | Dandan Chen, Ph.D. | Massachusetts General Hospital / Harvard Medical School

ACS-AEI Accredited Fellowship Programs train the next generation of surgical education researchers, but little is known about graduates' experiences. This mixed-methods study surveys fellowship alumni nationwide to explore motivations, career impact, and suggestions for improvement. CESERT funding enabled expansion from an institutional pilot to a national survey, supporting all stages from development to data analysis. The findings offer actionable insights for existing programs and provide evidence-based guidance for institutions considering new fellowships.

VOICES FROM OUR CESERT AWARDEES

"It is a fantastic mechanism for a focused project that can provide foundational funding for a project that would be difficult to fund through other mechanisms." — Rebecca Minter, MD, 2004 CESERT Awardee

"Do it! Great experience to write the grant—the process was fair and rewarding." — Rebecca Hoffman, MD, 2023 CESERT Awardee.



2025 CESERT Awardees at the Banquet in Seattle, celebrating excellence and innovation in surgical education.

DID YOU KNOW?

From 1999 to 2025, the ASE Foundation funded **96 grants** totaling **\$1,470,000** to ASE members.

That's 26 years of investing in surgical education research!

We are thrilled to fund \$71,030 in CESERT grants for 2026!

A special THANK YOU to Intuitive for your generosity and continuous support of (2)\$25,000 Giant Robot Grants!

DEBRA DAROSA CAREER DEVELOPMENT SCHOLARSHIP

The Debra DaRosa Scholarship honors Dr. DaRosa's profound impact on surgical education as the first PhD President of the Association for Surgical Education and a mentor to generations of surgical educators. Thanks to the extraordinary generosity of our donors, **this scholarship is now fully endowed.** The Dr. Debra DaRosa Career Development Scholarship is awarded annually to help support the costs of participation in a formal surgical education course — from SERF to Surgeons As Educators to graduate school tuition.

Meet Our 2nd Awardee: Dr. Minna Wieck

Dr. Minna Wieck is a general pediatric surgeon at UC Davis and Shriners Children's Northern California. She serves as Associate Program Director for the General Surgery Residency and Director of the Surgical Education and Simulation Fellowship at UC Davis, and is currently pursuing a Master's in Health Professions Education.



Dr. Minna Wieck receiving the Dr. Debra DaRosa Scholarship Certificate, with Dr. Shabahang, ASE President, and Dr. Cochran, ASE Foundation President, at SEW 2025.

Our Newest Travel Grants: COORDINATOR AND LMIC TRAVEL SCHOLARSHIPS

In 2025, the Foundation awarded its first-ever Coordinator and LMIC Travel Scholarships, enabling ASE Members— including a surgical education coordinator and an international member from a low- or middle-income country —to attend the Annual Meeting and strengthen their impact as surgical educators.



Dr. Adewale Adisa, International Awardee, with Dr. Patricia Numann and Dr. Kimberly Brown. Dr. Adisa is a Professor of Surgery at Obafemi Awolowo University, Nigeria, and a leader in laparoscopic surgery and surgical education in Africa.



Lureye Myers, 2025 Coordinator Awardee from Penn State College of Medicine, receiving the ASEF Foundation check with Dr. Amalia Cochran, ASEF President, and Rolanda Whitford, Coordinator Committee Chair.

Building on the inaugural scholarships awarded in Seattle in 2025, we are excited to mark the second year of the program in Atlanta.

"Thank you to all our contributors that supported the DaRosa Scholarship campaign — your generosity will carry forward forever."

THANK YOU TO OUR 2025 ASE FOUNDATION DONORS

(January 1, 2025 - April 1, 2026)

PLATINUM:

\$5,000 & ABOVE

Adnan Alseidi, M.D.
Travis & Kristen Heriaud, M.D.
Myriam Curet, M.D.
Patricia Numann, MD
Mohsen Shabahang, M.D., Ph.D.

GOLD:

\$2,500-\$4,999

Amalia Cochran, M.D.
Kimberly Hendershot, M.D.
Dimitrios Stefanidis, M.D.

SILVER:

\$1,000 – \$2,499

Michael Awad, M.D.
Aimee Gardner, Ph.D.
Alan & Sheila Harzman, M.D.
Natasha Keric, M.D.
Mary Klingensmith, M.D.
James Lau, M.D.
Marc de Moya, M.D.
Barbara Pettit, M.D.
Rebecca and John Minter
and Rectenwald, M.D.
David Rogers, M.D.
Rachel Slotcavage, M.D.
Susan Steinemann, M.D.

BRONZE:

\$250 – \$999

Robert Acton, M.D.
Kimberly Brown, M.D.
Christie Buonpane, M.D.
Andre Campbell, M.D.
Jeffrey Chipman, M.D.
Annesley Copeland, M.D.
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Wing-Sze Yung, M.D.
Rebecca Williams, M.D.

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UP TO \$249

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Shelley Jain, M.D.

ON OUR WAY TO THE FIRST MILLION!

| | | |
|------------------------|--|-----------|
| Assets Dec 31, 2024 | | \$534,449 |
| Assets Dec 31, 2025 | | \$618,957 |

2025 FINANCIALS

12 Months Ended June 30, 2025

ASSETS

| | |
|--------------------|---------|
| Cash | 103,246 |
| Investments | 482,981 |
| Other Assets (Net) | 30,691 |

FUND BALANCES

| | |
|--------------|---------|
| General Fund | 456,347 |
| DaRosa Fund | 102,574 |
| Laycock Fund | 50,698 |
| Numann Fund | 7,300 |

| | |
|-------------------------------|----------------|
| Total "Corpus" Balance | 616,919 |
|-------------------------------|----------------|

OPERATIONS

| | |
|-------------------|-----------|
| Revenue | 151,091 |
| Expenses | (116,416) |
| Investment Income | 34,442 |

| | |
|-------------------------------|---------------|
| Net Surplus for Period | 69,117 |
|-------------------------------|---------------|



THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING US!

The Foundation's leadership extends their thanks and gratitude to all who have donated and supported our mission to provide sustainable support for innovation, research and professional development programs.