Crawford Forum Celebrates 25 Years

The E. Stanley Crawford Critical Issues Forum – marking 25 years under that name this year – is a mainstay of the Vascular Annual Meeting.

But who was E. Stanley Crawford?

He was a “cardiovascular surgeon extraordinaire,” according to the late Calvin Ernst, MD, writing after Dr. Crawford’s death in late 1992. Dr. Crawford developed new techniques for treating AAA; was a coinventor of the Baylor (College of Medicine, where he worked from 1956 until his death) Rapid Autologous Transfusion System, a machine that recycles a patient’s red blood cells during surgery; and wrote more than 300 peer-reviewed publications and book chapters. With his son, Dr. John Lloyd Crawford II, he wrote the “Diseases of the Aorta” textbook, which Dr. Ernst called “a standard reference text on aortic surgery.”

Dr. Crawford also helped develop the SVS Forum on Critical Issues, convening the first session during the 1988 VAM. It was decided the forum should address socioeconomic and research issues, as they impact vascular surgery, and be led by that year’s president-elect.

Dr. Ernst said Dr. Crawford believed the vascular surgery specialty had become “increasingly vague, its mission ill-defined, and its future membership uncertain. The big question: ‘Who would want to go into vascular surgery today with the uncertainties of tomorrow and how can those already committed remain dominant?’ ” Dr. Ernst wrote.

Dr. Crawford felt the SVS needed to take a leadership role in this and other questions; he believed the SVS and its members were eminently qualified to do so successfully.

After his death, the SVS Executive Council unanimously agreed to rename the Critical Issues Forum for Dr. Crawford. The first such named forum was held 25 years ago, at the 1993 VAM.

This year’s Crawford Forum will focus on the vascular surgery workforce, addressing challenges and solutions. President-Elect Michel S. Makaroun, MD, who spearheaded a survey of SVS members on workforce data in late December 2017, will moderate.

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