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By Bryan Kay

During the virtual annual meeting of the New England Society for Vascular Surgery (NESVS), outgoing president Marc L. Schermerhorn, MD, called for the NESVS to follow the lead of the Society for Vascular Surgery (SVS) by creating a diversity task force.

Schermerhorn devoted his presidential address to the issue of diversity, equity and inclusion, outlining an effort he said would ultimately enable vascular surgery to recruit more women and minorities into the specialty and improve patient care.

“Each of us can contribute to this effort,” Schermerhorn told the Sept. 11–12 gathering. “We should reach out to students before they have a career path. We should identify and mentor those from underrepresented groups at all levels. I’m not suggesting promotion of someone who doesn’t have the tools to succeed but rather to help them to develop the skills to succeed, and then advocate for them.

“We should embrace diversity at all levels—in our practices, in our hospitals, and in our patients. We can all learn about our patients, try to understand their culture, learn to communicate better.

We should be asking questions to make sure our message is coming across. We may need to ask our patients how they’d prefer to learn about vascular disease. We need to educate ourselves and adapt ourselves.”

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