



Record Attendance and Energy Ensure the Vitality of VAM for Years to Come

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BY DR. RONALD DALMAN

The Vascular Annual Meeting is important to the vitality and purpose of our Society. For many members, their primary interactions with the SVS come through readership of the Journal of Vascular Surgery and regular participation in the VAM. The 2017 VAM, developed with the input of more than 100 members and dedicated staff, made continued progress toward our twin goals of expanded content and program inclusivity.

Eight plenary and 14 concurrent sessions (up from six and six, respectively, in 2014) were organized to accommodate this year's record number of abstracts. Multidisciplinary participation expanded to eight specialty societies, including the STS, SVM, APMA, SVN, SVU, AVF, ESVS, and VESS. International programming expanded to fill the entire day on Wednesday. Trainee-specific programming attracted hundreds of surgical residents and medical students at all levels. And VQI@VAM provided 1½ days of programming dedicated to continuous quality improvement and expanded value in vascular practice.

Hands-on workshop offerings were updated and expanded to include a wider range of essential procedural and practice management skills. New interactive program features such as "My Worst Complication" and compelling video presentations provided pearls of surgical wisdom. Expanded use of text-to-screen questioning encouraged active participation in the flow of the meeting for all attendees.

Guided by the 2014 SVS strategic planning retreat organized by Past Program Chair and President Dr. Peter Lawrence, the VAM has grown steadily in the intervening years. This year's meeting, highlighted by Dr. Ron Fairman's stirring Presidential Address entitled "Making it Personal Through a Career of Service," attracted more than 1,800 paid professionals, an all-time record attendance. For my fellow SVS Program Committee members, Vice-Chair Matt Eagleton, Post-Graduate Education Committee Chair Kelli Brown, and myself, the 2017 VAM was also personal – our heartfelt contribution to the ongoing vitality, relevance, and sustainability of this important meeting franchise.

Member-driven interest and participation at VAM continues to grow year on year. Going forward, the meeting will continue to evolve under Dr. Eagleton's capable guidance. Thanks to the thousands of vascular surgeons, specialists and scientists from around the world who submitted abstracts to, and participated in, the 71st annual VAM. And get ready for an even better program in Boston in 2018!

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