

**AUA**

Association of University Anesthesiologists

UPDATE

Association of University Anesthesiologists UPDATE | 2026 | Summer Issue

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Advancing Academic Anesthesiology: AUA Activities and Future Directions

Since the successful 2026 AUA Annual Meeting in Seattle, the Association of University Anesthesiologists (AUA) has continued to advance its mission of promoting excellence in academic anesthesiology through leadership, mentorship, education, research, and collaboration. Over the past several months, AUA has made meaningful progress in strengthening member engagement, expanding partnerships, and developing strategic initiatives to support the future of academic anesthesiology.

A major focus of the AUA has been enhancing opportunities for professional development across all career stages. AUA has appointed new Educational, Leadership, Membership Engagement, and Scientific Advisory Board members to help guide future programming and initiatives. These groups will support webinars, educational activities, and leadership development programs that foster mentorship, career advancement, professionalism, and collaboration among academic anesthesiologists.

The AUA has also continued to explore the evolving role of artificial intelligence in academic medicine. Under the leadership of Immediate Past President Dr. Dolores Njoku, discussions and surveys have been initiated to better understand how AI may influence education, research, clinical practice, and leadership within anesthesiology. These efforts will help inform future educational programming and strategic planning.

Collaboration remains a cornerstone of the AUA's vision. AUA has strengthened its partnership with the American Society of Anesthesiologists (ASA) and is exploring opportunities for joint initiatives that support academic anesthesiology, research advancement, leadership development, and advocacy. As one example, ASA has agreed to provide AUA ribbons at future ASA Annual Meetings, further enhancing the visibility of AUA members and strengthening the relationship between the two organizations.



**Zhongcong Xie,
MD, PhD, FASA
President, AUA**
The University of Texas
Health Science Center
at Houston
Houston, TX

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The AUA has also expanded collaboration with the Chinese Society of Anesthesiologists (CSA), building upon longstanding academic exchanges and shared commitments to education, research, and leadership development. In addition, discussions have been initiated with other national and international anesthesia organizations to promote broader cooperation and facilitate the exchange of ideas, mentorship opportunities, and scholarly activities. These partnerships reflect the increasingly global nature of anesthesiology and the importance of international collaboration in addressing common challenges.

Looking ahead, the AUA is committed to engaging its membership in shaping the future of both the AUA and academic anesthesiology. New member surveys will be launched to gather perspectives on the future direction of the AUA, the major challenges facing academic anesthesiology, and opportunities to strengthen research, mentorship, leadership development, and advocacy. A separate survey focused on the AUA Annual Meeting will seek member feedback on scientific programming, networking opportunities, career development activities, and overall meeting experience. The results will help guide future strategic priorities and ensure that the AUA remains responsive to the needs of its members.

The AUA is also exploring new ways to recognize and celebrate membership. One initiative under consideration is the development of personalized membership certificates in the form of professionally designed nameplates displaying each member's name and academic title. This effort is intended to highlight the prestige of AUA membership and strengthen engagement within the academic anesthesiology community.

The AUA also wishes to express its sincere appreciation to the many individuals whose service has contributed to the success and growth of the organization. Plans are underway to formally recognize past Council members and committee members whose dedication, leadership, and volunteer efforts have helped shape the Association and advance its mission over many years.

As we move forward, the AUA remains committed to supporting academic anesthesiologists at every stage of their careers while strengthening the foundations of research, education, mentorship, leadership, and innovation within our specialty. We thank all members, volunteers, leaders, and partner organizations for their continued support and engagement. Together, we will continue to shape a vibrant and successful future for academic anesthesiology. 📖

SAVE THE DATE!

AUA 2027 Annual Meeting April 2-4, 2027 • Houston, Texas

Hosted by McGovern Medical School at UTHealth Houston

Join us for the AUA 2027 Annual Meeting, happening from April 2-4, 2027 in Houston, Texas. The meeting will be hosted by McGovern Medical School at UTHealth Houston.

While registration has not open, you can book your lodging accommodations now. The AUA has secured discounted lodging for the AUA 2027 Annual Meeting at the Hyatt Place Houston Medical Center and Hyatt House Houston Medical Center. Both Hyatt Brands are located at the same address and currently offer complimentary, hot breakfast served daily. Please note, if you want a room with two queen beds, please book at Hyatt Place – there are no queen beds at Hyatt House. The group block closes on March 5, 2027.

Additionally, keep an eye out for our call for abstract submissions which will open soon!



FROM THE EDUCATIONAL ADVISORY BOARD (EAB): EAB Chair Introduction and Vision

I am deeply humbled and honored to step into my new role as the Chair of the Educational Advisory Board (EAB). I want to express my sincere gratitude to our AUA Council President, Dr. Zhongcong Xie, for his trust and for nominating me to lead this vital board.

Before introducing our new team, I want to extend a heartfelt thank you to our immediate past chair, Dr. Arna Banerjee. Her amazing work and visionary leadership over the last several years have left an incredible mark on our organization. She has built a stellar foundation that we are fully prepared to build upon.

For those whom I have not yet had the pleasure of meeting, I am Dr. Tobias de la Garza Eckle, MD, PhD, FASA. I serve as a Professor of Anesthesiology, Medical Director of Advanced Practice Providers, and Director of Grand Rounds at the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus. My career is rooted in bridging basic science with clinical innovation. I focus specifically on the circadian control of cardioprotection, acute lung injury, and metabolism in perioperative care. A primary cornerstone of my research portfolio explores the translational impact of circadian medicine. As a physician-scientist and educator, my focus has always been on translating complex scientific paradigms into actionable bedside teaching. I am excited to bring this passion for lifelong learning and the future of circadian medicine to the national level with the AUA.

We are expanding the EAB with an incredible group of national leaders. I am thrilled to welcome our new Vice Chair and an elite panel of new members who will help guide our mission:

- **Maurice “Frankie” Joyce, MD, EdM, FASA (Vice Chair, Term Expires 2028)** – Tufts Medical Center: Expert in educational methodology and leadership.
- **Karsten Bartels, MD, PhD, MBA (Term Expires 2029)** – University of Michigan: Specialist in health services research, patient safety, and perioperative mental health.
- **Lee-lynn Chen, MD (Term Expires 2029)** – UCSF Medical Center: Known for innovating anesthesia training through simulation and multidisciplinary team building.

- **Larry F. Chu, MD, MS (BCHM), MSc (Term Expires 2029)** – Stanford University School of Medicine: Recognized for his leadership in medical education, healthcare technology, and clinical design

- **David Joshua Douin, MD, MSc (Term Expires 2029)** – University of Colorado School of Medicine: A dynamic asset to our board, bringing vital expertise from CU Denver/Anschutz in contemporary residency training, data-driven education, and critical care trial logistics.

- **Paul Garcia, MD, PhD (Term Expires 2029)** – Columbia University: Visionary in neuroanesthesia training and translating neuroscience into clinical curricula.

- **Julia Sobol, MD, MPH (Term Expires 2029)** – Weill Cornell Medicine: Focused on enhancing trainee education in the perioperative and critical care settings.

- **Trevor S. Sutton, MD, MBA, CPE (Term Expires 2029)** – University of Connecticut School of Medicine: Bringing strong administrative mastery in business education and physician executive leadership together with a focus on graduate medical education informed through the lens of organizational science and health equity.

- **Joseph W. Szokol, MD (Term Expires 2029)** – David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA: Dedicated advocate for clinical operations training and healthcare policy integration.

My core vision for the EAB is to elevate the academic medical centers and their educational mission to the next level. Traditional training models must evolve alongside the rapid changes in clinical technology and research. To ensure the modern academic clinician thrives, I envision our board focusing on the following items:

- **Adaptive Curricula:** Merging perioperative data science and anesthesia medical records with daily intraoperative teaching modules to train residents in real-time, data-driven clinical decision making.



Tobias de la Garza Eckle, MD, PhD, FASA
Chair, Educational Advisory Board
University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus
Aurora, CO

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- **Interdisciplinary Teaching:** Breaking down departmental silos to learn alongside global healthcare leaders, and by partnering with subspecialty societies, to teach residents to manage patient care from admission to recovery.
- **Scalable Mentorship:** Forging robust pathways to transition residents into innovative physician-scientists, matching trainees with NIH-funded anesthesiology investigators to secure the future pipeline of academic discovery.

More specifically, I envision creating the following pathways:

- **The “Academic Lab” Micro-Internship Program:** Instead of just networking at meetings, create a formal structure for Inter-Institutional Peer Observation. Facilitate 2–3 day “micro-internships” where junior faculty from one university visit another member institution specifically to observe their teaching models (e.g., their simulation lab setup or clinical base year curriculum).

- **“Fail-Forward” Rapid Fire Sessions:** Academic culture can be risk-averse, which stifles educational innovation. A session at the Annual Meeting specifically for unsuccessful educational experiments. Speakers present an initiative that failed, what the data showed, and what they learned. This will foster a culture of psychological safety and “intellectual honesty”.
- **AI-Driven “Adaptive Curriculum” for Residents:** Position the AUA as the leader in integrating Generative AI into anesthesia education. Develop a framework for using AI to create personalized board-review pathways or “virtual patient” scenarios that adapt in difficulty based on the learner’s performance.

I am fully convinced that with this phenomenal advisory board and the strong backing of Council President Dr. Zhongcong Xie, we will achieve exceptional results. I am looking forward to seeing you at the next AUA meeting, April 2–4, 2027, in Houston, hosted by the McGovern Medical School at UTHealth. 



AUA

Association of University Anesthesiologists

LinkedIn

**The AUA is now on LinkedIn!
Please follow us and stay up
to date on our events!**

FROM THE EDUCATIONAL ADVISORY BOARD (EAB): Celebrating Innovation in Education: *Dr. Marc L. Dickstein* *Receives the 2026 AUA Education Innovation Award*

The Association of University Anesthesiologists (AUA) is proud to honor Marc L. Dickstein, MD, Professor of Anesthesiology at Columbia University Vagelos College of Physicians and Surgeons, as the recipient of the 2026 AUA Education Advisory Board (EAB) Education Innovation Award. This award recognizes his transformative, decades-long impact on the teaching of cardiovascular physiology and his visionary creation of Harvi, a simulation platform that has reshaped how learners understand hemodynamics and cardiopulmonary physiology.

A Career Defined by Visionary Educational Innovation

Dr. Dickstein's contributions to medical education began early in his career, when, as Director of Columbia's foundational medical school course *Science Basic to the Practice of Medicine*, he secured competitive funding to modernize Harvi into a web-based platform—an advancement that set the stage for a global shift in physiology education.

Today, Harvi is used worldwide, translated into nine languages, and serves thousands of students, residents, fellows, and practicing clinicians. Its interactive modeling of hemodynamic and cardiopulmonary physiology lets learners manipulate parameters and observe real-time physiologic responses—an experience no static resource can replicate.

Transformational Impact Through the TEACH Program

Building on Harvi's success, Dr. Dickstein co-developed TEACH (Training and Education in Advanced Cardiovascular Hemodynamics), a widely adopted educational workshop series that integrates Harvi-based simulation with focused expert instruction. TEACH workshops have been offered at national and international venues, including the AUA, the Society of Cardiovascular Anesthesiologists, and ELSO.

At Columbia University, TEACH has become a core training experience for trainees in cardiothoracic anesthesia, cardiology, and critical care, fostering both conceptual mastery and clinical decision-making skills.

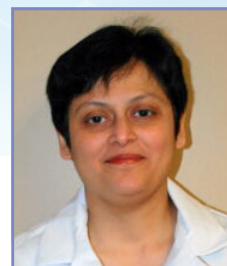
Recognized Excellence as an Educator and Scholar

Dr. Dickstein's exemplary commitment to teaching has earned him numerous institutional honors, including:

- Columbia University Presidential Award for Outstanding Teaching—the institution's highest teaching honor

and awarded to only five faculty members annually. He is the *only anesthesiologist at Columbia* to have received this distinction.

- Four-time Medical Student Teacher of the Year Award and Distinguished Teaching Award from graduating Columbia medical students.
- Founding roles in Columbia's Academy of Clinical Excellence, Virginia Apgar Teaching Academy, and multiple educational innovations within the medical school curriculum.



Arna Banerjee, MD, MMHC, FCCM
Immediate Past Chair,
Educational
Advisory Board
Vanderbilt University
Medical Center
Nashville, TN



Dr. Marc L. Dickstein

His scholarly portfolio includes more than 50 peer-reviewed publications, numerous invited lectures worldwide, and leadership roles in international education initiatives, including ELSO's ECMO Taskforce.

A Lasting Legacy in Cardiovascular Physiology Education

From the early Java-based versions of Harvi to its current robust online ecosystem of simulators and structured electronic textbooks, Dr. Dickstein has relentlessly pushed the boundaries of what physiology education can achieve. His innovations span cardiovascular, pulmonary, renal, and membrane physiology simulations; CME-awarding digital curricula; and novel educational formats.

Through these contributions, Dr. Dickstein's work has reached tens of thousands of learners, strengthened the scientific foundation of clinical practice, and established a model for technology-enhanced teaching that educators continue to emulate.

By recognizing Dr. Marc L. Dickstein with the 2026 AUA Education Innovation Award, the AUA celebrates an educator whose creativity, rigor, and dedication have profoundly influenced the specialty. His work shows how thoughtful innovation can transform understanding, improve patient care, and elevate the entire field of anesthesiology.

The AUA congratulates Dr. Dickstein on this well-deserved honor and expresses gratitude for his extraordinary contributions to academic anesthesiology and to the future of cardiovascular physiology education. 📖

FROM THE MEMBERSHIP ENGAGEMENT BOARD (EAB): MEB Chair Introduction and Vision

It is a tremendous honor and privilege to serve as the new Chair of the Membership Engagement Board for the Association of University Anesthesiologists (AUA). I am grateful for the trust placed in me and excited about the opportunity to contribute to an organization that has played such an important role in advancing academic anesthesiology.

I currently serve as Vice Chair for Clinical Research in the Department of Anesthesiology at UTHealth Houston. Throughout my career, I have been passionate about advancing perioperative medicine through clinical research, education, mentorship, and collaboration. My academic interests focus on perioperative organ injury, acute kidney injury, cardiovascular anesthesiology, and improving patient outcomes through translational and clinical investigation. In addition to research, I have been actively involved in trainee and faculty development, educational initiatives, and leadership roles within both institutional and national organizations.

What has always attracted me to the AUA is its unique ability to bring together leaders in academic anesthesiology who share a common commitment to innovation, scholarship, education, and service. The AUA has a remarkable history of fostering collaboration, supporting future leaders, and creating opportunities for meaningful professional growth. As academic medicine continues to evolve, organizations such as the AUA play an increasingly important role in connecting individuals across institutions, disciplines, and career stages.

As Chair of the Membership Engagement Board, my foremost goal is to listen and learn. I recognize that the strength of the AUA comes from its members, and I am eager to hear your perspectives, ideas, and aspirations for the organization. Whether you are a trainee, junior faculty member, established investigator, educator, clinician, or departmental leader, your experiences and insights are invaluable. Understanding what members value most—

and where the AUA can provide additional support—will be critical as we continue to strengthen our community.

I also hope to help expand engagement opportunities across all career stages and institutional settings. Academic anesthesiology is increasingly diverse, and our membership should reflect the broad range of talents, backgrounds, and interests that contribute to the field. By fostering meaningful connections, mentorship opportunities, leadership development, and scholarly collaboration, we can continue to build a vibrant and inclusive professional community.

Looking ahead, I believe there is tremendous opportunity to further expand the impact of the AUA within academic institutions and to strengthen its international presence. Academic anesthesiology faces many shared challenges and opportunities worldwide, and the AUA is uniquely positioned to serve as a platform for collaboration, innovation, and exchange of ideas across borders. By engaging a broader community of academic anesthesiologists, we can amplify the influence of the organization and advance our collective mission.

Most importantly, I view this role as one of service. I am here to learn, to listen, and to work alongside all of you in support of the AUA's mission and vision. I look forward to partnering with our members, leadership, and committees as we continue to strengthen the organization and create new opportunities for academic anesthesiology to thrive.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve. I am excited for the journey ahead and look forward to working with each of you. 📖



Yafen Liang, MD
Chair, Membership
Engagement Board
UTHealth Houston
Houston, TX

FAER 40TH
ANNIVERSARY
Foundation for Anesthesia
Education and Research

FALL 2026 GRANT CYCLE

Applications Open through August 15, 2026

VISIT [FAER.ORG/GRANTS](https://faer.org/grants) TO LEARN MORE & APPLY!

Applications to the Foundation for Anesthesia Education and Research's (FAER) Fall 2026 Grant Cycle are open through August 15, 2026! Available grants include the **Mentored Research Training Grant** (two years, \$300,000), **Research in Education Grant** (two years, \$100,000), **Research Fellowship Grant** (one year, \$75,000), and **Transition to Independence Grant** (one year, \$75,000). Find out more, including eligibility and research areas, and apply at [FAER.org/Grants](https://faer.org/grants)!

FROM THE LEADERSHIP ADVISORY BOARD (LAB): Building Leaders, Building Community

As we begin our terms as Chair and Vice Chair of the AUA Leadership Advisory Board (LAB), we have been reflecting on the Board's mission and asking a simple question: *What unique role can the LAB play for academic anesthesiology?*

The LAB was established to support the professional development of AUA members by fostering leadership, mentorship, and an equitable and inclusive academic community. Through educational programming, networking, mentorship, and leadership development, the LAB seeks to help academic anesthesiologists at every career stage develop the skills and relationships needed to lead successful departments and programs.

We are fortunate to inherit a strong foundation. We would like to thank **Dr. Tetsuro (Ted) Sakai** for his outstanding leadership as Chair. Under Ted's direction, the LAB expanded its educational mission through Annual Meeting programming, webinars, mentorship initiatives, leadership awards, and regular contributions to the *AUA Update*. His thoughtful transition and continued service as Immediate Past Chair provide continuity as the Board enters its next chapter.

One of the Board's recent successes has been the development of year-round leadership programming. This year's webinars on *Digital Communication for Career Advancement and Workplace Justice*, together with plans for structured mentor-mentee networking, demonstrate the LAB's commitment to providing practical leadership education beyond the Annual Meeting.

As we think about the future, one opportunity continues to emerge in conversations across academic medicine. Nearly every department is working to strengthen faculty development, mentorship, promotion, leadership training, wellness, and institutional culture. Yet many of us are doing this work independently, often recreating programs that already exist elsewhere and without a forum for sharing ideas or learning from one another. As Elizabeth recently observed, colleagues repeatedly ask, *"Who else is doing this work, and where can we connect?"*

We believe the LAB is uniquely positioned to help answer those questions.

Over the coming year, we hope to explore the creation of a *national community of practice for academic professional development* — a community that brings together faculty development leaders and others engaged in professional development across academic anesthesiology departments. Through quarterly virtual meetings and shared resources, such a collaborative could provide a venue to exchange successful programs, discuss common challenges, and learn from one another. Rather than each department working in isolation, we envision a community that accelerates innovation through collaboration while strengthening the professional infrastructure of academic anesthesiology.

This vision aligns naturally with what we believe should be the enduring mission of the LAB: *to develop leaders, connect leaders, and sustain leaders throughout their academic careers.*

The Leadership Advisory Board includes faculty leaders from academic anesthesiology departments across North America who bring expertise in education, research, faculty development, mentorship, and departmental leadership. We look forward to introducing individual Board members and highlighting their work in future newsletters.

The success of the LAB will ultimately depend on the engagement of AUA members. We welcome your ideas for future programming, mentorship initiatives, and opportunities to strengthen leadership development across our community. We look forward to working with you as we continue building a vibrant network of current and future leaders in academic anesthesiology. 📖



James P. Rathmell, MD

Chair, Leadership Advisory Board
Mass General Brigham/
Harvard Medical School
Boston, MA



Elizabeth Duggan, MD

Vice Chair, Leadership Advisory Board
University of Alabama
at Birmingham
Birmingham, AL

FROM THE LEADERSHIP ADVISORY BOARD (LAB):

Celebrating Excellence in Mentorship:

Dr. Harriet Hopf Receives the 2026 AUA Mentoring Award

The Association of University Anesthesiologists (AUA) is proud to recognize **Harriet W. Hopf, MD, FASA**, Professor of Anesthesiology at the University of Utah, as the recipient of the **2026 AUA Leadership Advisory Board (LAB) Mentoring Award**. This prestigious honor recognizes Dr. Hopf's extraordinary, sustained, and nationally influential commitment to mentorship, which has shaped generations of anesthesiologists and academic leaders.

Dr. Hopf was nominated by **Susan M. Martinelli, MD, FASA**, Residency Program Director and Edward A. Norfleet, MD '70 Distinguished Professor of Anesthesiology at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. In her nomination, Dr. Martinelli emphasized the defining and enduring nature of Dr. Hopf's mentoring legacy:

"Dr. Hopf exemplifies a longitudinal and generative mentoring practice. Many of her mentees have advanced to leadership roles, received their own awards for mentorship, and now mentor others—creating a vibrant mentoring chain that amplifies her influence."

A Career Defined by Sustained Commitment to Mentorship

For more than three decades, Dr. Hopf has mentored individuals across every stage of the academic continuum, including students, residents, fellows, junior faculty, senior faculty, and interprofessional colleagues. Her mentoring relationships are notable not only for their breadth, but for their longevity, often spanning decades and continuing across institutional transitions.

Dr. Martinelli noted that Dr. Hopf's mentorship is distinguished by its durability and intentionality, observing that her influence does not diminish over time but instead compounds through the success of those she mentors and the mentoring cultures they go on to create.

Transformational Impact on Individual Careers

Letters from mentees across the country attest to the transformational impact of Dr. Hopf's mentorship. Her mentees consistently credit her guidance with helping them navigate promotion, research training, leadership development, and complex career decisions.

Mark D. Rollins, MD, PhD, Professor of Anesthesiology and Perioperative Medicine at the Mayo Clinic, reflected on more than 25 years of mentorship:

"She has guided me for more than 25 years—since my time as a graduate student in bioengineering, anesthesia resident, NIH research fellow, and now as a Professor of Anesthesiology. Her commitment to mentoring spans multiple institutions and appears timeless."

He further emphasized the personal and professional confidence her mentorship instilled:

"Harriet's mentorship gave me the confidence and freedom to complete a successful doctoral project and to define my long-term career goals."

Mentorship Rooted in Sponsorship and Accessibility

A hallmark of Dr. Hopf's mentoring approach is her active sponsorship of mentees. She is widely recognized for her hands-on support—reviewing manuscripts and grants, encouraging national presentations, nominating mentees for leadership opportunities, and connecting them with collaborators nationwide.

Her accessibility and dedication are frequently cited as exceptional. As Dr. Rollins shared:

"Harriet is remarkably accessible, even during travel or personal milestones. On one occasion, she provided project feedback less than 24 hours after giving birth to her first child."

Building Mentoring Infrastructure and Culture

Beyond individual mentoring relationships, Dr. Hopf has been a transformative leader in building mentoring capacity and institutional culture. As Co-Director of the Utah Coaching and Advancement Network (U-CAN), she has led comprehensive mentoring and coaching initiatives that support faculty across career stages and disciplines,



Tetsuro (Ted) Sakai, MD, PhD, MHA, FASA
Immediate Past Chair,
Leadership Advisory
Board – Term Expires 2028
The University of North
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Dr. Harriet Hopf

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with measurable impact on retention, promotion success, and professional fulfillment.

Her influence also extends interprofessional. **Joanne Rolls, MPAS, MEHP, PA-C**, Professor (Clinical) and Vice Chair of Education in the Division of Physician Assistant Education and Sciences at the University of Utah, described Dr. Hopf's mentorship as catalytic:

"Dr. Hopf mentored and supported me in my work as a first-time chair (of Department Advisory Committee), making sure that I was able to execute the complicated retention and promotion process in accordance with university policy. Her mentoring has had an exponential effect on career development, retention, and promotion."

National Leadership and a Multiplicative Legacy

Nationally, Dr. Hopf's leadership on the Foundation for Anesthesia Education and Research (FAER) Board of Directors, including service as Chair, and her direction of the FAER Medical Student Anesthesia Research Fellowship Program, have extended her mentoring impact to hundreds of aspiring anesthesiology investigators. Her rapid adaptation during the COVID-19 pandemic—

creating virtual mentoring communities—demonstrated innovation, resilience, and an unwavering commitment to mentee success.

As Dr. Martinelli concluded in her nomination, Dr. Hopf's influence is best understood through its multiplicative effect:

"Dr. Hopf's mentoring legacy is not limited to those she directly mentors. It is visible in the generations of mentors and leaders who follow her example, carrying forward her values of generosity, rigor, and advocacy."

A Worthy Recipient of the AUA Mentoring Award

In honoring Dr. Harriet Hopf with the 2026 AUA Mentoring Award, the AUA celebrates a mentor whose career embodies sustained excellence, national impact, and transformative influence. Her work has shaped individual careers, strengthened institutions, and elevated the culture of mentorship within academic anesthesiology.

The AUA congratulates Dr. Hopf on this well-deserved recognition and thanks her for her extraordinary contributions to the specialty and its future leaders. 📖

Member Nominations

Nominate a Colleague for AUA Membership



Applications open: August 1st, 2026

Deadline: October 15th, 2026

We are excited to announce that our round 2 for the 2026 Member Nominations will open soon!

If you are currently an AUA Member wanting to nominate a non-member, please review the AUA New Member Nomination Checklist and Guidelines to ensure that their accomplishments are consistent with that of a successful application.

If you are not currently an AUA member, please reach out to a current active AUA Member to get nominated!

Announcements will be around by the end of the year!

FROM THE SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY BOARD (SAB): Fostering a Community for Anesthesiology Researchers

Maintaining a robust mission of biomedical research has become fiscally challenging for both investigators, departments, and institutions. How will research survive in academic anesthesiology? As we assume SAB leadership, we reflect on this question and how the AUA could contribute to the development and retention of physician-scientists and researchers.

The AUA continues to be a unique venue to support researchers as a vital component of our profession. For many members, presenting at the AUA as a trainee or junior faculty member was a formative experience that defined our early career. We received valuable suggestions from esteemed researchers whose decades-old papers we had cited in our posters or used as the basis for our presentations' introductory slides. We were introduced by our mentors to members who served as editors of anesthesia journals or reviewers on NIH study sections. In contrast to specialty meetings more narrowly aligned with our content expertise, the AUA meeting allowed engagement of a diverse scientific audience, a prelude for appealing to a diverse grant review committee or future invited grand rounds audience.

The AUA 2026 Annual Meeting provided another opportunity to continue this tradition, offering networking and career development perspectives from academic anesthesiology leaders. Productive workshops on mentorship engaged trainees and faculty. An SAB T32 Program Directors Roundtable session, organized and moderated by David Mintz and Christine Sang, saw a vibrant discussion of shared experiences, challenges, and tactics. Diverse topics included filling fellowship positions with non-anesthesiology physician scientists and challenges in renewing program grants. Launch times for physician scientists from T32 through foundation mentored research awards and into NIH K-awards were compared. Nobel Prize laureate David Baker provided inspiration for all in providing a vision for developing novel therapeutic peptides using deep learning. Over 50 moderated poster presentations complemented coffee introductions and trainee awardee presentations. On the final meeting day, Creed Stary and Brant Wagener moderated the SAB panel, "Funding Your Research Program: There's More Than One Fish in the Sea." Given the recent uncertainties, delays, and opaqueness on NIH grant review and award distributions, this timely session was thought-provoking for funding portfolio diversification, with presentations by Michael Gropper, Max Kelz, and Meghan Lane-Fall. SAB members compiled feedback and suggestions for next year's meeting.

The SAB looks forward to developing scientific programming throughout the coming year. Our overall goal for the next two years is to support the recruitment and retention of anesthesiology researchers through AUA member support. We have assembled a broad team representing 13 academic departments to bolster the scientific program for the AUA 2027 Annual Meeting. We appreciate the contributions of the immediate SAB Past-Chair, Christina Pabelick, and outgoing board members over the past year. We anticipate multiple webinars leading up to the upcoming meeting in Houston. The webinars will represent content expertise of SAB members, including development of new anesthetics and repurposing of current ones, advances in delirium and other postoperative neurocognitive disorders, advances in understanding and treating pain mechanisms, lung protection and clinical outcomes, and neuroscience of anesthetics and their interaction with sleep. Other activities will address early- and mid-career investigator needs. These include networking among T32/T35 awardees and program directors, updates on navigating NIH grant review/awards, initiating and navigating industry partnership, and peer mentoring. Expertise from current standing members of NIH study section will be leveraged given the ongoing flux in supporting federally funded research.

The SAB requests the assistance of academic anesthesiology leaders to collectively nurture aspiring researchers and physician-scientists. Prioritization of leave for AUA meeting attendance by departmental leadership is encouraged. We request T32, T35, and residency research-track program directors to discuss the AUA meeting with trainees. Principal investigators are asked to sponsor trainees for abstract submission and presentation in Houston. Thank you in advance for supporting our efforts in AUA to support the scientific component of our specialty. 📖



Ben Julian Palanca, MD, PhD
Chair, Scientific Advisory Board
WashU Medicine
St. Louis, MO



Jiapeng Huang, MD, PhD
Vice Chair, Scientific Advisory Board
University of Louisville
Louisville, KY

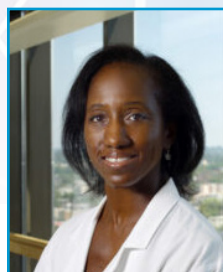
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**Zhongcong Xie, MD,
PhD, FASA**
President
University of Texas Health
and Science Center
Houston, TX



**Miriam Treggiari, MD,
PhD, MPH**
President-Elect
Duke University
Durham, NC



Dolores B. Njoku, MD
*Immediate Past
President*
Washington University in
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St. Louis, MO



**Tetsuro (Ted) Sakai MD,
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C. David Mintz, MD, PhD
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Maria Bustillo, MD, FASA
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Shahzad Shaefi, MD, MPH
*Communications and
Website Committee Chair*
Mass General Brigham
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Board Chairs

Terms Expire in 2028



**James P.
Rathmell, MD**
*Chair, Leadership
Advisory Board*
Brigham and
Women's Hospital
Boston, MA



**Elizabeth
Duggan, MD**
*Vice Chair,
Leadership
Advisory Board*
University of Alabama
at Birmingham
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