



PRESS RELEASE

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Dr. W. Randolph Chitwood, Jr., Named New STS President

Dr. W. Randolph Chitwood, Jr., senior associate vice chancellor for health sciences and director of the East Carolina Heart Institute at East Carolina University, was elected President of The Society of Thoracic Surgeons at its Annual Membership Meeting in January.

A graduate of Hampden-Sydney College in Virginia, Dr. Chitwood received his medical degree from the University of Virginia and completed his surgical residency at Duke University Medical Center. He then went to the East Carolina University School of Medicine as a full Professor of Surgery, where he started the cardiac surgery program there in 1984. He served as Chairman of the Department of Surgery from 1995-2003.

Dr. Chitwood has been involved with STS throughout his career, taking his first leadership role in 1994. He has been active on a variety of the Society's Workforces, particularly those regarding the planning of the Annual Meeting. He is also active in several other organizations, both in the United States and abroad. In 2003, he was elected to fellowship of the Royal College of Surgeons of England and is a former president of the International Society for Minimally Invasive Cardiac Surgery and the Society for Heart Valve Disease. He serves or has served on the editorial boards of *The Annals of Thoracic Surgery*, the *Journal of Cardiovascular and Thoracic Surgery*, the *Journal of Cardiac Surgery*, the *Journal of Heart Valve Disease*, the *Asian Annals of Cardiovascular and Thoracic Surgery*, CTSNet, the *Heart Surgery Forum*, *Chest*, and the *American Heart Journal*.

During his term, Dr. Chitwood plans to take a more active role in international cardiothoracic surgery issues, work on government policy issues, develop additional clinical guidelines and increase efforts to better foster upcoming generations of cardiothoracic surgeons.

"We need to utilize new technology and the impact it has in patient care to increase the interest surgeons have in our specialty," Dr. Chitwood said. "It will also be important in the coming year to think about how we can blend our influence in areas of public policy and new technology with other professional organizations."

Dr. Chitwood is a founder of the East Carolina Heart Institute that is undergoing a \$200 million building project. He has been a pioneer in developing new technology for minimally invasive heart surgery. His Robotic Surgical Center has trained more than 350 surgeons from around the world in the robotic surgical techniques which Dr. Chitwood developed. Dr. Chitwood also pioneered robotic valve repairs using the da Vinci system, and in 2000, used it to perform the first complete mitral valve repair in North America. He was the lead investigator of the FDA robotic mitral valve trials. Dr. Chitwood has special expertise in complex valvular surgery including mitral repair, as well as aortic valve and cardiac rhythm surgery. His influence on cardiothoracic surgery has spread world wide through his many academic visits demonstrating new operations and technology.

The Society of Thoracic Surgeons is a not-for-profit organization representing more than 5,600 surgeons, researchers, and allied health professionals worldwide who are dedicated to ensuring the best possible heart, lung, esophageal and other surgical procedures for the chest. Founded in 1964, the mission of STS is to enhance the ability of cardiothoracic surgeons to provide the highest quality patient care through education, research and advocacy.