



The Society of Thoracic Surgeons
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News

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Irving L. Kron Earns Bakken Scientific Achievement Award

STS Award recognizes outstanding scientific contributions in cardiothoracic surgery

San Diego – Prolific researcher Irving L. Kron, MD was today awarded the 2015 Earl Bakken Scientific Achievement Award by The Society of Thoracic Surgeons during the organization’s 51st Annual Meeting.

“It is a huge honor to be recognized by one’s peers, especially those that I, myself, respect so much,” said Dr. Kron. “But science, like surgery, is a team sport and I never could have accomplished what I have in my career without my team. I’ve worked together with the same team nearly my whole career, so this award is not just for me; it’s recognition of a great team.”

Dr. Kron is currently Chair of the Department of Surgery at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville, where he is also the S. Hurt Watts Professor of Surgery and Program Director of the Thoracic Surgery Residency Program.

Dr. Kron received his undergraduate degree in 1971 from the University of Pennsylvania and earned his medical degree from the Medical College of Wisconsin in 1975. He continued with a general surgery residency at the Maine Medical Center in Portland before completing his training in thoracic and cardiovascular surgery in 1982 at the University of Virginia.

“As cardiothoracic surgeons our primary job is patient care and surgery, but it is critically important that we remain committed to science and research and continue the growth of our specialty,” said Dr. Kron. “The minute we begin to get away from the science, our field stops growing. We see the problems and issues that our patients deal with every day. Naturally, we understand our patients’ problems better than anyone else and we should lead the research that translates into problem solving for our patients.”

Dr. Kron’s specialty interests include mitral valve and aortic valve surgery, surgery of the aorta, carotid artery surgery, coronary artery surgery, and heart transplantation.

“Irv has always been a very busy clinical surgeon and a highly respected leader of our specialty, and at the same time has uniquely advanced the science of cardiothoracic surgery,” said 2014-2015 STS President David A. Fullerton, MD. “He has effectively championed the cause of cardiothoracic surgery with the National Institutes of Health to increase funding for research in our discipline. We have all learned from Irv, and young surgeons in particular should emulate Irv’s dedication to excellence in both clinical surgery and scientific advancement.”

Throughout his career, Dr. Kron has published more than 350 manuscripts, including 160 articles in *The Annals of Thoracic Surgery*, making him the most prolific author published in the STS journal’s 50 year history.

He also has made nearly 250 presentations on cardiothoracic surgery in the US and internationally. He has published about 30 books and chapters, and has been the principal investigator for more than 20 funded research grants.

The Earl Bakken Scientific Achievement Award was established in 1999 through a grant from medical equipment company Medtronic, Inc., to honor individuals who have made outstanding scientific contributions that have enhanced the practice of cardiothoracic surgery and patients' quality of life.

The award is named for Medtronic Co-Founder Earl Bakken. Among numerous other achievements, Mr. Bakken developed the first wearable artificial pacemaker.

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Founded in 1964, The Society of Thoracic Surgeons is a not-for-profit organization representing more than 6,900 cardiothoracic surgeons, researchers, and allied health care professionals worldwide who are dedicated to ensuring the best possible outcomes for surgeries of the heart, lung, and esophagus, as well as other surgical procedures within the chest. The Society’s mission is to enhance the ability of cardiothoracic surgeons to provide the highest quality patient care through education, research, and advocacy.