



For Immediate Release

The Thoracic Surgery Foundation Awards \$125,000 for New Robotic Heart Surgery Programs *First-of-its-kind fellowship allows cardiothoracic surgeons to train with ‘the masters’*

CHICAGO (October 09, 2019) — The Society of Thoracic Surgeons (STS)—along with its charitable arm, The Thoracic Surgery Foundation (TSF)—recently awarded \$125,000 in fellowship grants to five standout cardiothoracic surgeons interested in launching new robotic cardiac surgery programs at their institutions.

“TSF President Dr. Joe Bavaria and I had a vision to improve education and training by creating a partnership between STS, leading robotic cardiac surgeons, and industry,” said T. Sloane Guy, MD, MBA, chair of the STS Task Force on Robotic Surgery. “Our first step was to start a series of clinical symposia, and now TSF has established the next phase: fellowships for practicing surgeons to learn robotic cardiac surgery from the masters.”

The Advanced Robotic Cardiac Surgery Fellowship—available for the first time in 2019—recognizes surgeons who are excelling in innovation and who demonstrate commitment to a cardiac care future that includes robotic technology. In fact, to even apply, surgeons and their first assistants must have attended an STS Workshop on Robotic Cardiac Surgery.

The grant allows the award recipients, who were selected through a rigorous and competitive process, to offset costs associated with the initiation of high-quality robotic cardiac surgery programs at their home institutions. Under this fellowship, the surgeons will choose to learn either coronary artery bypass grafting or mitral valve repair using a robotic surgical system. The surgeon fellows are assigned to STS proctors, who also will serve as their primary mentors-sponsors. In addition to working closely with these mentors—who are surgeons from high-volume training institutions—the fellows will have the opportunity to attend a surgeon-led procedure training course.

The recipients of the Advanced Cardiac Robotic Surgery Fellowship are:

George M. Comas, MD

St. John Health System in Tulsa, OK

Tom C. Nguyen, MD

The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston
Memorial Hermann Memorial City Medical Center in Houston

Matthew A. Romano, MD

University of Michigan Medicine in Ann Arbor

Phillip G. Rowse, MD

Mayo Clinic in Rochester, MN

Moritz C. Wyler von Ballmoos, MD, PhD, MPH

Houston Methodist DeBakey Heart & Vascular Center, TX

For more information about the Advanced Cardiac Robotic Surgery Fellowship and other TSF awards, visit <https://thoracicsurgeryfoundation.org/awards/>.

###

Contact: Priscilla S. Kennedy, TSF Executive Director, pkennedy@sts.org, 312-202-5868.

About STS

Founded in 1964, The Society of Thoracic Surgeons is a not-for-profit organization representing more than 7,300 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. For more information, visit sts.org.

About TSF

The Thoracic Surgery Foundation is a pivotal force for growth and vitality in cardiothoracic surgery, especially for research and academic career development, awarding more than \$17 million in cardiothoracic surgery research and education grants. The Foundation was first established in 1988 as a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit charitable organization and is the charitable arm of The Society of Thoracic Surgeons. The mission of TSF is to foster the development of surgeon scientists in cardiothoracic surgery, increasing knowledge and innovation to benefit patient care. For more information, visit thoracicsurgeryfoundation.org.