



Dr. Sheldon

Dr. Sheldon honored with Lifetime Achievement Award

The second Lifetime Achievement Award of the American College of Surgeons (ACS) was presented to **George F. Sheldon, MD, FACS**, during the Convocation ceremonies at the 2012 Clinical Congress. Dr. Sheldon is the Zack D. Owens Distinguished Professor of Surgery at the University of North Carolina (UNC) at Chapel Hill School of Medicine and a Past-President of the ACS.

This award is only the second one ever presented for a lifetime contribution to the art of medicine, surgery, and service to the College. The late C. Rollins Hanlon, MD, FACS, received the first Lifetime Achievement Award in 2010 at the 96th Clinical Congress in Washington, DC.

Born in Salina, KS, to a physician father, Dr. Sheldon became involved in medicine at an early age. Due to a severe shortage of medical personnel in rural Kansas during World War II, he started helping his father in the operating room in the local hospital and worked there throughout his high school years.

Education

Attending University of Kansas (KU), Lawrence, he exhibited an uncommon aptitude for leadership, service, and scholarship. For three of his

undergraduate years, he held the faculty rank of assistant instructor in the department of Western civilization and taught classic literature. He also was elected student body president. While attending the KU Medical School, from which he graduated in 1961, he co-authored the book, *The Doctor, 1861–1961: A Pictorial History of Kansas Medicine*, during the state's centennial year. Upon graduation, he was awarded the L.L. Marcell Award for the highest academic standing in medicine.

After completing an internship at KU and military service in the U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps, the medical branch of the U.S. Coast Guard, Dr. Sheldon completed a one-year fellowship in medicine at the Mayo Clinic, Rochester, MN, followed by surgical residency at the University of California-San Francisco (UCSF), where he completed a five-year residency in four years. In his third year, he received the Helmut Fresca Award for best resident.

His training continued with a postdoctoral fellowship from the National Heart Institute as well as a research fellowship in surgical biology at the Peter Bent Brigham Hospital of the Harvard Medical School, Boston, MA. Dr. Sheldon then joined

the faculty of the UCSF and was promoted to professor in 1980.

Contributions to trauma, surgical education

Dr. Sheldon participated in the founding of one of the nation's first trauma centers and became the chief of trauma service at San Francisco General Hospital, which trained not only UCSF residents, but also U.S. Army, Navy, and Air Force surgeons before deployment to Vietnam. He also served as director of the physiological research facility and was among the first physicians on the West Coast to feed patients by intravenous hyperalimentation.

In 1984, Dr. Sheldon was named chair of surgery at the University of North Carolina (UNC) at Chapel Hill, and in that role, he structured the rapid expansion of department services and extensive recruitment of young surgeons. In 2001, Dr. Sheldon stepped down from that position, but was made a professor of social medicine and surgery and continued to teach a popular history of medicine course and conduct health policy research. The UNC named two distinguished lectureships in his name, and the Surgical Interest Group at UNC—for medical students interested in surgical practice—is named in his honor.



CHARLES GIORNO PHOTOGRAPHY

Dr. Sheldon (left), receives the Lifetime Achievement Award from then-ACS President Patricia J. Numann, MD, FACS, FRCS.

Continuing his scholarship and interest in history, he published the biography *Hugh Williamson: Physician, Patriot, and Founding Father* in 2010 and is working on a book on the life of Philip Syng Physick, long considered the father of American surgery. (Dr. Sheldon gave the Opening Lecture at the 1978 Clinical Congress, titled Philip Syng Physick: The Father of American Surgery.) In 2011 Dr. Sheldon received the Thomas Jefferson Award, the highest award given by UNC for exemplifying the following seven qualities: ecumenicity of spirit, intellectual distinction, professional superiority, interdisciplinary involvement in the humanities, scholarly productivity, service to the university, and service to the community on a Jeffersonian vision for higher education.

Active ACS Fellow

Dr. Sheldon was initiated into ACS Fellowship in 1973 and represented the Society of University Surgeons on the ACS Board of Governors (B/G). He went on to serve as Secretary and on the Executive Committee of the B/G. In 1984, Dr. Sheldon became an ACS Regent and Chairman of the Communications Committee and the first Editorial Advisor of the *Bulletin*

of the American College of Surgeons. During his years as a Regent, he served on more than 10 ACS committees or task force groups. In 1985, at the urging of Olga Jonasson, MD, FACS, Dr. Sheldon, along with Dr. Hanlon, Oliver H. Beahrs, MD, FACS, and David C. Sabiston, MD, FACS, worked with Sen. David Durenberger (R-MN) to protect graduate medical education (GME) funding. His testimony before Congress was shown on C-SPAN and was instrumental in ensuring continued GME funding for a five-year general surgery residency.

Dr. Sheldon served on the ACS Committee on Trauma, and in 1992 he gave the Scudder Oration on Trauma titled Trauma Manpower.

During his term as ACS President (1998–1999), the Residents and Associates Society was founded. In 2004, Dr. Sheldon became the founding Editor-in-Chief of the ACS Web portal, now with 42 communities, nearly 300 editors and associate editors, and more than 4 million page views.

In 2008, he became the founding Director of the ACS Health Policy Research Institute (HPRI) with Thomas Ricketts, PhD, MPH, as Managing Director, and enlisted the part-time support of 160 researchers at the UNC Cecil G. Sheps Center for Health Service Research.

Their work has resulted in more than 70 publications.

In 2009, Dr. Sheldon presented the Excelsior Surgical Society Edward D. Churchill Lecture titled Surgical Workforce in the Era of Health Reform.

Other surgical organizations

Among his extensive honors, Dr. Sheldon is one of the few surgeons to serve as president of several major surgical organizations, including the ACS, the American Surgical Association, the American Association for the Surgery of Trauma, the Society of Surgical Chairmen, the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences, and the University Surgical Service Visiting Board. He also has served as chairman of the American Board of Surgery, and in 2003, Dr. Sheldon became the first surgeon since Samuel Gross in 1879 to chair the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC). He was named an AAMC Distinguished Service Member.

He is a member of the Institute of Medicine of the National Academies and was a charter member of the Council on Graduate Medical Education. Dr. Sheldon holds Honorary Fellowship in the Royal Colleges of Surgeons of

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England and Edinburgh, the Association of Surgeons of Great Britain and Ireland, the European Surgical Association, the Colombian Surgical Association, and the Society of Black Academic Surgeons. During the 2012 Clinical Congress, he was also accorded honorary membership in the Association of Women Surgeons.

Dr. Sheldon has authored more than 400 articles and book chapters on surgical biology, intravenous hyperalimentation, trauma, health policy, workforce, and historical issues. He has co-authored eight books and serves on multiple editorial boards.

His regional, national, and international pre-eminence in academic surgery and social medicine distinguishes him

even among the elite handful of prodigious educators at the summit of the surgical profession.

Dr. Sheldon has been supported by a wonderful family. He met his wife of 55 years, Ruth Guy Sheldon, in college and they married while he was in medical school. They have three daughters and two grandchildren. ♦

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AJCC Seeking Candidates for Editor of Cancer Staging Manual



www.cancerstaging.org

The American Joint Committee on Cancer (AJCC) welcomes applications for the position of editor-in-chief of the 8th edition of the *AJCC Cancer Staging Manual*, planned for publication in 2015. This publication represents the latest iteration of the tumor, node, and metastasis (TNM) system.

The editor, who will be chosen in January 2013, will be expected to coordinate all activities leading to publication. A minimum three-year term will begin in March 2013 and will involve working with AJCC staff, the publisher, and all volunteer physicians, cancer registrars, and others who participate in the site-specific expert panels.

The position will be financially compensated by the AJCC. Candidates must be physicians and should submit their letter of interest to Karen Pollitt, AJCC Manager, kpollitt@facs.org, by December 1, 2012.