

# ACOS

The American College of Ophthalmic Surgeons (ACOS) was formed this summer. Do ophthalmologists need another professional society? Yes.

In my editorials over the years, I have expressed my wishes for improvement in several areas, including ophthalmologists' relationship with industry and their need both for technological advances and for more quality education, advocacy, and responsibility. The ACOS was formed largely to address these issues, as evidenced by our mission statement: "ACOS brings leading ophthalmologists and innovative technologies together to advance vision care and improve the patient's quality of life."

As the word *college* implies, the ACOS will emphasize education and learning. We will organize several meetings in our first full year. They will be focused, interactive, and practical, much like the Aspen Invitational Refractive Symposium (AIRS) and the summer meeting organized by Steven Dell, MD.

We are starting with a small group of doctors and industry representatives. The surgeons include Steven Dell, John Doane, William Trattler, Steven Vold, and John Vukich. Key members also include David Cox and Adam Krafczek of Bryn Mawr Communications LLC, the publisher of *Cataract & Refractive Surgery Today*. A common commitment of ACOS members is sharing practical ideas, surgical skills, thoughts on new technology, etc. I know



this group will have much of value to offer to ophthalmic surgeons.

So much of what ophthalmologists do is driven by technology. Unless surgeons plan to build lasers themselves—which I do not recommend—they need industry as partners. We are most fortunate at the ACOS to have had strong, enthusiastic, and broad support from industry since our first exploratory meeting.

Certainly, ophthalmologists already have excellent organizations, including the AAO and the ASCRS. As large, mature organizations, however, by nature, they cannot fill every need or represent all political views. The ACOS is not a protest group. Nor are we positioning ourselves as direct competitors with ophthalmology's major societies. Indeed, all of our mem-

bers are active in both. Nevertheless, we believe that the ACOS will serve a currently unmet need.

What can ophthalmologists expect from the ACOS? Our hope is that surgeons will share their ideas and thoughts at one of our meetings. We plan to expand the society's membership later this year, and we would be honored if *CRSToday's* readers would consider joining us. We want to make a positive difference in surgeons' practices and for their patients. We want to create an organization of which we can be proud. Time will tell if we are successful, but our sheer enthusiasm and power as a group at this early stage bode well for the future. ■

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Chief Medical Editor