

Presidential Address: 5th Annual Meeting of the International Society of Minimally Invasive Cardiac Surgery

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Introduction

This presidential address gives me the opportunity to describe the progress, aims, and goals of the International Society for Minimally Invasive Cardiac Surgery (ISMICS). There is no doubt that at present ISMICS is THE worldwide organization dedicated to advancing new techniques in cardiac surgery. ISMICS was founded in 1997 to enhance, promote, and support research and education in new techniques of cardiac surgery. It has formed a strong partnership with industry, and in particular with start-up companies. It currently has a leadership role in guiding the direction of less invasive cardiac surgery on a global basis.

Table 1 (●) depicts the present Executive Board and Board of Directors. At this time I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Robert W. Emery, MD, who was the founder and first president of ISMICS and has devoted an enormous amount of time, energy, and work into the establishment of this society.

The membership report between June 2001 and June 2002 lists 593 active current members from various parts of the world. The medical specialties in ISMICS consist mainly of either cardiac or cardiothoracic surgeons. The number of pediatric cardiac surgeons, anesthesiologists, and cardiologists is slowly growing (Table 2, ●). In addition to these specialists, the desired extended membership spectrum should consist of PhDs working in basic research or for industry, residents and trainees in cardiac surgery, nurses working in the field of cardiac surgery or cardiology, and perfusionists. Table 3a (●) describes the geographical breakdown of all active members, with the United States being the country with the most members (344 members), followed by Germany (26 members). Table 4 (●) depicts the geographic distribution of members within the United States.

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ISMICS Tasks

ISMICS offers an important forum not provided by any other current cardiothoracic surgical society. It gives an opportunity for the early distribution of experimental work and presents early applications of brand-new technology. Young students, residents, and specialists in particular get a unique chance to present their early work at a scientific meeting. It is important for me to emphasize that ISMICS is not only focused on minimally invasive techniques such as off-pump coronary artery surgery (OPCAB) but on any new surgical technology applicable to the whole spectrum of cardiac surgery. Table 5 (●) lists new techniques and topics that are typically represented at ISMICS-related meetings. Of particular interest in recent meetings have been techniques of atrial ablation and other arrhythmia surgery, surgical treatment of heart failure, alternative perfusion strategies, facilitated anastomosis techniques, and basic science.

In my activity as board member of the International Society for Heart and Lung Transplantation (ISHLT), I have noticed some parallel developments in both societies. ISHLT was founded in 1981 as a small society focusing on operative techniques, donor management, and rejection diagnosis in heart transplantation only. Twenty years later, in 2002, ISHLT represents a large international society covering the whole spectrum of heart and lung transplantation, management of end-stage heart and lung failure, organ preservation, immunobiology, basic science, xenotransplantation—mechanical assist devices and other alternatives to transplantation. I predict that ISMICS will undergo a similar development, starting as a focused symposium on minimally invasive cardiac surgery but expanding into a surgical society involved in new techniques that span the entire field of cardiac surgery.

Cooperation with Industry

Particularly for a society such as ISMICS, a close cooperation with industry is absolutely essential. Both established and start-up companies should be given the chance to present interesting new technology to the surgical community. ISMICS provides an ideal platform for finding partners in clinical studies and research. At the Fourth Annual Meeting in Munich, Germany, an annual dinner was inaugurated, named “Faculty meets Industry.” During this dinner, the representatives of sponsoring companies and start-up companies meet the Board of Directors and Program Committee of ISMICS. This is not just a social dinner but an active exchange of ideas and suggestions to improve the interactions

Table 1. 2001- 2002 ISMICS Board of Directors

President	Hermann Reichenspurner, MD, PhD
Past President	Michael J. Mack, MD
President Elect	W. Randolph Chitwood, Jr., MD
Secretary	Hani Shennib, MD
Treasurer	Steven R. Gundry, MD
Senior Advisor	Kit V. Arom, MD
<i>Directors</i>	
Didier DeCanniere, MD	Anthony C. DeSouza, MD
James D. Fonger, MD	Robert G. Matheny, MD
Hikaru Matsuda, MD	Friedrich W. Mohr, MD
Jose Navia Sr., MD	Eugene K.W. Sim, MD
Randall K. Wolf, MD	
Editor HS Forum	Mark Levinson, MD

Table 2. ISMICS Medical Specialty Counts

Cardiac Surgeon	194
Cardio-Thoracic/	7
Cardiovascular Surgeon	
Pediatric Cardiac Surgeon	9
Heart Transplant Surgeon	1
General Surgery	1
Anesthesiologist	5
Cardiologist	4
Research Scientist	0

Table 3. ISMICS Members Geographical Breakdown

Argentina	6	Japan	14
Australia	3	Korea	1
Austria	5	Kyrgyzstan	1
Bangladesh	1	Lebanon	1
Belgium	13	Macedonia	1
Brazil	8	Mexico	4
Bulgaria	1	Netherlands	8
Canada	15	New Zealand	1
Chile	3	Norway	1
China	3	Paraguay	1
Colombia	1	Peru	1
Czech Republic	1	Philippines	1
Denmark	2	Poland	8
Dominican Republic	1	Portugal	1
Egypt	3	Qatar	2
England	10	Russia	3
Equador	1	Saudi Arabia	4
Estonia	1	Singapore	1
France	15	Slovenia	1
Germany	26	South Africa	2
Greece	5	South Korea	2
Hong Kong	1	Spain	8
Hungary	1	Sweden	1
India	17	Switzerland	8
Indonesia	1	Taiwan	3
Iran	1	Turkey	9
Ireland	1	United Kingdom	1
Israel	5	United States	344
Italy	9	Wales	1

Table 4. ISMICS Members in the United States

Alabama	5	Missouri	6
Arizona	3	Mississippi	1
California	7	North Carolina	13
Connecticut	4	North Dakota	1
Washington, D.C.	6	Nebraska	5
Delaware	2	New Jersey	10
Florida	26	Nevada	1
Georgia	14	New York	31
Hawaii	2	Ohio	17
Iowa	2	Oklahoma	2
Illinois	17	Oregon	3
Indiana	9	Pennsylvania	22
Kansas	1	South Carolina	1
Kentucky	2	Tennessee	5
Louisiana	3	Texas	24
Massachusetts	15	Virginia	5
Maryland	3	Washington	5
Maine	1	Wisconsin	14
Michigan	2	West Virginia	6
Minnesota	14	Total	344

Table 5. ISMICS Topics

New Techniques in Coronary or Valve Sx
Atrial Ablation and other Arrhythmia Surgery
Congenital Heart Surgery
Computers and Robotics
Facilitated Anastomosis
Surgical Treatment of Heart Failure
Alternative Perfusion Strategies (e.g. MIC-ECC)
Ventricular Assist Devices
Basic Science (e.g. Angiogenesis, Cell Tx)

Table 6. ISMICS Platforms

Annual Scientific Meeting of ISMICS
New: ISMICS Winter Meeting in New Dehli 12/2002
ISMICS Newsletter
Partnership ISMICS – Heart Surgery Forum
Partnership ISMICS – CTS NET
Rapid Communication using the Internet
• www:ISMICS.org
• www:HSForum.org
• www:CTSNET.org

Table 7. ISMICS Program Topics

New Techniques in Coronary Artery and Valve Surgery
High Risk CABG
Computer Assistance and Robotics
Atrial Ablation on- or off-pump
Surgical Treatment of Heart Failure
Congenital Forum
Basic Science
Symposia on Anastomotic Devices and AF Ablation
Debates

Table 8. ISMICS Membership Benefits

Subscription to Heart Surgery Forum
Reduced Annual Meeting Registration Fees
Eligibility to Participate as a Discussant or Moderator at Meetings
Opportunity to Serve on ISMICS Committees
ISMICS Newsletter
International Forum for Networking and Rapid Communication on the Field of New Techniques in Cardiac Surgery

between ISMICS and industry. The results of the annual dinner held in Munich in 2001 are published in the recent ISMICS Newsletter and in *Heart Surgery Forum*. In the future, a closer integration of industry partners into the society is absolutely necessary to promote research and development of new surgical technology.

ISMICS Training and Education

ISMICS provides a variety of training and education opportunities. Each year there is a postgraduate course immediately preceding the annual meeting. This year, an excellent live telesurgery conference was organized by Dr. V.A. Subramanian from Lennox Hill Hospital in New York City. Under the auspices of ISMICS, several resident and fellow training courses have taken place in the past, such as the European training course for minimally invasive cardiac surgery at the European Surgical Institute, Hamburg-Norderstedt, Germany (Course Directors: R. Wolf, S. Schueler, H. Reichenspurner). In the future it will be neces-

sary to expand those training courses to include both virtual training and laboratory animal training. In cooperation with Internet-based communication platforms, such as CTSNet and *Heart Surgery Forum*, teaching programs will be instituted through the World Wide Web. Table 6 (©) describes the current ISMICS platforms. I should also mention that an excellent journal serves as the official publication organ of ISMICS: *Heart Surgery Forum*. This publication is a well established, peer-reviewed journal that has been listed in *Index Medicus*. *Heart Surgery Forum* publishes both original and reviewed articles describing various topics in cardiac surgery. A strong partnership exists between ISMICS, CTSNet, and *Heart Surgery Forum*. I would like to mention that in addition to the annual scientific meeting, there is a newly introduced ISMICS winter meeting that will take place for the first time this year in New Delhi, India, in December 2002 (Course Director: Naresh Trehan, MD).

In June 2002, an excellent annual scientific meeting was organized by the Program Chairs, Drs. H. Shennib and V.A. Subramanian, which took place in the beautiful and impressive New York City. Program topics covered the whole range of new techniques in cardiac surgery (see Table 7, ©). The highlight of the social program was the official reception at the *Museum of Madame Tussaud*.

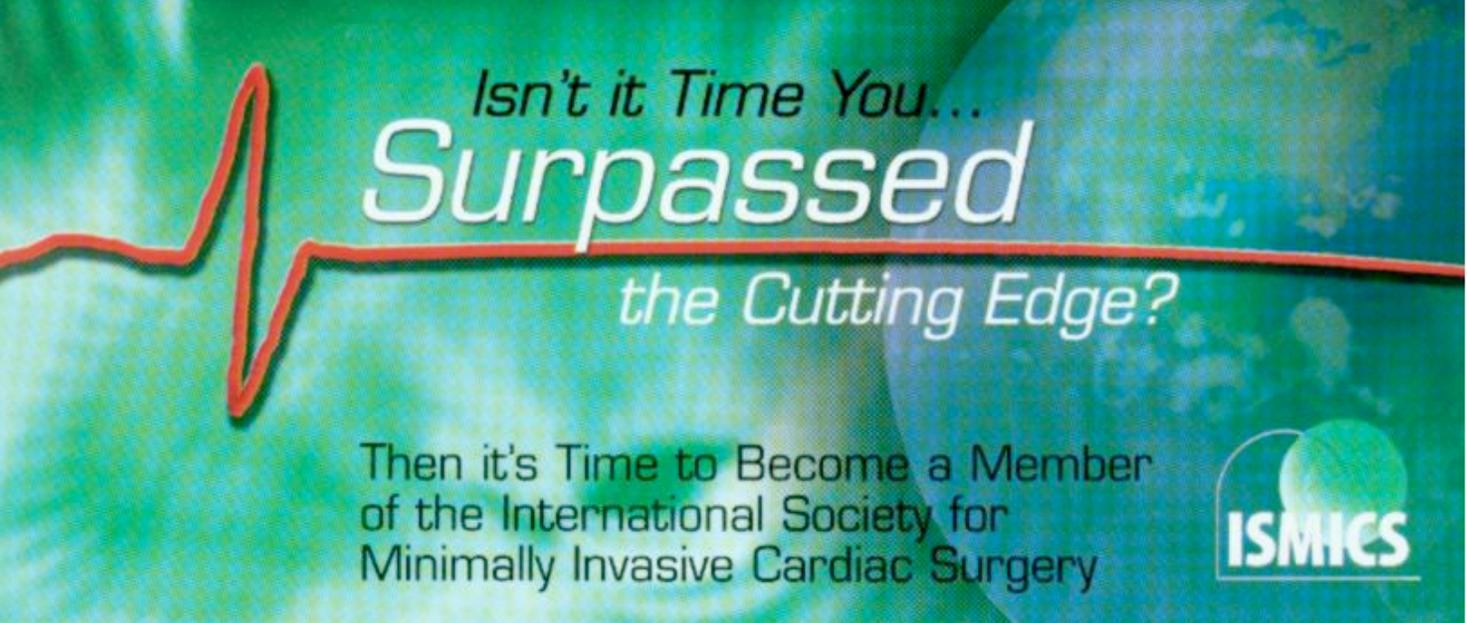
The ISMICS Newsletter is another publication that is distributed every six months to all members. It contains valuable information for members, summarizing the most recent Board meetings and decisions. It also describes upcoming events and the activities of the various committees, which ISMICS members are eligible to join. In addition, the Newsletter publishes highlights of the annual meeting, messages from the President, announcements of award recipients, and other special events, such as the annual “Faculty meets Industry” dinner.

New Membership

Finally, I encourage anybody involved in heart surgery and its related fields to become a new member of this exciting society. The major membership benefits, which are listed in Table 8 (©), include subscription to *Heart Surgery Forum*, eligibility to serve on various ISMICS committees, and the opportunity to participate in an international forum that promotes networking and rapid communication throughout the field of rapidly developing techniques in cardiac surgery. I would like to conclude by directing your attention to our recently adopted logo (Figure 1, ©): *Isn't it time you surpass the cutting edge? – Then it is time to become a member of the International Society for Minimally Invasive Cardiac Surgery.*

It has been an honor and pleasure for me to be President of ISMICS, and I offer my full support to this exciting society for the years to come.





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