

Dr. Patricia L. Roberts
ASCRS Research Foundation Mentor Award – 2010



A mentor is defined as a wise and trusted advisor. According to Greek legend Mentor was a faithful friend of Ulysses, who was the teacher and advisor of Ulysses son, Telemachus, until Ulysses returned from the Trojan War. Since the days of Greek legend, the role of the mentor has held true, and is still a critical component of surgical training, education, and professional development.

As such, Dr. Patricia Roberts is a well deserving recipient of the Mentor Award, chosen by the Young Researchers Committee of the American Society of Colon and Rectal Surgeons Research Foundation.

The eldest of four children, with three younger brothers, Patricia decided at an early age to enter the field of medicine. After high school, she entered Boston University's six year combined program and graduated Magna Cum Laude with a BA and MD degree at the age of 24. She then entered general surgical training at Boston University Medical Center. As a resident she rotated to Lahey Clinic, and met John Coller, Mike Veidenheimer, and former Mentor Award winner and past ASCRS president, David Schoetz. With Mike and Dave serving as her mentors, she chose a career in colon and rectal surgery, and completed her colon and rectal surgery residency and a Pelvic Floor Fellowship at the Lahey Clinic. She then joined the staff in 1987. Pat has worked tirelessly for the Clinic both in steady clinical volume and improving the Clinic's quality. She has served on 32 different hospital committees, including the Clinic's Board of Governors, and was President of the Medical Staff Association. Pat was named Vice Chair of the Department in 2000 and Chairman of the Department of Colon and Rectal Surgery in 2002. Pat's mentorship extends not only to

medical students, general surgery residents, and colon and rectal surgery residents, but also to her department staff. Under her leadership, the department has increased in size to eight staff surgeons, two ET nurses, and three physician extenders.

In addition to her accomplishments at Lahey, she has delivered more than 130 presentations and has authored or coauthored over 150 peer-reviewed articles, reviews, and textbook chapters. She has served on many editorial boards and has played critical roles in the education of students, residents, and practicing surgeons amongst the leading professional societies. For our own Society, amongst her many contributions, she has served as Chairman of the Awards Committee, Standards Committee, Local Arrangements Committee, Program Committee, Self Assessment Committee, and Operative Competency Evaluation Committee. For the American College of Surgeons, she has served on the Pre and Postoperative Care Committee, Chairman of the Postgraduate Course in Colon and Rectal Surgery, the Program Committee, and Chair of the Advisory Council for Colon and Rectal Surgery. Pat has also made significant contributions to the American Board of Colon and Rectal Surgery, where she has served as an Associate Examiner, member of the Maintenance of Certification Committee, prior Chair of the Written Exam Committee, and our current Chair of the Examination Committee. She has been a Board Member since 2002 and is the current President of the ABCRS.

Patricia's role as a mentor has been not only to stimulate the academic and technical proficiencies of her students and residents, but also to exemplify to proper balance we seek in our lives; as surgeon, teacher, mentor, researcher, administrator, and more importantly, as parent and spouse. Nobody is more highly organized or balanced with their time than Patricia Roberts. It is this ability to maintain symmetry amongst all of life's facets that makes her the perfect choice for this Mentor Award. She is already the recipient of numerous teaching awards, including the Tufts University School of Medicine Excellence in Teaching for the surgery clerkship, and the Cornelius E. Sedgwick Mentor Award given by the General Surgery Residents of Lahey Clinic.

On behalf of the Young Researchers Committee of the American Society of Colon and Rectal Surgeons Research Foundation, we are pleased to present the Mentor Award to Dr. Patricia Roberts in recognition of her commitment and dedication to the training and mentoring of young surgeons.

Written by: Dr. Peter Marcello