

ISDE presidential biography: Mark K. Ferguson



Mark K. Ferguson, M.D., served as the 10th President of the ISDE, between the years 2008 and 2010. This culminated many years of active participation and leadership in the organization.

He has presented original material from his own clinical experiences at several meetings and led and participated in many panel discussions. Through these activities he has fulfilled the ISDE's mission to inform and guide international surgeons in our care of patients with both benign and malignant diseases of the esophagus. Mark was not idle during the years between meetings. He was active, presenting his experiences at other society meetings and publishing them in several journals, including the ISDE's *Diseases of the Esophagus*. Not only were these contributions important in their own right, but they kept the ISDE

in the eyes of other surgeons and undoubtedly encouraged them to join and participate in our society.

Prior to becoming President, Dr. Ferguson's leadership was particularly important during his time as Federation Chairman of North America. In addition to participating in society discussions and contributing to decisions determining the functioning of the society and the format of meetings, Dr. Ferguson was a major participant in the development of a new ISDE constitution which established the framework of the society. We were strengthened by this important document.

Other important actions that have impacted the ISDE include helping to design a new logo. This has helped brand the society for others to take note. He encouraged and helped lead the ISDE to transition from a self-managed organization to using a new management group. This brought stability and consistency to our society's management style and has served us well. Another contribution was negotiating a new publishing contract with Oxford University Press (electronic only) to service those who prefer to access the journal in this fashion.

Dr. Ferguson has many individual accomplishments. He has presented material related to surgical treatment of esophageal diseases at both national and international society meetings. This activity has culminated in the publication of more than 200 scientific articles and over 100 book chapters. He has authored and edited several books on multiple topics, including surgical treatment of esophageal diseases. In particular, he was an editor of the manuscripts published in the *Diseases of the Esophagus* volumes which contained the material presented at the Fourth World Congress of the ISDE.

It has been my privilege to know and work with Mark for many years. After Harvard he attended medical school at the University of Chicago, after which he joined the surgical residency. We were residents together and eventually worked together in the Division of Thoracic Surgery at the University of Chicago for several years. I moved on but he has stayed the course, picking up the mantle of esophageal surgery from David Skinner, M.D., the Chairman of the Department and our mentor. He has maintained the Chicago esophageal surgery tradition that goes back to the first successful transthoracic

esophagectomy by Adams and Phemister. I can attest that he is a superior thoracic surgeon and dedicated to the welfare of his patients.

On a personal level, Mark is a man of few words but they always are pertinent and insightful. He harbors a subtle sense of humor, which is frequently deployed when self-importance is detected in his neighborhood. He is well read and has interests outside surgery. Phyllis, his wife, is his delight and a support and partner in all he does. Continuing the Ferguson legacy

at the University of Chicago is his son Ben, who is starting a career in surgical oncology.

I am proud to call Mark Ferguson a friend and am certain that the ISDE is a better and more effective society because of his participation and leadership.

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