

Learning to Care for Those in Harm's Way



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Trauma Surgeon Dr. Mark Bowyer to Receive International Society of Surgery Robert Danis Award

Bethesda, Md. – Retired Air Force trauma surgeon, Mark W. Bowyer, M.D., has been named as the 2017 recipient of the Robert Danis Prize by the International Society of Surgery/Société Internationale de Chirurgie. The Robert Danis Prize is awarded to the surgeon who has made the most important and personal contributions to the fields of trauma, burns or critical care. Bowyer was selected for his life-long endeavors and “broad contributions to the field of trauma covering all aspects from basic and clinical science research to clinical application and futuristic planning,” according to the Society’s announcement.

Bowyer, the Ben Eiseman Professor of Surgery, and surgical director of Simulation in the Division of Trauma and Combat Surgery of the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USU)-Walter Reed National Military Medical Center (WRNMMC) Department of Surgery, spent more than 22 years as an Air Force trauma and combat surgeon. He has taught trauma skills to thousands of medical students and physicians around the world over the past three decades and is one of the principal architects of the Advanced Surgical Skills for Exposures in Trauma course that has been shared in more than 100 course sites in 11 countries in the last six years. Bowyer served as the Air Force’s “trauma czar” while deployed to Iraq, where he directed and coordinated all the care for combat trauma patients.

Bowyer is an active member of the American College of Surgeons, where he serves as chair of the Surgical Skills Committee of the Committee on Trauma and is actively involved in resident education. He also serves as the surgical director of USU’s Val G. Hemming Simulation Center, where he has been on the forefront of adopting the use of surgical simulators as a replacement for animals in the teaching of advanced trauma and acute care surgical skills, and works to develop and validate augmented and virtual reality as well as trauma, laparoscopic, acute care surgical, triage and critical care-based simulators. Bowyer is currently working on simulation projects to improve patient safety.

“Dr. Bowyer has been at the forefront of surgical and trauma education for the past decade. Built on his experience as a military trauma surgeon and medical educator, he has introduced skills-based assessment into the lifecycle training of surgeons. This has already had a significant impact in saving lives both on and off the battlefield, and will transform surgical education at all levels,” said Navy Capt. (Dr.) Eric Elster, professor and chair of the USU-Walter Reed Department of Surgery.

"I am humbled to accept this award on behalf of, and as a validation of the efforts of our team at USU and the entire Defense health care system, to ensure that the hard lessons learned from the care of combat casualties are not forgotten, and are used to better prepare surgeons around the world to care for all victims of trauma and conflict," said Bowyer.

Bowyer will be presented with the award at the Society's International Surgical Week in Basel, Switzerland, in August.

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About the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences

The Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences, founded by an act of Congress in 1972, is the nation's federal health sciences university and the academic heart of the Military Health System. USU students are primarily active duty uniformed officers in the Army, Navy, Air Force and Public Health Service who receive specialized education in tropical and infectious diseases, TBI and PTSD, disaster response and humanitarian assistance, global health, and acute trauma care. A large percentage of the university's more than 5,200 physician and 1,000 advanced practice nursing alumni are supporting operations around the world, offering their leadership and expertise. USU also has graduate programs in biomedical sciences and public health committed to excellence in research, and in oral biology. The University's research program covers a wide range of clinical and other topics important to both the military and public health. For more information about USU and its programs, visit www.usuhs.edu.