



## Women in IR news

Spring 2021

### WIR at SIR 2021 Annual Scientific Meeting

On March 21, 2021, educators in IR came together to discuss the state of women in IR as part of the SIR 2021 Annual Scientific Meeting. Despite the challenges of virtual interactions this year, presenters capitalized on the opportunity to capture an audience and inspire them to take on the challenge of succeeding in a male-dominated specialty. Several outstanding presenters spoke on their experiences in leading and diversifying radiology, contributing to the overall inspirational energy of the session.

A team of volunteers, led by Paula Novelli, MD, FSIR and Daniel B. Brown, MD, FSIR, developed fantastic programming to highlight some of the most pressing and actionable points affecting the professional engagement of women in IR. This included the “gender gap” within IR as well as some of the barriers women face as IRs, including finding mentorship, interacting with other colleagues, and navigating cultural and generational differences. “We certainly recognize that issues of gender equity, diversity, inclusion, and wellness in healthcare and in the workplace resonate with many. We want to encourage and support more women training in IR and hope that we answered questions so others recognize how rewarding our role can be in a traditionally male-dominated field,” said Dr. Novelli of the program.

While accepting the inaugural Women in IR Champion Award, Meridith J. Englander, MD, FSIR, said, “It really takes a village to accomplish what we’ve done,” emphasizing the importance of support in success. She went on to discuss the challenges she faced when entering the specialty as a young woman with uncertainty about career trajectory and radiation safety. She recalled the early beginnings of the Women in IR Section and emphasized persistence saying, “Giving us an opportunity does not take away their opportunity,” pushing for professional equity alongside the support of male colleagues. During her *Women in IR InspiRed* lecture, Geraldine McGinty, MD, discussed “being a first” and cited important leadership lessons. “We have to get more comfortable talking about our ambitions and having it be okay for us to be ambitious,” she says – words to recall in pushing past boundaries and championing success for all women in IR.

### Alda L. Tam, MD, FSIR

Dr. Alda Tam is a practicing interventional radiologist at MD Anderson with a focus on interventional oncology with outside interests in international travel, reading, and constantly being exposed to new ideas and ways of doing things. Her passion for learning from different industries and sectors helps her to continuously improve her own practice and patient care. Dr. Tam has had many influential mentors in her career, including M. Victoria Marx, MD, FSIR, and Sue E. Hanks, MD, FSIR, during her residency at the

University of Southern California, who showed her how interventional radiology was a fun, exciting and impactful service that provided meaningful care for patients.

Most importantly, she realized the interventional radiologists she worked with as a trainee were people she could see herself working with for the rest of her career. When asked about advice she would give to her younger self, Dr. Tam responded, “Early on in your career, it’s important to always be open to opportunities; don’t immediately discount or say no to something that you’ve never considered before.”

### Notes from WIR leadership

*SIR 2021 marked the beginning of a new year for many of SIR’s volunteer groups, including Women in IR. As the leadership of the Women in IR Governing Council, we’re excited about several new and continuing initiatives within the section! This newsletter, of course, is one – published quarterly to inform and update our members. Our webinar series will be returning later this year with topics including women in research and male sponsorship of women. We have several updates coming to the Women in IR webpage, and we’ll soon be opening the nomination period for the 2022 WIR Champion Award. Finally, this fall, we’ll begin a new program – the Dream Big Book Club, geared toward midcareer women looking to grow in the profession. During the first meeting, on Sept. 14, we’ll discuss *You<sup>2</sup> by Price Pritchett*. Throughout the series, we’ll engage with leaders and authors about reaching your full potential. Look for the full announcement on SIR Connect in the next few weeks!*

*None of this would be possible without our dedicated volunteers – amazing people who have stepped up to contribute to projects, add to the discussion and lead workgroups within the Governing Council. We know, with this team, we’ll accomplish so much in the next year.*

### Upcoming events

- Mid-June: WIR Award nominations open
- June 17: SIR Stroke Case Conference
- Sept. 10–11: RISQCS Symposium
- Sept. 14: Dream Big Book Club begins

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