

FELLOWS' FOCUS

RETINA FELLOWS FORUM 2019: KEYNOTE LECTURE



A brief recap of the keynote lecture from Stanley Chang, MD, at the 19th Annual Retina Fellows Forum.

BY DURGA BORKAR, MD; PHILIP STOREY, MD, MPH; AND DANIEL SU, MD

In January 2019, all second-year vitreoretinal fellows were invited to the 19th Annual Fellows Forum in Chicago. The two-day program was packed with panel discussions and lectures from leaders in our field on topics ranging from genetics in neovascular age-related macular degeneration to negotiating your first contract. One of the highlights of the program was the keynote lecture delivered by Stanley Chang, MD, the K.K. Tse and Ku Teh Ying Professor of Ophthalmology at Columbia University Medical Center.

While introducing Dr. Chang's keynote lecture, Tarek Hassan, MD, highlighted the many things that Dr. Chang has achieved over the course of his career as a master clinician, researcher, educator, and surgeon. Dr. Hassan noted the revolutionary impact that Dr. Chang has had on the field of retina, from teaching so much about repairing complex retinal detachments with gas and other tamponades to, of course, the development of perfluorocarbon liquid. Dr. Hassan also spoke about Dr. Chang's involvement at the forefront of bringing widefield viewing to retina.

Dr. Chang's lecture covered a wide range of topics, including the mentors who helped shape him as a retina specialist; the paths that led to his many discoveries in vitreoretinal surgery; and the importance of cultivating strong relationships with family, friends, and colleagues. Here, we recap some of the things that stuck with us from his talk.

—Durga Borkar, MD; Philip Storey, MD, MPH; and Daniel Su, MD

One of the main topics highlighted by Stanley Chang, MD, during his lecture was the path to the discovery of perfluorocarbon liquid. He noted that his interest in the mechanics of vitreoretinal

surgery began, at a basic level, at a very young age. He also spoke about the important role that his father played in his developing an interest in engineering. His father was an engineer who emigrated from China and passed on

many of his interests to his children. Dr. Chang emphasized the role of his mentors while he was a resident at Massachusetts Eye and Ear in Boston and a fellow at the Bascom Palmer Eye Institute in Miami.



Stanley Chang, MD, giving his keynote lecture at the 19th Annual Fellows' Forum in Chicago.

DEVELOPING A STAPLE IN VITREORETINAL SURGERY

Dr. Chang said that when he was a young surgeon, he and his colleagues were assigned some of the hardest cases, particularly recurrent detachments in the presence of advanced proliferative vitreoretinopathy. Being assigned these difficult cases pushed Dr. Chang to think outside the box.

Although he acknowledged that Leland Clark, PhD, initially presented the use of perfluorocarbon liquids, Dr. Chang detailed his own quest with Dr. Clark and a large team to investigate the use of perfluorocarbon liquid in retinal surgery. He described the many years he spent working with basic scientists and biologists to conduct animal studies to investigate whether these heavy-weight liquids could flatten retinal detachments. And they could. After many years of experiments, Dr. Chang was able to use perfluorocarbon liquid in a human, to patent perfluorocarbon liquid, and to disseminate its use to many. It has since become a staple in retinal detachment surgery.

THE IMPORTANCE OF RELATIONSHIPS

Throughout his lecture, Dr. Chang emphasized that none of his accomplishments would have been possible without

AT A GLANCE

- They keynote lecture at the 19th Annual Retina Fellows Forum in January was delivered by Stanley Chang, MD.
- Dr. Chang spoke of the importance of balancing scientific advancement with professional collegiality and focused on the mentors who influenced his life.

both his colleagues and his patients. Relationships with these people taught him the importance of collaboration and collegiality. From the beginning to the end of his talk, Dr. Chang focused on the retina subspecialists who shaped his career, both as friends and mentors, and he concluded with a reminder that being collegial and cultivating good relationships with your colleagues is just as important for your own career enjoyment as it is for theirs. He cautioned the next generation of retina subspecialists not to allow medical collegiality to fade.

LEARNING FROM A GIANT

Having the chance to hear Dr. Chang's lecture was an unparalleled opportunity for the newest generation of retina specialists to hear life lessons and wisdom from a true giant in vitreoretinal surgery. ■

SECTION EDITOR DURGA BORKAR, MD

- Second-year Vitreoretinal Surgery Fellow, Wills Eye Hospital, Philadelphia
- dborkar@midatlanticretina.com
- Financial disclosure: None

SECTION EDITOR PHILIP STOREY, MD, MPH

- Second-year Vitreoretinal Surgery Fellow, Wills Eye Hospital, Philadelphia
- pstorey@midatlanticretina.com
- Financial disclosure: None

SECTION EDITOR DANIEL SU, MD

- Second-year Vitreoretinal Surgery Fellow, Wills Eye Hospital, Philadelphia
- dsu@midatlanticretina.com
- Financial disclosure: None

DON'T MISS OUT ON THE 20TH ANNUAL RETINA FELLOWS FORUM: JANUARY 24-25, 2020

The 20th Annual Retina Fellows Forum will take place next year in Chicago from January 24-25. All second-year vitreoretinal fellows will be invited to join their colleagues and the course director, Tarek Hassan, MD, and co-directors, Carl C. Awh, MD, and David R. Chow, MD, to discuss the medical and surgical situations frequently encountered in clinical practice and to gain practice management pearls and career advice in an open and professional environment. We hope to see you there!

—Tarek Hassan, MD