

FOUNDATION

AWS Foundation Visiting Professor Program Visiting Professor Application Form

If you are interested in representing the AWS Foundation as a Visiting Professor, please complete this application and return it to the AWS Foundation Office. Applications must be submitted electronically as one PDF document to Info@WomenSurgeons.org by **April 10, 2010**. Selection will be made by May 1, 2010. The application process is open to full members of the Association of Women Surgeons in good standing and in active practice in the United States or Canada.

Name	Catherine Marie Wittgen MD
Academic Institution/ Office Name	Saint Louis University
Address	3635 Vista at Grand Avenue PO Box 15250
City	Saint Louis
State	MO
Postal/Zip Code	63110
Phone	314-577-8310
Fax	314-577-8635
Email	wittgenc@slu.edu

Please provide the following information.

1. Topics for lectures/areas of expertise (list in priority order):

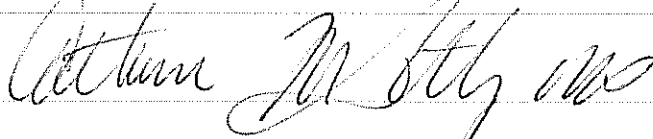
A.	The Impact of Gender on Professionalism and Interpersonal Skills
B.	Cardiovascular Risk Factors and Operative Outcomes for Women
C.	Anterior Approaches to the Spine
D.	Vascular Physiology

2. Attach a bio-sketch not to exceed three pages in length.
3. Attach a personal statement that outlines what your goals would be as the AWS Visiting Professor, your philosophy of surgical education and your efforts to promote women in surgery.
4. Include information about your involvement in AWS. (*Volunteer positions, leadership, etc.*)
5. Please attach a scanned letter of recommendation attesting to your leadership and teaching ability.

Submission Instruction

- Applications must be submitted electronically as one PDF document to Info@WomenSurgeons.org by April 1, 2010.
- Your file should be named as follows: Your last name, followed by VP2010.doc (Example: Smith VP2010.doc.)
- If you have difficulty submitted your application electronically, please contact the AWS Office by phone or email listed below.

I understand my responsibilities as outlined on page one of this application and would be pleased to be the AWS Foundation's Visiting Professor.

Date	4/5/10	Signature (Scanned is Acceptable)	
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Catherine Marie Wittgen, MD
Short biography

Dr. Catherine Wittgen received her undergraduate degree from St. Louis University summa cum laude and was a member of the original class of Scholars in Medicine. She received her medical degree from St. Louis University School of Medicine magna cum laude. She is a member of Phi Beta Kappa and Alpha Omega Alpha.

She completed her internship and residency and served as Chief resident at St. Louis University. Following her general surgery training she completed fellowships in Surgical Critical Care at the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis and in Peripheral Vascular Surgery at Massachusetts General Hospital/Harvard University in Boston, Massachusetts. She is certified by the American Board of Surgery in 3 specialties: General surgery, Surgical Critical Care and Vascular Surgery.

Dr. Wittgen is a tenured Professor of Surgery, Director for Surgical Critical Care, and the Associate Program Director for General Surgery at St Louis University in St. Louis Missouri. In 2002, she received the Ambassador's Club Award for Outstanding Patient Care and was voted Physician of the Year at Saint Louis University. In 2004, she was nominated for Woman of the Year at Saint Louis University and received the Vallee L Willman award for excellence in surgical education. In 2009, she was recognized by the American Medical Association as a physician mentor and received the MDX Medical Patient Choice Award.

While responsible for the training of medical students, residents and allied health professionals, she maintains an active clinical practice and performs over 400 vascular and endovascular procedures annually.

She has participated in over 20 clinical trials in the areas of critical care and vascular surgery. She is a member of the writing committee for SESAP for the American College of Surgeons. She is a frequent lecturer in the St Louis University School of Medicine and has given over 200 invited presentations nationwide.

She is married to David William Horan MD JD and has 4 children.

Catherine Marie Wittgen MD
Personal Statement

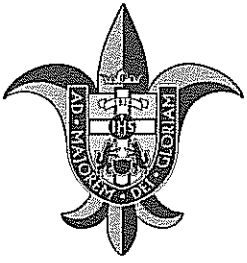
My goal as a Visiting Professor is to continue the fundamental mission of the Association of Women Surgeons. Women are critically involved in many different roles in the field of surgery and every time one of us is seen, we have an enormous impact just by our physical presence. I have been a member of the organization since 1998. While I have not been active on committees or volunteering with the organization, I've considered myself a representative at my local level.

As a child, my father took me with him to national Orthopedic Surgery meetings. He was always quick to point out Lorraine Day MD whenever she was in an exhibition hall. He didn't know her, and I never met her. He would, however, make certain I noticed her and told me not to let being a girl have any influence on what I chose to do. She was proof it could be done. In my adolescent wisdom, I kept pointing out to him that it was nice to see her with her long blond hair and sling back pumps but the very fact that she was always the only woman at these meetings was very discouraging. My Dad's answer was always the same. He'd tell me that by the time I was a surgeon, there would be more.

I have experienced training in Departments where there was only female faculty member. I have been the only female resident, fellow and on occasion, faculty member. I have been Lorraine Day for some of these periods. I have also learned with many activities, gender just doesn't matter. Simultaneously, I also discovered that being a female presence in surgery did matter a very great deal to the female residents and students who were watching me when I wasn't aware.

Recognizing the importance of this visibility was part of the reason I designed a surgical elective with gender in mind. Since we all recognize that gender has its obvious differences, it makes inherent sense that these attributes would extend to patient care as well. I designed a phase 3 and 4 elective for medical students entitled "Women in Surgery". The "woman" part was not a requirement for the student, but a requirement for the faculty mentor for the rotation. It was designed as a true mentorship between one student and faculty member. It provided a great opportunity for a true view of a surgeon's life (who happened to be female) and gave more faculty contact than any other elective. Much of the last week of the rotation involved discussion of the student's perception of female attending surgeons interacting with other professionals and patients, and asking how the student's perceived an operation when a female or male surgeon was at work. I've learned that there are more differences than I was ever aware of but, more importantly, many of them are very positive. It has been tremendously popular with both male and female students.

This experience has made me change the way I teach. I've learned that the idea that equality means identical is ridiculous. Standards should be set for patient care and professional behavior but recognizing differences in approaches based on gender differences has a positive not negative impact on these goals. I think every time a female surgeon performs an operation, stands before a podium or mentors a student, she is by definition embodying this concept, and whether she is aware of it or not, she is a representative of the Association of Women Surgeons.



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SAINT LOUIS
UNIVERSITY

Health Sciences Center
School of Medicine

Department of Surgery

Robert G. Johnson, M.D.
C. Rollins Hanlon Professor
Chairman

April 5, 2010

Association of Women Surgeons Foundation
5204 Fairmount Avenue
Downers Grove, IL 60515

RE: Catherine M. Wittgen, M.D.

Dear Colleague,

It is with great pleasure that I write to recommend Dr. Catherine M. Wittgen for the AWS Foundation visiting professorship. As you have her *curriculum vitae* available to you, I need not recount in too much detail the many qualifications and achievements that qualify her. Suffice it to say she is a member of Phi Beta Kappa, Alpha Omega Alpha and holds board certification in general surgery, critical care and vascular surgery. She was promoted to professor of surgery at Saint Louis University last year.

While these facts, and many others you have before you, distinguish her, even more impressive are her teaching and leadership skills. I have known Catherine just over a decade now and she is without doubt one of the best teachers in the department. She not only provides formal, interactive lectures with our medical students on the core surgical rotation, she is very frequently sought out by them as a Mentor and advisor with their career planning. She serves as the Associate Program Director of our general surgery training program and the Program Director for the critical care surgery training program. As such she is intimately involved meeting and surpassing the accreditation requirements for these important resident-education programs. Several years ago she created an elective for our women students interested in surgical careers. While this elective has been well-subscribed even more impressive are the number of young women who have chosen to enter surgical residencies following her mentoring and superb role modeling.

As a leader Dr. Wittgen combines well the rigor and intentioned-effort of a surgeon, but also the collaboration and wisdom of a seasoned negotiator. When there are particularly thorny problems to be solved among colleagues of the same specialty or in a multidisciplinary realm, Catherine is the one to whom I turn to for *ad hoc* leadership. In developing ventilator weaning protocols, to redesigning ever contentious resident rotations, she is able to deliver structurally sound plans that enjoy the support of those party to the process and those affected by the change.

In short, from data you already have available and from my own personal assessment of her teaching and leadership activities, you can see, I hope, that Dr. Catherine Wittgen is very much the “old school” academic surgery quadruple threat. She is a superb clinician, and outstanding educator, a consistent researcher and a talented leader. A wife and mother as well, she does appear to effortlessly “do it all.” As I review the list of prior AWS visiting professors, I am privileged to know several of them, and, it is perhaps the highest praise I can offer that I believe Dr. Wittgen would fit nicely among these distinguished surgeon-predecessors.

With appreciation for the opportunity of making this recommendation, I am,

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert G. Johnson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Robert G. Johnson, M.D.
C. Rollins Hanlon Professor and Chairman
Department of Surgery

RGJ/ee/rah