

Walter Spohn Educational Fund (WSEF)

Our Story . . .

The WSEF was established in 2003 to provide financial support to individuals initiating educational and research projects to advance the field of Anaplastology. It was named after Walter Spohn, whose enthusiasm for his profession and passion to share his knowledge with others lead to the founding of the International Anaplastology Association in 1980.

Our Mission

- to advance clinical and practical education and scientific research in support of patient care in the field of anaplastology

Our Vision

- to be recognized as an important source for funding life-long learning in the field of Anaplastology
- to form partnerships with business, industry, health education organizations and health care institutions; these partners will help promote our mission to a wider range of private/public donors

Our Values

- to seek excellence and be committed to continuous improvement in all our endeavors

Funding

The WSEF receives funding from the Walter Spohn Memorial fundraising events held during the International Anaplastology Association's (IAA) annual meeting, corporate and institutional donations, private donations from IAA members, special gifts from grateful recipients of prosthetic care and the general public.

Donations made to the Vesalius Trust a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation are tax-deductible. Please make checks payable to and mail to:

Vesalius Trust c/o WSEF
20751 West Chartwell Drive
Kildeer, Illinois 60047
847/540-8671
email: vesaliustrust@aol.com
website: <http://www.vesaliustrust.org/>

Award, Scholarship, Grant Activity

Awards from the WSEF will address the categories outlined in the mission statement: education, research and patient care.

The History of the Walter Spohn Educational Fund (WSEF)

Born on June 5, 1914 in Reutlingen Germany, Walter Spohn immigrated to the United States in 1928. Spohn worked as part of a US Army Dental Corps team to develop methods of fabricating artificial eyes from plastic - methyl methacrylate. Spohn's career as an ocularist was typical of many twentieth-century practitioners who loved their work, experimented with their craft, and questioned the structure of the profession.

The VA established the restoration program in the beginning of 1946 when it was confronted with the need to furnish plastic eyes and other anatomical restorations for a large number of disfigured and disabled veterans returning from WWII. To meet this need, the VA embarked upon a restoration program by establishing 15 clinics throughout the US. Since no formal training was available from any other source, Spohn helped develop and establish these restorative training programs, "establishing the Anaplastologist as a member of the medical treatment team at the professional level within the VA."

After 30 years, he retired from the VA hospital in San Francisco and went immediately to work full time for Professors Laub and Vistnes in the Department of Plastic Surgery at Stanford University Medical Center in Palo Alto California. There he continued to seek new techniques to aid the wounded soldiers returning from Vietnam with large facial defects. It was at Stanford that Walter Spohn's dedication to the needs of patients was expanded to include passing on his knowledge and expertise to others. Stanford welcomed the idea of a two-year undergraduate Anaplastology program with Spohn as the Director. The entrance requirements were strict and selective as were the graduation requirements for an Associate of Science degree.

In 1980 Spohn started the Anaplastology Association with the financial help of Robert Levy, an optometrist/ocularist. The mission of the IAA is to promote quality patient care by supporting the development of best practices in anaplastology through educational conferences, networking, publication, and advocacy opportunities. An often-asked question is: who created this word. . ana-plast-ology, what does it mean and when was the term first used. Spohn created the word to reflect expanded career and academic opportunities for the individual doing not just one type but also many types of restorative prosthetics

WSEF Committee

The WSEF Committee has a chair, co-chair and three subcommittees: fundraising, education and communications. Active and Emeritus IAA members work on these committees on a volunteer basis.

Vesalius Trust advisors on behalf of the WSEF:

Gillian F. Duncan, Chair

Barbara Spohn-Lillo, Co-Chair, Fund Raising