Leadership in Neurosurgery

Gregory R. Trost, MD
Professor
Neurological Surgery
University of Wisconsin-Madison
Madison, WI
USA

Introduction

• Neurosurgery has been a male dominated field
• More than 50% of US medical graduates are women
• Neurosurgery requires the best and the brightest
• Training demands competence, hard work, dedication, inquiry, and commitment to continual improvement
Introduction

- Not unique to Neurosurgery - G. Surge 30%, Orthopedics less than 1%
- In 2008 5.9% of practicing neurosurgeons are women
- From 1990-2003 only 0.2% of female medical school graduates chose neurosurgery

Obstacles

- Mentoring and role models are important factors in career choice
- Exposure to neurosurgery in medical schools is limited
- Long work hours, training length, and risk of litigation are general recruitment impediments
- Few women in leadership roles

Obstacles

- Gender inequity
- Sexual harassment
- Residency attrition rates
Strategic Approach

- Characterize the barriers
- Identify and eliminate discriminatory practices
- Promote competent women into leadership roles
- Foster the development of female role models and mentors

Lt Commander
Jean Marie Sullivan

- Fake it until you make it
- Be in charge
- Be yourself
- Supportive father, ... or a mother who's stronger than their father and supports their ambition