

Private Practices Rally Behind R&E Foundation

Four private practice radiology groups are taking advantage of a new giving opportunity with the RSNA Research & Education Foundation.

The Foundation has launched the Visionaries in Practice (VIP) program, which allows group practices to donate to the Foundation on an annual basis.

“Not a day goes by that the radiologists in our practice are not using imaging techniques and new technologies that have been developed through supported research,” said William T. Thorwarth Jr., M.D., chairman of the Foundation’s VIP program subcommittee and a radiologist at Catawba Radiological Associates in Hickory, N.C. “My colleagues and I at Catawba Radiological Associates recognize that supporting research and education is critical not only to the future of our profession but also to the prosperity of our practice. That’s why we’ve pledged \$25,000 annually to the Foundation.”

The very first contribution to the VIP program came from Austin Radiological Association with 14 imaging centers in the Austin, Texas area. The group gave \$75,000 to the Foundation.

“Austin Radiological Association has a commitment to innovation of new technology in imaging and intervention,” explained Gregory C. Karnaze, M.D., one of about 63 radiologists in the group. “A contribution to the RSNA R&E Foundation supports research to develop further enhancements in our field. It is extremely important that research in imaging be performed by radiologists; otherwise, other medical specialties will perform more imaging research in their localized areas of interest resulting in fragmentation of imaging research and possibly of professional interpretations.”

To further show their support for RSNA and for the R&E Foundation, Austin Radiologic Association has posted the VIP logo on their Web site, along with a link to *RadiologyInfo.org*, the patient-information Web site created by RSNA and the American College of Radiology.

Dr. Karnaze said he and his colleagues realize that their investment in the Foundation is an investment in their practice.

“Development of newer imaging modalities and expansion of their indications and uses has been the driving force behind radiology’s growth into one of the most dynamic and important specialties in all of medicine. Since December our group has been offering CT coronary angiography in an outpatient

imaging center with a 64-slice CT,” he explained. “Radiologists need to continue to develop diagnostic studies and procedures such as this. It requires research funding to keep the process moving forward for the benefit of our patients, our medical colleagues and our own radiology practices.”

Geoffrey G. Smith, M.D., from Casper Medical Imaging, P.C. in Casper, Wyoming, echoed his sentiments. Dr. Smith and his colleagues gave \$25,000 to the Foundation.

“Medical imaging as we know it would not exist if not for the pioneers who discover and develop new technology, and the educators who guide us in its proper application,” Dr. Smith said. “The active support of the 'private practice' community is paramount in ensuring our own future and ongoing success. We are happy that leadership of the Foundation provided a simple pathway for our group to begin participating.”

Michael N. Brant-Zawadzki, M.D., brings a unique perspective the situation. After spending time in academia, Dr. Brant-Zawadzki joined Hoag Memorial Hospital and Newport Harbor Radiology Associates in Newport Beach, Calif.

“When I first joined my private practice partners, I was able to actually see the research and educational components of what I used to do being applied in the practice setting by my new partners. The tools that my former colleagues developed in the clinical and basic research areas of radiology were actually being converted before my very eyes into routine clinical practice,” he said.

After the VIP program was launched, Dr. Brant-Zawadzki easily convinced his colleagues to become members. “Research validates radiology as a complete medical specialty,” he said. “It provides the basis for new developments in the field, fosters the crucial concept of continuous learning among all radiologists, and promotes the field of radiology to the public as a dynamic, innovative and unique medical specialty.”

The R&E Foundation Board of Trustees and members of the VIP subcommittee are hoping that more private practice radiologists will “step up to the plate” and invest in their practice by investing in research.

“The groups doing research are the ‘R&D’ department for our practice and the educational programs are the ‘farm teams’ that develop our future partners,” Dr. Thorwarth said. “Becoming a member of the VIP program is to the benefit of the patients we serve and the physicians who care for them.”

Dr. Karnaze recommends that all private practice radiology groups become VIP members. “Medical imaging is a crucial part of diagnosing and treating medical conditions. In many cases, it sets the whole process into motion,” he said. “Each new advancement in this specialty provides an opportunity to address conditions more expediently and effectively. The future of healthcare will be significantly affected by the future of medical imaging.”

Dr. Smith agreed, “Participating in the RSNA Research & Education Foundation today is an excellent way that private practitioners can help their patients and themselves tomorrow.”

Callout:

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—William T. Thorwarth Jr., M.D.

RSNA Visionaries in Practice

Platinum Level – \$75,000 annually

Gold Level – \$50,000 annually

Silver Level – \$25,000 annually

Bronze Level – \$10,000 annually

For more information about the VIP program and its member benefits, go to RSNA.org/Foundation/donation/vip.cfm or contact Susan Thomas, M.A., director of the RSNA R&E Foundation at (1-630) 571-7810 or at stthomas@rsna.org.