

*Only all of us will  
define our future*

*Committees and special initiatives*

*The Society addresses the education of physicians interested in the care of women. Over the years initiatives were created such as the STD Committee, which was established in 1985, to keep members abreast of the latest information concerning STD's. More recently, committees were formed to address issues of relevance to the practicing physician including medical liability insurance, reimbursement, and the closing of maternity services in Philadelphia.*

*The Obstetrical Society of Philadelphia is a conduit to stay in touch with our colleagues, network with area clinicians and specialists, learn about new technologies and clinical advances, and exchange ideas to resolve crises unique to our area.*



*The mission, vision, goals and plans  
of our profession depend on you.*



*PLEASE JOIN US AND SEND YOUR  
APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP TO:*

*OBSTETRICAL SOCIETY OF PHILADELPHIA  
308 ROLLING CREEK ROAD  
SWARTHMORE, PA 19081*

*Tel: (484) 716-8909  
info@obsociety.org  
or apply online at:  
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THE OBSTETRICAL SOCIETY OF

*Philadelphia*



Professional Development  
Collegial Relationships  
Advocacy and Leadership

Devoted to the  
excellence and  
education in the health  
of women since 1868



[www.obsociety.org](http://www.obsociety.org)

# Our Mission

The Obstetrical Society of Philadelphia is an educational organization for “town and gown” obstetricians and gynecologists, residents in training, medical students and all practitioners with an interest in women’s health. Members of the Society represent three states: Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Delaware. Members include faculty from nine different medical schools. Membership is open to all physicians who have an interest in “diseases and problems peculiar to women”.

## History of the Society

The first obstetrical society in Philadelphia was an informal organization started by Dr. Joseph Warrington in the 1840s. It disappeared with his death. The resulting professional void was filled when nine clinicians came together on a June afternoon in 1868 in the office of Albert Holmes Smith, a young and remarkable Quaker physician who had been trained by Dr. Warrington. The Obstetrical Society of Philadelphia was officially incorporated in 1877.

The first president, Francis Gurney Smith was a medical generalist who founded the first physiology laboratory at the University of Pennsylvania’s School of Medicine. Dr. William Goodell one of the more academically prominent founders of the Society and the first Clinical Professor of Gynecology at the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine “did not tolerate” women physicians; he felt that “the presence of women would stifle discussion”. Dr. Smith was their champion. The pioneering work of the female professors at the Women’s Medical College was read before the Society, and then pushed to publication by Dr. Smith. Long after he died women physicians were finally admitted to Society membership. Dr. Marie K. Formad was the first female member of the Society.

Originally the Society met monthly at the College of Physicians of Philadelphia, to review “the diseases and problems peculiar to women.” The 9 p.m. Black tie affairs featured case presentations and coroner’s autopsy specimens, followed by arguments and discussion. This format gradually gave way to special symposia, conferences, and lectures. The Society now hosts dinner events from October through May each year. The last event is the President’s Night and past presidents attend in traditional formal attire to honor the successful year of the current president and to welcome the president elect.

## The J. Robert Willson Award

The Willson award named for Dr. J. Robert Willson for his contributions to the society and the Philadelphia community in women’s health, is the highest honor given by the society to local members. It is decided upon by the past 3 presidents to honor a deserving member.



## Library and Archives

The Obstetrical Society maintains a library and archives dating back to the inception of the Society. When Dr. Lewis P. Sheffey was president of the Society, the archival material in his possession was placed in the historical collection of the College of Physicians of Philadelphia. Current minutes, ephemera and memorabilia are held by the Society historian prior to adding it to the College holdings. Our famous Parry Library is on permanent loan to the College.

## The “Book”

Members of the society upon successful introduction to the society are invited to sign the “book” This honor has been in place since the beginning of the society and the Book houses many historic and important individual signatures. The “Book” is maintained by the secretary of the Society.

## Monthly Dinner Meetings

Dinner meetings are designed to facilitate education and exchange of ideas among colleagues. The meetings are typically held on the 2nd Thursday of the month, October through May. The evening begins with “cocktails” starting at 5:30 PM followed by dinner. The lecture usually begins at about 7 PM. The speakers represent a diverse array of expertise. The Society hosts joint meetings with other specialty societies in the Philadelphia area including the Philadelphia Area Reproductive Endocrine Society, the Philadelphia Perinatal Society, the Interventional Radiology Society and the Philadelphia Colposcopic Society.

## Residents Education

The Society is committed to the education of residents in Obstetrics and Gynecology with programs designed for this purpose. Residents and students are welcome to attend our dinner meetings and special events hosted by the society.

## Residents Education Day

The Society Resident Education Day, is a day of lectures and workshops devoted to the education of residents from the tri-state area, and was first introduced in 1967. It occurs after the President’s night. Recent topics featured a mock medical liability trial with a mock jury “Minimally Invasive Surgery,” with hands-on training, and “Career Development for Ob/Gyn Residents: Filling in the Gaps.”

## Resident’s Bowl

A resident competition, “The Ob/G Resident Bowl” was introduced in 1977 and is an exciting high point of the Resident Education Day. Residents from all the area programs compete by taking a written quiz in the morning of Resident Education Day. The six highest scoring residents compete in the finals, which has an oral quiz format. The winner’s name and training institution are inscribed on a silver bowl and receives a financial award.

## The S. Leon Israel Award

This award was established to honor the distinguished former Chair of Obstetrics and Gynecology at Pennsylvania Hospital, Dr. S. Leon Israel. Residents from area programs submit manuscripts of their research for review. The Society Council selects the best of these submissions. The winner receives special recognition and a financial prize and gives a 10-minute oral presentation at Resident Education Day.

## Obstetrical Society Newsletter

The Obstetrical Society has a Newsletter published regularly. Started as an informal typewritten sheet over the years it has expanded to be an informational document including summaries of the prior lecture, information about upcoming Society events, editorial commentary, reviews of controversial topics and a classified section. Current and archived Newsletters are available on our web site