

Latin American Federation of Neurosurgical Societies (FLANC) Young Neurosurgeons Report 2019-2021

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The Latin American Congress of Neurosurgery (CLAN) held in Santa Cruz, Bolivia, witnessed my appointment as President of the Young Neurosurgeons chapter of the Latin American Federation of Neurosurgical Societies (FLANC), an honor provided by the will of peers in the historical first-of-five continental neurosurgical associations of the WFNS (1,2).

No honor comes without challenges, the first and most important for the chapter's profile, to define what it means to be a "Young" Neurosurgeon. No other concept can be so erratic and misunderstood (3). Unfortunately, we use to think of it as a synonym of lack of expertise, experience, or maturity. Most of our colleagues are living examples that the above is by no means our definition.

The only requisite to become a member of this chapter is to be a neurosurgeon under the age of 45. It is unfair to consider that as our unique merit, making it feel like a handicap rather than an advantage. The following paragraphs summarize our work as "Young" Neurosurgeons chapter members. Let us rethink ourselves as highly valuable youngsters with the will and strength to change the world.

Anyone who reads this is aware that we have held one of our greatest fights among the living – a pandemic that has stressed us so greatly that we can consider ourselves as survivors. We have had many losses, precious lives that we engrave in our hearts as the loss of recognized neurosurgeons all over the world. We pray for all of them. However, it is also true that we have managed to rebuild our society. Under this presidency, together with our Brazilian colleague Dr. Mateus Reghin Neto, secretary of the chapter – and raised by the effort of many young Latin American neurosurgeons, we have made record achievements in scientific exchange.

We have participated in several webinars among national neurosurgical societies since our initial appointment in 2021. We, as "Young" neurosurgeons, have discussed state-of-the-art controversies head-to-head with "Mature" experts" in critical areas of neurosurgery. The Brazilian Society of Neurosurgery and the Mexican Society of Neurological Surgery have been the guide and support of our chapter, allowing our active participation in different academic activities within these societies. In addition, we have encouraged continuous medical education among each of the subspecialties in neurosurgery. These objectives follow the directives proposed by the President of FLANC, Dr. José Antonio Soriano Sánchez, a neurosurgeon who has promoted our chapter's growth and empowerment since it was proposed – providing full support for our objectives.

Our crews are active authors, peer reviewers, and even editors in the scientific community for international journals such as the *World Neurosurgery*, *Operative Neurosurgery*, *Neurosurgery*, and the recently launched *Archives of Neurosurgery* (4), among many others.

Our members became distinguished specialty professors soon after finishing their training in vascular neurosurgery, spine neurosurgery, peripheral nerve surgery, epilepsy surgery, functional neurosurgery, endovascular neurosurgery, and pediatrics. In addition, most of us have international trainees among our alumni who consider our experience as valuable as that of a "Mature" Neurosurgeon.

We have also created a rotation system receiving national and foreign residents for short stays and the development of educational and assistance programs, which promoted receiving requests from Cuban neurosurgeons to belong to the chapter.

Soon we will have the honor of participating in the XXXIX Latin American Congress of Neurosurgery CLAN 2021 that will take place November 2021, in Guayaquil, Ecuador, thanks to the kind invitation received from Dr. Henin Mora, current President of the Functional Chapter of the FLANC and academic coordinator of the Congress. From November 22 to 24, we will participate in this prestigious program with high-quality sessions from outstanding colleagues belonging to the Young Neurosurgeons chapter.

Therefore, we would like to raise our voice and highlight that our youth and knowledge is a hallmark of the revolutionary changes in medicine over the last 20 years. For all these reasons, "Young" neurosurgeons are much more than just neurosurgeons under the age of 45. We are revolutionary people, we are vanguard thinkers, and we are full of will and passion for fighting the world's challenges and adversities with courage using scientific knowledge and highly advanced skills to perform neurosurgery.

Under this presidency and with the support of the current FLANC presidency and different National and World Neurosurgery leaders, we will demonstrate what it takes to be a Young Neurosurgeon with our commitment to our daily activities in neurosurgical care, education, and research. For excellence in neurosurgery, let the "Young" show their potential as our "Mature" colleagues show as well.

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