

Introduction



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I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my mentor and friend, Dr Duke Cameron, President of the American Association for Thoracic Surgery (2017–2018) for the opportunity and privilege of chairing the 2018 AATS Congenital Heart Surgery Postgraduate Course in San Diego. I am also truly indebted to the Course co-Chairs (Dr Viktor Hraska and Dr James Quintessenza) for sharing their insight, wisdom and experience, as well as to the world-class Course Faculty for their help in bringing together a great educational program and for contributing the enclosed manuscripts.

The 2018 AATS Postgraduate Course in Congenital Cardiac Surgery focused on 2 distinct areas that often prove to be challenging to the congenital heart surgeon. The first dilemma (“how small is too small”) was addressed through several lectures that covered right and left-sided lesions, trying to guide decision-making based on anatomical anomalies and overall size of the patient. We purposefully did not include in this edition of the Pediatric Cardiac Surgical Annual some of the topics that have been previously discussed (eg, the borderline left ventricle among others) or that are detailed in prior AATS publications. The second part of the program comprised a series of lectures that focused on all aspects of congenitally corrected transposition of the great arteries; this minisymposium followed the “Legends’ Luncheon” in Congenital Heart Surgery, that honored this year Dr Thomas Spray and his legacy to our field.



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As the AATS strives to always be at the forefront of our field, I hope that the attendees of the 2018 Congenital Heart Surgery Postgraduate Course found the lectures engaging and useful to their everyday practice; similarly, I wish that the readership of the Pediatric Cardiac Surgery Annual will find this collection of articles interesting and a valuable resource as they deliver care to children with congenital heart disease.

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