



## The Colombian Association For Surgery Of The Hand

The Colombian Society for Surgery of the Hand was established on 1966. Nowadays it is conformed by 20 Honorary Members, 88 Corresponding Members, and 101 Titular Members.

In 1992 the Society obtained the Official Recognition of Hand Surgery as a Specialty, and today four Academic University Programs recognized for the formation of specialists exist. They have the requirement of being previously certified in Orthopedics or Plastic Surgery. Official Diplomas are obtained as *Specialist In Hand Surgery*.

### HISTORY AND PIONEERS

Before the foundation of the Colombian Society for Surgery of the Hand in 1966, some surgeons promoted the Hand Surgery like an integral discipline:

Dr. Julio Calonje, --**Figure 1**-- specialized in Orthopedics in Chile on 1945, who later was formed in Hand Surgery with Dr. Sterling Bunnell in the United States. He returned to Cali, developed the first academic orthopaedic residence and organized the Clinic of Hand Surgery.

Dr. Guillermo Nieto Cano, --**Figure 2**-- Plastic Surgeon trained with Dr. Harold Gillies, returned from England on 1947, founded several services of Plastic Surgery in Bogota and was Founder Member of the Colombian Society for Surgery of The Hand.

Dr. Miguel Orticochea, --**Figure 3**-- was born on 1928 in Uruguay, where he was formed like plastic surgeon. He moved to Bogotá and became a professor at the Javeriana and National Universities. He published techniques for the treatment of the metacarpal hand, the transference of the deep beam of the short flexor of the thumb for opposition, the reconstruction of the thumb by local flaps, and the anatomophysiology principles of the muscular and musculocutaneous flaps.

The Colombian Society for Surgery of the Hand was founded in Bogotá on the 1<sup>st</sup> of July 1966, by 29 surgeons who constituted in Founder Members under the Honorary Presidency of Professor Dr. Paul W. Brand.

Between the 29 Founder Members it is relevant to emphasize the following names:

Dr. Roberto Laignelet, --**Figure 4**-- its first President. Orthopaedic Surgeon, he was trained in Hand Surgery with Dr. Guy Pulvertaft in England. He returned to Bogota and worked exclusively on the exercise of the specialty. On 1970 he entered to the Children's Hospital and created the Service of Hand Surgery. He dedicated himself to teaching and transmitted his knowledge in tendon transfers, congenital deformities, burns, and rheumatoid arthritis, among others.

Dr. Abraham Cuperman, --**Figure 5**-- its first Secretary. He studied Hand Surgery with Dr. Marc Iselin in France, and returned to Colombia on 1963. He dedicated to the exclusive exercise of Hand Surgery. On 1965 he entered to the Hospital San Juan de Dios of the National University in Bogota. He contributed to knowledge in aspects of cutaneous cover, reverse flow flaps, gunshot wounds, early mobilization, tendon injuries and microsurgical techniques.

Dr. Eduardo Bustillo, --**Figure 6**-- Orthopaedic Surgeon, formed in Surgery of the Hand with Dr. Joseph Boyes in the United States, returned to Bogota on 1962 and entered to the Hospital San Juan de Dios of the National University. He spread the knowledge of carpal instabilities, handling of fractures, tendon transfers and ring injuries, infections and fingertip injuries.

Dr. Felipe Coiffman, --**Figure 7**-- was formed in Plastic Surgery and Hand Surgery with the Dr. A. J. Barsky in New York and returned to Bogota on 1955. He entered to Hospital San Juan de Dios of the National University. He taught the handling of the congenital deformities, burns, cutaneous cover and tendon injuries. On 1986 he published the first edition of his book "*Reconstructive and Aesthetics Plastic Surgery*"; the third edition was published on 2008 in 6 volumes, one of them focused on Hand Surgery.

Dr. Tito Tulio Roa, --**Figure 8**-- Plastic Surgeon, formed in Hand Surgery at the Dr. William Littler School in New York, then he came back to Bogota in 1965 and he joined the Hospital San José. He taught vascular microsurgery, the plastic reconstruction of the hand and the handling of ring injuries.

Dr. Bernardo Montes, --**Figure 9**-- Orthopaedic Surgeon, was an enthusiastic professor of semiology, anatomy and handling of the peripheral nerves injuries, the principles for tendon transferences, and the treatment of carpal fractures. He carried out the position of Fiscal Inspector of the society during many years and permanently made to fulfill their statutes.

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In the following years, new members joined the Society to consolidate its growth process, such as:

Dr. Benjamin Rivera, --**Figure 10**-- Orthopaedic Surgeon, formed in Hand Surgery with Dr. Robert Carroll in New York, he joined the Society in 1968. He created the Hand Surgery Service at the Hospital San Ignacio of the Javeriana University in Bogota, where he taught the surgical management of rheumatoid arthritis, of tendon injuries and transfers, of the congenital deformities and the carpus and hand fractures. In 1984, he became the first Delegate of the Colombian Society for the International Federation of Societies for Surgery of the Hand.

Dr. Jochen Gerstner became a member in 1968. --**Figure 11**-- Orthopedic Surgeon, he was trained in Hand Surgery with Dr. William Burkhalter in Miami, and joined the University Hospital in Cali on 1976. From the professorship and through several books that he published, he taught the treatment of the Dupuytren's disease, the compartmental syndromes, the cutaneous cover,

the flexor tendons repair, the infections management, the fracture osteosynthesis and the behavior in the finger amputations.

Dr. Jaime Restrepo became a member in 1981. --**Figure 12**-- Plastic Surgeon with training in Hand Surgery and microsurgery at the School of Drs. Raoul Tubiana and Alain Gilbert in France. When he returned to the country, he joined the Hospital San Vicente de Paul in Medellin. He is known by several papers on hand and upper limb replantations, by the development of free flaps and by his important investigations in microvascular anatomy.

Dr. Roberto Meléndez became a member in 1982. --**Figure 13**-- Orthopaedic Surgeon, trained as Hand Surgeon in Brazil with Drs. Edmur Isidoro Lopes and Heitor Ulson, he returned to the country in 1980 to dedicate exclusively to the Hand Surgery practice. He joined the La Samaritana University Hospital in Bogota, and created the Hand Surgery Section at the Orthopaedic Department. He spread out the concepts of AO minifragments osteosynthesis, the distal radius fractures osteosynthesis with plates, the Sauvé Kapandji operation, the treatment of the carpal scaphoid pseudoarthrosis, the osteomyelitis management and the Papineau method, and the microsurgical repair of peripheral nerves. He worked in the Society for obtaining the official recognition of Hand surgery as a Subspecialty and to structure it from the legal and academic points of view.

Dr. Felix Borrero became a member in 1987. --**Figure 14**-- Orthopaedic Surgeon, he studied Hand Surgery at the Dr. Walter Blauth School in Germany and joined the University Hospital La Samaritana in Bogota on 1984 as the chief of Hand Surgery section. He taught about index pollicization and the treatment of the forearm diaphysis fractures. He made emphasis in the treatment of hand complex injuries, and published his book *Hand Traumatology* on 1996.

As pioneers in microsurgery, we must mention Dr. Fernando Gomez Rivas, who made the first extremities replantation at the Hospital San Juan de Dios in Bogota on 1963, and Dr. Marcos Ramirez, who made the first one in Medellin on 1968. The formal development of microsurgery began in 1975, when Drs. Luis Fernando Robledo and Tito Tulio Roa made the first replantation at the Hospital San José in Bogota. Later, in Medellin, Dr. Jaime Restrepo published a great casuistic of reimplants, and since 1985, Dr. Julio Bermudez --**Figure 15**-- implemented the techniques for fingers replantation and hand and upper limb free flaps. On 1985 Dr. Raul Sastre organized the first microsurgery laboratory at the Hospital San Juan de Dios in Bogota. In the microsurgical peripheral nerve repair techniques development, stand out Dr. Yolanda Restrepo by her research about peripheral nerve regeneration, Dr. Raul Sastre by his research in neurotization and repair of brachial plexus, and Dr. Enrique Vergara by the management of brachial plexus in children and by his research in vascular microanatomy and the development of free flaps.

## THE LOGO

When the Colombian Society for Surgery of The Hand was founded on 1966, adopted as a logo one fragment of the Miguel Angel Buonarroti work "The Creation of Adam". On 1986 it was modified, and again on 1997 when the statutes were adjusted to new law requirements that changed the term SOCIETY by ASSOCIATION, as it stays nowadays. --**Figure 16**--

## THE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF SOCIETIES FOR SURGERY OF THE HAND

The Colombian Society for Surgery of The Hand became a Member of the International Federation of Societies for Surgery of The Hand on 1984. Dr. Benjamin Rivera Pico **Figure 10** was its first Delegate.

## TRAINING IN HAND SURGERY

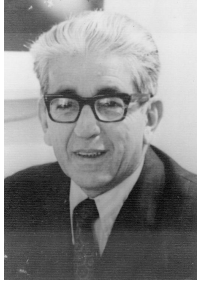
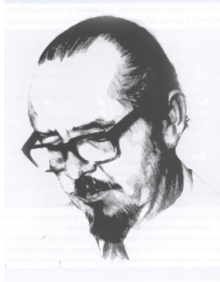
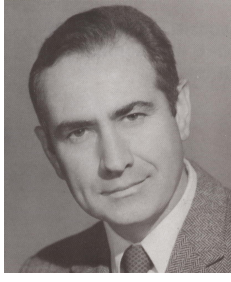

On July 1988, Dr. Roberto Melendez initiated the process to look for the hand surgery official recognition like a subspecialty based upon his work "*Studies for Education on Hand Surgery in Colombia*", --**Figure 17**-- published on 1987. In this document, he demonstrated the magnitude of the problems that affected the hand, based on statistics of accidental rates at the Social Security Hospital. He mentioned the existence of 13 hospital centers in where the hand surgery was practiced. Next he presented a "*Program of training for the formation of Specialists in Hand Surgery*", with 14 items of anatomical dissections in cadaver, 43 basic subjects of laboratory microsurgery training, and 113 essential theoretical subjects.





On **July 24<sup>th</sup> 1992** he obtained the official recognition of Hand Surgery like a Subspecialty, based on Orthopaedic, Plastic or General Surgery, and its regulation was approved. This was a transcendental fact for the society, and consequently on march 1<sup>st</sup> 1993 a group of 31 surgeons became officially certified as "*Specialist in Hand Surgery*" **by own right**, and the corresponding diplomas were granted to them. On the other hand, the possibility that the universities could create academic programs for the formation of Specialists in Hand Surgery was opened. In addition, it was created the option of validate the abroad obtained diplomas endorsed by the Law 30 of 1992.





Based on this new legal and academic order, on May 7<sup>th</sup>1993 was approved at the Military Medicine University in Bogota the first **Hand Surgery Specialization Program**, with a length of one year, for specialists graduated in Orthopaedic or Plastic Surgery. On 2000, the University El Bosque obtained the approval of a second program, on 2011 the Fundacion Universitaria de Ciencias de la Salud initiated one third and on 2018 one fourth program began with the Javeriana University.




Author -*Dr. Roberto Melendez (Past President of the Colombian Society for Surgery of The Hand)*

## PAST AND PRESENT MEMBERS

			
Dr. Julio Calonje	Dr. Guillermo Nieto Cano	Dr. Miguel Orticochea	Dr. Roberto Laignelet
Figure 1	Figure 2	Figure 3	Figure 4

			
Dr. Abraham Cuperman	Dr. Eduardo Bustillo	Dr. Felipe Coiffman	Dr. TitoTulio Roa
Figure 5	Figure 6	Figure 7	Figure 8

			
Dr. Bernardo Montes	Dr. Benjamín Rivera	Dr. Jochen Gerstner	Dr. Jaime Restrepo
Figure 9	Figure 10	Figure 11	Figure 12

		
Dr. Roberto Meléndez	Dr. Félix Borrero	Dr. Julio Bermúdez
Figure 13	Figure 14	Figure 15