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Gordon Sze: 10th President of the American Society of Spine Radiology

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Biography

Gordon Sze: 10th President of the American Society of Spine Radiology

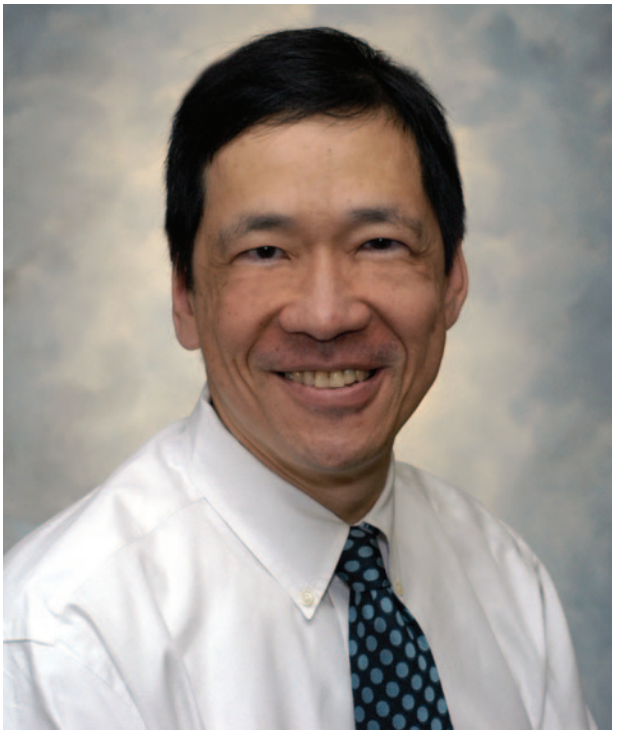
Gordon Sze assumed the presidency of the American Society of Spine Radiology (ASSR) on June 10, 2004, becoming the 10th president of this relatively new, but rapidly growing, society. The ASSR has challenges in both the interventional field (What specialty will control the "turf?") and the diagnostic field (Will the spine "catch up" with the brain in advanced imaging techniques?). Gordon and his executive committee will be working over the next year to deal with these important political and research issues.

Born and raised in Manhattan, Gordon was strongly influenced at an early age by his parents, both of whom were in the medical field—his father was a thoracic surgeon and his mother, an administrator at Bellevue Hospital. From preparatory school at Phillips Academy in Andover, Massachusetts, Gordon entered Harvard College in 1973, graduating summa cum laude and as a member of Phi Beta Kappa in 1976. In the year between his graduation from college and entering Harvard Medical School, Gordon received the Sheldon Fellowship, an award that allowed him to travel to New Guinea, Africa, and Nepal to study rural healthcare delivery.

In his second year of medical college, exposure to radiology made him decide that he would pursue a career in that field. A medical internship, a radiology residency, and a fellowship in neuroradiology at the University of California, San Francisco, followed medical school. One of the strong points of the neuroradiology fellowship at that time, was, in addition to the outstanding faculty, the experience of being in a department with one of the first clinical MR imaging units in the country.

Following his 6 years in San Francisco, Gordon returned to New York, where he joined the Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center as an assistant professor at Cornell University Medical College. In 1989, after 3 years at Sloan-Kettering, he moved to Yale University where he was appointed chief of the neuroradiology section. Throughout his career, Gordon has been an active academician, publishing studies and presenting his work in a large range of important topics in neuroradiology; but he believes his most important scientific contributions have been in the development and application of fast spin-echo techniques for spine imaging and the testing of the efficacy of intravenous MR imaging contrast material in the detection of spinal abnormalities.

In his leisure time, Gordon takes advantage of New Haven's proximity to New York City, making frequent visits to Manhattan. Interestingly, Gordon has developed an expertise in a field far removed from neuroradiology. As a result of the time spent in New Guinea before medical school, Gordon became interested in Pacific Oceanic Carvings and has amassed an important private collection of these works. As a member of the Pacific Arts Association, Gordon maintains that he is at least as well known worldwide in that association as he is in the American Society of Neuroradiology.



Many people have strongly influenced Gordon's life, including his parents, of course, but also his uncle, I. M. Pei, the world-famous architect who designed, among other landmark buildings, the Louvre Pyramid in Paris, the East Wing of the National Gallery, and the JFK Library—the things one learns talking to people about their lives! Professionally, Gordon specifically mentioned the strong radiology mentoring he received from Hans Newton and Alex Margulis while in San Francisco.

As president of the ASSR, Gordon will continue to encourage the development of interventional spine procedures within radiology and will also work toward bringing new MR imaging techniques, such as diffusion-weighted imaging and functional MR imaging, to the forefront in spine imaging. Gordon believes that continuing the mentor awards is the best way to encourage young investigators to become academicians and contributors to our specialty.

ROBERT M. QUENCER
Editor-in-Chief