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American Society of Plastic Surgeons Appoints First African American President Elect

Tatiana Bido | October 31, 2022



Founded in 1931, the American Society of Plastic Surgeons is the largest plastic surgery specialty organization in the world. Made up of board-certified plastic and reconstructive surgeons, the society's mission is to advance patient care and encourage high standards of training, research and practice in the field. The recently named president elect, Oakland, CA plastic surgeon **Steven Williams, MD**, will become the first African American president and his appointment comes at a time when diversity and inclusion in medicine is as important as ever.



Dr. Steven Williams has been named the president elect of the American Society of Plastic Surgeons.

As part of his tenure, the Ivy league–trained, highly accomplished surgeon says this honor is a culmination of many years of hard work and it’s not lost on him that his new role shows how critical representation is for the future of aesthetic medicine. “I think that we all respond and relate to people in some ways in positions of leadership that resemble us,” explains Dr. Williams. “The American Society of Plastic Surgeons is an amazing organization and obviously surgery is my life, my specialty and my passion. However, in leadership there was really a little bit of a deficit and a lack of diversity, not just for African Americans, but also for women and other underrepresented groups. It has been part of my personal mission to change that, to do my part and to be able to hold that leadership role and at some point, to help others.”

During his tenure, Dr. Williams wants to ensure the organization is moving forward to meet the needs of all patient populations, including those who have felt underserved in the past. “There’s really clear data that is able to relate to people who understand them and who have some degree of empathy, which doesn’t mean they have to necessarily be the same race,” he shares. “That base of diversity, inclusion and quality equity—that understanding, that core being there—it helps you to be a better doctor which leads to better care. That’s what we’re all about and that is the most important thing.”

Dr. Williams has served as ASPS’s vice president of membership, created COVID patient safety resources and led the organization’s diversity and inclusion committee. He will begin his presidency in 2023.

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