

# Prof. Frank C. Detterbeck: sharing and critical thinking

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Founded in July, 2016, the Asia Society of Thoracic Surgeons (ASTS) recently gathered numerous experts from different international thoracic associations, like American Association of Thoracic Surgeons (AATS), Society of Thoracic Surgeons (STS), European Association of Cardiothoracic Surgeons (EACTS), International Society of Minimally Invasive Cardiothoracic Surgery (ISMICS), Canadian Association of Thoracic Surgeons (CATS), etc., together to have an active and aspiring discussion and sharing about the better development of ASTS. During this time, the Editorial Office of *AME Medical Journal (AMJ)* seized the opportunity to have an interview with Prof. Frank C. Detterbeck, representative of the AATS (*Figure 1*).

For the interview details, please click the following online video (*Figure 2*):

## Interview Q&A

**AMJ:** *How do you think about the round table discussion today?*

**Prof. Detterbeck:** I think it's an excellent way to explore how best to start a new society. Certainly, there are many challenges and opportunities. So I think it's a good way to learn from others and hopefully do not make the mistakes that others may have made. The society is going to be a success.

**AMJ:** *Do you have any suggestion on organizing a society? And what should a member do for his society and what can a society provide for its members?*

**Prof. Detterbeck:** The most important thing is being engaged as a member of a society. The society exists because of its members. The society should provide an atmosphere where it is easy for them to be engaged. Thus, one of the most important aspects is having the engaged membership and allowing way for that to happen. Another important aspect is to make it easy for people to



**Figure 1** Picture with Prof. Detterbeck.



**Figure 2** Prof. Detterbeck: sharing and critical thinking (1). Available online: <http://www.asvide.com/articles/1312>

exchange ideas and to learn from one another. Another stage of that, or we say, another level of that is to actively promote education and, more than that, to promote the level of thinking or detail of thinking and critical thinking about how to look at different things. Let me just go on a little bit about that. We view the world with a particular mindset and a particular concept about one thing. Because of that concept, you view things in a certain way which doesn't really allow us to see important things. And we have different concept, then we will view things differently and we can't see things we don't realize. So that is an

important thing for a society to allow different viewpoints and different level of thinking in order to become a part of what the society represent.

*AMJ: How to attract worldwide membership? Since we have many similar organizations in the world, so how can we communicate with them and attract membership through it?*

**Prof. Detterbeck:** With European and American societies, the Asian society is still a small world. Globalization is a reality, so I think we all have similar goals and desires. If the Asian society contributes to what we are all trying to achieve, like those of the European and American society, there will be an easy collaboration.

*AMJ: We have many difficulties of course, and language comes first. In your opinion, how to solve this problem?*

**Prof. Detterbeck:** It is not only a major challenge in Asia society interacting with European and American societies, but also a challenge within Asia society, because there are many countries in Asia with different languages. In addition, I think it has to be solved by having the ability to translate things and make things more accessible to people in the language they are most comfortable with. But I also think it is a huge opportunity. Like I said before, we have different viewpoints, so if we are only viewing things from our own viewpoint, we don't always realize what is really important and if we can bring different viewpoints and overcome the language barrier, it is actually a good opportunity to learn from one another.

*AMJ: Though Chinese medical system is totally different from that of American, many Chinese students hope to come to American and learn, do you think is there any possible way of achieving that?*

**Prof. Detterbeck:** Well, certainly there are ways of achieving that. I have had the opportunity to work with a number of Chinese medical students. And it is increasing and also a good thing. I do think that the more we can promote the exchanging, the more it could help us to bridge the gap, such as language and lacking of understanding of how things work differently in china versus north America, versus somewhere in Europe. Individual exchange is very important.

*AMJ: I notice that you have been listed on the best doctors many times, so what quality is essential for a good doctor?*

**Prof. Detterbeck:** The first thing that comes to my mind is care. You have to actually care about the patients. When people are sick, they need not just the right medicine, surgery, but they also need support and understanding. How do I deal with that, what my attitude should be, I think you can think of providing that. When you care, you ought to care about being on top of what the scientific data tell me and what resource do I have that can help the patients.

*AMJ: Do you have any suggestion on training young surgeon? Lots of young surgeon would like to learn from the experts, so what should they do?*

**Prof. Detterbeck:** I think role models are important and being aware of the different aspects of practicing medicine. We just talked about the personal aspects of interacting with the patients and not just medicine or something else, but also their attitude towards being sick. And being critical of what you know and what you don't know is also an important aspect. I have learn a lot from listening to patients, but also from other people talking about what they have found and trying to understand what I really think that is true or not exactly true, because they haven't really focused on the important aspects and they are next to the really important aspects. You have to be critical about what you see and hear in order to understand things at a higher level.

#### **Expert introduction:**

Frank C. Detterbeck, MD, New Haven, Connecticut, USA  
Dr. Frank C. Detterbeck is the Professor & Chief of Thoracic Surgery Yale University, and co-director of the Yale Lung Screening and Nodule Program. He is an Associate Editor of Journal of Thoracic Oncology and is on the Editorial board of the Journal of Thoracic and Cardiovascular Surgery and Chest. He is the Chair for the Lung Cancer Guidelines of the American College of Chest Physicians. He is the former president of the International Thymic Malignancy Interest Group, and has served in leadership positions in most of the major thoracic oncology and thoracic surgery organizations. He has edited several textbooks on lung cancer, mediastinal malignancies and thoracic surgery, and has written more than 250 peer

reviewed journal articles and 50 book chapters.

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1. Wu S. Prof. Detterbeck: sharing and critical thinking. *Asvide* 2017;4:006. Available online: <http://www.asvide.com/articles/1312>

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