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Ingrid Kleiss, M.D., earns Claus D. Walter Award for highest international score on 2019 IBCFPRS/EBCFPRS examination



Dr. Ingrid Kleiss, 2019 Claus D. Walter Award winner

After earning the highest score on the 2019 IBCFPRS/EBCFPRS examination, administered in London, England, with the cooperation of the ABFPRS, Dr. Ingrid Kleiss will be honored with the Claus D. Walter Award for Academic Excellence at the AAFPRS fall meeting in San Diego, California.

Dr. Kleiss attended medical school at the University of Groningen, in the Netherlands. Before starting her ENT residency, an opportunity to embark on a PhD project with a research fellowship at the Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary at Harvard Medical School with Dr. Tessa Hadlock became available. "What an amazing opportunity," says Dr. Kleiss. "I started my fellowship at Dr. Hadlock's facial nerve regeneration lab where we tested various treatment modalities on rats. Never thought I would spend so much time with these little rodents, but it was a great experience. Besides studying effects of the rats' facial nerve disorders, I was very fortunate to observe Dr. Tessa Hadlock in her clinic and I was able to see her patients with facial nerve impairments. That was a turning point in my medical training because these patients inspired and motivated me to go into facial plastics. Abnormalities of the face are so visible for patients and their surroundings, which makes a tremendous impact on their lives. Being able to improve their appearance, and with that, their quality of life and psychosocial well-being, is very rewarding."

Dr. Kleiss continues, "Working with Dr. Hadlock was an incredible experience. She is an extremely talented surgeon/scientist as well as a great mentor to a young physician like me at the start of my career. Luckily, great mentors continued to inspire my medical training. After completing my project at Harvard in 2012, I started my ENT residency at the Radboud university medical center where I continued my research in facial palsy with Dr. Koen Ingels and Prof. Dr. Henri Marres. In 2015, I finished my PhD thesis, *Assessment of Facial Function in Peripheral Facial Palsy*, and was fortunate enough, at the end of my residency, to start my

training in facial plastic and reconstructive surgery with a few of the Dutch IBCFPRS certified surgeons—Drs. Koen Ingels, Niels van Heerbeek, Godelieve Damen, Cor Stengs, and Arthur Scheffer,” Dr. Kleiss observes.

Exemplary training opportunities continued to come her way via her facial plastic surgery fellowship with the Australasian Academy of Facial Plastic Surgery in Sydney with Drs. George Marcells, Paul Gerarchi, Michael Zacharia, and Angelo Tsirbas. “That wonderful group of gifted surgeons taught me the entire scope of facial plastic surgery with a great emphasis on rhinoplasty and facial rejuvenation procedures. Without their diverse training, I would never have been able to achieve the Claus Walter award,” states Dr. Kleiss.

Dr. Kleiss is currently working at Gelre Hospitals in the Netherlands where she also works with her senior colleague, Dr. Tjasse Brintjes, an IBCFPRS certified surgeon. Together they focus on facial plastic and reconstructive surgery, mainly rhinoplasties, otoplasties, and skin cancer reconstructions.

“I am very proud that the Netherlands requires completion of IBCFPRS certification for doctors to be able to call themselves ‘certified facial plastic and reconstructive surgeons’. In my opinion, the IBCFPRS certification process is a high quality instrument to guard the quality of care in our specialty,” concludes Dr. Kleiss.

“The IBCFPRS examination has been established to encourage applicants for certification to reach for and achieve the highest standards in our profession. That Dr. Ingrid Kleiss not only passed the examination, but also achieved the highest international score, is a testament to her knowledge and commitment to be the best that she can be. May she serve as an inspiration to others as she continues to promote the advancement of our specialty,” notes Dr. Adamson, IBCFPRS President.

The 2020 examination for international candidates will be given June 27-28 in Washington, D.C. and in July in London. To apply for IBCFPRS certification, please go to www.iffpss.org or www.ibcfprs.org and click on IBCFPRS for additional details and to download an IBCFPRS application.