

Big shoes to fill: Timothy Fabian, inaugural editor of *Trauma Surgery & Acute Care Open (TSACO)*

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I have big shoes to fill. I knew succeeding Timothy Fabian as editor-in-chief of *Trauma Surgery & Acute Care Open (TSACO)* would be a daunting task. Two months into the job, it is more work than I ever imagined. Being a journal's editor-in-chief is not an easy job. Starting a brand-new journal from scratch must have been infinitely harder. Yet that is exactly what Dr Fabian did. As *TSACO*'s inaugural editor, he led the team on a journey to create a new open access, peer-reviewed journal to cover all aspects of trauma and acute care surgery. There is no doubt in my mind that the American Association for the Surgery of Trauma (AAST) selection of Dr Fabian was the perfect choice to 'give birth to *TSACO*'.¹

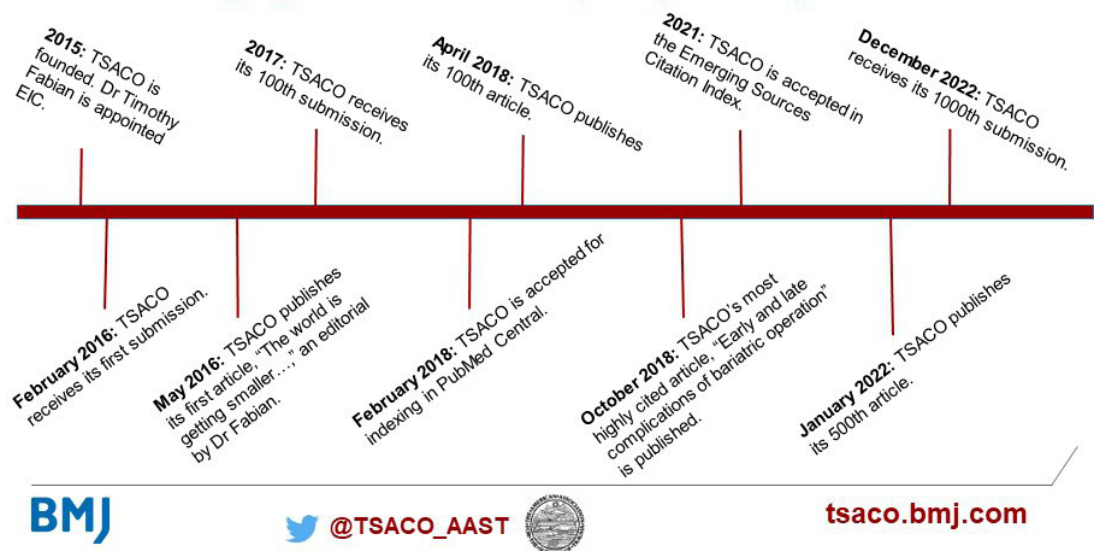
I have looked up to Tim Fabian as one of the iconic leaders of trauma over the last half century. As a surgical resident and trauma fellow, I read landmark papers by Dr Fabian and the Memphis group on literally every important topic in trauma including: injury to the liver, spleen, and colon, blunt aortic and cerebrovascular injury, ventilator-associated pneumonia, and abdominal wall reconstruction. When I joined the AAST, Dr Fabian was the president and signed the certificate that hangs on my office wall. When I was President of the Eastern Association for the Surgery of Trauma (EAST), I read all the past presidential addresses including Dr Fabian's from 1999² which focused on evidence-based medicine, a central focus of my academic career.

In 2015, Dr Fabian was named editor-in-chief, given the journal's title, and otherwise had a blank slate. Over the first 7 years of *TSACO*'s existence, Tim created everything from nothing; crafting the journal's mission, vision, and goals. He recruited a first-rate editorial team from around the globe. He was responsible for every minute detail—website design, instructions for authors, article types, reviewer instructions, and so much more. He was the ambassador for the new concept of an open access journal dedicated to trauma and acute care surgery. He continuously pushed the envelope and explained to the leaders of trauma and acute care surgery why we needed a new journal and the importance of open access. He combated old guard authors who would say things like "Why do I need to pay to publish my paper? I never had to before."

Since the journal's first paper,² *TSACO* has published over 600 manuscripts under Dr Fabian's leadership. By December 2022, we had received over 1000 submissions from 47 different countries (figure 1). True to its mission, the journal has published articles of all types from 30 unique countries around the globe with research and educational content coming from six continents. We are still waiting for a paper from Antarctica.

The journal achieved many milestones under Dr Fabian's leadership. *TSACO* is indexed in PubMed Central and listed in the Emerging Sources Citation Index. We eagerly anticipate our first impact factor

Trauma Surgery & Acute Care Open (TSACO) Milestones



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Figure 1 *Trauma Surgery & Acute Care Open (TSACO)* milestones (2015–2022). EIC, editor-in-chief.



Figure 2 Transition of *Trauma Surgery & Acute Care Open* editor-in-chief from Timothy Fabian to Elliott Haut.

which we expect later this spring. Every year, we have hundreds of thousands of page views and article downloads, approximately half of which are from the USA and the other half from around the world. Our growth in social media gets the *TSACO* content in front of thousands of readers with over 6500 Twitter followers.

In following Dr Fabian, my goal is to build on the incredible bedrock that he founded the journal on. For example, in the coming years, *TSACO* will hopefully add podcasts and offer video content, two of Dr Fabian's original long-term plans.

As Dr Fabian stated in his inaugural editorial,¹ he served 'as midwife in the delivery of this youngster.' He spent years dealing with colic, late-night feedings, diaper changes, and tantrums. I feel honored to adopt this preschooler and plan to guide the journal over the next decade as it grows into its childhood and teenage years on its way towards a mature adulthood (figure 2).

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