



The SURGICAL Assistant

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2021 ASA ELECTION RESULTS

Elections were held for the offices of president, vice president, treasurer and two directors. ASA members were able to vote electronically beginning September 1 through the close of the first business meeting on September 24. Election results were announced at the second business meeting in Phoenix on September 25.

The following ASA members were elected:

President: Fred Fisher, CSA, CSFA, RSA

Vice President: Rebecca Hall, MS, CST, CSA,

FAST Treasurer: Michael Morrison, BS, CST,

CSFA Director: Ivan Zamora, LSA

Director: Jennifer Consorte, CST, CSFA

The board will be reviewing applications for committee appointments and notifying individuals regarding their status.

ASA is delighted to have an engaged membership and practitioners who are willing to step forward and commit their time to advancing the profession and organization.



ASA/AST Separation FAQ's

ASA is dedicated to promoting the profession of surgical assisting through educational opportunities and legislative initiatives for all surgical assistants. The separation from AST has been a process for well over the past ten years since ASA's inception. Members have been demanding this throughout the years and all of the elected boards, including your current board of directors, have made this a top priority. It was not an easy decision, as we knew that there would be initial unanswered questions and typical growing pains that all new aspiring organizations must deal with. Here, we will try to answer the common questions that have arisen in regards to how the process has progressed and what we believe will be happening in the near future.

What was the purpose of separation? Unfortunately, while ASA was under the organizational structure of AST, this proved to be a burden when trying to gain recognition of the CSFA as a separate entity, whether through hospitals or legislation.

Why would ASA members push for separation? Throughout ASA's existence, members along the way wanted a separate identity. Even though the majority of members are dually credentialed and will always have roots to the CST credential, the recognition of work required to gain the CSFA credential was also important to members.

Why did separation happen at this point and not before? In 2015, ASA signed a management agreement with AST in which AST would manage the membership and financial aspects of ASA, but ASA would operate as an autonomous organization. ASA's management contract was to expire as of December 31, 2020. The ASA board felt like that was the time to separate since ASA could stand on its own.

Why did ASA dues remain at the current rate? While under AST, the ASA dues were at \$175 per year. ASA paid AST \$50 out of that for management services, which happened to also include dual membership. ASA dues remain the same because ASA still retains a management company to maintain the membership services and financial aspects of the organization. The issue of the dual membership arose because ASA was still under the official AST organizational structure, it could not have been separated because AST was the only processor of CE's and ASA could not obtain the privilege to do this because ASA was not an independent organization.

Will I need to pay for two separate memberships? As of September 30, 2021, ASA took over its own membership and the new website was launched. It was agreed upon by both ASA and AST to continue the dual memberships for any member that joined or renewed by this date. Unfortunately, as of now, any ASA member that joined or renewed after this will need to obtain membership separately through AST in order to get CE credits processed. ASA is hopeful within the near future, that this will not be the case, as ASA is currently gathering all requested information to provide to the NBSTSA in order to gain CE approval.

Will ASA CE credits be accepted by AST? ASA has posed this question to AST and are awaiting a firm answer. Since members will be required to join both organizations for now, it would only be rational that AST would accept ASA educational CE's, as they have accepted them previously. ASA hopes to have a definitive answer shortly after the new year. The goal of ASA is that both organizations would be accepting of each others CE credits.

How will ASA update members on changes? ASA's goal is to keep membership apprised of any new information received as promptly as possible. ASA will utilize member email and text messaging to provide members with updated information. As a member, please ensure that the ASA emails are setup to come to your inbox. This may require you to search for past emails and allow the email address by right clicking in your spam inbox and selecting "Always allow from sender" or "Never block this sender".

President's Report

December 2021

Fred Fisher, CSFA, ASA PRESIDENT

ELECTIONS

ASA held elections for president, vice president, treasurer and two director positions. Election results were announced at the second business meeting in Phoenix. Online vote began September 24 and concluded on September 25 at the end of the first business session.

MEMBERSHIP

Our membership is growing and we are focused on new and innovative ways to increase the numbers. The number of CAAHEP-accredited programs is increasing; at the moment, there are 13 CAAHEP-accredited programs and others are in the pipeline—more are anticipated. The CSFA examination remains the only nationally accredited exam, and ASA has been leveraging that at every opportunity. Last year, more than 790 practitioners sat for the CSFA exam; 584 passed the examination.

FINANCES

Despite some significant lobbying, textbook and setting up the organization with a new management company, along with new website expenses, ASA had a positive year. The opportunity to work with other organizations, including NSAA, to seek surgical assistant legislation has been very helpful. Over the last several months, ASA has been able to field more legislative activities because of sharing these costs. We hope to continue these collaborative endeavors into the future.



It is my pleasure to report to you that the state of the Association of Surgical Assistants is strong at 1,765. Over the last year, ASA has been working with other organizations whose missions affect the role of the surgical assistant.

I would like to inform you of some ASA accomplishments and achievements since the last report.

LEGISLATION

Currently, ASA is actively seeking licensure in Ohio and Massachusetts. Our licensure bill in Ohio had been rolling along swiftly until the Covid shutdown and legislative slowdown took place. I am happy to announce that the Ohio bill has regained momentum and as of a couple weeks ago we had our third hearing in the House Health Subcommittee. The only opposition we received was from the Ohio Hospital Association. This was not unexpected, as the Hospital Associations typically oppose any type of legislation they do not propose. We are still expecting another hearing before a final vote to go to the House floor early next year. We feel very confident that we have the votes to clear the committee, but are continuing to work to ensure success on the House floor. ASA is also working on legislation in Massachusetts. This has been one of the most challenging initiatives ASA has taken on thus far only because of the reluctance of the MA legislators to move forward in any meaningful way. The Covid shutdown is still somewhat making this endeavor move very slowly,

due to the MA legislators still doing all meetings virtually. Our MA bill was afforded its first hearing a month ago and received a very good reception in the committee. ASA would like to give a huge thank you to those assistants in MA and their surgeons for stepping up and providing testimony during the hearing. Moving forward, it appears that any further movement will be stalled until after the holiday break. ASA and NSAA will continue the forward movement on this legislation during the coming months once the legislators return.



WHY YOU SHOULD

JOIN ASA!

You are a surgical assistant—new or a veteran. You practice in a field that is fragmented and challenged on many levels. Advancing this profession forward and practicing your right to practice represents two continuing problems.

For 10 years, one organization has taken the lead and achieved the following:

- ▶ Enacted legislation in Illinois, Nebraska, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, Washington, DC
- ▶ Currently, ASA is legislatively active in Georgia, Ohio, Texas and Virginia.
- ▶ Spearheaded the effort with the Bureau of Labor Statistics to establish a separate occupational code for surgical assistants
- ▶ Developed a Job Description, Guidelines for best practices and Position Statements
- ▶ Presented and exhibited at the Association of Hospital Risk Managers
- ▶ Developed a survey of critical tasks and presented results to The Joint Commission.
- ▶ Authored the fourth edition of *The Core Curriculum for Surgical Assisting*
- ▶ Authored the first textbook for surgical assisting students (in process)
- ▶ Sponsored advanced level robotics workshops and cadaver labs
- ▶ Partnered with the National Surgical Assistant Association for annual spring meetings.

These efforts are made possible by the dues of committed ASA members. There is certainly more to be done but we need additional members to support new efforts. Encourage your colleagues to join. Their membership investment will help us to broaden legislative efforts and offer more independent continuing education opportunities.

**Join online at www.surgicalassistant.org or
call ASA member services at 720-459-3791.**