



THE SURGICAL ASSISTANT

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Virginia Mock Surgery Takes Legislators Behind OR Doors

On January 31, surgical assistants and surgical technologists went to Richmond, Virginia, to support a legislative bill that required licensure for surgical assistants and certification for surgical technologists.

The effort focused on presenting a mock surgery of a knee replacement.

A legislative summary and additional pictures are printed on page 7.



Dennis Stover, ASA President; Cathy Sparkman, ASA/AST Director of Government Affairs; and Virginia Senator Blevins join in a discussion on the importance of licensure for surgical assistants.



Dr Curtin and the surgical assistant demonstrated the interlocking responsibilities of all surgical team members.



Dennis Stover, Theresa Cooper, ASA Secretary, Dwight Deadmon, Jake Jacobs with Dr. Curtin, an industry representative and a surgical assistant practitioner.





ASSOCIATION OF SURGICAL ASSISTANTS

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Dear Surgical Assistant,

For a number of years, ASA did not require a membership fee. And for that period of time, it was the right decision. But in 2010, a major shift occurred, and ASA fast forwarded to becoming its own organization that will, in the not-too-distant future, be in charge of its own destiny.

2010

- ASA appointed its first Board of Directors.
- ASA sponsored its first hands-on cadaver lab in Naples, Florida.

2011

The first slate of officers was elected. In response to member request, an ASA Education Committee was appointed and tasked with revising the surgical assistant job description and developing the first-ever Standards of Practice authored by surgical assistants.

- ASA sponsored three hands-on workshops in San Francisco.
- A discounted CE opportunity exclusively for surgical assistants was published.
- A dues structure was initiated.
- An educational cruise to the Caribbean provided 17 continuing education credits.

2012

Legislative efforts were launched in Virginia and Florida to license surgical assistants.

- A hands-on surgical robotics practicum was offered for the first time.
- The initial draft of a revised definition of the surgical assistant job description was developed.
- A salary survey was published, and an online salary predictor was introduced.
- Candidates for secretary and three directors will be elected.
- A fall educational meeting is tentatively being planned with the Illinois Surgical Assistant Association.

2013

- A spring educational meeting is being discussed.
- Plans for another fall educational cruise also are in discussion.

All of these benefits offer ASA members substantive value for your commitment to join and support the professional organization. We believe ASA has made gigantic strides in just two years and we invite you to send us your suggestions about future membership benefits. We intend to fulfill our mission to advance safe patient care and promote the legislative recognition and reimbursement of surgical assistants.

Sincerely,

Dennis Stover, CST, CSA, ASA President

2012 ASA CANDIDATES FOR OFFICE

ASA SECRETARY (VOTE FOR ONE)

Kathy Duffy, CSFA, CSA KAD Surgical Assisting Boca Raton, Florida

Election Statement

My name is Kathy Duffy and I am a surgical assistant. I own a solo surgical assisting practice straddling Broward and Palm Beach counties in South Florida. I have been certified as a surgical assistant by both the NBSTSA and the NSAA. I have been



actively involved with the Association of Surgical Assistants as a member of the Ad Hoc committee (which was formed by the AST), and as an appointed board member of the ASA.

I would like to continue the work of ASA by running for the office of secretary. I feel that having my own business has prepared me for the duties

and responsibilities of this position. It will allow me to continue as a proactive board member and allow me to take on additional responsibilities.

The mission of ASA is to bring surgical assistants, regardless of credential, into an organization that will collectively determine the future of the surgical assistant profession. I think we are off to a phenomenal start. Since its inception June 1, 2010, when the Association of Surgical Assistants became a dues-paying membership organization, we have grown our membership base to numbers approaching 700. We have Bylaws, adopted by the members at Conference in San Francisco, and we have a standing Board of Directors.

We have formed an Education Committee and a Membership Committee. We are actively involved in the legislative efforts in Virginia and Florida. We have educational opportunities never before available to the surgical assistant. All this has been achieved by surgical assistants volunteering their time to help get this organization off

the ground. This is only the beginning.

My vision for ASA is simple: to continue in the direction that we started. We need to continue to grow our membership base by encouraging all surgical assistants to join in our efforts. We need to show our members that we are not just another do-nothing organization that asks for money and doesn't give anything back. We need to continue providing top-quality educational opportunities to all surgical assistants. We need to develop a plan to get involved and to help steer testing requirements and educational standards toward our profession. We also need to educate our membership to the realities of the processes involved in legislative efforts and the timeline involved with such efforts.

I would appreciate your support in my decision to run for secretary of the Association of Surgical Assistants.

Christina Tuchsien, CSFA, SA-C San Antonio Surgical Assistants San Antonio, Texas

Election Statement

Having successfully pursued careers in both the military and civilian surgical theater, I will bring a strong background of traditional academic and ethical standards, as well as broad experience



in the practical exercise of surgical assisting skills to the ASA Board of Directors.

Serving in the United States Air Force from 1993 to 2004 provided a broad exposure to preoperative, perioperative, and postoperative surgical care with experience in all surgical subspecialties, including combat and trauma medicine.

Subsequently, I continued my surgical career as a civilian Certified Surgical Technologist while I completed my formal education. I graduated from St Philips College with an Associate of Science in Biology, Associate of Science in Pre-medicine in 2007, and I graduated from Wayland Baptist University with a Bachelor of Science in Occupational Education with emphasis on Surgical Technology in 2008. After completing the Meridian Surgical Assistant Program in 2009, I was licensed through the Texas Board of

Medical Licensure in 2011. Currently, I am president and serving on the Board of Directors of San Antonio Surgical Assistants, Inc.

As an elected official, I envision betterment of the ASA organization through educational consistency. Currently, certification boards accept a wide variety of educational programs to qualify for certification exams. Considering this broad diversity, candidates are likely to pursue less education by taking the route that allows students to achieve the same credentials

in less time, for less inconvenience, and less money. If we allow shortcuts, this inevitably means we are not adhering to the agreed norms and, therefore, result in lowering the standards of our profession. Building a stronger, unified body will require the creation of uniform educational guidelines among the different associations. This will encourage unified growth of our profession and help to build better awareness, acceptance, and understanding of our career.

In addition, I will continue to work vigorously to expand

the surgical assistant partnership nationwide. To do so, I feel it is vital we start at the state level by encouraging the establishment of state assemblies and/or legislative committees that will provide guidelines and lobbying support for establishing state level licensure.

I greatly appreciate your consideration, and I look forward to actively participating in the overall growth, educational, and social opportunities ASA will offer.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS (VOTE FOR THREE)

Crystal Rae Coddington, CSFA

Election Statement

The time that has passed since my CSFA exam in 2009 has no doubt been better than I ever would have imagined. I had no idea how my whole world would change. Since then, doors of opportunity have opened, my skill set has continued to expand, and my professional network has grown immensely.



Initially, I set up my own practice and worked out of six hospitals and four outpatient surgery centers. After almost two years of solo practice, I joined Valleywide Surgical Services, a group of 22 assistants, who hold varying credentials. We serve 45 facilities and numerous physicians in the Phoenix metropolitan area.

There are a myriad of issues in front of us right now — from scope of practice and salaries, to promotion and legislation. We will be far more effective if we continue to collaborate, regardless of credential. This way of thinking is a paradigm shift from years of competition and division. There are plenty of cases to go around and patients to treat. If we are going to get

paid for them, we need to continue to work together to be heard.

It seems everything in health care is changing these days. We have to be proactive about having our collective voice heard. Our future as providers depends on this voice. I am asking for your vote for the Board of Directors to give me the opportunity to serve our community as a whole.

Vera P Thomas, CST, CSFA, SA-C Traveling Surgical Assistant Salem, Massachusetts

Election Statement
Hello Fellow Surgical Assistants,

I have been working in surgery for 10 years now. Currently, I am a

traveling surgical assistant on assignment in Salem, Massachusetts. In the past year, I have been fortunate enough as a traveler to attend the New York, Maryland, and Idaho State Assembly meetings



and represent and speak from the surgical assistant perspective.

I also was able to attend the CSFA Item Writers Workshop in January for

BOARD OF DIRECTORS (CONTINUED)

a second consecutive year and was honored with an invitation to speak at the ASA Houston Conference in February 2012. Since May 2011, I have been an active member of the ASA Education Committee and also remained active at the Vice President of the Idaho State Assembly, and currently serve as chair for various committees.

I am delighted to say that my travels now provide me with ample opportunity to support, promote, and provide exposure for ASA. I already have made progress in educating others about

the role of the surgical assistant in the areas I have traveled to, with great success. This includes the operating room staff surgeons and administrators within the hospitals. My hope in doing this is to increase the number of people who recognize what we have to offer as a nonphysician first assist, surgical assistant, or whatever your area refers to you as, should be the standard in experience and economic value. I am a sincere and complete advocate for our chosen profession and specifically for ASA, as it is only organization that embraces

the CSFA, CSA, and SA-C credentials.

I ran for the Board position in San Francisco. Although I was not elected, I was able to then volunteer (and was appointed) to be a member of the new ASA Education Committee. This was rewarding and exciting for me to be a part of due to the fact that our first task at hand was to revamp the job description issues that were brought forth from the floor discussion held by active members of ASA at the national conference last year.

I am running for the Board of Director position

again this year because I still believe I have much to offer in both the time and passion it will take to help us grow. I see ASA as the only national organization that really has focused on the issues and projects that you, the members, want to see addressed. I would like to be a part of this service to you. I am already an advocate, supporter, and member of ASA in my everyday life. I would like to be able to take it further and officially represent this profession and organization.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to seeing all of you in DC.

HOW TO RUN FROM THE FLOOR

If you missed declaring your candidacy for one of the ASA offices in the 2012 elections in Washington, DC, there's still time. Interested ASA dues-paying active members can also run become a candidate during the first Business Session that occurs on Friday, May 25. This candidate process is also called running from the floor.

Elections will be held for the office of secretary plus three Board of Director positions. To be eligible, candidates must be an active member and, if elected, shall maintain that active status. (This is contingent on the adoption of a Bylaws change, see page 8). Completed Curriculum Vitae and Consent to Serve forms must be submitted. (These are available on the ASA website, www.surgicalassistant.org. Click on *About ASA* and scroll down to the links posted under Interested in Serving?)

Interested practitioners must present their forms to the ASA Credentials Committee Booth for their review and approval before the first business session. The Credentials Committee Booth will be open on Thursday, May 24, 2-4 pm in the main registration area.

ASA Business Session 1 will be held in International Ballroom East, beginning at 2:30. After the opening remarks, the proposed Bylaws will be introduced,

discussed and voted upon. Following the discussion, the declared candidates will be introduced and then any eligible candidate can place their name in nomination for one of the open positions to run from the floor. Each nomination must be seconded before a candidate is considered eligible to be placed on the ballot.

After the nominations from the floor are closed, the ASA Candidates Forum will occur. Each candidate for secretary will be able to present a five-minute speech related to their positions and their priorities for the organization. Each candidate for a Board of Director office will have three minutes to share their priorities and views for the future of the organization.

Once the candidates have completed their presentations, ASA active members will be able to directly ask candidates relevant questions. Responses will be timed and rotated in order to allow as many as possible to participate.

We hope to see many active ASA members participate in Washington, DC.



2011 SALARY SURVEY

We would like to extend a huge thank you to everyone who participated in our survey. The response was fantastic. We asked you to take part — and you really did! The total number of responses we received totaled more than 9,100 and our verifiable base respondent number of employed was 8,425.

We heard from techs, surgical assistants, educators, central and sterile supply workers, administrators and industry representatives.

For the first time, we are obtaining enough information to begin to draw an accurate picture of practitioners and share who we are, where many of us live, how many years we have been working in the field and the age of our colleagues.

Trends in employment settings are vital to our future career advancement and information gathered in this survey will inform us about which specialties are growing; how many are employed full time; how many have been working

more than four years — and how many have been working longer; how many manage budget responsibilities and how long practitioners have been certified.

The information that we publish here is intended to be merely representative and only a general summary of selected survey results. Membership in ASA pays — all detailed survey results will be published behind the members' only sections of the respective websites in January and available when ASA members log in.

In addition, an online salary predictor also will also be available to ASA members shortly in the members' only section of the ASA website.

2011 SALARY SURVEY	TALLY
Total Number of Survey Respondents	9,134
Currently Employed	8,425
Primary Position – Surgical Technologist	74%
Primary Position – Surgical Assistant	14%
Educators	5%
General Surgery Participants	66%
Orthopedic Participants	63%
Neuro Participants	33%
Classroom Educator	4%
Clinical Educator	8%
Employed 15 Years or More	34%
Working in Current Primary Position More than 14 Years	64%
Hold CST credential	95%
Hold surgical assisting credential	17%
Working in a civilian hospital	6,065
Working in an educational institution	9%
Working in an inner city	30%
Working in a suburb	28%
Satisfied with work environment	82%
Opportunity to earn overtime	71%
Health Insurance Benefit	92%
Dental Insurance Benefit	7,486
Paid Time Off Benefit	89%
Life Insurance Benefit	81%
Pension/Retirement Plan Benefit	71%
Education Assistance Program Benefit	58%
Residing in the Northeast	11%
Residing in the South	42%

The 2011 Salary Survey was sponsored by the Meridian Institute of Surgical Assisting.



Jake Jacobs, CSA; Frances Dargan, CST, CSFA; Lobbyist Michele Satterlund; Lobbyist Hunter Jamerson and AST President Margaret Rodriguez, CST, CSFA, FAST, review a successful day.



Sandra K Luthie, CST, Virginia Commonwealth State Assembly President and mock surgery team leader (right) relaxes with the surgical team after many hours of planning for the Richmond event.

ASA IS EXTREMELY GRATEFUL TO MEMBERS OF AST AND VASA

The ASA Board of Directors and membership would like to express our deep appreciation to the officers and members of the Virginia Commonwealth State Assembly of AST and the members of the Virginia Association of Surgical Assistants.

Virginia AST members worked tirelessly to provide the OR setup which was vital to the day's success. AST President Margaret Rodriguez, CST, CSFA, FAST, lent her voice, presence

and talents to the legislative efforts that supported both surgical assistants and surgical technologists.

Again, ASA is aware of the critical importance of teamwork — and especially appreciative of our fellow practitioners.

Hunter Jamerson, one of the lobbyists will be speaking on Sunday in Washington, DC, May 27, at the ASA Meeting and presenting "The Virginia Experience."



The full Senate Education and Health Committee voted unanimously to refer Senator Blevins' Senate Bill 313, Surgical Technologist Certification and Surgical Assistant Licensure, to the Joint Commission on Health Care by letter. Further legislative action on SB 313 is carried over to 2013.

The Joint Commission process typically begins in May and concludes in November. Further information about the Joint

Commission is available at <http://jhc.virginia.gov/>

This is a very positive outcome in light of the Hospital Association's staunch opposition to SB 313. The ASA representatives were pleased by the recognition of the Senate's Health Committee that this is an issue that requires significant formal discussion, under the monitoring of a standing commission of the General Assembly, in order to help achieve consensus



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PROPOSED BYLAWS CHANGE ACCORDING TO THE ASA BYLAWS ARTICLE VIII

Board of Directors

Section 1. The Board of Directors shall consist of the officers and five other elected members of the Board of Directors.

Section 2. Eligibility of Board of Directors Members

A. A candidate for the Board of Directors shall ~~have been~~ be an active member ~~for one year immediately preceding nomination~~ and, if elected, shall maintain that active status.

B. A candidate shall not serve in any elected or appointed board position in any national accreditation, professional, or certification

organization relative to surgical technology or surgical assisting practice.

(Note: for 2012 a proposed bylaws change (seen above) will be voted upon at the first business meeting in Washington, DC, in 2012. Eligibility of candidates will be determined by the adoption of the proposed bylaws amendment.)

All interested active ASA members who are interested in seeking election to the ASA Board are encouraged to send in their Consent to Serve, CV and picture for publication.