ASA MEMBERSHIP OFFERS NEW VALUE-ADDED BENEFIT

The Association of Surgical Assistants (ASA) has a new added benefit. The Association of Surgical Technologists (AST) membership is now included with the ASA membership as a value-added membership benefit! The new ASA and AST memberships entitle you to all the benefits and privileges of both memberships, including advance notice and discounts on educational events, CE credit opportunities, and access to member only areas on the websites.

The ASA is committed to embracing and advancing the interests of all surgical assistant practitioners—CSFAs, CSAs, and SA-Cs. Joining the ASA is a great way to become involved in practitioner affairs and to support the association. It is also a great opportunity to meet new people and network. ASA also welcomes CSTs, CRNFAs, RNFAs, OPA-Cs and other surgical health care professionals as associate members.

Your support is vital. We hope you will consider becoming actively involved in the association and volunteer your talents and expertise in one of the many areas ASA seeks assistance, such as bylaws, education, membership, writing articles and state-level organizations.

Discover all that ASA has to offer at surgicalassistant.org. Take advantage today of this valued new benefit. When you become an ASA member, your AST membership is automatically included, and you will receive a separate membership card for both associations with all the added benefits. Renew both by paying the ASA annual dues, at the same time each year. Your member number is the same for both memberships and you renew both by paying the ASA annual dues at the same time each year. Please disregard ASA and/or AST membership card(s) that you received in the past. New ASA & AST membership cards mailed to you on February 11th, reflect the extended expiration dates.

Thank you for being a vital part of the new ASA! For questions, please contact us memserv@surgicalassistant.org or call ASA Member Services at 800.637.7433, option 3. Business hours are 8 am–4:30 pm Monday–Friday, MST.
2011 ASA CANDIDATES FOR OFFICE

PRESIDENT
(elect one)

Dennis Stover, cst, csa
Meridian Institute of Surgical Assisting
Joelton, Tennessee

Professional involvement

Election statement
What an exciting time to be a surgical assistant. During the past year, much has been accomplished to redefine and reshape the commitment of the Association of Surgical Assistants. As our journey moves us from an appointed committee status to a fully functioning, elected Board of Directors, we will find ourselves directly responsible for our future. The first elected president of the ASA must be an individual, who has the desire and ability to provide experienced leadership and direction as we transcend toward building our independent organization in support of surgical assistants that carry the CSFA, CSA, or the SA-C credential.

As the appointed ASA President, I have had the opportunity to work with the Board of Directors to redirect the focus from past modalities which has drastically improved our vision and working relationships with the NBSTSA, ARC/STSA, ABSA, NSAA and AST.

The election, and not appointment, of the ASA Board of Directors is a historic milestone that some said we would never attain. I will strive to develop and share our vision to ensure the future of our connected, committed group of surgical assistants becomes a stronger organization. Through arduous work, I want to assist in reshaping a renewed mission for surgical assistants, one that is aligned with today’s realities, exigencies, and challenges. This will be a lengthy process requiring honest and frank discussions about ASA, its unique role, its programs, goals, directions and performance. The success of the ASA will require input from all ASA stakeholder groups and leaders, involving analysis of not just the ASA Board of Directors, but also of the larger stakeholder groups represented. I will, as the ASA president, ensure that the voices of all members are heard.

If I am elected to lead ASA into the future, I will produce a fair representation concerning the challenges surgical assistants face on a daily basis and a sensible framework for approaching them, as well as developing a pragmatic outline of what must be accomplished within the capabilities of the ASA.

VICE PRESIDENT
(elect one)

Doug Hughes, cst, csfa, csa, crcst
San Joaquin Valley College
Fresno, California

Professional involvement
ASA interim treasurer 2010–2011; ASA interim Board of Directors 2010; ASA Advisory Committee
2009–2010; NBSTSA exam item writer for CST and CSFA exams; Developer Surgical Assistant Resource website.

Election statement
My name is Doug Hughes, and I am running for vice president of the Association of Surgical Assistants. In January of 2010, I was extended an invitation to serve ASA as a member of the Surgical Assistant Advisory Committee by AST President Sherri Alexander. Shortly thereafter, with the approval and assistance of AST, we officially laid the groundwork for the only national association dedicated to advancing the profession of the non-physician surgical first assistant for all practitioners. Since that time, I have had the honor of serving you and the profession as a member of the interim ASA Board of Directors. The organization of an independent ASA prepared and able to meet the growing needs and demands of practicing CSFAs, CSAs and SA-Cs is a dream that many of us have had for years. I am proud to say that the dream is now becoming a reality, but we still have a lot of work to do. As vice president, I will continue to dedicate myself to the growth and development of the ASA and help each and everyone of you as we work together to move surgical assisting forward.

As we begin the new decade, we face a number of challenges as a profession. Coordinating legislative efforts, developing educational opportunities, establishing clearer standards of practice, increasing public knowledge of the profession and obtaining reimbursement are just some of the topics that the association is setting its sights on. In order for us to obtain our goals, we need to have dedicated members and strong leaders to continue to build ASA. As a member of the interim Board of Directors, I have played a key role in developing ASA’s strategic efforts to tackle many of these tough issues. I have also had the chance to assist many in the surgical assistant community through the development of my website, SurgicalAssistantResource.org. Additionally, I am an experienced and highly trained surgical first assistant and educator in the field of surgical technology, a published medical author, and an effective leader and manager. As vice president, I will continue with my commitment to the membership and the profession. I know that my experience, strong desire to succeed and willingness to serve ASA, will continue to prove highly beneficial, if I am elected.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to run for national office in the first-ever Board of Director elections of the Association of Surgical Assistants. This is truly a historic time in our profession, and I am honored to be a part of it. I look forward to working with each of you over the next two years as your vice president.
During my career as a surgical assistant, I’ve benefited from the hard work and dedication of previous ASA leaders, and it has long been a goal of mine to make a similar contribution to our profession. My commitment to giving back can be seen in my active role in the ASA, my mentoring efforts for surgical assistants entering the workforce and in my surgical mission trips to the Philippines and the Congo.

If elected to the ASA Board, I will continue to move our profession forward and stridently advocate for the increased recognition our field deserves. I believe the leadership abilities I have demonstrated throughout my career will help me as I serve the ASA in this capacity. In 2000, I founded my own surgical assisting company. By 2010, my company supported over 75 surgeons in six facilities in the Atlanta area. This experience helped me to see the challenges that face our profession and provided me with the opportunity to apply my leadership abilities to overcome these challenges.

For instance, I launched a medical billing organization to better service collections for the surgical assisting business. I took the initiative to become a certified biller, so that I could better understand the reimbursement process and help produce better collections for the surgical assistants that I employed and for the other surgical assistants who used my company’s billing services. My billing organization supported surgical assistants in multiple states, offering me insights into the reimbursement challenges throughout the country.

My top priorities as a Board member will be to:
- Enhance the profession of surgical assisting
- Build ASA membership through increased outreach and local events
- Communicate more effectively with the public on the importance of our role in patient care
- Bridge the gap between our fellow surgical assistant groups

I plan to strive toward a true working environment between organizations like the Association of periOperative Registered Nurses and Association of Surgical Assistants, encouraging each group to work toward national recognition for all surgical assistants.

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

(elect three)

**ROBERT BUSH, CST, CSFA**
**ALPHA SURGICAL ASSIST**
**TUCSON, ARIZONA**

Professional involvement

Election statement
Hello, my name is Robert Bush. I am applying for a position on the ASA Board of Directors.

I have been a surgical technologist for over 37 years. I became a Certified Surgical Assistant in 1993, and within the first two years, started my own surgical assisting business.

In 1994, Julie Stanley approached me about starting the Arizona State Assembly of AST. I was nominated at the formation meeting and became a Board member on April 26, 2004. In January 2005, I was appointed president after Julie unfortunately became ill and could no longer fulfill the responsibilities. I had not previously fulfilled a role of this nature, and it was a great learning experience. Fortunately, I had a great asset behind me with AST and the staff. I also had a great mentor, who helped me in being successful as a leader and demonstrated how to get things accomplished.

In addition to being an active member of the state assembly, I teach surgical technology courses for Mohave Community College in the distance education program. My years of experience in the educational process for surgical technology will be an asset to the surgical assistant programs.

The strengths I will contribute to the ASA are:
- Knowledge and background as a surgical first assistant and business owner
- Understanding issues members have and being able to represent those concerns
- The ability to assist students with concerns related to the
educational process and clinical process

• Ability to work with various personality types in a constructive and professional manner

It is my passion to put my background and experience to work for the ASA; to see our national organization work toward excellence in education and to pursue legislation, which will provide the same nationally recognized title in every state similar to radiology techs and physician assistants.

As surgical assistants we have a hard uphill battle ahead of us. The first step is having a mind set of cooperation and unity. Second, we need to educate those who have misconceived perceptions of surgical assistants and show them through example that surgical assistants are a valuable professional asset they want and need by their side in the operating room.

Reimbursement issues for the surgical assistant need to be addressed. Through personal experience and filtering complaints from other surgical assistants, this is a current issue of concern. There is no simple solution, and there will not be a change overnight but, it is something we need to address in the near future.

With over 37 years of surgical experience and seven years’ experience working with the state assembly, I am asking that you cast your vote for me, so that I may serve you as a member of the Board of Directors of the Association of Surgical Assistants. I want to be a part of the ASA Board as it moves to the next level, be a contributing voice and continuing the success already put in motion by the previous and current members.

Bruce Gruenewald, cst, csfa
Reno Orthopedic Clinic
Reno, Nevada

Professional involvement

Election statement
I would like to offer myself as a candidate for the office of ASA Board of Directors. I have worked in and around the surgical setting since 1974. I graduated from my surgical technology program and became certified in 1978. I have remained active and certified since that time. In 1992, I took and passed the very first certifying exam for surgical first assistants (CFA, now CSFA) offered by the LCC-ST (now the NBSTSA).

Why do I want to serve ASA? The Association of Surgical Assistants brings new challenges to the floor. The concerns of surgical assistants are far different than those of the full time surgical technologist and deserve to have a full-time Board and, in the future, a full-time association to address those concerns. I would like to be part of this movement.

Should only full time surgical assistants be members of ASA? No! ASA was started as a sounding board and voice for all non-physician surgical assistants other then PAs and APNs (they are, of course, welcome). CSFAs, CSAs, SA-Cs and CSTs who first assist as part of their job will benefit from membership in this organization. I feel that there are others, who can also benefit from ASA. Surgical assistants from the National Association of Orthopaedic Technologists (NAOT) who first assist on a regular basis and have privileges in hospitals around this country are just one example. There are others! That is why I am running for the ASA Board of Directors to help find ways to include all surgical assistants—to ensure quality education and to elevate the standard of surgical assisting care in our nation.

I have served AST and the surgical community in many ways. I am currently an appointed member of the ASA Board of Directors. I am the Nevada State Assembly Treasurer, I have instructed at Synthes workshops, held casting and splinting workshops and served on multiple AST committees on the regional and national levels. I have been elected twice to the AST national Board of Directors and served two terms as AST national President and President-Elect. I believe in quality surgical patient

continued on page 8
RENEWAL OPTIONS FOR SURGICAL ASSISTING CREDENTIALS

In the last issue of ASA News, we published a comparison chart related to the three credentials, CSFA, CSA and SA-C. We intended to offer a quick summary of details related to the application process, eligibility and renewal options since this information has not been previously published in one venue. We did receive some feedback, and many seemed to be confused about issues concerning the subsequent costs of maintaining the certification. In an attempt to provide some additional clarification, we have added provided a timetable spanning eight years that includes the annual costs and renewal options for maintaining the respective credentials. It also provides an annual average cost, presented from the most expensive to least expensive.

EIGHT YEAR COST COMPARISON TIMETABLE (excludes initial certification fee)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Credential</th>
<th>Year 1*</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
<th>Year 4</th>
<th>Year 5</th>
<th>Year 6</th>
<th>Year 7</th>
<th>Year 8</th>
<th>Average Annual Cost (Years 2 to 8)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CSA-1</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>$900</td>
<td>$900</td>
<td>$900</td>
<td>$900</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSA-2</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>$375</td>
<td>$375</td>
<td>$375</td>
<td>$375</td>
<td>$375</td>
<td>$375</td>
<td>$375</td>
<td>$350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSA-3</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>$700</td>
<td>$700</td>
<td>$700</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSA-4</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>$300</td>
<td>$300</td>
<td>$300</td>
<td>$300</td>
<td>$300</td>
<td>$300</td>
<td>$300</td>
<td>$300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSFA-1</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>$150</td>
<td>$150</td>
<td>$200</td>
<td>$150</td>
<td>$150</td>
<td>$150</td>
<td>$200</td>
<td>$162.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSFA-2</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>$499</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>$499</td>
<td>$125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSFA-3</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>$450</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>$450</td>
<td>$112.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSFA-4</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>$80</td>
<td>$80</td>
<td>$130</td>
<td>$80</td>
<td>$80</td>
<td>$80</td>
<td>$130</td>
<td>$92.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAC-1</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>$180</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>$180</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>$180</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>$180</td>
<td>$90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SA-C-2</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>$100</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>$100</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>$100</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>$100</td>
<td>$50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Assumes first year of certification and the initial examination fees that were discussed in the last issue of the ASA News.  **Adopted by the NSAA Board of Directors April 2010.
You can also renew your CSFA credential by CE, even if you’re not a member of ASA (or AST) for all four years of your certification cycle. While not recommended, you can also renew by CE, even if you have only been a member in the last couple of years of your cycle. For example, if you join ASA in the third and fourth years of the cycle and pay $150 per year ($300 for two years), earn the required 75 CE credits starting at that point, and then pay the $50 renewal fee, the total would be $350—an average of four years of only $87.50. You can do the same thing as a member of AST for the last years of your cycle, and the costs are even less. As most experienced practitioners know, it’s never been less expensive or easier to earn CE credits. There are a variety of online opportunities that allow you to earn all the credits you’ll need to earn for $100 or even less. You can call ASA to learn more about those options which don’t require membership.
care. It is what I do and who I am, and that will not change.

William Price, SA-C, RSA
I Care Surgical Assistance, Inc
Highland Park, Illinois

Professional involvement
Illinois Surgical Assistant Association and affiliate member, American College of Surgeons

Election statement
After attending the national conference in Grapevine, Texas, I decided that it was my turn to either “put up or shut up.” I am an SA-C, who is running for the ASA Board of Directors under the newly formatted Association of Surgical Assistants.

This new Board has a direction unlike any other in the past. It serves as an umbrella to all non-physician surgical assistants. This distinguished panel has encouraged us all to lend a hand to our future. No longer do we have to battle our differences; I look forward to pooling our resources and ideas. My desire is to help increase our membership, which is one of the main focus points when growing a new professional body in order to be taken seriously by the legislature. I aim to link my prior experience from serving on the Illinois Surgical Assistant Association membership board. The focus during my two years of service was growth and retention of the surgical assistant membership.

Currently, our state boasts more than 300 members. Illinois is also at the forefront for surgical assistants with a title protection act and a billing act specifically written to mandate insurance companies pay surgical assistants for their services at surgery. As an active member, I witnessed how basic membership to the association held weight when trying to get laws passed. It took many tries in the statehouse, until we had a critical mass large enough to get lawmakers to listen.

Delightfully, I have been looking forward to serving with my fellow surgical assistants from all over the country. I believe that I will add to the Board by looking at issues from the point of view of an independent surgical assistant and business owner. My strength will be the ability to educate physicians, administrators, hospital staff and the public (including patients), daily about our profession. I have been a cheerleader for our field since I passed my boards with the American Board of Surgical Assisting in 2003. I visualize sharing my knowledge and experience to all novice and seasoned assistants nationwide. I promise to stand tall as we press lawmakers to recognize our profession as a whole. Thank you for this honor to serve us all.

Shannon E Smith, CST, CSFA, BSHS
Gulf Coast Community College
Panama City, Florida

Professional involvement
AST Florida State Assembly Board of Directors 2010-present

Election statement
Hello, my name is Shannon Smith. I am running for the position of Board of Directors for the Association of Surgical Assistants.

As a founding member of ASA, I am very excited to be running for this position. I have 22 years of combined experience in the operating room with 15 years experience as a Certified Surgical First Assistant. I also hold a Bachelor’s Degree in Health Sciences with a minor in Management. I currently work as the Assistant Coordinator of Surgical Services at Gulf Coast Community College. In addition to assisting with administrative duties for our programs, I oversee lab and clinical assignments for the surgical technologist program, and I am the instructor for our new surgical assistant program. Prior to starting this position I worked for a private practice...
as a surgical assistant for 13 years. In addition to assisting in the office and surgery, I also assisted with many administrative duties, including obtaining preauthorization for procedures and writing appeal letters to insurance companies for reimbursement. I believe my experience and education will be a tremendous asset to our great organization. These are our formative years, a crucial time for our organization, and we need a dedicated, competent, well-informed leadership.

As a member of the Board of Directors, I pledge to commit myself to the advancement of our organization with the level of dedication, passion, and professionalism that our members so rightly deserve.

I began my career in the operating room because of my desire to make a difference. It is with this same desire that I ask for your consideration for this position.

**Vera P Thomas, CST, CSFA, SA-C**  
Boise Surgical Group  
Meridian, Idaho

Professional involvement  

Election statement  
My legal first name is Vera; however, I have answered to “Polly” my entire life. My decision to run for a position on the ASA Board of Directors is driven by the belief that the surgical first assistant role in the operating room is separate than the role of the surgical technologist.

Some people search their whole lives for a career that is fulfilling in all aspects of life. I am lucky that after I became a CST and was exposed to the different career paths chosen by others on the operating room. I realized I had the best job in the OR! I met the person who first suggested being a first assistant to me about eight years ago. Beth Amos, CSFA, LPN (now retired), became my mentor for choosing to continue schooling in an accredited first assistant program. I found in her the passion and knowledge that sparked my own and gave me the direction to follow when I knew I did not want to be a nurse, physician’s assistant, anesthetist or administrator.

In the last year, I have served as vice president of the Idaho State Assembly of AST. Working with the other officers and Board members, has given me the satisfaction of being able to provide new opportunities and experiences to the CSTs and CSFAs in Idaho through AST. I would like to eventually start the Idaho State Assembly of ASA to provide more specific education focusing on surgical first assistant related topics.

It is difficult in limited space to express all I see in the advancement of the surgical first assistant profession. I am a strong advocate for our specialized role in patient care. If I am elected as a member of the Board of Directors, I would like to be a part of making the decisions that will define and support the validity of our credential. I believe in requiring that a CST or other eligible practitioner attend and graduate from an accredited first assistant program to legally work in that role. I have much to learn about legislation, but am learning every day. I believe in justifiable reimbursement from insurance companies to pay our nationally recognized credential the monies for the service provided, as currently some are excluding the credential we hold, yet pay to other people of varying degrees who don’t have the training of the actual role we fill.

In closing, I would like to say that although I may not have the years of experience of some, and admit I have much to learn, if you choose to elect me to this position, I will serve, promote and support ASA and all of you who have chosen this career. My motivations for running come from the heart of a person who has found the passion for exactly what they were meant to do in life. As my mentor has opened this door for me, I would like to give back in return. Thank you for your consideration.

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Editor’s Note: More candidates may run from the floor during the first ASA business session. Prospective candidates must have submitted their Consent to Serve and CVs and have their credentials verified before the first ASA business session. Hours will be posted in the conference handbook.
### Which credential do you hold?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Credential</th>
<th># Responses</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CSFA</td>
<td>257</td>
<td>81.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSA</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SA-C</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### How long have you been certified?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duration</th>
<th># Responses</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-10 Years</td>
<td>221</td>
<td>63.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-20 Years</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>26.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20+ Years</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### What type of employer do you have?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employer Type</th>
<th># Responses</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hospital or Surgery</td>
<td>207</td>
<td>59.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physician/Surgeon</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>25.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self Employed</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>14.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Which state do you work in?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th># Responses</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>7.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Texas</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>14.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wisconsin</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>7.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### How long have you been working as a surgical assistant?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duration</th>
<th># Responses</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-10 Years</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>53.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-20 Years</td>
<td>1167</td>
<td>33.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20+ Years</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>12.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### My annual salary range is:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Salary Range</th>
<th># Responses</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$18K-$25K</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$25-$50K</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>33.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$50-$75K</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>40.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$75-$99K+</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$100K+</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>9.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Are you employed under a specific job description as a surgical assistant?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job Description</th>
<th># Responses</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Surgical Assistant</td>
<td>259</td>
<td>74.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surgical Technologist</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>25.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 2010, two surgical assisting practitioner groups were surveyed to obtain the most recent salary and practice information for Certified Surgical First Assistants and Surgical Assistants–Certified. The results are published here.

Three hundred fifteen participants responded to the CSFA online survey, and 257 participants responded to the SA-C mail survey. Some respondents hold dual credentials and this will be reflected in the statistics. Data for the state of employment were widely varied. For these results, the top three states that were reported by respondents in each of the two surveys were listed.
Oftentimes, in the heady realm of government affairs, it is heard, “If you build it, they will come.” That is, if there is a good idea, such as licensure of surgical assistants, run it up the flagpole, and everyone will salute. While it is without question that the surgical assistant profession and surgical patient safety will both benefit greatly from the requirement that practitioners who assist at surgery be appropriately credentialed, competent and recognized as professionals in the operating room, the road to such recognition can be arduous and serpentine. Experience in this process can yield some useful guidance in pursuing licensure initiatives.

The beginning: have a plan
To paraphrase Judy Garland in the 1939 film, Babes in Arms: “Hey! My Dad has a barn! Let’s put on a show!” Charging forward to file legislation will not be so well received. First, it is necessary to evaluate the political landscape and determine allies, detractors and distractions, interest, motivation, incentives and, of course, worst case scenarios. Identify interested parties and assess their involvement, or opposition. Determine what is essential to the legislation and what can be bargained. “Eye on the Prize!” But first identify specifically what is the prize.

Chart a course
What is the path to licensure? Does it include evaluation by governmental agencies or professional organizations? What is the process to introduce the initiative to each, and what will be the benchmarks of persuasion? Case in point: if a state requires a “sunrise” process, proponents must meet the following criteria:
1) Demonstrable harm from the unregulated practice of a profession or occupation;
2) Inherent qualities peculiar to the proposed regulated professions that distinguish it from ordinary work or labor;
3) Requirements of the profession that include specialized skill or training to benefit the public needs;
4) Demonstration that the public cannot be protected by any means other than professional regulation.

In Virginia, the Department of Health Professions conducted a two-year study to determine that surgical assistants meet these criteria and recommended licensure for the profession. But, it was only the first step.

Assess the political landscape, gather supporters and identify opponents and detractors
A favorable determination of a sunrise process does not guarantee passage of legislation. The journey has only begun. Legislative proponents must assess the political landscape to determine whether the relevant legislature is conducive to entertaining the type of legislation being proposed. Further, the selection of a sponsor (or patron) should position the initiative for movement through the relevant committees, onto the floor, and to the companion chamber. Selecting a sponsor only by “constituent request” may not create sufficient credibility or momentum to move the bill forward. Similarly, developing supporters and identifying opponents should be accomplished at the earliest opportunity. If other members of a profession are impacted by the legislation, they should be contacted and their buy-in and support obtained. It will be one of the first questions asked by the legislators, “Who have you talked to? Are they on board?” Case in point: a licensure bill proponent, who does not involve all practitioners of the profession risks difficult questions from legislators about the solidarity of the initiative at best, and at worst, may appear to be divisive, fragmented and self-serving as the process goes forward. Similarly, if the proponents have not at least identified the opposition and created arguments to blunt or rebut their arguments, they risk appearing unprepared or unable to demonstrate solid arguments. Legislation is not pursued in secret, or even in private, in the current political culture. Questions concerning the legislation, its positive effects and its detractors must be addressed openly, if the political decision makers are to take the legislation and its proponents seriously.

Get all the facts, and share them
Legislation will not go forward without good reason. In today’s political climate, legislation that further

continued on page 12
involves a state’s bureaucracy (with its attendant costs) will be viewed with suspicion at best. Developing the factual support for licensure legislation in advance of the legislation, and in anticipation of the questions to come, is as important as developing the supporters to advance the bill. Development of “white papers” and other public policy analyses should accompany any effort to advance legislation. Data should be gathered from all available sources and shared with all decision makers at all levels. Case in point: a committee or subcommittee hearing is the best opportunity not only to show solidarity with all stakeholders, but to submit data, information and arguments supporting the legislation for the decision makers. Appearing with only argument and without facts dilutes the impact of the initiative.

**Optimize the strengths of the legislation as well as all of its proponents**

Legislators discover almost immediately whether proponents have done their homework and have brought the best face of the bill forward. Controversy can and will derail a bill almost as fast and certainly as opposition. Exclusionary tactics, especially among proponents, will discourage, if not derail, serious inquiry into the efficacy of a proposed bill. Legislators are tempted to abandon legislation that appears divisive. Thousands of bills are filed annually in all 50 states. Only a small percentage will pass. Preparation, planning, alignment and strategy play critical roles in securing passage of professional licensure legislation.
### Membership Application

**Association of Surgical Assistants** • www.surgicalassistant.org
6 West Dry Creek Circle • Suite 200 • Littleton, CO 80120-8031
Phone: 800.637.7433, option 3 • Fax: 303.694.9169
memserv@surgicalassistant.org

#### MEMBERSHIP DUES
Membership categories and discounted first-time CSFA exam bundles explained on the back of this form.

Please check the appropriate choice for membership dues or bundle.

- **Active…$150** *(INCLUDES AST MEMBERSHIP)*
  - Copy of your credential must be submitted for verification.
  - **Credential Held:**
    - CSFA = NBSTSA
    - CSA = NSAA
    - SA-C = ABSA
  - Certification Number __________  Cert Start Date __________  Cert End Date __________

- **Associate…$150** *(INCLUDES AST MEMBERSHIP)*
  - **Credential Held:**
    - CST
    - CRNFA or RNFA
    - PA-C
    - OPA-C
    - Other
  - **Bronze Exam Bundle…$317** *(First-time certification only. INCLUDES ASA & AST MEMBERSHIP. See other side for requirements.)*
  - **Silver Exam Bundle…$202** *(First-time certification only, currently an ASA member. See other side for requirements.)*

- **Student…$45** *(Requirement: currently enrolled in a CAAHEP-accredited surgical assisting program.)*
  - Complete School Name __________  Start Date __________  Graduation Date __________
  - Instructor’s Name __________  Instructor’s Email __________
  - **Gold Student Exam Bundle…$237** *(First-time certification only, includes ASA membership. See other side for requirements.)*

#### DUES INFORMATION
All dues are for one year. Dues are not refundable and membership is not transferable.

#### PAYMENT METHOD
Remit to: ASA, 6 West Dry Creek Circle, Ste 200, Littleton, CO 80120-8031 or fax 303-694-9169

- Check or money order enclosed (make checks payable to AST)

  - Bill my credit card: VISA  MasterCard  AmEx  # __________  Expiration date __________

  - Signature __________

- Check here if you do not wish to receive email notification in addition to your regular postal notifications.

- ASA shares mailing information with a very limited number of organizations which provide membership with liability coverage and other services at a discounted rate as a benefit of membership. Check here if you do not wish to receive information.

#### Join ASA Today!
Print and mail your application with payment to
ASA • 6 West Dry Creek Circle • Suite 200 • Littleton, CO 80120
or fax to 303.694.9169
or submit this form directly to ASA by clicking “SUBMIT”
EARN UP TO 17 CE CREDITS AT THE 2011 SURGICAL ASSISTING LEARNING AT SEA

An educational cruise jointly sponsored by ASA, ASOPA and the Meridian Institute of Surgical Assisting
October 30–November 5, 2011

Surgical assistants, techs and orthopaedic physician assistants are going to sea together—for an unparalleled learning opportunity in the Eastern Caribbean aboard the Carnival Destiny. Participants will experience on the go—learning and earning continuing education credits even before they embark.

This is the first time the Association of Surgical Assistants will be joined by members from the American Society of Orthopaedic Physician’s Assistants (ASOPA). This is the first time surgical assistants and orthopaedic physician assistants are cruisin’ and learning together.

The ship features an huge array of dining options—buffet, international, made to order—all at your fingertips. Extravagant shows, a dance club, casino, Karaoke lounge, luxurious spa, sports bar—all yours to choose and just steps away from your cabin.

There’s more!

The cruise will be making stops at three ports of call—Grand Turk, Half Moon Cay and Nassau. Participants have an appealing range of choices for shore excursions that can be purchased separately or aboard ship.

Grand Turk

The beautiful island of Grand Turk is the capital of the Turks and Caicos. Beautiful beaches, historical buildings and and shopping at small arts and crafts boutiques are just a few of the attractions to enjoy during the shore excursion.

Half Moon Cay

This privately owned paradise features horseback riding on the sand, experiencing a stingray adventure, exploring a nature trail or relaxing in a private beachfront cabana.

Nassau, Bahamas

Stretches of white sand beaches, crystal-clear waters and an abundant marine life are waiting for you to discover. Or shop til you duty-free shop, hop on a carriage ride or see the watery depths in a glass bottom boat—you will have lots of fantastic memories to take back home.

And we even have planned some surprise amenities that we know you will enjoy.

EDUCATION AGENDA (subject to change)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUNDAY, OCTOBER 30, 2011</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11 am–5 pm Registration at pre-cruise Miami Marriott Biscayne Bay hotel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1–5 pm Advanced Suture Workshop at Marriott Biscayne Bay hotel (4 CEs)</td>
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<tr>
<th>MONDAY, OCTOBER 31, 2011</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Noon Embarkation</td>
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<tr>
<td>4:15–5:15 pm Keynote Address (1 CE)</td>
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<tr>
<td>5:15–6:15 pm Reception</td>
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<tr>
<td>6:15–7:15 pm Dinner</td>
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<tr>
<th>TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 2011</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7 am–Noon Education Sessions (5 CEs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noon–1 pm Lunch</td>
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<tr>
<td>1–5 pm Education Sessions (5 CEs)</td>
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<tr>
<th>WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 2011</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7 am–2:30 pm Grand Turk Port Call (on own)</td>
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<tr>
<td>3–5 pm Education Sessions (2 CEs)</td>
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<tr>
<th>THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 2011</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9:30 am–6 pm Half Moon Cay (on own)</td>
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<tr>
<th>FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 2011</th>
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<tr>
<td>7 am–5 pm Nassau, Bahamas (on own)</td>
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<tr>
<th>SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 5, 2011</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8 am Arrive Miami</td>
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</table>

THE DETAILS

We have reserved several levels of cabins. They are in limited supply so be sure to make your reservations early to ensure you receive your preferred choices. All cabins are double occupancy and require two guest registrations. Prices below are per person. Be sure to double the per person price to arrive at the accurate cost for the cruise and program. The per person price includes cabin accommodation, educational sessions, meals, specified soft drinks and many shipboard activities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CABIN CATEGORIES</th>
<th>CHARGES (PER GUEST)</th>
<th>TOTAL CABIN CHARGE (2 GUESTS)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4B Interior</td>
<td>$601</td>
<td>$1,202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4C Interior</td>
<td>$606</td>
<td>$1,212</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4D Interior</td>
<td>$611</td>
<td>$1,222</td>
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<tr>
<td>4E Interior</td>
<td>$616</td>
<td>$1,232</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4F Interior</td>
<td>$621</td>
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<tr>
<td>6B (Ocean View)</td>
<td>$666</td>
<td>$1,332</td>
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<tr>
<td>8B Balcony</td>
<td>$781</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>8C Balcony</td>
<td>$786</td>
<td>$1,572</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additional charges: A $50 per person tip is not included.

Pre-cruise Hotel Information: October 30, 2011, Marriott Biscayne Bay, 1633 North Bayshore Drive, Miami, FL 33132. Visit the hotel website to register: www.marriott.com/miab.

Cruise Registration Online: Visit the ASA/AST websites and click on the 2011 ASA/ASOPA Cruise link. Registration deadline is August 1, 2011. No refunds after August 1, 2011.

For questions, please contact Michele Frey, 303-325-2514 or mfrey@ast.org.