



ASA 9TH ANNUAL MEETING

The ASA 9th Annual Meeting will be held 8 am to 5 pm on May 23, in New Orleans, Louisiana, one day prior to the official beginning of the 38th AST Annual National Conference.

The ASA Advisory Committee has announced the sessions that will be presented during the morning agenda, whereas plans for the advanced practice clinical workshop are still being finalized.

Please note that changes to the schedule are possible and any alterations will be announced in the next newsletter and in the *AST Journal* and on the ASA website.

Seven continuing education credits will be awarded. Fees for members are \$235; fees for nonmembers are \$335. (*Registrants must also be registered as conference attendees*).

■ **8-8:50 am**
GYN updates and the Surgical Assistant
Jeffrey Marcus, MD

■ **9-9:50 am**
Minimally Invasive Spine Surgery
Ron Voorhees, MD

■ **10-10:50 am**
Unicondylar Knee Replacement, Current Trends and the Robotic Future
Bill Bresnihan, CFA

■ **11-11:50 am**
Pancreatic Surgery
Mark Shikhman, MD

■ **Noon-1:30 pm**
Lunch (provided)

■ **1:30-5 pm**
Advanced Practitioner Hands-on Workshop

■ **6-7 pm**
Reception

ORTHOPEDIC/CARDIOVASCULAR SPECIALTY FORUM AND EXAM

Fred Schaefer, CST, CFA

The first exam, for CSTs and CFAs specializing in surgical assisting orthopedic, and cardiovascular specialties, occurred at the Hyatt Regency, in Indianapolis, Indiana, on Saturday, September 23, 2006.

The Forum began with ASA members, CSTs and CFAs from around the country, greeting one another, during a reception held on Friday evening. James Bell, CST, CFA, AST president, Sherri Alexander, CST, AST treasurer, Bill Teutsch, CAE, AST chief executive officer, and Kevin Frey, CST, AST director of continuing education, as well as Board members from the National Board of Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting (NBSTSA) were on hand to inaugurate this advanced practice opportunity.

Saturday morning began with two tracks and eight speakers including, Dave Brokaw, MD, Dave Fisher, MD, David Hormuth, MD, Zane Hammond, MD, Kosmos Kayes, MD, Michael Landis, MD, John Storey, MD, and Terry Trammell, MD. Topics ranged from Rural Trauma, Pediatric Orthopedics, Efficiency in O.R. Management, Endo-Thoracic Aortic Aneurysm, Cardiothoracic Trauma and Diseases of the Esophagus. Lunch followed the education presentations and then the two examinations were scheduled.

NBSTSA developed a specialty certification examination as one route of recognition for experienced prac-

tioners who have contributed to quality orthopedic and cardiovascular surgical patient care. The credential provides evidence of an individual's competence in these surgical specialties, and also offers proof of achievement to employers, other health care professionals, peers, and the public. The certification examination measures the skills and knowledge required to assist in orthopedics and cardiovascular. By passing the examination, a practitioner has earned the credential and the right to place the CST-OS or CST-CVS or CST, CFA-OS or CST, CFA-CVS designation after his or her name.

The four-hour certification exam consisted of 150 multiple-choice questions with four possible answers. There is only one correct answer for each question, and the test is scored as a pass/fail.

Preparing for an advanced practice specialty certification examination represents a challenging undertaking. With only a few months to prepare, participants improvised creative study techniques and developed study groups with other colleagues.

A study guide was furnished, and it provided assistance in identifying knowledge areas that required possible review and also offered an opportunity to become familiar with the format of questions used on the exam. The study guide was supplemented by a list of textbooks intended to help practitioners review.



NATIONAL BOARD OF
SURGICAL TECHNOLOGY
AND SURGICAL ASSISTING

The National Board for Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting (NBSTSA) has announced that a total of 51 advanced practitioners took the advanced specialty examinations. Thirty-three practitioners who specialize in orthopedics and 18 practitioners who specialize in cardiovascular tested in order to earn one of the two new designations.

Eligibility for Surgical Assistant Examinations

In the winter 2006 issue of *ASA News*, information was provided regarding methods to help prospective surgical assistants evaluate an educational program and determine the value of the competing credentials.

In this issue, the eligibility standards of the four different certifying examinations will be reviewed. These surgical assistant examinations are sponsored by the National Board for Surgical Technologists and Surgical Assistants (NBSTSA); the American Board of Surgical Assistants (ABSA); the National Assistant at Surgery Council (NASC); and the National Surgical Assistant Association (NSAA).

Certifying Agency	Criteria for Eligibility
NBSTSA	Current CST with minimum 350 cases and two full years of surgical assistant experience during the four previous years
	Graduate of CAAHEP-accredited surgical assistant program
NSAA	Graduate of CAAHEP-accredited or NSAA-approved program of surgical assisting
	Individual with three consecutive years' experience as nonphysician surgical assistant (750 hours/year, minimum 2,250 hours)
	Graduate of foreign medical school with verifiable documentation and verifiable experience as surgeon or a surgical rotation equivalent to 2,250 hours of surgery/surgical assisting.
	Graduates of US military program that emphasized surgical assisting.
ABSA	Individual with 2,250 hours of experience but lacking college course work can receive CSA-Provisional certificate after passing examination.
	Physician Candidates (US or foreign trained) with 400 cases or 1,500 clinical surgical hours during last two years
NASC	Licensed and Non-licensed Personnel with 400 cases or 1,500 clinical hours during last two years
	Licensed Practical Nurse—Surgical Assistant
	Registered Nurse First Assistant

Prospective Surgical Assisting Education Programs (not CAAHEP-accredited)

We are hearing through the grapevine and, of course, online, that additional surgical assisting education programs are on the horizon. In order to enhance the career opportunities for surgical technologists and reinforce current surgical assistants, your help is necessary.

Can you review the list of the following locales and facilities, and share what you know, or have heard, if any of these programs are in development or actually in operation. We are seeking general information about the identity of their program director, length of program, admission requirements, curriculum design, number of students and graduation rates, if available.

Please contact a member of the ASA Advisory Board if you have information. Their contact information is published below. Your assistance is greatly appreciated.

MICHIGAN

- Oakwood Hospital, Dearborn
- Wayne County Community College, Detroit
Mark Shikhman, MD, PhD, Program Director,
Mshikhm1@wcccd.edu
www.wcccd.edu/academic_programs/view_program.asp?id=67

- University of Cincinnati, Clermont College, Cincinnati
Linda M Baker-Numrich, CNOR, BSN,
Program Director
bakerim@email.uc.edu
www.cic.ud.edu/Programs/SurgTech.pdf

MINNESOTA

- Mayo Clinic, Rochester

TEXAS

- Brooklyn Institute, Arlington
Nora Flores, CSA, Chief Operations Officer

OHIO

- Lorain County Community College, Elyria
Pat Sedlak, Surgical Technology Program Director
psedlak@loraininccc.edu,
www.loraincc.edu/LCCC/Institutional_Development/CM/SearchResults.Normal.0.lccc
- University of Akron, Akron
Sherry Gamble, CST, CSA, Program Director
sig@uakron.edu
www.uakron.edu/academics/docs/SMC_25.pdf

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JEFF BIDWELL—MADISONVILLE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Jeff Bidwell, CST, CFA, KCSA, MA, graduated from the surgical technology program of Madisonville Community College (MCC), Madisonville, Kentucky, in 1991. Four years later, he earned an associate's degree from the same facility, and in another two years, earned a bachelor's degree from the University of Southern Indiana in Evansville, Indiana. Bidwell obtained a master's degree from Murray State University, Murray, Kentucky, in 1999. Over the past 15 years, he has worked in all surgical areas, with a specialty in orthopedics.

Currently, he is serving as the director of the surgical first assisting and surgical technology programs at Madisonville Community College. He is also an instructor of European and American history and is employed as a part-time surgical assistant in the orthopedic department of Trover Clinic. He is a member of the Accreditation Review Committee on Education in Surgical Technology (ARC-ST), and the Education and Professional Standards Committee for the Association of Surgical Technologists. Bidwell is a Board member for the Kentucky State Assembly and serves in an advisory role for the Kentucky Medical Boards Surgical Assisting Committee.

When asked how the program developed, he explained that a few years ago, several CSTs and local employers requested that Madisonville Community College develop a surgical assisting program that was both accredited and affordable. With the help of AST staff members, the first CAAHEP-accredited surgical assisting educational program was launched.

Of course, things started off slowly, and the program was initially intended for local students only. Gradually, the program was placed online and is now offered through distance education. In 2006, we are currently in our fifth year and average approximately 22 students annually. Our goal is to maintain that number of students as long as we continue to excel on the national certification exams.

Presently, our program provides a 20-credit hour certificate. We will be reducing the 20 credit hours down to 16 credit hours beginning in 2007. Soon, we will offer an associate's degree in surgical assisting. The program intends to accept a block of credits applicable to the associate's degree from any applicant who has graduated from a CAAHEP-accredited surgical technology program.