



ARC/STSA

OutReach

Accreditation Review Council on Education
In Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting
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Fall/Winter 2011

Sponsored by the Association of Surgical Technologists and The American College of Surgeons

Chair's Message

Tony Makin, CST, BS, FAST



Transition. Change. Quality. Improvement. We all may have used these words to describe the ongoing process of developing our programs. One of the things that remains constant is that we change to meet the needs of the students and the needs of the communities that we serve. This part of the process involves evaluation of required program courses and the overall program of instruction to reflect the needs of our clinical facilities and ultimately, the needs of our patients.

The incorporation of the national *Core Curriculum for Surgical Technology 6ed.* from AST is one of those changes that will lead to program improvement. Yes, it does entail a lot of work which may include the evaluation of course work and shifting topics from one course to another or from one term to another. But we tend to do that anyway. The new core curriculum gives us the opportunity to examine what we currently teach and to evaluate it for effectiveness, and then, make necessary changes based on that evaluation. It also gives us the opportunity to eliminate certain topics or reduce the amount of time that we have been spending on them to free up time to concentrate on other relevant materials.

With this in mind, the conversion of clinical case requirement and the definitions of specialties will help the program faculty help the student meet the case requirement to be successful and to meet CAAHEP Standards. The changes in the specialty designation and the case leveling will allow the students to have a broader range of surgical procedures depending on the range available at the clinical affiliate facilities in your area. The transition from the *Core Curriculum for Surgical Technology 5ed.* to the *Core Curriculum for Surgical Technology 6ed.* must be completed by January 1, 2013.

While this may seem to be ample time for transition, the process to make the total conversion may involve several steps, including those outside the department (i.e., curriculum committee approval, institutional accreditor approval, etc.). The time to start is now to ensure that the conversion takes place in a smooth and fluid manner.

The ARC/STSA Board of Directors also voted to make changes in the titles of some of the board leadership for 2012, our 40th anniversary, as well. The designations of Chair and Vice-Chair will be replaced with the designations President and Vice-President. This change goes into effect on January 1, 2012.

On behalf of the Board of Directors and the ARC/STSA staff I want to wish each of you a joyous holiday season and pleasant transition from 2011 to 2012.

ARC/STSA Board of Directors

Chair

Tony Makin, CST, BS, FAST
Jamestown, NC

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Decatur, IL

Howard M. Ross, MD, FACS
Red Bank, NJ

Carolyn Stewart, PhD, EdS
Rock Hill, SC

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Congratulations!

Congratulations to the following surgical technology and surgical assisting programs which have been awarded initial and continuing CAAHEP programmatic accreditation at the September and November 2011 CAAHEP meetings. These programs have successfully completed the accreditation process and have met or exceeded the national standards outlined in the CAAHEP *Standards and Guidelines for the Accreditation of Educational Programs in Surgical Technology* or the CAAHEP *Standards and Guidelines for the Accreditation of Educational Programs in Surgical Assisting*.

Schools That Have Received Initial Accreditation:

Surgical Technology:

Fortis College-Columbus, OH
MedVance Institute-Grand Prairie, TX
North-West College-West Covina, CA
Suwannee Hamilton Technical Center, FL
Virginia College-Augusta, GA
Virginia College-Greenville, SC
Virginia College-Jacksonville, FL



Schools That Have Received Continuing Accreditation:

Surgical Technology:

Albert I. Prince CTHSS, CT
Canadian Valley Technical Center, OK
EHOVE School of Surgical Technology, OH
Everest College-Thornton, CO
Fortis College-Orange Park, FL
Harrison College-Indianapolis East Campus, IN
Keiser Career College-Miami Lakes, FL
Keiser Career College-St. Petersburg, FL
Miami-Jacobs Career College, OH
National College-Louisville, KY
Owensboro Community and Technical College, KY
Palm Beach State College, FL
Washburn Institute of Technology, KS
West Virginia Northern Community College, WV

Surgical Assisting:

Wayne County Community College, MI

We applaud your continuing commitment to excellence in surgical technology and surgical assisting education through specialized programmatic accreditation.



~ Calendar of Meetings and Events ~

February 10-11, 2012: Instructors Forum (including AFE and Site Visitor Training)

March 14-17, 2012: SASA and ARC/STSA Board of Directors Meeting—San Diego, CA

May 18, 2012: CAAHEP Board of Directors Conference Call

July 16-17, 2012: PRR Panel Meeting—Denver, CO (tentative)

August 4, 2012: Accreditation Fundamentals for Educators (AFE) Workshop—Denver, CO

September 12-15, 2012: SASA and ARC/STSA Board of Directors Meeting—Denver, CO

November 16, 2012: CAAHEP Board of Directors Conference Call

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The ARC/STSA Board of Directors (BoD), its Subcommittee on Accreditation for Surgical Assisting (SASA) and the accreditation services staff wish you and your students Season's Greetings and a Happy New Year. We commend every CAAHEP accredited program on completing another calendar year of commitment to excellence in education via maintaining the national accreditation Standards.

It seems like our last newsletter, the Spring/Summer 2011 edition of the *Outreach*, was just posted a few months ago. Since then, there has been abundant activity on the part of the ARC/STSA, its SASA and CAAHEP. As with each of these ED Corner columns, highlights of ARC/STSA activities and events in programmatic accreditation services for surgical technology and surgical assisting programs from July 2011 through December 2011 follow including some year-end wrap-up information:

- Re-election of **Van Bates, CST, BA** as Chair of the SASA for a one year term.
- Development and submission to CAAHEP's **Standards Committee** of proposed revisions to the **Standards and Guidelines** for surgical technology programs reflecting input from over **700** respondents [including program directors, clinical coordinators, educators and allied health deans] to ARC/STSA 2009-2011 online surveys of education community preferences [see *next two bullets*].
- **Standards revision** proposals* based on survey input above being reviewed by **CAAHEP** include enhancements to minimum academic credentials to be held by newly appointed faculty and to be awarded to graduates at program completion. Professional experiential requirements for newly appointed faculty have also been enhanced.
- **Guideline language revision** proposals include a reduction in the recommended laboratory student-to-instructor ratio to support effective student instruction and the addition of multiple and more helpful descriptions and examples to assist surgical technology programs in demonstrating compliance.

*Note: Any revisions to the *Standards and Guidelines* approved by the CAAHEP Standards Committee must be approved by sponsoring organizations and subsequently published for public comment and an open hearing to be scheduled *prior* to final adoption and implementation by CAAHEP. Any changes to minimum credential and/or experience requirements for faculty will not affect current employees while in that position at that institution/campus. Implementation of any changes to minimum credential requirements for graduates at program completion will be delayed for at least five years to allow programs ample time to transition.

- Concluded processing of **455 2011 Annual Report** online submissions (100% response rate) incorporating data corrections reported after October 1, 2010 from **surgical technology** programs in dialogue with the ARC/STSA.
- Notified each SA program of formal SA Review Panel findings based on their **2011 Annual Report** reflecting program outcomes limited to retention and outcomes assessment exam (OAE) participation in demonstration of continuing compliance [see *SASA column for additional information*].
- Board of Directors reaffirmed CST **outcomes assessment exam thresholds** for compliance (**100% participation & 70% pass rate**) with 100% of accredited ST programs using the **CST exam** as their *sole* assessment tool as of August 1, 2011.
- Inaugurated the alternative NBSTSA **Comprehensive (Secure) Practice Exam** as a reportable outcomes assessment tool for graduating cohorts from 'applicant' ST programs seeking Initial accreditation.
- Conducted **21 on-site visits** and **100+** Board of Directors' **reviews** of program applications, progress reports, requests for change, complaints and other accreditation actions.
- Recommended **7 Initial** and **15 Continuing** accreditation awards in surgical technology and surgical assisting with approximately 465 surgical technology and 8 surgical assisting CAAHEP accredited programs in the United States.
- Conducted **186 protocol reviews** expediting ARC/STSA action *between* formal Board of Directors' meetings on program change requests and other submissions.
- Launched an *expanded* ARC/STSA **2012 Scholarship Program** with maximum awards pool of \$4000 for students and \$1000 for educators (a 67% increase over 2011) as an ARC/STSA service to the surgical technology and surgical assisting student and educator communities [http://www.arcstsa.org/pdfs/2012_Scholar_Web_Announcement.pdf].
- Approved six new ARC/STSA **on-site evaluators** (site visitors).
- Budgeted funds beginning in 2012 for enhanced educational offerings to educators and administrators including **development of additional workshop opportunities** by various non-traditional delivery methods where appropriate.

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- Nearly 300 ST programs accepted the ARC/STSA one-time only offer of a '**complimentary copy**' of AST's revised *Core Curriculum for Surgical Technology, 6th Edition (CCST6e)*. All current applicant and accredited ST programs that accepted the one-time offer will receive their copy by the beginning of the year.
- Assisted those programs seeking early transition to AST's 2011 revised *Core Curriculum for Surgical Technology, 6th Edition (CCST6e)* prior to the published mandatory implementation date of **January 1, 2013** for all ST programs.
- Hosted successful summer **Accreditation Fundamentals for Educators (AFE)** workshop in Denver, CO for **30** participants for a total of **146** participants at all three AFE offerings during 2011. *The AFE is a required training session to assist all newly appointed program directors (effective January 1, 2009) and is available to all program directors, instructors, preceptors and school administrators.*
- Revised and posted updates to ARC/STSA standardized ST and SA program reporting forms and instructions on the website for easy 24/7 access (www.arcstsa.org/forms/ST/index.htm).
- Exhibited at the October 2011 **ACS 97th Annual Clinical Congress** in San Francisco, CA educating attendees regarding the benefits and value of programmatic accreditation and its impact on the preparation of program graduates who serve with surgeons in the surgical suite.
- Exhibited at the October 2011 **California State Assembly (CA-SA) 11th Annual Conference** in North Hollywood, CA updating attendees regarding the benefits and value of programmatic accreditation to the student and practitioner communities of interest.
- Hosted the October 2011 joint **Partnership Meeting** [ARC/STSA, NBSTSA & AST] in San Francisco, CA updating attendees on ARC/STSA programmatic accreditation activities in support of certified graduates of CAAHEP accredited programs as entry-level practitioners in every operating room.
- Participated in the July 2011 **CAAHEP Summer Workshop** in Arlington, VA presenting ARC/STSA input as part of the select **Best Practices Panel** providing resources for Committees on Accreditation representing multiple other professions.
- Attended the September 2011 **NN2 24th Annual Meeting** in Cheyenne, WY for Health Career

Programs in Two-Year College and participated in the NN2 Accreditation Committee meeting.

- Completed the two-year (2009-2011) **outcomes assessment exam pilot-test** to establish thresholds for SA program compliance with 2008 Standards for programs which elected either the CSA or CSFA™ credentialing exam.
- Established SA program **outcomes assessment exam threshold of 71% pass rate** for program graduates and **eliminated** the participation rate requirement effective **August 1, 2011*** [see the *SASA column for additional information*].

* As with other Committees on Accreditation (CoA) in the CAAHEP system, the ARC/STSA Board of Directors and its SASA employ objective, data-driven methods as part of the due diligence exercised in the evaluation of, and threshold-setting for, any credentialing exam recognized as an appropriate entry-level outcomes assessment tool [see Spring/Summer issue of *Outreach* for additional information at www.arcstsa.org].

With the end of the year at hand, final preparations are underway for the launch of a new website in 2012, to mark the 40th anniversary of the ARC/STSA and the 18th anniversary of our collaboration with CAAHEP (www.caahep.org).

As in the four decades since inception, the ARC/STSA has maintained its commitment to our common mission with CAAHEP to provide world-class recognition for quality surgical technology and surgical assisting education, through specialized programmatic accreditation services, for students, educators, and regulatory agencies and the healthcare consumer (public).

In 2011, CAAHEP accreditation retained its national recognition as the *gold standard* for programmatic accreditation in the healthcare professions. CAAHEP accreditation welcomes all sponsor-types as part of an *inclusive* process aimed at enhancing education programs regardless of location or institutional setting. CAAHEP remains the largest allied health accreditor in North America.

Since 1994, the ARC/STSA has served as the sole Committee on Accreditation (CoA) recognized by CAAHEP for accreditation of

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education programs in surgical technology and since 2002 in surgical assisting. The ARC/STSA remains focused in collaboration with CAAHEP on providing accreditation services to all of our communities of interest.

CAAHEP is the only CHEA (www.chea.org) recognized allied health accreditor for surgical technology and surgical assisting. CAAHEP employs a comprehensive, two-tier accreditation process as a public service ensuring a balanced and thorough

review of all applicant programs against national Standards in achieving and maintaining specialized programmatic accreditation.

Congratulations to all of these programs who have been awarded initial and continuing CAAHEP programmatic accreditation in 2011. The ARC/STSA applauds your achievement and continuing commitment to excellence in surgical technology and surgical assisting education through specialized programmatic accreditation.

CORE CURRICULUM FOR SURGICAL TECHNOLOGY, 6E IMPLEMENTATION UPDATE

Effective January 1, 2013, all CAAHEP-accredited surgical technology programs are required to implement the *Core Curriculum for Surgical Technology, 6e* (CCST6e) for all new cohorts starting on or after January 1, 2013.

Programs can elect to implement the CCST6e prior to January 1, 2013. Programs that elect to implement the CCST6e prior to the January 1, 2013 mandated implementation date should submit the following documentation to the ARC/STSA, seeking approval of the proposed curriculum change and demonstrating evidence of CCST6e compliance:

- a revised copy of the ARC/STSA Curriculum Sequencing form (Form C-1 – available online at www.arcstsa.org/forms/ST/forms_and_facts_ST.htm) indicating the months of instruction for each of the four designated areas for one cohort of students
- a master curriculum list, including the course designation, course title, clock hours, and time increment (quarter, semester, trimester, etc.) of instruction
- for each course listed on the master curriculum list, a comprehensive syllabus including the course designation, course title, clock hours, time increment (quarter, semester, trimester, etc.) of instruction, course faculty, course schedule, course overview, course objectives, method of teaching, course content outline, outcomes assessment methods, and grading scale. Course syllabi should be submitted for all didactic, laboratory and clinical courses.
- An ARC/STSA Curriculum Comparison Form – CCST6e [CCF-6e](available at www.arcstsa.org/forms/ST/forms_and_facts_ST.htm) indicating that the proposed curriculum offered will meet or exceed the content requirements of the *Core Curriculum for Surgical Technology, 6e*.

Please note that a comprehensive syllabus should include the following: the course designation, course title, credit hours, clock hours, period of instruction, course faculty, course schedule, course overview, course objectives, methods of instruction, detailed content outline, outcomes assessment methods, and grading scale. Course syllabi should be submitted for all didactic, laboratory and clinical courses.*

[* A detailed content outline is a document that is either included within the syllabus or is a companion document to the syllabus that clearly specifies the CCST6e topic(s) instructed within the course, as listed on the ARC/STSA Curriculum Comparison Form 6e (CCF-6e), including specific surgical procedures. CCST6e compliance is determined by identifying a topic on the ARC/STSA Curriculum Comparison Form, 6e, identifying the syllabus and page number indicating where the specific content is located in the applicable syllabus, then identifying the topic on the syllabus page specified.]

The ARC/STSA Board of Directors will notify programs beforehand regarding the documentation requirements for submission implementation of the CCST6e.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ATTENTION NEW Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting PROGRAM DIRECTORS!!

NEW PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT REQUIREMENTS EFFECTIVE JANUARY 2009 FOR NEWLY APPOINTED SURGICAL TECHNOLOGY AND SURGICAL ASSISTING PROGRAM DIRECTORS

At the Fall 2008 Board of Directors meeting, the board approved a new mandatory professional development requirement for newly appointed program directors.

Effective **January 1, 2009**, all newly appointed surgical technology and surgical assisting program directors are required to attend an ARC/STSA *Accreditation Fundamentals for Educators* (AFE) Workshop within **one** (1) year of appointment.

The AFE Workshop is designed to give program directors, instructors and administrators basic information on the accreditation process, including:

- Accreditation Definitions
- Institutional versus Programmatic Accreditation
- Initial versus Continuing Accreditation
- Terminology Associated with Accreditation
- Accreditation Actions
- The Accreditation Process
- Assessment Planning
- Standards Interpretive Guide (SIG)
- Annual Reporting Requirements
- CAAHEP Standards & Guidelines
- Program Review Report
- Types of Accrediting Bodies
- Findings Letter Responses & Progress Reports

While this workshop is open to all Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting Program Directors and educators, newly appointed ST and SA program directors will be required to submit proof of attending an AFE to the ARC/STSA in support of their appointment.

The workshops will be offered three times per year:

- before the AST Instructors Forum (February 10, 2012 – Orlando, FL)
- during the AST Instructors Workshop (Wednesday, May 23, 2012 – Washington, DC)
- on August 4, 2012 – Denver, CO

The cost of the workshop is **\$100** plus travel and accommodation expenses.

Please contact the ARC/STSA at 303-694-9269 or info@arcstsa.org for more information.



ARC/STSA Fall/Winter 2011 Office Hours/Holiday Schedule



ARC/STSA regular office hours are Monday – Friday, 8 AM – 4:30 PM (Mountain Time).

Offices Closed

ARC/STSA offices will be closed on the dates noted below in observance of the holiday season. Accreditation services and assistance will resume on the next business day during regular office hours.



Thursday, *December 15, 2011 from 11 AM – 4:30 PM*
Friday & Monday, *December 23 & December 26, 2011: Winter Holidays'*
Observance

Monday, January 2, 2012: New Year's Day Observance



Happy holidays to all!!

Congratulations to the 2011 ARC/STSA Scholarships Winners!!

2011 Advanced Degree Scholarship Winner



**Cindy Mask, CST, AA
Assistant Professor
Tarrant County College
Hurst, Texas**

The first time I experienced surgery, I was hooked! I knew this was the right profession for me. That was 1982. Nearly thirty years later, I still love surgery! I believe surgical technology is a wonderful career. Currently, I am an instructor in surgical technology at Tarrant County College in Hurst, Texas.

As an instructor, it is not always easy to practice what you preach. We tell our students everyday how important it is to focus on their studies, complete their assignments and organize and prepare for their careers. I know firsthand the importance of all of these. I too am a college student. Going back to school has been challenging, but I am ready for this challenge.

In 2008, I made the commitment to finish my bachelor's degree. Advancing my education was a personal decision, and I thank my family for supporting me during this time. My oldest son is now a senior in high school and I want to set an example for him. How will

this degree help in my current position? It will help me advance at my current employer and most importantly, I want to be a role model to convey to my current as well as former students to set their goals and know that they are attainable. I want them to know that they can do anything if they put their heart and soul into it. I hope they realize the importance of advancing personally as well as educationally during their careers.

I thank ARC/STSA for the incredible scholarship. This is a wonderful honor and I thank you from the bottom of my heart. When I complete my degree, you will be the first to know it. My target completion date will be 2012. If I make that goal, it will be exactly thirty years since I started this goal. Thank you again for the award.



2011 Student Scholarship Winners



**Amy Shibe
Student
Concorde Career College
Aurora, Colorado**

First, I would like to start by thanking ARC/STSA for the generous

scholarship; it is true honor and blessing. Second, I would like to thank my instructors Julie Vance and Kevin Bellis for pushing me beyond my comfort zone and always encouraging me. My instructors have a passion for this amazing profession and strive to pass those fundamentals down to every student they teach. Third, I would like to thank my wonderful family and fiancé for all their love and support during this past year of schooling.

It has been a lifelong pursuit to pursue a job in the medical field. As a teen volunteer at a local hospital I was introduced to the role of the Surgical Technologist. It was that experience which confirmed my desire to work toward becoming a Surgical Technologist.

I applied and was accepted to Concorde Career College after graduating high school and earned recognition on the President's List and Dean's List for the duration of my training at Concorde.

I graduated from Concorde July 7, 2011 and passed my national exam. Three weeks later, I was hired at Memorial Hospital in Colorado Springs. Being a Surgical Technologist is a selfless and rewarding job. I absolutely love being a Surgical Technologist. Every day I learn something new, and expect to for the rest of my career. There are always new challenges and surprises around every corner. I don't have one favorite specialty; I enjoy scrubbing all cases while learning to be a well-rounded Surgical Technologist. I love being on trauma cases, where I am challenged to use all the skills I have learned. It is an

amazing feeling being part of a team whose sole purpose is to save the patient's life.

I would like to eventually become a First Assistant and Preceptor and pass on my passion to students. It is an honor and a blessing to have been given the opportunity to pursue my dream, and I am proud to be a Surgical Technologist!



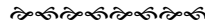
Cynthia Sowecke
Student
East Valley Institute
of Technology
Mesa, Arizona

First and foremost I want to thank ARC/STSA for selecting me for this wonderful award. It truly is an honor, and means so much to me. Deciding to return to school a year ago was a very difficult decision. The sacrifices made by my family were extremely difficult to say the least. I graduated in May as a Surgical Technologist and have never looked back or regretted that decision. The lessons I have learned are ones that will truly last me a lifetime.

When I reflect on the procedures that I was fortunate enough to be a part of during my clinicals, it amazes me that someone such as me was able to be a part of something as fascinating as surgery in the operating room. It truly was and continues to be amazing.

I am currently in the process of taking my national exam. I am hopeful that with the skills, knowledge and my ability that I will pass the exam and start my career as a Surgical Technologist. My goal is to learn as much as I can and fulfill my desire to travel to other countries and help those less fortunate.

Once again, I cannot thank you enough for this wonderful scholarship. Good luck to all my fellow Surgical Technologist students. You truly can make your dreams come true!



Terri Belcher
Student
Meridian Institute of Surgical
Assisting
Joelton, Tennessee

Let me begin by thanking you for choosing me to be the recipient of your scholarship. As a working student and mother of two active children, the financial burden this scholarship pays is greatly appreciated. I still have far to go to reach my dream; but your generosity and support help me, and my family, far more than you know.

Please allow me to tell you a little more about myself. On a personal note, on my days off, my family

and I love going out on the boat or going bike riding. I am the kind of person that always wants to be doing something and moving forward.

On the professional side, I completed surgical tech school in August 2005. After working a couple of years in the field, I decided to start studying for the Certification Exam. My co-workers predicted I would have a huge disadvantage because of the many years since completing school. I studied for months and proudly passed the first time. Approximately a year later, I decided that I wanted to do more and move forward with my education. I looked into the Meridian Institute for Surgical Assisting. It was very scary thinking of the financial burden and the time commitment that the requirements for this program involved for completing. I have surprised myself, however, with my busy schedule and hard determination I am in month 10 now and I am almost done with the program. I will be taking the Certification Exam in August 2011. After successfully completing the test, I will continue looking for a position available in the Houston area. I still am looking forward to learning all about the areas of surgery that I have not had the chance to explore and further perfect my skills.





Maria Ferchen
Student
Niagara County Community
College
Sanborn, New York

I would first like to thank the foundation in granting me the Student Scholarship Award. It is with great excitement and gratitude that I have been chosen with this honor. This scholarship will greatly help defer some of the costs of my continuing education and assist me with my

future endeavors and dreams in working toward my professional and educational goals.

The opportunity to model what it entails to become a lifelong learner has granted me a new found appreciation of higher education and has afforded me the privilege of learning what self development involves. Throughout my adulthood, I have always demonstrated hard work and dedication to whatever I was challenged with from marriage to raising a family. As an adult learner, I have applied those same ambitions with the passion I have to reach my educational and professional goals. It is my desire and ambition to achieve and continue to maintain that same driving force in obtaining my life long dream of working in the healthcare system as a Surgical Technician. However, my goals do not stop there.

My ultimate goal is to work in a trauma unit or in an emergency room setting where I can exercise

my talents and expertise in assisting others who are desperately in need of quality healthcare. I will uphold in the highest honor my responsibilities and dedication to assist others with the highest form of care. The challenges of my dreams of achieving these goals are held in highest regards and I look forward to the challenges and rewards this endeavor will bring me and to those that I work along with and for those patients that I care for. I realize that long after the formal education that I am working toward has been reached, the learning and self-development will continue for a lifetime. This truly excites me and I welcome the many challenges and awards I will experience in working within the healthcare system. I plan on always continuing my educational learning through workshops and other various forms of professional growth opportunities in order to always ensure the highest quality of care to my patients.



➤ We're Committed To Advancing Your Education.

The ARC STSA 2012 Scholarship Program Multiple Scholarships—Up to \$1,000 each

The Accreditation Review Council on Education in Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting (**ARC STSA**) is pleased to announce the launch of our **2012 Scholarship Program** in service to the Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting student and educator communities.

Annually, since 2005, the **ARC STSA** Board of Directors has awarded multiple scholarships of up to **\$1,000** in at least two separate categories, Student Scholarship and Educator Scholarship. In 2012, the **ARC STSA** will award a total of up to **\$5,000** in combined scholarships.

➤ All eligible applicants are strongly encouraged to apply before the **February 27th deadline**. For eligibility requirements and to apply visit **arcstsa.org** today!

Scholarship recipients will be announced at the 2012 AST National Conference in Washington, DC and will be posted on our website, arcstsa.org, by June 15, 2012.



Moving Measurably Forward

Van Bates, BA, CST, SASA Chair

Winter Greetings and Happy Holidays from the Subcommittee on Accreditation for Surgical Assisting (SASA). As we all know, fall can signal that our routines are about to slow down, and winter can bring even the most determined of us to a halt. At times it can be difficult to tell we are making progress at all. Deadlines we set optimistically get put off due to the Holidays, commutes grind to a stop as inclement weather closes in, and our programs take a much-deserved break as we evaluate what we have done and plan for the next term. As the SASA held its Fall meeting this September in conjunction with the ARCSTSA Board of Directors in Denver, it considered many things it has seen before: Program Review Reports from programs as they move toward Continuing Accreditation, evidence of compliance with the updated 2008 CAAHEP Standards and Guidelines for Education in Surgical Assisting (S&G-SA), revisions to the Standards Interpretive Guide for Surgical Assisting (SIG-SA) and other items for routine review. Sometimes it can be difficult to see progress in routine. This fall, however, there was one item that was not routine: Annual Report data.

For the first time ever, SASA was able to consider Annual Report of outcomes data provided by our accredited Surgical Assisting programs. The Annual Report for Surgical Assisting collects data reported by accredited SA Programs from the previous academic year. For the 2011 Annual Report, two of the five outcomes areas: retention data and assessment exam results data were submitted, while graduate placement, graduate survey data, and employer survey data will be incorporated beginning with the 2012 Annual Report. This data will be collected each year from SA programs in both initial and continuing accreditation and used to help confirm continued compliance with the 2008 CAAHEP Standards and Guidelines for Education in Surgical Assisting. Over time, Annual Report data also serves as a tool for our accredited SA programs. By monitoring outcomes data trending over time, our programs will be able to identify areas of strength and of weakness. In combination with Outcomes Assessment Planning (OAP), an accredited SA program can identify not only the five reported outcomes, but any additional outcomes the program wishes to collect and use it to plan strategically to reach its goals.

In the process of piloting this first Annual Report, SASA gathered a great deal of feedback regarding the 2011 Annual Report format and process. Much of that feedback will be reflected in the 2012 Annual Report. Programs can look forward to (among other enhancements), elimination of the outcomes assessment exam

participation rate while setting the pass rate threshold (see below), streamlined clinical affiliate and clinical preceptor reporting (using baselines in their 2011 Annual Reports from which they can submit updates) and resetting the Annual Report due date from May 1st to August 1st beginning with the 2012 Annual Report for accredited Surgical Assisting programs.

In order for any outcome threshold to be useful to a program's assessment and strategic planning processes, it must be an outcome founded on sound statistical data. As such, the outcome thresholds for assessment exam results recommended at the SASA fall meeting have set a benchmark founded on academic year data from three sources: National Surgical Assistant Association's (NSAA) Certified Surgical Assistant (CSA) examination results, National Board of Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting (NBSTSA) Certified Surgical First Assistant (CSFA™) examination results, and Annual Report outcomes data. Based on the previous two years' pilot data from these combined sources, SASA recommended and the ARC/STSA Board of Directors approved the outcomes assessment exam threshold, effective **August 1 2011**, set at a minimum pass rate of 71% of program graduates with no minimum participation rate. This means that over the coming years, Annual Report data will be collected on how many graduates from a Surgical Assisting program obtain either the CSA or the CSFA™ credential within one year of their graduation. As trends in this pass rate data develop, programs will use the trended data to help demonstrate their compliance with the 2008 CAAHEP *Standards and Guidelines for the Accreditation of Educational Programs in Surgical Assisting* and pursue their outcome assessment planning and strategic planning goals related to credentialing.

If you find yourself deep in routine this winter and wonder if you are indeed making progress toward your SA program's goals, the ARCSTSA and SASA can help you see that progress. Often one single phone call [(303) 694-9262] or email (info@arcstsa.org) to the staff at ARCSTSA can clarify a point of procedure or definition that will help a Program Director break through an obstacle separating that program from a goal it has worked hard to reach.



SURGICAL ASSISTING OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT EXAM THRESHOLDS NOTIFICATION

At the September 15-17, 2011 meeting, the Board of Directors of the Accreditation Review Council on Education in Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting (ARC/STSA), upon recommendation of its Subcommittee on Accreditation in Surgical Assisting (SASA), set the following thresholds for the approved outcomes assessment exams for CAAHEP-accredited programs in Surgical Assisting:

Participation Rate: no participation rate threshold

Pass Rate: **71%** of all students graduating during an annual reporting period (AY = August 1 to July 31) will hold the approved credential (CSFA or CSA) within 1 yr of program completion based on first-time exam results

CAAHEP accredited Surgical Assisting programs will continue to have the *option* to use the CSFA Exam (NBSTSA), the CSA Exam (NSAA), or both the CSFA and CSA Exams for reporting outcomes assessment exam results on Annual Reports.

Surgical Assisting programs will be required to report outcomes assessment exam **pass rate** results for graduates completing their course of studies effective **August 1, 2011**. Outcomes assessment exam **pass rate** data will be reported for the first time on the 2013 Annual Report (graduates during the period of August 1, 2011–July 31, 2012).

In addition, at the September 15, 17, 2011 meeting, the Board of Directors of the Accreditation Review Council on Education in Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting (ARC/STSA), upon recommendation of its Subcommittee on Accreditation in Surgical Assisting (SASA), voted to adjust the due date for the Annual Report for Surgical Assisting programs only to **August 1st** of each year, effective with the 2012 Annual Report.

[Note: minor adjustments to the Annual Report due date may be made to accommodate the due date falling on a weekend.]

In April of each year, Surgical Assisting programs will receive the ARC/STSA Annual Report packet, including detailed instructions for use to successfully complete and submit the Annual Report.



Standards Interpretive Guide for Surgical Assisting

The ARC/STSA and SASA have posted recent updates to the *SA Standards Interpretive Guide (SIG-SA)*. This guide provides insight into understanding each Standard and provides explanations and examples to assist programs in demonstrating compliance with the 2008 CAAHEP *Standards and Guidelines for Accreditation of Educational Programs in Surgical Assisting*.

Check it out at www.arcstsa.org today!

Subcommittee on Accreditation in Surgical Assisting (SASA)

Chair

Van Bates, BA, CST
Fairview, TN

Committee Members

Clinton Crews, MPH
Norfolk, VA

Dorothy Rothgery, CST/CFA, MS
Detroit, MI

Mark Shikhman, MD, PhD, CSA
Belleville, MI

Carolyn Stewart, PhD, EdS
Rock Hill, SC

SASA Updates—cont.

Student Work Policy— Surgical Assisting

(recommended by SASA and approved by the ARC/STSA BoD—March 2010)

The intent of a Student Work Policy is to ensure that medical control and accountability exist. Medical control and accountability exist when there is unequivocal evidence that Surgical Assisting students are not operating as independent practitioners on clinical assignment and when SA students are under direct medical control or in a system where timely medical audit and review provide for quality assurance.

The sponsoring institution/program must establish and implement a Student Work Policy reviewed and approved by the Program Advisory Committee (PAC).

The Student Work Policy must minimally state:

- all activities including clinical in the program must be educational
- students must not be substituted for staff

The Student Work Policy should be published and available in the following documentation:

- student handbook
- syllabi
- academic calendar
- clinical affiliation agreement (optional)

ADVANCE.

GET \$1,000 TO FURTHER YOUR EDUCATION.

Introducing the 2012 NBSTSA Student Scholarship. This scholarship is available to any student currently enrolled in an NBSTSA recognized program.

Visit nbstsa.org today for full details and to **apply**.

HURRY! Applications must be received by March 31. Recipients will be notified by June 4, 2012.



THE NATIONAL BOARD
OF SURGICAL TECHNOLOGY
AND SURGICAL ASSISTING

WWW.NBSTSA.ORG or 800 707 0057
6 WEST DRY CREEK CR, SUITE 100
LITTLETON COLORADO 80120
[FACEBOOK.COM/THENBSTSA](https://www.facebook.com/thenbstsa)



ARC/STSA

Accreditation Review Council On Education
In Surgical Technology And Surgical Assisting



1972-2012

ARC/STSA 2011 SURGICAL TECHNOLOGY OUTCOMES THRESHOLDS REVIEW NOTIFICATION

At the September 15-17, 2011 meeting, the Board of Directors of the Accreditation Review Council on Education in Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting (ARC/STSA) reviewed and reaffirmed the outcomes thresholds for CAAHEP-accredited programs in surgical technology. The ARC/STSA approved outcomes thresholds, effective August 1, 2011, remain unchanged and are as follows:

- **Retention – 70%**
[calculated by the number of students completing the program on a completion date divided by the number of students (enrolled, transferred in, changed on-time cohort completion date due to failed course, leave of absence, etc.) assigned an original or revised (if applicable) on-time cohort completion date (anticipated graduation date)]
- **Approved Outcomes Assessment Exam**
 - For CAAHEP-accredited programs: NBSTSA Certified Surgical Technologist [CST] Exam
100% participation rate
70% pass rate on the CST Exam
 - For applicant programs seeking CAAHEP Initial Accreditation: NBSTSA Comprehensive (Secure) CST Practice Exam
100% participation rate
- **Graduate Placement – 80% positive placement**
 - placed in the field of surgical technology, a directly related field, or an Active Duty Military placement
 - continuing their education
 - placed in field of surgical technology, a directly related field or an Active Duty Military placement **AND** continuing their education in a related field
- **Employer Surveys**
 - use of the standardized ARC/STSA Employer Survey tool administered no sooner than 9 months after employment
 - 50% Employer Survey return rate
 - 85% Employer Survey satisfaction [24 of 28 areas rated 3 or higher on the 5 point Likert scale.]
- **Graduate Surveys**
 - use of the standardized ARC/STSA Graduate Survey tool administered no sooner than 6 months after graduation
 - 50% Graduate Survey return rate
 - 85% Graduate Survey satisfaction [7 of 8 areas rated 3 or higher on the 5 point Likert scale.]

➤ ARC STSA Workshops In Conjunction with the 2012 Instructors Forum

Friday February 10 2012 • Orlando Florida
Doubletree by Hilton Orlando at SeaWorld

- 7:30am: Registration
- 8:00-Noon: **Accreditation Fundamentals for Educators (AFE)**
ARC STSA Board of Directors **4CEs**
- Noon-1pm: Lunch (*on own*)
- 1-5pm: **Site Visitors Training (SVT)**
Beginning or Advanced***
ARC STSA Board of Directors **4CEs**

SVT Workshop Prerequisites:

*Status as a currently approved ARC STSA site visitor.

-or-

Must attend AFE Workshop and complete the online CAAHEP Site Visitor Quiz (quiz.caahep.org) prior to attending Beginning Site Visitor Training.

**Must have attended Beginning Site Visitor Training and completed at least one site visit in the last twelve months prior to attending Advanced Site Visitor Training.

• **Doubletree by Hilton Orlando at SeaWorld Info:**

Please visit: www.ast.org/professionals/continuing_ed.aspx

The AFE workshop fulfills the 1/1/09 ARC STSA policy that requires all new program directors to attend an AFE workshop within one year of their appointment.

ARC STSA Registration Fees

- AFE \$100
- SVT Beginning Free
- SVT Advanced Free

Date: _____ Member/Cert/License no: _____

Name: _____

Title: _____

Institution/Employer: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Phone 2: _____

Email: _____

Check for payment enclosed

Please send registration and check/money order to:

ARC STSA, 6 W Dry Creek Circle, Suite 110, Littleton, CO 80120



ARC/STSA
Accreditation Review Council On Education
In Surgical Technology And Surgical Assisting



~ FYA—FOR YOUR ACCREDITATION~

The ARC/STSA **Standards Interpretive Guide** (Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting SIGs) are available at www.arcstsa.org. The "SIG" can assist programs in understanding the Standards—sort of a "Standards Cheat Sheet!"



Program Responses to the ARC/STSA



Please note that for responses in excess of **20** pages [excluding the ARC/STSA findings letter], the program should submit one hard-copy report, printed double-sided and bound (book binding, spiral binding or 3-ring notebook) **and** one single file or "seamless" electronic/digital PDF file that matches the hard-copy document exactly [the electronic file should be submitted on a CD-ROM, DVD or external drive (electronic drive or "thumb" drive)]. Please note that submissions in excess of 20 pages [excluding the ARC/STSA findings letter] that do not include an electronic copy **or** that include multiple files within the electronic copy will be returned to the program for revision, at the program's expense. This may delay the program's document review.

It Out

The ARC/STSA employs standardized accreditation forms for **both** ST and SA programs available for downloading and use. Please visit the "**Forms and Facts**" pages at: www.arcstsa.org/forms/ST/forms_and_facts_ST.htm and www.arcstsa.org/forms/ST/forms_and_facts_SA.htm.

Please contact your IT Department and be sure that any firewalls or security systems permit e-mails from the ARC/STSA to be accepted into your regular e-mail inbox, not sent to "junk mail"!



One thing life has taught me: if you are interested, you never have to look for new interests. They come to you. When you are genuinely interested in one thing, it will always lead to something else.

~ Eleanor Roosevelt ~

Thank You ARC/STSA Site Visitors!

We could not do what we do without you!!

Michael Batterson
Sarah Brannon
L. Gene Burke
Vicki Bushey
Phil Carlock
Nicole Claussen
Wanda Dantzler
Crit Fisher
Gregory Frazer
Scott Geist
Julia Hinkle
Chris Keegan
Robin Keith
Joe Long

Bonita McCoy
Libby McNaron
Janet Milligan
Jan Olmsted
Michelle Rey
Kim Shannon
Kathy Snyder

BoD
Jeff Bidwell
Kathy Lee
Arthur (Tony) Makin
Betsy Slagle



You made our **August – December 2011** site visits a success!

Please note the **ARC/STSA suite number for mailing or overnighting documents—please always**

use
SUITE
#110!



Future Mailings — Don't Lose Out!

The **ARC/STSA OutReach** is issued two times a year via e-mail. Please make sure we have your correct e-mail address so that you continue to receive each issue. Please e-mail info@arcstsa.org if your e-mail address has changed. Please be sure to include your name and your school name so that we may update our database.

If you know of someone who would like to receive a copy of the **ARCSTSA OutReach** but is not currently on our mailing list, please send the information to the e-mail address listed above or contact us at (303) 694-9262.

Genius without education is like silver in the mine.

~ Benjamin Franklin ~

Our name is

Accreditation Review
Council on Education in
Surgical Technology
and Surgical Assisting
(ARC/STSA).

ARC/STSA Accreditation Packet \$300

The ARC/STSA Accreditation Packet (otherwise known as the Self-Study packet) should be ordered when a program is pursuing application for initial accreditation. Materials in this packet include accreditation process and procedure documentation and materials required for submission of the Self-Study application and the *Core Curriculum*.

Initial Accreditation-Application Fee \$1500

This fee is due and must be submitted with the submission of the initial Self-Study application.

Initial Accreditation-On-Site Evaluation Fee \$2500

The initial on-site evaluation fee covers preparation and travel expenses incurred by the ARC/STSA. Due upon submission of the initial Self-Study application.

PRR Continuing Accreditation-Application Fee \$1000

This fee is for all programs seeking transition from Initial to Continuing accreditation. Due upon submission of the Program Review Report application.

Consultative On-Site Evaluation Fee \$4000

The consultative site visit fee covers preparation and travel expenses incurred by the ARC/STSA. Please refer to the ARC/STSA website for circumstances requiring a consultative on-site evaluation. Due at least 30 days prior to the on-site evaluation.

Note: Fees for Random/Continuing on-site evaluations are currently included in the ARC/STSA Annual Fee.

ARC/STSA Annual Accreditation Fee \$1500

Annual accreditation maintenance fee due for all accredited programs. Programs are invoiced in January annually. (**Please note: CAAHEP invoices a separate accreditation maintenance fee by institution annually).

Core Curriculum for Surgical Technology or Core Curriculum for Surgical Assisting
 (Published by AST; available at 800-637-7433)
 Standard III.C requires that programs meet *or* exceed the curricular requirements defined in the program-specific Core Curriculum.

ARC/STSA Approved Program Assessment Exams

For **CST** or **CSFA** contact NBSTSA at 800-707-0057.
 For **CSA** contact NSAA at 888-633-0479.
 Standard IV.B requires that programs implement an appropriate Outcomes Assessment Exam (OAE), as part of ongoing outcomes accreditation requirements.

Distance Education-Application Fee \$500

For all programs pursuing approval of Distance Education (DE) programs. Due upon submission of DE application.

Satellite/Consortium-Application Fee \$500

For all programs pursuing approval to offer program at multiple facilities through Satellite or Consortium models. Fee is multiplied per satellite or consortium campus. Due upon submission of Satellite/Consortium application.

Satellite-On-Site Evaluation Fee \$2500 for main campus and \$1500 for each satellite facility/campus.

The satellite on-site evaluation fee covers preparation and travel expenses incurred by the ARC/STSA. Fee is multiplied by number of satellite facilities/campuses. Due upon submission of Satellite Self-Study application.

AAD Option-Initial Application Fee \$500

For surgical technology programs pursuing approval of an Accelerated Alternate Delivery (AAD) option in tandem with their accredited traditional program. Due upon submission of the AAD application.

AAD Option-Annual Maintenance Fee \$500

Surgical technology programs that have been approved to offer the AAD option will be invoiced an annual fee in addition to the ARC/STSA annual fee.

Distance Education/Satellite/Consortium-Annual Maintenance Fee \$500

All programs that have been approved to offer their program at multiple facilities or through a distance education, satellite or consortium model will be invoice an annual fee per additional facility, in addition to the ARC/STSA annual fee.

ARC/STSA Late Fee \$250

The ARC/STSA strictly enforces a late fee which applies to any materials received in the ARC/STSA office after the assigned/requested due date. This fee will only be waived if the program notifies the ARC/STSA prior to the due date of its inability to meet the assigned date and an extension is granted by the ARC/STSA. Only one extension of up to 30 days will be granted to each program.

CAAHEP Annual Accreditation Fee \$450

Annual accreditation maintenance fee is separate from any ARC/STSA fees. Each sponsoring institution is directly billed by CAAHEP every May.

www.arcstsa.org

**All fees are payable to the ARC/STSA unless otherwise specified*