# THE CUTTING EDGE

*Oklahoma State Assembly Summer 2015*

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**FALL CONFERENCE**

**This year’s annual conference and business meeting will be held on *Saturday, Nov 14* at**

**\* MOORE Norman Conference Center**

**\*Penn Campus 13301 S Pennsylvania OKC**

***Registration form info*** for the annual OKSA conference can be found at www.ok.ast.org.

Please make sure *AST has your correct contact information* so you will continue to receive the latest updates.

**ELECTIONS**

In addition to a variety of speakers, elections will be held for the offices of President, Vice President, Treasurer, and 2 directors.

We will also elect 6 delegates who will act as representatives of Oklahoma at the 2016 AST National Conference.

**SURGICAL**

**TECHNOLOGIST WEEK**

**FREE CEU’s**

***OKSA is hosting a FREE 4 CE workshop on Saturday, September 26 in honor of ST Week!!***

**Brown Mackie College, Tulsa**

**4608 S. Garnett Rd**

**7:45 am –Noon**

**Surgical Technologists Week** is the 3rd week in September. How will you celebrate? Share how your Week was recognized and we’ll include it

in our next newsletter and submit it to AST for the journal.

TO ALL OUR SURGICAL TECHS IN OK

Congratulations on a job well done!

**Happy Surgical Tech Week**

From Your OKSA BOD and distinguished speakers

Pam Buff President

Sandy Edwards V President

Missy Houser, Treasurer

Karen Silvis, Secretary

**Directors:**

Patricia Sumner, Milton Cope,

Jennifer Wilkerson, David Hackett

**BOD Contact info can be found at** [**www.ast.org**](http://www.ast.org) **Click on State Assembly Websites**

HOW DO I RUN FOR OFFICE? WHAT ARE THE DUTIES?

OKSA Elected Offices

**President** The President is the official representative of the state association and is responsible, in partnership with the Board of Directors, for the organization’s activities. The President presides at all meeting, works with the Vice President as mentor and serves as an ex-officio member on all committees.

**Vice President** The Vice President actively aids the President and performs the duties of the President when required. The Vice President assists the President with orientation of new officers and committee members, consults with the President regarding the termination of committee appointments and provides assistance in finding replacements, and recognizes outstanding achievements among members and supporters.

**Treasurer** The Treasurer is responsible for the collection, disbursement, protection and accounting of association funds under the guidance of the Board of Directors. The Treasurer chairs the Budget and Finance Committee, prepares the semi-annual financial reports, and advises the Board of all expenditures.

**Secretary** The Secretary records the proceedings of the Board of Directors. The Secretary furnishes a copy of the Board meeting minutes, handles all correspondences, supervises the SA’s newsletter, presents an oral report to the membership and serves as the chair of the Policy and Procedures Committee.

**Board of Directors.** The AST Board of Directors includes the four officers and five elected Directors. The Board transacts business on behalf of the organization in between annual meetings formulates policies and procedures for the state assembly.

***Interested in becoming a candidate for an elected office?***

Download the [Consent to Serve](http://www.ast.org/uploadedFiles/Main_Site/Content/About_Us/National_Office_Consent.pdf) and [Curriculum Vitae](http://www.ast.org/uploadedFiles/Main_Site/Content/About_Us/National_Office_CV.pdf) forms. Send to [jastramski@hotmail.com](mailto:jastramski@hotmail.com)

**ELIGIBILITY OF OFFICERS AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**Eligibility of Officers:**

1. Must have been ***a member*** for one year preceding nomination, and must maintain active status.
2. Must fill out curriculum vitae and consent to server forms.
3. Other than submitting the required curriculum vitae and consent to serve, **one year of membership** in State Assembly is the only eligibility criteria that will be considered by Credentials Committee.

**Eligibility of President:**

1. ***A candidate for the office of President shall have served at least one full term as a member of the Board of Directors during the previous six years***.
2. Must fill out curriculum vitae and consent to serve forms.
3. Other than submitting the required curriculum vitae and consent to serve, one year of active membership in the State Assembly and confirmation of a previous term on the Board of Directors, are the only eligibility criteria that will be considered by the Credentials Committee.

**Eligibility for Director:**

1. Must have been **a member for one year** immediately preceding nomination, and must maintain active status.
2. Must fill out curriculum vitae and consent to serve forms.

**DELEGATES**

As required by state bylaws, an election will be held for delegates to the 2016 National Conference. These delegates will be the voice of Oklahoma!

Delegates and alternates MUST attend ALL business meetings and other functions determined by AST. This is a serious responsibility. Each state receives 6 votes and has the opportunity to help shape the future of our organization.

We can elect 6 delegates and 6 alternates. If you believe there’s a chance you will attend the 2016 Nat’l Conference in San Diego, please consider serving as delegate/alternate.

**NEWS**

**Legislation** efforts are still in the works. Over the past year, we had an interim hearing at the Capitol and a proposed bill in place. Passing as bill is a long process and requires persistence and a dedicated team. We will continue to pursue legislation until it passes! We will keep you informed as we proceed and let you know how YOU can be part of this effort of AST Newsletter.

**CHUM IS NOT ALWAYS SHARK FOOD; IT IS ALSO ANOTHER TERM FOR FRIEND**

**~ OR ~**

**THE ART OF BEING A STUDENT PRECEPTOR**

So, you have agreed to be a preceptor for your department. Good for you! But do you know exactly what you’ve signed up for? Looking back now, I think many of us had a different view of what this entailed. I know I did! Instead of learning through trial by fire, let me see if I can point you in the right direction.

Very few institutions have formal training for Surgical Technology preceptors. Usually, the surgical tech is told, “You are doing (fill in the blank) and you will have a student with you today.” After silent or vocal grumbling, you meet the student, who is staring wide-eyed and nervous at the surgery schedule board. You wonder how you will make it through the day.

Unfortunately, the person assigning students to staff doesn’t always take into consideration the teaching capability of the instructor. How do you make the learning experience a productive and positive one?

**1. Verbalize and articulate what you are doing** To start with, we need to step back and remember what being a student was like. A lot of our skill comes from repetition and muscle memory. As the case progresses, subtle visual cues trigger our anticipatory responses. This is why students frequently look at us in awe as we seem to know exactly what the doc needs and to have it ready quickly. Students don’t have that skill set yet, and it’s unfair to expect it from them.

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Let’s start with the surgical scrub. How often do you stand at the scrub sink and actually pay attention to every detail of what you are doing? Can you verbalize it, step by step, without actually doing it? We have to remember when we get these students that they are building this muscle memory and have no prior knowledge to pull from, besides their school training. This preceptor skill is usually the hardest for new preceptors to be comfortable with, but it is one of the most important.

**2. Aim small, miss small**

Think back to the first case you ever scrubbed in on. Did you do it flawlessly and confidently from beginning to end? No? Then don’t expect the student to do it either. I’ve had preceptors tell me that a student wasn't “performing to standards.” This is a Catch-22 situation. The students don’t know the case because they don’t have the experience and they can’t get the experience because they don’t get to do the case. An experienced surgical technologist who can do the case in his/her sleep may become impatient and have the student step aside and observe. This can lead to the student wanting to do only easy cases or one she has done before.

Behavioral psychology describes what we are looking for as “Positive Reinforcement.” Don’t judge the student on the entire case. One small error can mar the entire experience, causing your new learner to feel that he failed on the entire case. So break down the entire process into steps. When the student does well, let him know. This collection of positives can be gone over after the case and builds confidence.

**3. Give them enough leeway to make their own mistakes**

Watching someone fumble without stepping in to correct it is one of the hardest aspects of being a preceptor. As long as it doesn't affect safety or asepsis, let it go. Give the student the opportunity to anticipate the next step. If you continue to hover and hold their hands, they get used to that protection and then falter when they are out on their own. Step far enough away so you are there for moral support but close enough to intervene if necessary. We often learn more from our mistakes than from our achievements.

**4. Throw them in, let them swim**

How often do we assign the easy cases to students? Seems like the kind thing to do, but we are doing them a disservice. I tell my students to go for the cases that terrify them! As a preceptor, you are their safety net, their lifeguard. Imagine watching a swimmer who goes into deeper water as she gains confidence. As lifeguard, do we jump in and pull her out? No, but we do watch to assure she is not struggling, preparing to drown. A little stress keeps the student from becoming complacent as well as tempering her.

**5. Embrace the Evaluation**

We all learn from feedback. Even with a heavy caseload, it’s important to debrief our students, to roll the entire day’s experience into an informative synopsis. Include the good, the bad, and the ugly. Keep it simple ***- think of a stoplight. Green = good, yellow = needs improvement, red = STOP doing that!!***  After the case, see if there’s anything they would change, delete or add to what they just did. Self-analysis is an important hindsight tool. The experience is ingrained through replaying the case and verbalizing any changes for next time.

Having a student for the day can be a great experience. Remember, you are helping to shape a potential new hire and possibly a new team members.

From students and instructors everywhere— THANK YOU for all you do!

By David Hackett, CST

Edited for publication by Karen Silvis, CST

If you have an idea for an article or would like to write one yourself,

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