



Fall/Winter 2023

Editor:

Claire Parda

WISCONSIN STATE ASSEMBLY-ASSOCIATION OF SURGICAL TECHNOLOGISTS

President's Update

NICOLE VAN VONDEREN, CST, FAST

I hope everyone is having a fantastic year; only a few more weeks, and we are into a New Year. This year, we celebrated "The Unsung Heroes." Every one of you is an unsung hero of the OR! You are greatly appreciated in all that you do.

We will meet in April 2024 in Green Bay, WI, with fun and exciting events happening! Stay tuned for more updates! Our Fall 2024 will be down in Milwaukee with more information!

Our state is going through some inspiring times, and we hope to keep pushing forward positively. Keep up all of the great work!

I hope everyone has a great holiday season coming up! Stay Healthy!!

Please see below for instructions to get letters of support from surgeons, anesthesiologists, and CRNAs. I will post the draft letters to wiast.org so that you can access them. When you go to the wiast.org website I have created a tab for legislation. In there will be the Instructions, and then draft letters to Surgeons, Anesthesiologist, and CRNAs. Please have them follow these drafts.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- PRESIDENT'S UPDATE
- EDITOR'S NOTE
- BOARD MEMBER BLURBS
- NEWS AROUND WI
- STUDENT CORNER
- SPRING MEETING
- CONFERENCE 2024
- NEXT ISSUE

WRITE FOR US! WE ARE ALWAYS LOOKING FOR INTERESTING ARTICLES AND NEWS FROM AROUND WISCONSIN! SEND ALL SUBMISSIONS TO:
WIASTNEWS@GMAIL.COM

Editor's Note

CLAIRE PARDA, BSHCA, CST
WI-AST SECRETARY/NEWSLETTER EDITOR

CONNECTION: *noun*

a relationship in which a person, thing, or idea is linked or associated with something else.

We are all connected to someone, something, every single day. Whether with our patients, fellow staff, the coffee machine. Think about the connections in your life; the stressful ones, the easy ones, the thoughtful ones, and the lost ones.

I wanted to dive into what connection means to all of us, and I hope the submissions and articles help establish that. I cherish my travels around Wisconsin, learning new things and spreading my passion for surgery and the WIAST wherever I go.

I challenge you all to find that connection and cultivate it as we head into 2024!



WI AST



wisconsin.ast

2022-2023 Board of Directors

President:

Nicole Van Vonderen, CST, FAST
Oct 2023 – Oct 2025

Board Director:

Karen Bisesi, CST, CSFA
Oct 2022– Oct 2024

Board Director:

Tiffany “Bunny” Wolover, CST
Oct 2023 – Oct 2025

Vice President:

Ilea Cornelius, CST, FAST
Oct 2023 – Oct 2025

Board Director:

Nicole Sexton, CST
Oct 2022 – Oct 2024

Student Member:

Maci Stevens
Oct 2024

Secretary:

Claire Parda, CST
Oct 2022 – Oct 2024

Board Director:

Rachel Gresk, CST
Oct 2022 – Oct 2024

Treasurer:

Bridget Hanson, CST, CSFA
Oct 2023 – Oct 2025

Board Director:

Jessica Jacobson, CST
Oct 2023 – Oct 2025



Standing, Left to Right: Tiffany “Bunny” Wolover, Jessica Jacobson, Bridget Hanson, Ilea Cornelius, Karen Bisesi, & Maci Stevens

Sitting, Left to Right: Nicole Sexton and Claire Parda

Kneeling: Nikki Van Vonderen

Board Member Blurbs



WELCOME TO THE BOARD!

JESSICA JACOBSON, CST
WI-AST BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Hello my name is Jessica and I have been working at Froedtert Menomonee Falls Hospital for about 6.5 years. At FMFH we are required to tech all specialties, however my favorite is ENT! For schooling, I attended WCTC and I continue to love precepting students. I enjoy spending my free time with my two dogs, Chewbacca and Casper, and reading a good book or watching a movie.

My goal for this term is to get involved and help make the surgical technologist voices of my area heard.

FRONT COVER PHOTO CONTEST

CLAIRE PARDA, BSHCA, CST

CONGRATULATIONS to the winner of our photo contest! Thank you everyone who submitted a picture!!! Below you will find the top 5 voted submissions!!! Looking forward to 2024 ST Week photo contest for next year!



Linda A. Blume, CST, CSFA
Schofield, WI



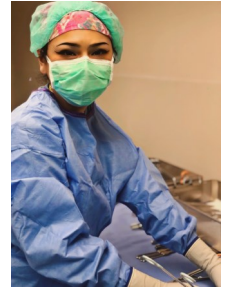
Claire Parda, CST
Muskego, WI
Karen Chapman, CST
Delevan, WI



Diane Riese, CST
West Bend, WI



Linda A. Blume, CST, CSFA
Schofield, WI



Destiny Winters
Student
Green Bay, WI

News Around Wisconsin

TECHGYRLS EVENT-GREEN BAY

SUBMITTED BY NICOLE SEXTON, CST

GREEN BAY (WLUK) -- A group of young girls visited Aurora BayCare Medical Center Friday to explore the opportunities of STEAM and learn how surgical robots are used in the medical field.



The event was part of the YWCA Greater Green Bay's "TechGYRLS" -- a program which seeks to empower young girls and encourage them to pursue careers within science, technology, engineering, arts and math.

TechGYRLS collaborates with area businesses and organizations to bring participants on field visits, led by women who work within the STEAM industries, and provide hands-on experiences for the attendees.

During Friday's workshop at Aurora BayCare Medical Center, gynecologic on-

gologist Dr. Elizabeth Dickson Michelson and other staff members introduced the girls to the world of robotic surgery and cutting-edge medical technology.

It's more and more acceptable for women to go into math, science, technology, but anything that we can do help girls and young women figure out, 'Okay, what could I do with what I know and what I'm interested in?' said Dr. Dickson Michelson. "And how it's something they can then see moving on in their careers and using. So anything of this stuff that we can do to bring to the community, show them how they can use what they're learning now later in life, is definitely worth it.

Dr. Dickson Michelson said one of the highlights of the event was giving the girls a chance to play with a da Vinci surgical robot, the same technology that she uses in the operating room.

The robot gives surgeons better vision, precision and control, enabling medical professionals to advance the possibilities of minimally invasive care.

"We brought all the different things that go with using the intuitive da Vinci robot, so we can actually have them see how the robot actually works with patients. And they can actually play on the robot, use different tools, do different games, things like that. So we can kind of show them what it would actually be like to do a surgery," Dr. Dickson Michelson explained.

Girls from third grade to eighth grade can participate in TechGYRLS. Visit the YWCA Greater Green Bay website to learn more or to register.

#wisconsinAST

THE GRAM!!!

Instagram! Do you know that we are on it? Our username is Wisconsin.ast. Look us up and send us pictures. Find out what we are doing. Learn who the board members are. Share with us!

News Around Wisconsin



MY JOURNEY INTO THE OR AS A SURGICAL TECHNOLOGIST

KAREN CHAPMAN, CST

SUBMITTED BY CLAIRE PARDA, BSHCA, CST

When I was asked to write this article, my initial thought was, really? Me? Is my story really that interesting? Then my thoughts shifted to why not me? I love my job and it’s been quite a journey to get here.

My name is Karen Chapman and what I think makes my story different is that I am 49 years old and started my journey into the operating room (OR) 4 years ago. I had always had my heart set on becoming an early elementary school teacher for as long as I could remember. I had married my high school sweetheart the same year I graduated from high school and started on my teaching degree while my husband finished his electrical engineering degree. When I found out we were expecting our first son, I put my dreams on hold. Four years later we added to our family once again. I was happy to cheer my family on their achievements throughout the years, but I realized that I wasn’t fulfilled. After all these years, it was time for me to go back to school and have my family cheer me on.

My husband was supportive of my decision to go back to school, so I applied immediately to Blackhawk Technical College in Janesville, WI in September of 2019. I needed a few prerequisites before I could apply to a program. The Surgical Technologist program fell into my lap in February of 2021. I never knew this job existed. Aren’t nurses and doctors doing surgery? My advisor read the course description for the Surgical Technologist program to me with excitement then said, “They happen to have 4 seats open and if this is what you want to do, you will have to attend a petition meeting then petition to get in.” During the petition meeting we were asked to watch a video of a surgery. That’s all it took for me! I knew this is what I wanted to do! I had finally found my dream job.

Fall of 2022 I had my first clinical experience at St. Francis Ascension in Milwaukee. The surgical staff made me feel like I was a part of the team from the first day. My preceptor, Molly, had 7 years of experience in head & neck surgeries and is an amazing preceptor. She was happy to teach me everything she had learned in our short time together. She not only expected excellence from me, but she also showed me how to be excellent. What she wanted from me was to be confident in the OR and to own my OR as soon as I walked in. I can’t thank Molly enough for such a strong start to my career.

With my family and friends support, I graduated from Blackhawk Technical College in May of 2023 and started my career as a full time Surgical Technologist at Beloit Healthcare System. I can’t begin to tell you how many times I’ve been in surgery and thought to myself “I have the best job ever and I couldn’t be happier!”

“I have the best job ever, and I couldn’t be happier!”

*Karen Chapman,
CST*

News Around Wisconsin



CONTINUED...

One of the most beautiful things about being an agency employee, is that I am able to travel ANYWHERE. I choose to support my National AST and State AST by staying in Wisconsin at least 6 months out of the year.

When I started my contract in July at Beloit Health System, I met Karen and another new CST that I had the privilege to precept. Some might say that it's not a traveler's job to precept; and I would have to agree...yet disagree. When a facility is building up their workforce due to turnover, retirement, etc (and they are not a big facility); you have to have both staff and agency train. It helps me by asking the difficult 'policy' questions, but at the end of the day, sterile technique is sterile technique. We all took the national exam; it comes down to surgeons' preferences.

I asked Karen to write for us, because that is something I try to do wherever I go in Wisconsin. Not only do I say "Hey, you know that board and those meeting you go to? I am one of those people! I am just like you!"

Karen continues to learn and succeed at her place of employment, and I hope she can take the tips and tricks from all of us and continue to thrive as a CST.

Student Corner

LUCY SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

CLAIRE PARDA, BSHCA, CST

Good evening Wisconsin AST board,

My name is Tammy Harden, and I was one of the students who was selected to receive the scholarship from WI AST. I want to start by saying thank you very much. Since I am having to pay out of pocket for this program, and scholarship is greatly appreciated and will go towards what I currently owe.

I just started the surgical tech program at MATC in Madison in Aug and was one of the last few to be in the one-year program. I am very excited about this program and am looking forward to a long, successful career as a surgical technologist. Also, I will be starting my first clinical rotation on Oct 24th and am super excited.

In 2019 I attended MATC's Medical Assistant program and graduated in 2020. After three years of working in the clinics and assisting doctors with in-office procedures I realized I wanted to do something more. That's when I did my research and found the Surgical Technologist program. I knew right away that this was the program for me.

A little about me; I spent the last 19 years being a mom to a boy with multiple medical issues. Whom we were told, when he was three months old, that he would not make his first birthday. Well, he just turned 19 this past summer. Our son has always required, and will always require, around the clock care. We have been working with a caregiver for the past three years who also runs an adult family home. When our son turned 18, I wanted to give him the opportunity to spread his wings like any other child, or young man. That is when I allowed the opportunity for him to move into the adult family home. It is very hard some days, and I feel guilty at times, but then I look at my son and realize how much he has grown over the past year, and the friends he has made.

Again, I would like to say thank you to everyone on the board. And I will see you all at the next meeting.

Tammy Harden

Dear Wisconsin Association of Surgical Technologists,

I was honored to be one of the two recipients of the Lucy scholarship. I enjoyed attending the conference, as a first-year student it was exciting to learn what may come in this field. Being able to receive this award to support my financial journey means a lot to me.

I am currently enrolled in the Surgical Technology program at Southwest Wisconsin Technical College in Fennimore, Wisconsin where I plan to graduate in the spring of 2025. While it's only been a short 8 weeks so far in my schooling, I am so excited for the next year and a half. I recently did a job shadow at a local hospital in my area which was such a great opportunity to see first-hand what a day in the life of a surgical technologist looks like.

After graduation, I plan on sitting for the national exam to hopefully become a Certified Surgical Technologist. I then hope to work in a local, rural hospital in the area to help patients receive the best care while they undergo surgical procedures. Thanks to your generous scholarship I will be able to put that towards my schooling which will bring me one step closer to my end goal. Thank you for your generosity and contribution towards my educational goal of becoming a CST.

Sincerely, Kaitlyn Sweeney



Education Updates



**SPRING EDUCATIONAL MEETING
APRIL 6TH, 2024 | GREEN BAY, WI**



Agenda - TBD

Morning lecture style speakers (possible zoom option) with afternoon hands on lab!!!

MEETING:

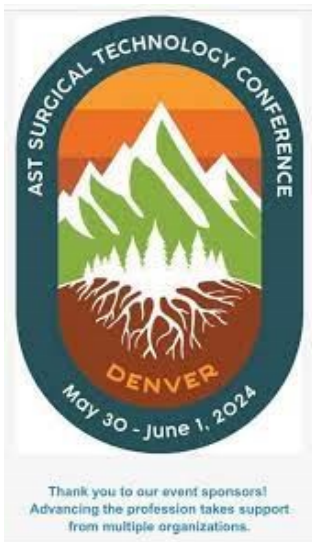
**NORTHEAST WISCONSIN TECHNICAL COLLEGE
2740 W MASON ST, GREEN BAY, WI 54307**

HOTEL:

TBD

MORE INFORMATION COMING SOON!

National Conference



54TH AST SURGICAL TECHNOLOGY CONFERENCE MAY 30-JUNE 1ST, 2024 | DENVER, CO

Join us in our headquarters' home city in May as we come together to promote the surgical technology profession, highlight the latest and greatest surgical techniques and connect you to supporting organizations from across the country.

Denver, known for its craft breweries, live music, and scenic views is a great place to come and explore.

More details will be coming soon!

HOTEL

Sheraton Denver Downtown
1555 Court Pl, Denver, CO 80202 60611

[Conference Information](#)

NEXT ISSUE

- Fall Meeting 2024
- National Conference 2024 Recap
- “Your Article Here!!!”

Submit articles to
[wiastrnews@
gmail.com](mailto:wiastrnews@gmail.com)