📰 Illinois State Assembly of Surgical Technologists

Winter 2025 Newsletter

🌟 Legislative Engagement: Building Momentum for Our Profession

This winter has been a season of remarkable advocacy and visibility for surgical technology across Illinois. Following National Surgical Technologists Week, legislators have toured programs statewide, learning firsthand about the vital role surgical technologists play in patient care.

- **Senate Leader Bill Cunningham (D-Chicago)** toured Midwestern in Evergreen Park.
- **Rep. Mike Hanson** visited Elgin Community College.
- **Rep. Wayne Rosenthal** will tour Lincoln Land later this month.
- **Sen. Paul Faraci (D-Champaign)** and **Sen. Chapin Rose (R-Mahomet)** scrubbed in at Parkland College.
- **Harper College** hosted **Sens Adriane Johnson, Laura Murphy** and **Reps Dan Didech, Michelle Mussman, Nabella Syed**.
- **Midwestern** welcomed **Reps Mary Gill and Fran Hurley**.
- **Malcolm X College** hosted **Sen Lakeshia Collins** and **Rep Yolanda Morris**, with **Rep Kelly Cassidy** scheduled for January.

These visits have generated strong social media engagement and reinforced the importance of accredited training programs.

🏛️ Chief Senate Sponsor: Sen. Adriane Johnson

We are proud to announce that **Senator Adriane Johnson (D-Buffalo Grove)** has agreed to serve as the **chief sponsor of our Senate bill** supporting accredited surgical technology education. Her leadership is a major step forward in advancing recognition and support for our profession.

Please take a moment to visit her Facebook page and share your appreciation for her advocacy.

🏅 Legislator of the Year Award: Rep. Barbara Hernandez

At our Annual Meeting on **October 11, 2025** at Malcolm X College, the Illinois State Assembly proudly presented the **Legislator of the Year Award** to **Representative Barbara Hernandez (D-Aurora)**.

Rep. Hernandez has been a steadfast advocate for surgical technology and sterile processing, particularly through her leadership on **HB 1598**. Her commitment to advancing accredited education and supporting our profession has made a lasting impact.

The award presentation, led by **Margaret Vaughn**, was a highlight of the day and underscored the importance of legislative partnerships in shaping the future of surgical technology in Illinois.

📣 National Surgical Technologists Week Resolutions

Thanks to our legislative champions:

- **Sen. Dave Koehler (D-Peoria)** introduced **Senate Resolution 423**.
- **Rep. Sharon Chung (D-Bloomington)** introduced the **House version**.
- **Rep. Michelle Mussman (D-Schaumburg)** introduced **HR0471**.

These resolutions commemorate **National Surgical Technologists Week**, honoring the skilled professionals behind every successful surgery. Legislators have been invited to co-sponsor and share a custom graphic on social media to raise awareness.

🎤 Annual Meeting Recap: Malcolm X College, October 11, 2025

Hosted by **Dr. Natan Mendes** and the Malcolm X Surgical Technology Program, our annual meeting was a resounding success. Attendees were welcomed warmly and treated to a day of inspiration, education, and advocacy.

Featured Speakers

- **Dr. Deborah Loeff** – Pediatric Surgery & Mentorship
- **Michelle Rinard** – History of the International Museum of Surgical Science
- **Dr. Pryor** – Breast Implant Illness: Surgical Insights & Advocacy
- **Dr. Mathew Nash** – OB/GYN Surgical Interventions: Present & Future
- **Rebecca Good** – Kidney Foundation, Living Donors, and the Heroes Who Inspire Us

Rebecca also serves as **ISA Secretary**, and her message about living donors reminded us of the profound humanity at the heart of healthcare.

Legislative Session

Margaret Vaughn led an interactive session explaining the legislative process and the progress of our bill. Their presentation underscored the importance of advocacy and collaboration.

Scrub Bowl Showdown

Students from across Illinois competed in the **Scrub Bowl Challenge**, a fast-paced competition inspired by the AST National Certification Exam. Teams showcased their knowledge, teamwork, and spirit, making this one of the most exciting parts of the day.

Guided Museum Tour

Attendees also had the opportunity to enjoy a **guided tour of the International Museum of Surgical Science**, exploring exhibits that highlighted the history and evolution of surgical technology. This experience connected our present-day work to the legacy of innovation and dedication that has shaped the field.

👟 Community Outreach: "Share Your Soles"

Led by **Bridget Hoffenkamp (Board Member)** and **Melissa Jensen (ISA Vice President)**, ISA partnered with *Share Your Soles* to collect gently used shoes. This initiative demonstrated our commitment to serving communities beyond the operating room, changing lives through simple acts of generosity.

🙌 Celebrating Board Leadership

The success of this year's events reflects the tireless work of our Board of Directors.

ISA Board Officers

- **Sonya Conton – President**
- **Melissa Jensen – Vice President**
- **Rebecca Good – Secretary**
- **Jennifer Jordan – Treasurer**

Board Members

- **Regina Barajas**
- **Tanisha Bonner**
- **Emily Gregg**
- **Bridget Hoffenkamp**
- **Becca Good**
- **Dr. Natan Mendes**

Their dedication ensured that every detail—from legislative visits to student competitions—was executed with excellence.

🤝 Supporting Fundraisers

Several legislators who champion our profession are hosting fundraising events this season. These gatherings provide valuable opportunities to strengthen relationships and advance our advocacy. While ISA does not endorse specific contributions, we encourage members to attend when possible and express appreciation for legislative allies.

🗓️ Save the Date: ISA Spring Meeting, Elections & Seminar

Mark your calendars! The **ISA Annual Spring Meeting, Elections, and Seminar** will be held at **Illinois Central College on March 21, 2026**. This event will continue our tradition of professional development, member engagement, and organizational leadership. We look forward to seeing you there!

✨ Looking Ahead

The Winter 2025 season has been a powerful reminder of what we can achieve together: advancing education, strengthening legislative advocacy, and serving our communities. Thank you to everyone who attended, contributed, and supported ISA's mission.

Illinois State Assembly of Surgical Technologists *Honoring the legacy. Transforming tomorrow.*