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THE NEWSLETTER OF THE UNITED STATES SECTION OF THE
INTERNATIONAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS

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From the PRESIDENT'S DESK

Dinesh Ranjan, MD, FICS

As the year and my tenure as your President comes to a close, I would like to indulge in the reminiscence of an eventful and often tumultuous year.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

1. A new era in the relationship in the governance of the Museum, where we – the US Section, will receive periodic updates on activities and finances, as is noted in the Bylaws.

2. We negotiated to reduce fractional remuneration to the ICS World Body at their Executive Committee meeting held in Chicago in the Spring of 2011. We remain the largest dues paying section, and the largest section (by number). This fact is even more striking if one balances the dues vs. international benchmarks of a country's income (such as GNI). We have recently been informed that the World Body has taken action to increase dues for others around the world to make the US Section's dues more appropriate.

3. We made substantial recommendations to the Editorial Board regarding the publication of our journal, International Surgery. Recently the decision was made to provide the journal to all fellows exclusively in electronic format beginning in 2012. This will be a savings of \$59 per member.

4. We made a pledge to re-engage the new blood, i.e. newer members in the governance and academic activities of the US Section. This was accomplished with great success and help from Sharmila Dissanaik, a new member from Texas – who became the Program Coordinator for the Portland meeting. Newer members had the lion's share in presentation and moderation in our Portland meeting and the quality of the sessions was better. Our governing bodies also now have increased participation from newer members. This includes the Executive Committee, the Council and various other committees.

5. Made a pledge to jump-start the membership drive through increased activity by leaders, the Board of Regents in particular. In addition, we pledged funds from specialty subsections to make membership more attainable. This work remains in progress and Chand Ramaiah, the Chair of Board of Regents, has been charged to work on innovative strategies to jump-start the membership drive/project.

6. Revamped our web-presence – making it easier to navigate and apply for memberships, etc.

7. Will begin to offer web-CME programs free to our members as a value added to the membership. This project is in progress with the joint efforts of Chand Ramaiah and Thav Thambi-Pillai.

continued

2012 US Section Officers

for the term commencing January 1, 2012



United States Section President
Larry S. Sasaki, MD
Bossier City, LA

Dr. Larry S. Sasaki was born and raised in Norman, Oklahoma. After receiving his Bachelor of Arts degree at Grinnell College in Iowa, he then obtained his medical degree from the University of Oklahoma College of Medicine. Dr. Sasaki completed his surgical internship at Yale University - St. Raphael Hospital in New Haven. He then traveled westward to complete his residency in General Surgery at Wayne State University - Harper/Grace Hospital in Detroit. Migrating closer to home, he completed a fellowship in Colon and Rectal Surgery at the University of Texas at Houston.

Dr. Sasaki's interest in surgical education and teaching is demonstrated by his association with the Louisiana State University School of Medicine at Shreveport as Clinical Assistant Professor in Surgery. He considers himself blessed with the overwhelming amount of invitations to present that he has received to more than 175 venues with audiences in North America, South America,

Europe, Asia, the Middle East, and New Zealand; teaching techniques in minimally-invasive colorectal surgical procedures.

A Fellow of the International College of Surgeons since 1994, Dr. Sasaki was introduced to the ICS when he participated in the United States Section Scholarship Competition that same year, and won First Place for "Primary Repair of Colon Injuries: A Prospective Randomized Study." During his time as a Fellow, Larry has served in the United States Section as State Regent, Vice-President, Chair of the Research & Scholarship Committee, Chair of the Colon and Rectal Surgery Specialty Group, Chair of the Membership Committee, Chair of the Board of Regents, Secretary, Treasurer, and now, President. On the International level, he has served as a Governor, a Vice-President, and was recently appointed Vice Chair of the Congress Program and Arrangements Committee.

Dr. Sasaki has been married to his wife, Jennifer for eight years. They and their three children enjoy snow skiing, scuba diving, and travelling. They also enjoy just "hanging out", whether on the beach or camping in the wilderness.

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Bossier City, LA

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8. We, as a US Section, decided that we should undertake the urgent repairs necessary for our executive offices. Since the world body has half-ownership of the building, we asked them to come-up with their half of the funds needed to do this. They have subsequently indicated that they wish to sell the building and we believe that this option is currently impractical and unadvisable, given the economic climate and respective financial circumstances of US Section and the World Body.

9. In 2011 the US Section participated in three officially sanctioned Surgical Teams (Philippines, Northern Iraq and Bolivia), collaborating and developing with several groups like the World Surgical Foundation, Operation Hope and the MIMA Foundation. ICS Fellows Domingo Alvear, Gazi Zibari and Francis Podbielski deserve our deepest gratitude for their efforts.

10. During the Portland meeting, we honored Bud Shaw with Honorary Fellowship and enjoyed an excellent opening lecture from Don Trunkey. Our own Arno Roscher funded an endowed lecture that was given by Dr. Ira Shulman at the conclusion of the meeting.

11. The financial situation, although far from good, is looking a bit upbeat – partly from a successful Portland meeting and partly from various other factors including the efforts to work with the World Body as well as some proverbial belt-tightening.

CHALLENGES AHEAD:

1. Relationship with the world body: The year actually started with the World Body meeting in Philippines exactly a year ago, in November 2010. We, the US Section, realized that the terms of engagement with the World Body had changed – this was only a suspicion hanging on the horizon in the Vienna meeting in 2008, but had become a stark reality in the Philippines. Trying to regain the clout will be difficult, despite the fact that we remain the largest section and by-far the most financially supportive of the World Body as the electoral process relies heavily on the already elected governors and we, unfortunately, are under-represented.

2. Finances, while better than the close of fiscal 2010, continue to remain tenuous. It is truly a hand-to-mouth situation.

3. Our buildings need repairs, urgently. When the World Body indicated that they couldn't pay their half of the repairs, we offered to pay for their half in return for increased fractional ownership of the building. They have declined this offer.

4. Membership attrition continues to be a challenge. Hopefully some of the steps taken as outlined previously will bear fruit over the next few years. We are adding more value to the membership while embarking on a focused membership drive.

5. ACCME accreditation: while we remain accredited – our status is probationary as of August due to ever increasing requirements of the ACCME. We anticipate reinstatement of full accreditation next summer following the implementation of policies and mechanisms that address their concerns.

OTHER NOTABLE EVENTS:

Speaking of belt-tightening, due to some of what is outlined above – we were forced to look at our own operation and came to the conclusion that we couldn't afford 3 full-time staff anymore. This was a luxury – comparing ourselves to other similar societies. Paul Pancer, a long-time staff member, will depart at the end of January 2012. We can't thank him enough for the work and support he has given us during the past 20 plus years. He will be missed. All of us owe a debt of gratitude to him for his service.

The museum had a good year with an excellent and popular exhibit "Our Body".

The current World Body President, who took office at the same time as I did, (January 1, 2011) is one of our own: Dr. Said Daee from Maryland. We hope to continue our engagement through his efforts and other representation at that level including Jay Bachicha from California, who is now the North American Federation Secretary.

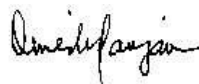
We will continue our efforts in 2012 beginning with another mission to the Philippines in February and a return trip to Northern Iraq in April. I encourage everyone who has an interest in giving back to join one of our upcoming missions. I hope that this aspect of our activity continues to prosper and proliferate as, being the only surgical organization recognized by the WHO, we are in a unique and distinctive situation to help others, and energize our membership.

Past President, Wickii Vigneswaran had started a fund-raising event two years ago to support our Surgical Team efforts. The Third Annual Evening at the Museum was successfully held on November 11th. This event has sustained the test of time and hopefully will continue with great success.

The next World Body meeting will be in Brisbane, Australia in November of 2012. I encourage everyone who can go, to make an effort to attend. This is important to us, as the US Section. Our next US Section meeting is in Atlanta – being developed with great effort by my able successor, Larry Sasaki. Let's all wish him great success.

During my very early years as a trainee in Surgery, one of my teachers told me: "a surgeon must know two things: how to stop the bleeding and stitch things together"

Let's do that.



Noteworthy Congresses

74th Annual Surgical Update
United States Section
June 6-9, 2012
Atlanta, Georgia, USA

World Congress
Fall 2012
Brisbane, Australia

For additional information regarding meetings, please call (800) 766-FICS, extension 3129 for meetings in North America and extension 3106 for international meetings. Or visit the website at [www. FICSONLINE.org](http://www.FICSONLINE.org)

REMINDER!

The 2012 Annual Dues notice was mailed at the end of November to members in the first billing cycle of the calendar year. If you normally get your dues notice in December and haven't received it yet please contact Headquarters.

DONT FORGET!

In order to keep you informed of Section news & business. We need your e-mail address. Just send an e-mail to info@ficsonline.org today. We'll add you to our database, or call 312.787.6274.

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