



# NEWSLETTER WINTER 2009

ASSOCIATION OF RESIDENCY COORDINATORS IN SURGERY

## Message From The President

January Newsletter

President's letter

Happy New Year! The hustle and bustle of the holidays are over and I am no longer anxious and stressed out about what to buy, what to wear, or what meal I am planning for all the entertaining I did over the holidays. Back to normal, wishing I had joined that gym I swore I was going to join on January 1<sup>st</sup>, back to the feeling of is the month of January ever going to end, and my poor family back to fending for themselves or a crock pot meal. I, like the rest of you, am back to work finishing up the interview season, getting ready for the ABSITE Exam, the NRMP match, and the other thousand jobs that we all do in one day. Thank goodness, that everyone on the Steering Committee worked collectively as a team to bring you what I feel is an outstanding program for our meeting in Salt Lake City, Utah. Thanks to all those coordinators who sent in abstracts this year, they were all phenomenal.



We are very excited about the Spring Program that we have planned for you this year.

The following speakers have been confirmed:

- Dr. Lori Curtin, Director of Match Policy from the NRMP
- Dr. Bell and Melissa Banker - Update on the SCORE Curriculum.
- Dr. Peggy Simpson and Tom Richter - ACGME and Operative Log Update.
- Dr. Jo Buyske, the Associate Executive Director of the American Board of Surgery – ABS Update
- Dr. Tom Whalen- Surgery RRC and Dr. Marc Wallack - RRC update
- Dr. Pam Rowland, Maggie & Dr. John Tarpley, and Ruth Nawotniak will provide sessions for the professional development

As stated previously, we had so many great abstracts submitted this year. Your fellow Program Administrators or Coordinators have really stepped up with very interesting and helpful topics. The following presentations have been selected:

- “How to Effectively Plan & Navigate the ACGME Program Review”
- “Surgical Skills Lab – Boot Camp”
- “Recruitment Strategies”
- “Be Prepared – Your ACGME Site Visit”
- “An interactive workshop on “Common & Specialty Program Requirements – this will be presented in two parts.
- “Update on the EWJ and ABS Proposal on Surgical Residency Training Attrition”
- Coordinator's Jeopardy will be back and we hope that the fun will continue. Gosh – you are all so competitive!

The ARCS Coordinator's Recognition nominations were at an all time high. It was a very difficult decision this year and all who were nominated were excellent candidates. Unfortunately, only one coordinator can be recognized each year. We will continue to encourage the Program Directors and our membership to nominate coordinators for this award.

We have also seen an increase in membership over the last three years. Currently, ARCS has approximately 154 identified members. Since there are 251 General Surgery Residency Programs across the country, we feel this is a really good beginning. Over the years, Jeannine St. Pierre and now Vincenza Gelardi have worked very hard compiling the ARCS membership list. Vincenza is now working closely with Jen Stromberg of the APDS to be sure both lists are up to date and match. Wouldn't it be great to say that every coordinator is a member of ARCS – only 97 more programs to go and we will have 100% of the coordinators on board. One of the goals of the Steering for the past 3 years has been to increase our membership and to become more user-friendly. We are almost there but need your assistance. Please encourage those coordinators who are not members to join ARCS. When you are at the spring conference, ask the gal/guy sitting next to you if they are members of ARCS and if they are not, point them in the right direction. Also, we love to hear from you – what would you like to see, what are your thoughts and concerns as members of our organization – you all have a voice so please feel free to contact me or other members of the Steering Committee with any questions, suggestions, or concerns.

I would encourage you also to consider being a member of the ARCS Steering Committee. Since April of 2009 will be my last year as a member of the Steering Committee, I would like to share with you what a great and wonderful experience this has been. I have made many lasting friendships that I know go beyond the work we do as a Steering Committee. I can also tell you that years ago I would have never had the courage to present or talk in front of a group of people especially Program Directors. Somehow by watching others and with the encouragement of my friends and peers, I managed to gather enough courage to present and feel comfortable doing so. I've gained so much more than I will ever be able to give back. I have learned so much by being on this committee. It has helped me both professionally and personally and looks great on my resume. I am truly grateful that I had this opportunity and hope that all of you will consider sending in your application to June Cameron, our President-Elect.

I am looking forward to seeing you all again in April. I always come back from our conference ready to move forward to graduation and orientation with a renewed spirit and confidence and that my friends, I get from all of you.

Sincerely,

Kim Agretto, C-TAGME

President, Association of Residency Coordinators in Surgery

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ASSOCIATION OF RESIDENCY COORDINATORS IN SURGERY

## GOING GREEN

ARCS is helping the environment, one paper at a time!

In our continued effort to help save the environment, the ARCS Steering Committee is working on ways to go green! We have already gone green by sending our Newsletter to you electronically. At our recent meeting in San Francisco, we decided to bring our own materials which meant printing them in a smaller font that we can read (as our eyes allowed us!), double-sided copies or bringing a lap top to review as we worked. This made our suitcases much lighter as well.

During our meeting, we also agreed, unanimously, that we needed to do something about all of the paper used for hand outs. On average we have about a dozen sessions that include handouts. If the handouts are 5 pages multiplied by the number of copies we need for each attendee, we have used on average, 15,000 pieces of paper which is equivalent to 3 cartons of paper! This is equivalent to 1.8 trees<sup>a</sup>. That may not seem like a lot to some of you, but it is. Every day we lose an area of the rain forest larger than all five boroughs of New York City!<sup>b</sup>

At our upcoming annual Meeting in Salt Lake City, Utah, we have decided to download all of the sessions, slides, handouts, etc onto a jump drive for everyone that attends. This will be our gift to you and the environment!

I hope that you will support us in our effort to save the environment and the rain forests!

Jeannine St. Pierre  
University of Massachusetts

<sup>a</sup>Estimated calculation by Tom Soder, Graduate Student in the Pulp and Paper Technology Program at the University of Maine from the book Recycled Papers: The Essential Guide (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1992), by Claudia Thompson.

<sup>b</sup><http://www.savetherainforest.org>

### TAGME – STAC Update

At the August 2008 National Board of Certification for Training Administrators of Graduate Medical Education (TAGME), Family Medicine and Emergency Medicine were approved to offer certification. This brings the number of core clinical specialties to offer certification to 10, or more than 1/3 of the core specialties accredited by the ACGME. In addition to the 10 core specialties, 3 subspecialties have also been approved: Vascular Surgery, Child Psychiatry and Neonatal-Perinatal Medicine. In the task force phase of the process are Diagnostic Radiology, Internal Medicine, Med-Peds, Neurosurgery, Otolaryngology and Transitional Year. TAGME is anticipating the formation of task forces for Anesthesiology and Urology within the next month. Serious interest has been seen from Plastic Surgery, GME office personal and administrators of Osteopathic programs.

At the present time, there are 49 certified general surgery training program administrators. 8 candidates applied for the first Maintenance of Certification assessment. Recommendations will be acted upon in the January 2009 Board of Directors Meeting, and will be announced in Salt Lake City. Since 2005, TAGME has conferred certification on 176 training program administrators. For a complete list, please access the website at [www.tagme.org](http://www.tagme.org).

The application periods for certification are: March 1 – May 30 for the fall assessment; September 1 – November 30 for the spring assessment. The spring assessments are at the national meeting, this year being in Salt Lake City for general surgery candidates. TAGME offers open assessment sites for the fall assessment. Typically there are 8-12 sites available throughout the country to accommodate candidates for certification who wish to sit in the Fall. You can download the application from the TAGME website.

Certification is one of the ways to acknowledge your skills, knowledge and abilities in your job. Many certified training administrators have become very pro-active in educating their human resource people regarding what goes into managing a training program. Several institutions have rewritten the program coordinator job description to reflect the change in the responsibilities and content of the position, and have revised titles to include managerial and administrative terminology. It has been very exciting to be a part of this process and to see how positively certification has been received by those we work for. Another indication of the impact of TAGME is it's inclusion in the "Green Book" published by the AMA. Check it out!

Ruth H. Nawotniak C-TAGME  
President, STAC

## 2008-2009 Steering Committee Members

### Kim Agretto, C-TAGME

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Easton, PA  
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### Gretchen M. Lynch, C-TAGME

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(573) 884-2000

## VASCULAR SUB-SPECIALTY AD HOC COMMITTEE

As Dr. James Valentine states, vascular surgery has really hit its stride as a specialty. Vascular Surgery Coordinators are finding their role continually expanding as programs branch out into different pathways of training vascular surgeons.

There are now four options of training to become a vascular surgeon. The traditional track has been the seven-year program, which is comprised of five years of general surgery residency plus two years of vascular surgery with eventual board certification in both general surgery and vascular surgery. A variation on this is the 4+2 track, which is available to residents in a few select programs with ESP (Early Specialization Program) accreditation. This track allows for early entry into vascular surgery with the traditional chief year of general surgery serving as the first year of vascular training. Graduates are eligible for vascular surgery and general surgery certification.

Two "integrated" programs are available: 1) a six-year track ("3 + 3") leading to primary certification in vascular surgery alone, for residents who match in initial surgical training (Similar to the plastic surgery training model involving 3 years of general surgery followed by an additional 3 years in vascular surgery. While this training paradigm has been approved by the ACGME, there are currently no programs up and running.) and 2) a five year training program including 24 months of general surgery and 36 months of vascular surgery where applicants match right out of medical school. According to the VascularWeb home page, ACGME approved the Primary Certification in Vascular surgery in 2006, which eliminates the requirement for certification in general surgery prior to certification in vascular surgery. The five-year integrated track is quickly catching on as the preferred program for trainees as it reduces the training period from seven years to five years. The five-year track (known as 0+5) leads to board certification in vascular surgery alone.

For vascular coordinators, this can be overwhelming as several of these tracks are still evolving and it is often unclear what needs to be done for each individual program. Vascular coordinators are finding themselves immersed into the world of general surgery training as two of the years of the 0+5 program are devoted to core surgical training. The 0+5 track matches at the same time as general surgery so this has generated the need for an additional interview season.

Due to these many changes in vascular surgery training and the increasing need for interaction with general surgery training programs, the ARCS Steering Committee has decided to form a Vascular Sub-Specialty Committee and they have invited me to be the chairperson. I was the General and Vascular Surgery Coordinator at Good Samaritan Hospital (Cincinnati, Ohio) for six years before coming to the University of Cincinnati to be the Vascular Administrative Coordinator. We have just been approved for a 0+5 program.

The goal of this subcommittee will be to give the vascular coordinators a place to come together to talk about the many challenges we face with our ever expanding role. The committee will hold its first meeting during the ARCS annual meeting, which will be held April 28 – May 2<sup>nd</sup> in Salt Lake City, Utah. A breakout session specific to vascular surgery will be on the agenda where we will discuss concerns and challenges of vascular surgery coordinators. We will look at the option of whether to continue under ARCS or become our own group. Another objective of the committee will be to work on the tools needed for STAC certification as a vascular surgery coordinator. The subcommittee is still in the developmental stage and looking for vascular coordinators interested in serving on the board. Please contact me if you are interested in serving.

I encourage all vascular coordinators to attend the Spring ARCS meeting. If you are a vascular coordinator, I would love to hear from you and I welcome your comments and suggestions.

Julie A. Gulley

Vascular Administrative Coordinator  
University of Cincinnati Department of Surgery  
231 Albert Sabin Way, ML 0558  
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[julie.gulley@uc.edu](mailto:julie.gulley@uc.edu)

# JEOPARDY!

## Coordinators Jeopardy is back!!

Back by popular demand, the Coordinators Jeopardy session will be held on **Saturday, May 2nd at 10:15am in Salt Lake City, Utah**. This session received excellent reviews in Toronto. Coordinators found it not only to be fun and entertaining but also a great review of information, a great learning experience and a nice ice breaker for new coordinators. The improvements made to the workshop make this session enjoyable. We will continue with the following rules:

Two rounds – Regular Jeopardy and Double Jeopardy.

Six teams of five coordinators each: three teams will play Jeopardy and three teams will play Double Jeopardy.

Coordinators from Jeopardy and Double Jeopardy will join together for the final Jeopardy question.

The audience will be the 4<sup>th</sup> team and will answer any questions that are answered incorrectly.

Random drawing will dictate which team goes first.

If the team that goes first misses the question/answer, the opportunity to answer will move to the next team, and so on.

The team that answers the question correctly will continue to pick a topic until they answer incorrectly.

Once a team incorrectly answers a question, the team next in line will then pick a topic.

Points will be deducted for any missed questions as well as points added for correct answers.

Teams with a negative point balance at the end of Double Jeopardy will not move on to Final Jeopardy.

Rules and regulations for Jeopardy will be reviewed prior to the start of the session.

Points will be deducted from those teams who argue with any decision made by the panel of judges.

Kim Agretto, President of ARCS presented this interactive, educational session for our group in 2006 in Tuscon. Since then there have been many enhancements. Seasoned coordinators are showing their competitive style and new coordinators are learning some great information. Let's show Alexa Trebek our support for another year of ..... "This is Jeopardy"!

### Dine-Out Groups in SLC

Again at our annual conference we are organizing some dine-out experiences for the evening of the New Coordinators Workshop. We hope that all new coordinators will plan on attending. It's a great way to meet new people at ARCS!

There will be sign up sheets near the ARCS Conference registration table. ARCS Steering Committee members will accompany each group and we've selected four restaurants. Check them out online if you'd like. It will be a fun evening!

Please plan on joining us!

The Melting Pot [www.meltingpot.com](http://www.meltingpot.com)

Squatter's Pub Brewery [www.squatters.com](http://www.squatters.com)

Market Street Grill – Downtown [www.gastronomyinc.com](http://www.gastronomyinc.com)

Biaggi's Ristorante Italiano [www.biaggis.com](http://www.biaggis.com)

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# ARCS Salt Lake City Program Schedule

## WEDNESDAY, APRIL 29, 2009

1:00—4:00 PM	New Coordinator's Workshop
4:15—5:15 PM	ARCS Programming
6:00 PM	ARCS Welcome Reception & Dine Out Groups

## THURSDAY, APRIL 30, 2009

7:00—8:00 AM	ARCS Breakfast
8:00—5:15 PM	ARCS Programming
6:30PM	Joint Reception APDS/ARCS/ASE/APDVS

## FRIDAY, MAY 1, 2009

7:00—7:30 AM	ARCS Breakfast
7:45—4:45 PM	ARCS Programming

## SATURDAY, MAY 2, 2009

7:00—7:30 AM	ARCS Breakfast
7:30- 12:00 Noon	ARCS Programming
12:00 Noon	ARCS Adjourns

## The 2009 Spring Meeting of the ASE/APDS/ARCS

April 28, 2009 to May 2, 2009

The Grand America Hotel  
Salt Lake City, Utah

<http://www.grandamerica.com/>

## 2009 Coordinator Recognition Award

In 2006 recognition was given to Ms. Heddy Bergstrom from Temple, in 2007 Mrs. Ruth Nawotniak from State University of New York was recognized and in 2008 Ms. Linda Schaffer from West Virginia University was presented with the coordinator recognition award! All three are very well deserving of this award and are to be congratulated once again by the Steering Committee.



As familiarity of this award continues to increase among Program Directors, numerous nomination submissions were received by the Steering Committee for the 2009 award. Program Directors should be applauded for recognizing their coordinators hard work and dedication. All nominations were reviewed, in detail, at the ARCS Steering Committee Meeting held in conjunction with the Annual ACS Clinical Congress Meeting in San Francisco during October 2008. After careful consideration and lengthy discussions, the Steering Committee unanimously elected the 2009 award recipient.

and the 2009 Coordinator Recognition Award goes to...



**Characteristics exhibited by the 2009 award recipients include, but are not limited to:**

- Dedication and commitment to the education of peers in surgery through presentations at ARCS meetings and the ARCS mentorship program.
- Leadership in professional organizations and development related to graduate medical education.
- Creativity, hard work, and enthusiastic contributions to overall function within the individual's residency program.

*Be sure to join us in Salt Lake City to see who the next recipient of this very prestigious award is!*

*It is with great honor that the ARCS Steering Committee continues to recognize members of our organization who contribute to our success!*

*Sandy K. DeCoglin, BS, C-TAGME*

### Professional Development Curriculum

The Association of Residency Coordinators in Surgery will be implementing our Professional Development Curriculum at the ARCS Conference in Salt Lake City, Utah. The Professional Development Committee has developed and will be implementing specific educational programs for the residency coordinator in order to facilitate the coordinator’s personal and professional growth in their field.

The Professional Development Curriculum will rotate over a period of three years with new sessions added each year so that the curriculum is up to date and current and serves the members of our organization. The curriculum will continually be monitored for current practices and new innovative concepts and procedures.

Professional Development Sessions will be marked with an asterisk in the ARCS Program. All coordinators who attend a Professional Development Session will be asked to complete an evaluation form designated for that session and will also be required to sign an attendance sheet. Following completion of the workshop and provided that the coordinator has signed the attendance sheet and completed an evaluation form, a certificate will be awarded. This certificate is in addition to the ARCS conference certificate and may then be used to assist coordinators who are applying for initial certification through TAGME and also maintenance of certification. In some instances, this certificate may be used for academic credit towards an advanced degree.

The following sessions have been designated as Professional Development Workshops at the 2009 ARCS Conference:

Session	Speaker
“Designing your Professional Armor”	Pamela A. Rowland, PhD Dartmouth Medical Center
“I know you can read this....Principles Of PowerPoint Presentations and Public Speaking”	Maggie Tarpley, MLS John Tarpley, M.D. Vanderbilt University
“De-Mystifying Writing Goals & Objectives”	Ruth Nawotniak, MS, C-TAGME University at Buffalo - Dept. of Surgery Program Coordinator

Our hope is that the Professional Development Curriculum will serve year after year as a tool that will nurture and educate our membership in their professional growth and development as a program coordinator. The input and evaluation of these sessions is extremely important as your opinion is what will drive future sessions. We are looking forward to presenting this curriculum to the APDS Board of Directors and to you at our conference in Salt Lake City.

Kim Agretto, President  
June Cameron, President-Elect

# ***NEW ARCS MEMBERS***

Please Join Us in Welcoming the Following New Members of ARCS. These Coordinators Were Approved for Membership at the 2008 APDS Board of Directors Meeting.

## **Effective 10/08:**

### **Brenda Davis**

Carolinas Medical Center  
1000 Blythe Boulevard  
Charlotte, NC

### **Jonathan Lilwall**

The Brody School of Medicine  
at East Carolina University  
600 Moore Boulevard  
Greenville, NC

### **Rita Raio**

St. John's Queens Hospital  
90-02 Queens Boulevard  
Elmhurst, NY

### **Nan Siebert**

Cleveland Clinic Foundation  
9500 Euclid Avenue  
Cleveland, OH

## **Effective 4/08:**

### **Vicki Anderson**

Physicians Medical Center  
3121 North Tenaya  
Suite 600  
Las Vegas, NV

### **Kathleen Beard**

University of New Mexico  
MSC105610  
Albuquerque, NM

### **Amy Braddock**

St. Joseph Mercy Oakland  
44405 Woodward Avenue  
Pontiac, MI

### **Mary Burda**

University of Toledo Medical College  
2801 W. Bancroft  
Toledo, OH

### **Shanda Cloud**

The University of Oklahoma  
College of Medicine  
Post Office Box 26901  
Oklahoma City, OK

### **Maria Angelica Gana**

The Albany Medical College  
43 New Scotland Avenue  
Albany, NY

### **Wendy Krank**

Mayo Clinic  
200 First Street, S.W.  
Rochester, MN

### **Diantha Langmaid**

The University of Vermont  
Burlington, VT

### **Theresa Landrum**

The University of Tennessee  
Knoxville, TN

### **Sandi Pettit**

Swedish Medical Center  
747 Broadway  
Seattle, WA

### **Linda J. Roock**

Wright State University  
Dayton, OH

### **Natasha Stepanets-Sagal**

SUNY Downstate Medical Center  
450 Clarkson Avenue  
Brooklyn, NY

### **Carla Thompson**

Duke University Medical Center  
Box 3951  
Durham, NC

### **Holly Torr**

University of Colorado  
Health Sciences Center  
9th Avenue & Colorado Blvd.  
Denver, CO

### **Stephanee Westee**

New Jersey Medical School  
185 S. Orange Avenue  
Newark, NJ

### **Christopher Williams**

University of Virginia  
1215 Lee Street  
Charlottesville, VA

The Steering Committee has been working very hard the last 9 months. We met in August to begin preparation for our presentation at the ACS Clinical Congress entitled "Resident Interviews – the Keys to Success" and to also plan the ARCS Conference in Salt Lake City. We were all very honored and excited that we were asked to participate in the Clinical Congress. We planned, revised, re-wrote, renewed, and practiced, practiced, and practiced this presentation until we were tired and had to resort to a glass of wine. Quite frankly, it got better and better with each glass! All kidding aside, the presentation to the medical students went very well and we hope to be invited back next year by the ACS to present once again. Thanks to Dr. Fuhrman, Dr. Tarpley, Dr. Kohli, Dr. Dunning, and Dr. Fudge who served as our actors in the mock interviews. The mock interviews brought a lot of laughter from the audience and the session was well received by those students in attendance. Lots of good questions were asked and answered by all who participated.

