



# SEA Update: Innovation in the Time of COVID-19

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**“T**he purpose of strategy is to align the behavior of everyone in the organization and help them to make good decisions when they are on their own.” (Understanding Michael Porter: The Essential Guide to Competition and Strategy. 2011)

In 2010, the Society for Education in Anesthesia (SEA) held its first strategic planning meeting. As a new member of the board back then, I was curious how that work would shape our organization. Biennially since 2010, the incoming SEA president, board of directors, and committee chairs have revisited the strategic plan and used our society’s vision, mission, and core values to guide our work.

Today in the aftermath of a most disruptive time in health care and academic medicine, it is very clear how the foresight of our past SEA leadership has been invaluable. As we weather the storm of COVID-19, SEA is moving forward using well-established principles to keep us on track.

## Collaboration

In the last year, collaboration with other groups has been an important aspect of our society’s work. In a joint initiative, SEA partnered with ASA to create the ASA/SEA Distinguished Educator award ([asamonitor.pub/3j47IXt](http://asamonitor.pub/3j47IXt)). This project culminated in the first Distinguished Educator awards being announced at the 2019 ASA annual meeting. Many SEA members were among the inaugural awardees. To continue our collaborations, SEA created a taskforce to oversee and invite alliances with other organizations. This resulted in the co-creation of a workshop on curriculum design presented at the 2019 fall meeting of the Society for Neuroscience in Anesthesiology and Critical Care. At this time, the task force continues its work to identify potential partners for workshops, panels, and other educational-based initiatives.

## Inclusive community

The 2019 SEA Spring Meeting theme was *“Integration and Diversity”* ([asamonitor.pub/2AXaLQa](http://asamonitor.pub/2AXaLQa)). As a direct result of that meeting, the SEA Board created a new Task Force on Diversity and Inclusion ([asamonitor.pub/3fvkrAh](http://asamonitor.pub/3fvkrAh)). This could not



have come at a more appropriate moment, and the new task force is already advising our society on how our work can stay free from bias, racism, and prejudice.

## Scholarship

The “SEA’d Award,” a starter grant of \$10,000 to support anesthesia-related education research, is now in its fifth year. In addition, a generous gift from the estate of one of the SEA founding members supports two Philip Liu Awards for “Innovations in Anesthesia Education.” This year, our research committee is organizing two virtual “Summer at SEA” sessions on September 16 and 22, 2020 to present innovative abstracts ([www.seahq.org/events/event\\_list.asp](http://www.seahq.org/events/event_list.asp)).

## Innovation and education in the time of COVID-19

The cancelled 2020 Spring Meeting would have been the focus of this SEA Subspecialty Update. We hope to present the 2020 program in 2022 and will be offering many of the workshops virtually over the coming months. I can, however, highlight the courage, creativity, and innovation shown by our members as they rose to the very considerable challenges of the pandemic and found ways to stay true to our core values and educational mission.

At Vanderbilt University, Drs. Bhutiani, Gelfand, and Kingeter restructured their traditional June CA-1 orientation “bootcamp” to emphasize wellness and combat burnout that had been worsened by COVID-19. Their strategies in-

cluded paired intraoperative mentorship for new CA-1s with senior residents, predictable and assured OR relief, evening online lectures in an interactive PBLD format, and resilience-building workshops. The need to prioritize resident wellness in challenging times helped drive a programmatic paradigm shift of greater resident support and well-being.

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At Texas Children’s pediatric anesthesia program, Drs. Caplan, Chen, and Young developed an innovative simulation training exercise to teach the effective use of PPE to OR providers undertaking aerosol-generating procedures. To preserve actual PPE, the team creatively used everyday alternatives, including mydriatic eye protectors instead of goggles, scrub jackets for PPE gowns, and rubber bands to substitute for non-sterile gloves.

At the University of Oklahoma, Drs. Kosik and Saxon went to great lengths to continue to hold high-fidelity simulation sessions for medical students with



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appropriate social distancing and adherence to their university’s COVID-19 guidelines. The team operated the simulators and sanitized the equipment themselves so that teaching could continue in a safe environment. Their creativity and ability to adapt to new safety requirements meant their anesthesia residents were still able to participate in mock orals and OSCEs.

In a very collaborative effort, Drs. Albertz, Hoagland, Masaracchia, Chatterjee (University of Colorado), Dr. LeRiger (University of Nebraska), and Dr. Dachsangvorn (OHSU) encouraged their pediatric anesthesia fellows to create questions related to the pediatric fellowship examination missed keywords. With support from the Society for Pediatric Anesthesia (SPA), these questions were published on the SPA website, offering high-quality distance learning opportunities for pediatric fellows.

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## Looking forward to the future

The SEA Fall Meeting, exploring the topic of “Educational Scholarship” will be held **virtually** on the **afternoon of Thursday October 1, and the morning of Friday October 2, 2020**, with online workshops being offered in the following months.

At this time, I am unsure how academic medicine will adapt to the changes brought about by COVID-19. However, I am sure that the Society for Education in Anesthesia remains a vibrant community of teachers, scholars, and innovators who are keen to collaborate and able to respond quickly and effectively to challenging situations guided by our strategic vision, mission, and core values. ■