



## Resilience and Renewal in Post-COVID Academic Anesthesiology

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It is with great honor that I have served as President of the Society of Academic Associations of Anesthesiology & Perioperative Medicine (SAAAPM) since October 2021. While my assumption of this leadership role was earlier than planned and my term of service is longer than usual, I am grateful for the opportunity to have worked alongside the exceptional Dr. Ron Pearl, my predecessor, who skillfully guided us through the turbulence of the COVID-19 pandemic.

**“We are also thrilled that the Association of Anesthesiology Core Program Directors (AACPD) Council has published guidance on upcoming changes to the ERAS application for residency programs in the 2023-2024 season. These changes include the integration of ERAS supplemental application information, such as geographic preferencing and the streamlining of the experiences section for applicants.”**

The SAAAPM has faced immense challenges during this epoch, especially with the loss of our largest value proposition, the annual meeting. However, we viewed this as an opportunity for all stakeholders in graduate medical education to come together, learn, and network. Through pivoting and utilizing our resources, we have emerged stronger and more resilient as an organization.



We learned to appreciate the benefits of virtual platforms for communication and exchanging ideas, but we also recognize the powerful unifying effect of in-person meetings. With valuable guidance from our leadership group and unwavering support from our membership, we successfully navigated through two virtual meetings and delivered one of our most successful in-person annual meetings in Chicago last year in November.

Moving forward, the SAAAPM remains focused on navigating the challenges and opportunities of academic anesthesiology in our post-COVID reality. We are excited to announce that our annual meeting this year will be held in person on November 3-4, 2023, at the Swissotel in Chicago, Illinois. The theme of this year's conference is “The New Normal: Adjusting to Instability in the Academic Anesthesiology Department.” We are also pleased to collaborate with the Society for Education in Anesthesia (SEA), who will be holding their fall meeting on November 2 in the same hotel. We are exploring ways to align our curricula to increase engagement and attendance for both events.

At SAAAPM, we are dedicated to representing, advocating for, and educating on issues that are important to academic anesthesiology. Our organization is composed of four distinct groups – chairs, residency program directors, fellowship program directors, and program administrators – and our mission is to enhance education, research, and quality clinical care in academic settings. As both the president and the academic director on

the ASA Board of Directors, I am proud to represent SAAAPM and its members in the broader anesthesiology community.

We faced significant challenges during the pandemic, which led us to undergo a self-study on how to increase the value we provide to our members. We recognized the need to explore other avenues outside the annual meeting and remain committed to this goal. In addition to our annual meeting and new initiatives, we are pleased to offer a variety of valuable programs to our members. Our annual survey of member departments, which examines staffing and finances, has been a particularly popular resource that empowers departments to gain comparative information for internal planning and negotiation for resources.

Moreover, we regularly organize webinars for our members, including two sessions for new chairs, monthly virtual sessions for women chairs, and regular interactive “check-ins” and career development programs for our program directors and departmental administrators.

We are also thrilled that the Association of Anesthesiology Core Program Directors (AACPD) Council has published guidance on upcoming changes



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to the ERAS application for residency programs in the 2023-2024 season. These changes include the integration of ERAS supplemental application information, such as geographic preferencing and the streamlining of the experiences section for applicants. In a change to program signaling for anesthesiology, each applicant will be allowed a total of 15 program signals (5 gold to indicate highest interest and 10 silver to indicate very high interest). Program signals are meant to provide equitable opportunities for an applicant to demonstrate specific interest in certain programs in the setting of high-volume applications to the specialty of anesthesiology. This initiative is an important step toward enhancing the value and engagement of our members, and we will share the AACPD's findings on our website and with the ASA community.

Lastly, the organization continues to host the Academic Caucus, a gathering at the ANESTHESIOLOGY® annual meeting that allows the academic community to come together, meet with ASA leadership, examine the House of Delegates business impacting the academic community, and voice our concerns.

We remain grateful for our partnership with ASA and look forward to continuing to advocate for, educate, and enhance academic anesthesiology for our members. We hope to see you at our annual meeting in November! ■

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