

Personal Statement

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It has been a tremendous privilege to be an active member within the ASMBS organization. It has always been a diverse and inclusive organization, allowing any member to participate at a high level. As a surgical society, I feel our future is very positive. We have made great strides in the recent past with increasing access to care, eliminating barriers to surgery for our patients, and expanding our indications for surgery. Our efforts to improve our outcomes have made bariatric surgery safer and more effective than ever before.

Even with our bright future ahead, challenges remain to be addressed. Our updated criteria will need to be a strong focus moving forward. In addition to the access improvements we have made, we need to shift the focus to increased utilization. We need to improve our efforts in making sure patients are aware of current coverage and the benefits of surgery will need to be emphasized. Moving the needle on our <1% operation rate will need to focus on making patients and referring physicians aware of the benefits and cost-effectiveness of our services.

Our future will only be as strong as our next generation of bariatric surgeons. The bariatric fellows and younger surgeons need to be supported for their futures. Increasing access and utilization for our patients will ensure surgeons early in practice will have strong opportunities upon completion of training.

In addition, in the ever-changing nature of obesity management, we need to make clear of the value of our society's role and position. Even with collaborative care with medication use is an advantage to our patients, we need to make clear the benefits of bariatric surgery.

I have the good fortune to have experience as an employed surgeon, in private practice and currently as an academic surgeon. My involvement working in these different environments provides a unique experience in bariatric surgery. This has provided the capability to understand some of the hurdles and needs bariatric surgeons face daily, along with the knowledge to help overcome these hurdles.

It has been the highlight of my professional career to have served on the ASBS Executive Council. I have served on various task forces and committees, including Chair of Access to Care. While in this role, we were able to make advances in improving access and removing unnecessary barriers for patients. I was grateful to receive the ASMBS Committee of the Year award for this service and the ASMBS Distinguished Service Award the following year.

Most importantly, I have always looked upon my role in the ASMBS as service. The primary responsibility of leadership is to serve. Our role is to serve our surgeon and allied health members and, primarily, our patients.

I feel my overall work with the ASBMS and service on the Executive Council has provided excellent experience for me to further serve as the ASBMS as Secretary/Treasurer. I would be honored to be elected and serve in this position.