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Personal Journey & Professional Development

Twenty-four years ago, I arrived in the US to become the best surgeon and individual possible. After completing my transplant surgery fellowship at the Medical University of South Carolina in 2003, I made the difficult decision to redo my entire surgical residency in the US in order to get board-certified in Surgery and pursue a career in this country. This five-year journey developed not only my technical skills but also crucial emotional intelligence through interactions with colleagues, fellow residents, junior attendings and residents who I had trained, who had overnight become my bosses. This ability to work in difficult environments, keeping personal ego aside, is, now my greatest leadership strength.

Leadership & Program Development

My career demonstrates my ability to build innovative programs:

- Founded the VISN-7 bariatric surgery program serving veterans across three states
- Lead the University-based Bariatric Surgery program at MUSC
- Established the Division of Foregut & Metabolic Surgery
- Revitalized the ASMBS state chapter, doubling participation

Recognition & Service

My commitment has been recognized through the ASMBS Clinical Excellence Award and Honorary Life Membership of the Obesity Surgery Society of India. As chair of the International Certification in Bariatric Surgery working group, I developed standards for global education and practice.

Vision Statement: Navigating the Future of Metabolic Surgery

We face unprecedented challenges with the emergence of effective pharmacological treatments for obesity. If elected President, I will lead with these strategic priorities:

1. **Redefining Our Position with GLP-1 Medications** Position surgical intervention as complementary to pharmacotherapy by emphasizing durability and cost-effectiveness while promoting research on optimal patient selection.

2. **Cost-Effectiveness Advocacy** Compile compelling data on long-term cost-effectiveness of bariatric surgery compared to lifelong medication, equipping members to advocate with payers.
3. **Procedural Innovation and Coverage Expansion** Secure coverage for newer procedures like SADI by developing standardized training pathways and integrate appropriate endoscopic therapies into our arsenal.
4. **Enhanced Grassroots Advocacy** Strengthen advocacy through direct-to-consumer messaging and coalition-building with patient advocacy groups, industry partners, and other medical specialties.
5. **Global Leadership and Expansion** Expand our presence in regions with high prevalence of metabolic disease through partnerships that facilitate knowledge exchange and standardize training.

Leadership Philosophy

I believe in service-first leadership. Having worked within ASMBS since 2009, I understand our organization's structure and potential. My approach is collaborative and forward-thinking, uniting diverse perspectives toward our common goal.

The coming years are pivotal. We need leadership that understands emerging challenges and can articulate bariatric surgery's role in comprehensive obesity treatment. Together, we can ensure our specialty remains vital in transforming patients' lives through effective, durable treatments for metabolic disease.