President’s Message

Thank You for the Opportunity to Serve You

“I leave the past and I leave the present. It is to the future that we must turn our gaze.” WINSTON CHURCHILL, JUNE 21, 1955

I t has been a terrific, if not surreal, year serving as your President and I would like to share with you, in my final President’s Message, my appreciation and my passion for Central Service/Sterile Processing (CS/SP) and all the unsung professionals who ensure that our customers and patients get the best in reprocessing and instrument care. Like the many presidents who came before me, we began this journey with a strategic goal and a plan to move our organization forward; I can confidently assure you that IAHCSMM continues to be the education, certification and support leader for our profession – and a steady, strong and reliable voice for all who comprise it.

I am often reminded of great leaders around the world who faced challenges and left their mark in a positive way. While I’m certainly not comparing myself to any past leader in our profession or any other leader across the globe, for that matter, I do often consider how passion and drive have helped me in my personal and professional life to become a more effective leader. I know that time is precious (if only we had more of it!) and that what we do today – and how we do it – helps steer us toward where we will be tomorrow. With that in mind, I have used that as my measuring stick for serving as your President.

Over the past year, we have seen tremendous growth, amazing milestones and notable successes that have not only made me proud to be an IAHCSMM member and Board member, but a proud CS/SP professional, alongside all of you. As we continue to move forward and face our challenges and goals head on, I know our eyes will remain wide open, our hearts and minds will remain focused on doing what’s right – and we will be ready for anything.

Lessons and memories to last a lifetime

Before my term as President draws to a close, I’d like to share with you some of the lessons, takeaways and memories I experienced during my presidency. Here are a few of those lessons learned, which I hope will help you in your own professional roles and personal lives:

• Listen to all sides of the story.

• Breathe. At times, it’s important to take a momentary (or longer) “time out” to refocus, regroup and remain a positive force/voice, even during the most challenging times.

• Ask questions. Often, the best answers come from setting aside our personal assumptions and relying on others to offer their opinions, suggestions and insights.

• Stand your ground, when necessary, and never waver when it comes to doing what’s right.

• Admit when you make a mistake. We’re all human and learning from our mistakes is what helps us grow.

• Stay humble. We all work hard and contribute to the greater good of our departments and profession. There’s real strength in working as a unified team, honoring others’ hard work and contributions, and sharing in our successes.

• Enjoy every moment and always remember the real reason we are in the CS/SP: to provide the safest, highest-quality patient care. It’s a critically important role and one that should make us very proud!

Throughout my presidency, I’ve had the amazing opportunity and privilege to travel the country and various parts of the world and represent IAHCSMM, all of you and the future of CS/SP. I’ve visited hospitals and CS/SP departments around our great country, and I’ve seen your smiles, witnessed your
hard work and dedication, and have seen the opportunities to improve and grow as professionals and as an Association.

I have attended so many meetings, I’ve lost count but I have the incredible memory of meeting and working with great people who are passionate about what they do and truly want to make a difference. I’ve met many true leaders of our profession – all of whom share a common goal of building a better future for our critically important discipline and all who comprise it.

Finally, I have had the opportunity to call, text, email and send many social media messages to many of you over the past year. You have shared your stories, generously opened your hearts, asked questions, offered valuable suggestions and demonstrated your sincere passion to continue educating and challenging yourselves for the betterment of patient care. These are just some of the many memories I’ll carry with me forever. I’m grateful to my hospital and team for supporting me on this journey and allowing me to serve an Association and profession I respect so deeply.

As I prepare to pass the gavel to our next IAHCSMM President, the very capable and committed Tony Thurmond, I find joy knowing IAHCSMM is stronger than ever and will remain focused on its strategic plan and meeting the current and future needs of the CS/SP profession. I will soon join a long line of Past Presidents who are committed to the ongoing success of IAHCSMM and the profession, and I look forward to meeting and even mentoring many of our outstanding future leaders and members. Rest assured, even after my presidency ends, I will still be here for you and this wonderful Association. I will continue to be a voice and champion for our profession.

Together, we are strong!

Damien S. Berg