

## WHO'S WHO 2010

*SurgiStrategies* would like to congratulate this year's Who's Who! The individuals and facilities featured are helping to change the face of medicine, and blazing the trail for a evolving, ever-successful ASC industry.

### The People



#### Frank Costa

Costa built, designed and operated the most successful ASC in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania from 1992 to 2004 when University of Pittsburgh Medical Center (UPMC) bought it. He is currently the chairman of the department of surgery of the ASC in Monroeville, Pa. and assists

in its development, utilization, and commitment to quality care. Costa has provided an ASC when there was previously none, held patient education seminars, symposiums, and healthfests to the community for many years (at no charge). "He is constantly giving and never asking for anything in return," says Nadine Banwell, CEO of the Insitute.

"I derive a lot satisfaction from being able to help people within my specialty; being able to understand a patient and knowing that helping them will impact their life and my own," adds Costa.

Costa has learned over the years that you must never lose sight of maintaining a high degree of integrity and having patient well-being in the forefront at all times. "Keeping this mission focused allows success no matter where you are," he adds.



#### Brian F. D'Ercole

D'Ercole serves as the chief financial officer of Surgem L.L.C, a rapidly growing regional ASC management company. Since joining Surgem in 2007, D'Ercole has been instrumental in the operations of the management company as well as revamping the company's financial reporting systems and instituting stricter internal financial controls.

"I have had a firsthand exposure to critical changes in the reimbursement landscape. From this experience, it has never been more apparent that Surgem's success and my personal effectiveness is predicated on establishing and preserving a sustainable business model to withstand any prospective threats and challenges due to legislative issues etc.," says D'Ercole. "To the end, it is imperative that each entity

be continuously vigilant both in streamlining its expense structure as well as optimizing revenues."

Far from the traditional CFO mindset of focusing on accounting and finances, D'Ercole also incorporates a broad focus on operational aspects, demographic indicators and industry trends as drivers and influencers of financial outcomes. His ability to balance internal and external factors and trends is best evidenced in Surgem's reporting formats, which guide and inform its management team and its large physician investor base.

Moreover, his ability to translate complex data and business models from all aspects into a straightforward transparent financial picture has proven invaluable to this emerging regional operator.



#### Michele Green

Michele Green has been in the nursing field since she was 19 years old. As an RN at Desert Mirage Surgery Center in Arizona, she enjoys taking on new challenges that force her for constant improvement. "My goals have always been focused on mastering whatever hat I wear for the day. It has

been a high priority for me to educate myself with the many different areas in the OR," Green adds. "I try and seek out any opportunity to learn from the many seasoned nurses and technicians that I work with."

Green feels that many factors help create a successful ASC such as amazing management, a group of people that genuinely cares for patients and business and physician satisfaction. "If these essential components are embodied in an ASC, patients satisfaction will reflect this," says Green. "I am so proud to say that our patient satisfaction surveys are phenomenal and if we have any issues the patient is contacted that same day to remedy the situation."

Taking her role as a healthcare provider very serious, she prides herself on being accountable for every patient who enters facility to provide high quality, compassionate and safe care. "I feel so lucky to come to work with such a dedicated group of people who truly care about making our surgery center stand out among the rest," Green says.



### Brenda Keeling

"I try to encourage clients to do the right thing for the patient at the right time and in the right setting. This includes being cognizant of resource utilization regardless of level of care status," says Brenda Keeling, RN, CPHQ, CPUR, president of Patient Response, Inc. "Meeting these indicators will ultimately result in positive patient outcomes and meet facility financial goals."

On the clinical side, Keeling sees nursing as a rewarding field; she has ingrained the nursing process in her lifestyle. At the age of 5, her favorite toys was a plastic nursing kit. "I believe nursing is a gift and it allows me to assist others in their time of need, whether that be to the patient at the bedside, mentoring other nurses, or providing education to nurses, physicians and executives regarding quality initiatives and regulatory compliance," Keeling adds.

Reflecting on her career, Keeling remembers helping a nurse who froze when she tried to start an IV. "I told her she was going to sit down and practice on me so she would become comfortable with the process and so she would quit freezing and missing the patient's veins," she remembers. "Needless to say five to six sticks later I questioned my sanity. However, allowing her to practice on me, she lowered her anxiety level."



### Michael J. Lipomi

"As I first entered the healthcare arena I learned that this industry is filled to the brim with the Nation's brightest and most caring and motivated care givers and administrators," says Michael J. Lipomi, president and CEO of Surgical Management Professionals. "Truly, physician-owned hospitals and ambulatory surgery center staffs and physicians are patient advocates in every sense of the word."

Lipomi feels in order to be successful, surgery centers need to maintain the focus on the patient and at the same time maintain efficiencies in all areas of operations. "Developing a comprehensive business plan and constantly reviewing and adjusting will give you the best chance at long-term success," he adds.

Lipomi actually had no thoughts of getting into healthcare until he was recruited to resolve a problem at a hospital in Southern California. "They had a complex marketing problem that drained the hospital of patients and I came in to revitalize the hospital's image, which was done very quickly and efficiently," he says. "Once I got the feel for working with doctors and healthcare administrators I could never leave."

"As the president and CEO of Surgical Management Professionals I have a dream of growing into one of the nation's leading corporate partners and management companies," Lipomi adds.



### Catherine Nichol

Nichol has 37 years of extensive experience in healthcare, with 24 of those years in ambulatory surgery operations. Prior to joining Titan as the vice president of development and professional services, she served as a regional administrator

and facility administrator for HealthSouth and acted as the Joint Commission coordinator for nine facilities.

Nichol is a commissioner for the California Health Policy and Data Advisory Commission and a member of the California Health Data and Public Information Committee.

She is also the founder and two-term president for the California Ambulatory Surgery Center Association and has published articles and made presentations on a variety of topics but recently, compliance, and CMS conditions of participation/infection control etc.



### Doug Peter

With his experience and knowledge Doug Peter, vice president of operations, Healthmark Partners has assisted in many successful de-novo centers as well as turn-arounds when Healthmark Partners was brought in to improve performance. He has contributed to several industry articles and been a speaker on center operations and managed care contracting, and served on the Texas Workers Commendation advisory panel when it recently revised the state's fee schedule.

Peter joined HealthMark Partners via Alliance Surgery in 2008 as vice president of operations. He has more than 25 years of experience in ASC operations. Prior to joining Alliance Surgery, Peter was employed by Symbion Healthcare, Inc., where he served as vice president of reimbursement for Symbion ARC. He was responsible for company-wide management of all surgery center revenue. Peter also served as the network manager for Aetna U.S. Healthcare and excelled in various capacities, including regional director of managed care for HealthSouth Corp.



### Sean Rambo

Rambo has more than 14 years of experience in the healthcare industry, with a specific focus in the ASC industry beginning in 2000. Rambo has been an active speaker on various topics within the ASC industry, and has published several articles on outpatient surgery strategies

The ASC industry has also taught Rambo the true value of partnership – and is something that he will never forget. "A 'partnership' is one of those theories that is discussed at length and seems painfully obvious," he adds. "However, until you find yourself immersed in a true business partnership (especially one within the healthcare industry), dealing with critical business, regulatory, and patient-care issues, while maintaining consistent interactions with physicians (all with different backgrounds, mindsets, and points of view) working to accomplish similar objectives – it's difficult to really understand the true meaning."

The healthcare industry, and in particular, the ASC industry, have taught Rambo the true value of a business partnership and how an effective partnership becomes the core driver to success or how an ineffective partnership can easily turn a business venture into failure.

## Ramesh Sawhney

Gramercy's surgery center's anesthesia team is led by Ramesh Sawhney, MD. Once Sawhney recognized that the needs of surgeons and their surgery centers were evolving faster than their anesthesia support services, he worked with his colleagues to foster innovation in anesthesia delivery.

Sawhney has more than 25 years of experience in heading anesthesia groups and developing the protocols necessary to create a quality program. His experience in anesthesia and operating room management allow him the expertise to perfect individualized policies and procedures in any surgical atmosphere, while his activities on the administrative side give him the ability to work data analysis, projections and pro-forma for medical practices.

In addition to his experience on the clinical and administrative side of medicine his expertise managing multiple anesthesia practices simultaneously has garnered him attention from outside the medical world. He was appointed to be an advisor to the state assembly of New Jersey on medical topics and is also the medical editor for Lifescape magazine.



## Steve Simion

Simonin has played an important role in putting the Wright Medical Center (WMC) on the map and making the facility a top choice for surgeries both for the surgeons and staff.

"Thanks to his leadership physician recruiting is no longer a challenge, but now finding office and OR space is," says Mary Goemaat, nominator and admissions clerk at WMC.

To understand Simion's positive effect on the center, let's look at the numbers. In 1997, the year after Simion took his position, the center performed 624 surgical procedures. In 2005, annual procedures climbed to 1,118 (almost double in seven years) and in 2009 the center completed 3,752 procedures.

"This number is even more impressive as we are achieving these amounts even with the economic slow down, when some are choosing to postpone elective procedures" says Goemaat. "It is a testament to Steve's sense of urgency and vision, creating a setting where so many seek out our facility to practice and also to receive their care."



## Derald Smith

"As president of the Louisiana Ambulatory Surgery Center Association (LASA), Smith has been a tireless and extremely competent leader and guide of our administrative and surgery management and supervisor community for the 75

surgery centers in Louisiana," says Peter Baudoin, one of the three individuals who nominated Smith.

As administrator for the B.R.A.S.S. Surgery Center, he has great dedication and passion for the surgery center industry in Louisiana. He has spent time, energy and money promoting the role of surgery centers and surgery center efficacy in providing excellent, cost-effective, patient-focused health services.

Tona Savoie says Smith devotes majority of his time to educating himself to educate the rest of the Louisiana centers on new policies and changes. "He keeps us motivated and is instrumental in the development and growth of LASA," Savoie adds.

Smith has learned to embrace change and be flexible in how we respond to problems using creative problem-solving as a great opportunity for achieving success.

"Working with others effectively is critical to creating strong teams. Leading and facilitating growth in capacity of your teammates will strengthen your organization," Smith adds. "Welcome young physicians and recognize that larger opportunities can emerge from relationships that were formed early and grew."



## Farrell C. "Toby" Tyson

"As chief officer of the Eye Surgery and Laser Center and six optical locations, Tyson's involvement in the business of the business is completely hands-on. His talent is widely respected across this country, and in many countries abroad," says Kimberly

Smith, business development manager.

Tyson makes the decisions for all advancements of the practice, from the 99 solar panels on the roof to the purchase and implementation of the technologically advanced instruments, such as their intraoperative wavefront aberrometer.

Today, in addition to running a caring, thriving practice, Tyson is also an examiner for the FDA, conducting research studies for FDA approval of different ophthalmic technologies and products used in the treatment of eye diseases such as cataracts, glaucoma and macular degeneration.

Tyson has written articles for several ophthalmic magazines and travels widely, speaking and teaching all over the world.

## Southern New Mexico Surgery Center:



# CTQ Quality Award Winners Back to Back

With more than 15 years of experience together at Gerald Champion Regional Hospital together, the staff at Southern New Mexico Surgery Center (SNMSC), a Regent Surgical Health ASC, has been highly-rated employees. "We are multi-focused ... everyone wears many hats with the small staff. We are all cross-trained, which is a benefit as far as financially and with productivity," says Patsey Bridges, administrator. "We can use the preop nurses in the OR, as a circulator, and even some OR nurses scrub. That much flexibility is a benefit. I think what makes our facility work best is that we have worked together so closely and we have a high standard of care."

Southern New Mexico Surgery Center has been recognized for excellence in patient satisfaction and overall quality of care with a 2010 Apex Quality Award from CTQ Solutions. This is the second year in a row that the surgery center has been honored with this elite distinction. The APEX Quality Award is presented to the highest performing healthcare facilities, specifically measuring overall patient satisfaction and loyalty attributes.

Bridges notes that the honor is especially rewarding as it reflects excellence by all staff members. "Ultimately, this is a team award as the recognition is based on a series of measures that includes contributions by all staff members. The fact that it is derived from patient feedback confirms our commitment to customer and quality care – which is our primary goal," says Bridges. "Southern New Mexico Surgery Center has excelled in patient satisfaction. The staff always takes an active role in seeking to improve. They

spend additional time and effort to learn from physicians and colleagues as well, gaining additional insight that benefits the patient."

With a staff of 12, including two techs, five RNs and the business team, SNMSC strives to achieve 100 percent patient satisfaction, which includes addressing all feedback received during surveys. With a clinical background, Bridges finds it easier to have a clear understanding of what patients are going through. "The surveys and feedback allow us to improve the processes at the center," she adds.

Receiving its second three-year AAAHC accreditation, the staff have all agreed that a cohesive team should have good communication and practices in place. "Methods are meant to be changed—a team should be flexible enough to change if necessary. We have that mentality," Bridges explains.

"Southern New Mexico Surgery Center is a great example of what it takes to thrive in the post healthcare reform regulatory environment. It is no longer enough to perform well and have a great reputation – today it is essential to be able to document and prove that degree of excellence," says Tom Mallon, CEO of Regent Surgical Health. "Analyzing and utilizing patient and surgeon satisfaction surveys gives our centers the ability to attract more patients and surgeon partners, fix costly OR efficiency problems and get ahead of any patient or surgeon issues before they can become an impediment to success. This data also plays a key role in keeping the staff and surgeons at the center focused on a single goal – patient satisfaction with high quality outcomes." ●

## The Facilities



### Cape Coral Eye Center

"The staff of Cape Coral Eye Center is highly motivated and strongly encouraged to increase its knowledge and education levels in order to exceed patients' customer service expectations, and word of mouth travels throughout the Florida area," says Kimberly Smith, business development manager.

"We treat our patients as if they were family from the time they walk in the door until they leave. We feel we have

the best doctors in the area and are proud to work for them," says Smith. "Education, education, education is what we preach here. If you advance to a new level of certification or licensure it comes with a raise. This motivates staff members to increase their levels which helps our patients and sets us apart once again," she adds.

Featured in the Florida reader's choice poll, Best of SWFLA, several years in a row, the two-OR, AAAHC-accredited center has gained recognition in the categories of best optical, vision center, optometrist, ophthalmologist, audiologist and oculoplastic surgeon. "We are a site of excellence and have many guests from all over the world coming to our practice to observe our surgical techniques and how to run a successful practice," concludes Smith.



### Mission Surgery Center

Mission Surgery Center is a five-OR, multispecialty, center that opened in April 1990. Medicare-certified and accredited by AAAHC, the center offers the latest technology and offer 23-hour care.

Longevity of the staff is key, as many have been with the center for 20 years. The center has superior quality of care that results in excellent patient outcomes. All RNs have training in Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS) and Pediatric Advanced Life Support (PALS), as do the anesthesiologists who specialize in pediatric anesthesiology.

"The experienced staff is actively involved in improving processes and enhancing safety for patients and staff," Smith adds.

Staff is well versed in all standards with 100 percent adherence with out exceptions says Kathleen Bellaire, staff member of the center. "Staff is engaged with risk management processes, with ongoing education and providing staff with up-to-date- changes on policies, protocols and standards," she adds.

Good communication and working relationships between all staff encourages communication and improvement in processes. The staff's excellent relationship with management, administration and medical directors fosters communication and appreciation throughout the center.



### Northwest Michigan Surgery Center

The Northwest Michigan Surgery Center (NMSC) is a state-of-the-art ASC performing over 16,500 cases a year. It has six main ORs with four procedure rooms. It has 83 physicians in more than 10 specialties utilizing its 52,250 square feet facility.

"NMSC is equipped with the best outpatient surgical products and highly skilled team of professional RNs, techs, aides and support staff. This center has a culture designed to be of a physician centric focus that results in the highest levels of physician and patient satisfaction," says Jim Stille, FACHE, CASC, CEO of the center.

Patients routinely comment of the ease of access, convenient hours highest levels of satisfaction. Staff like the team approach, family-friendly hours and mission orientated job design.

"Passionate about our mission to provide high quality care in a safe and cost efficient manner, staff interacts with patients in a kind and compassionate way, acting in a highly professional manner and are well educated and confident in the way we provide their care," Stille adds.

"We are overwhelmingly supported by our CEO and leadership team, who provide us with the foundation and the tools needed to fulfill our mission here," says Gayle Bultsma, RN, CAPA. "I am very proud to be a part of this team at the Northwest Michigan Surgery Center."



### NovaMed Surgery Center of Baton Rouge

"NovaMed Surgery Center of Baton Rouge continues to strive to be Baton Rouge's first choice in ambulatory surgery centers," says Cassandra Speier, senior vice president of NovaMed.

NovaMed Surgery Center of Baton Rouge has some of the most talented interventional pain physicians in the region. They focus on treating patients with interventional pain medicine in a compassionate and professional manner that delivers results. They also recognize that, for many patients, it is not a one time intervention. Many times their treatment requires several interventions. The ability to be efficient with the patient's time and that of the medical staff keeps both the physicians and the patients returning to the ASC.

The ASC provides safe and compassionate care in a warm stress free setting. With four surgical suites and 10 admit/recovery rooms it strives to make each patient's visit as efficient as possible.



### Orthopaedic South Surgical Center

"Orthopaedic South Surgical Center (OSSC) is an exceptional ASC that offer first class service where 'we would bring our own families'. OSSC conducts a myriad of daily, weekly and monthly audits to maintain a high quality of care environment," says Andrea Fann, CASC, administrator of the center.

The center has a 99 percent patient satisfaction rate and 100 percent physician satisfaction rate. Their recent employee leadership survey scored a 97 percent rating. The center is also actively involved in community efforts such as a coat drive for the homeless. The facility has also been spotlighted in the local paper on several community projects the center has supported.

"Staff are more than warm bodies to fill a position; they are wonderful people who work with their heart. Everyone shows compassion and VIP treatment to every patient," says Fann. "Lead with your heart and mind. A happy employee is a productive employee and it spreads to the physicians and patients."



### Raritan Valley Surgery Center

Open since 2000, this two-room, multi-specialty, physician-owned center has pulled together as a united front, cross-training all employees which allows them to help each other out with out ever being told.

As the new administrator, Marcy Sasso was welcomed and supported by staff. "I feel like I have known them for years," she says. "The fact that each employee takes courses and reads publications on their own time, because they are truly vested in their career, says so much."

Sasso states teamwork, followed by communication and respect, is the key to a successful ASC. "Act like you are a center of excellence and you become one. Invest the time to do a thorough interview during the hiring process; good people are going to stay with you longer," she adds. "If you receive any feedback regarding improvements listen carefully and as a team come up with a solution."

Sasso feels lucky to have Ambulatory Surgical Centers of America (ASCOA) as the center's partner and management.

What are the plans for the center's future? Growth is the main answer. "We are going in-network with some insurance carriers, and we hope to find the happy medium for our patients who deserve to have great medical care at affordable costs. We are looking for more ways to improve overall satisfaction," says Sasso.



### Stratham Ambulatory Surgery Center

"Stratham Ambulatory Surgery Center (SASC) was founded in 2009 and was built to 2012 standards, offering state-of-the-art, cost-effective, ambulatory care in a relaxed, comfortable, environment," says Ed O'Byrne, administrator.

At SASC, all physicians are board-certified specializing in the areas of ear, nose and throat surgery, fertility, orthopedic surgery, plastic surgery, foot/ankle/peripheral nerve surgery, laparoscopic surgery and general surgery.

"SASC offers a family-oriented safe alternative to hospitalization and has carefully selected staff with extensive experience and training in addition to their dedication to high quality patient care," O'Byrne adds. "The center offers an ideal working environment that is cost effective and provides excellence in patient care."

Future plans for the center include the addition of endoscopy and infusion services as the center expands to meet the needs of the community.



### Underwood Surgery Center

"I have always felt that, primarily, what sets our facility apart from the others is our staff as a whole (both clinical and office). Our staff takes ownership of its responsibility in completing the patient care equation," says Doug Oakley, business manager. "With every ASC that I have been involved with, the staff has been the determining factor for the success or failure of that ASC. In our situation at Underwood Surgery Center (USC). The No. 1 perk is providing a workplace surrounded by like-minded clinical and office staff all working towards a common goal; the safety of our patients, the satisfaction of our providers, and the continued success of USC."

The staff loyalty to the doctors and patients of USC is best shown in the fact that there has been a zero turnover rate in the core staff for four years. That is including the entire business office, all of our surgical techs, and the pre-op, intra-op, and post-op nursing staff.

Above all, regardless of any changes, upgrades or expansion, USC plans to maintain the high level of confidence, competence and safety that patients and providers have come to expect. ●