



Presidential Address:
**The
joy and privilege
of a
Surgeon**



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Editor's note: The following is an edited version of the Presidential Address that Dr. Bass delivered at the Convocation

and often routine joyful opportunity, are experiencing a rare life event—an operation.

Our communities need surgeons

Let's tackle a few other challenges. To frame this, be aware of just how valuable each of us is to our community as an asset. First, getting you to this skilled and knowledgeable point reflects an investment of well more than \$1 million: medical school, graduate medical education, and time and effort calculations. Your money, our society's investment—a lost opportunity for another.

Second, the dire anticipated shortage of surgeons of many stripes—general surgeons, orthopaedists,

what one's life might be like as a surgeon, not only as a professional but as a wife or partner, a mother or friend. procedures, augmented visualization, and minimal access sites—fundamentally delivering us to “precision surgery.”

We surgeons, of course, are not the only cohort of working women and families who suffer for the failure of our American society to embrace pregnancy, parenting, and child care as a common good. Our College with the guidance of the Women in Surgery Committee and the Association of Women Surgeons (join it, by the way), has endorsed a statement that acknowledges the need for appropriate pregnancy and parental leave and clearly articulates that the choice to become a parent in no way diminishes a woman surgeon's commitment to her career.

Our profession must commit to forging meaningful maternity and child care policies and practices so that this issue will not be a factor that may deter prospective students from choosing our disciplines or restrict the career aspirations of women surgeons—more work for our College.

Staying at the top of your surgical game: Retooling reimagined

Let's ponder another challenge. It took each of you between four and 10 years of formal training to get to your current level of proficiency and knowledge. You're actually getting even better during these early years in independent practice.

But then, 10, 15 years from now, you are going to realize that while your foundational training is durable, you need to add a piece to your repertoire, a new potentially transformative skill. You are in a busy practice doing the best you can every day, and then something new must be added.

In my lifetime, I've seen numerous transformative technologies rock our surgical world: laparoscopic surgery, endovascular surgery, robotic computer-aided surgery. Theoretically and in reality, each has brought incremental and sometimes transformative improvements in how we treat our patients.

Thematically, these advances have introduced new technologies, interfaces between our hands and our patients' bodies: image guidance, computer-aided

center for busy surgeons in practice and to study how best to deliver the retooling mission.

To begin to address this need, our College has gathered the stakeholders with vital interests in maintaining a skilled surgical workforce. The parties include our payors and consumers, liability carriers, surgical technology industries, the executive leadership of the

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impact beyond yourself. Look to the College and other pro