Dear colleagues,

We, the SVS and its members, stand at a pivotal time in our history. Health care policy will be at the center of the debate in next year’s elections. It is apparent that vascular surgeons need to have a voice in our future or be swept away in others’ ideas for how health care should be delivered and reimbursed in our country. The battle lines are now being drawn.

Our challenge at this time is very clear: Get our voice and message out to as many candidates and elected officials as possible so that we can have an impact on their decisions that affect our specialty and our ability to care for our patients. We will only be successful if we support and utilize the most important tool in our arsenal — the SVS Political Action Committee (SVS PAC).

Why give to the SVS PAC? Because PAC donations provide the ability to have direct access to the candidates and elected officials involved in the health care policy debates. Contributions to their campaigns are vital to their success. Without them, these candidates and officials have little chance of winning. It is here that the PAC has its greatest influence because a donation provides us access to discuss our issues with the candidates.

While these candidates have political skills, their knowledge and understanding of the health care needs of patients and physicians is often lacking, especially in the field of vascular surgery. To candidates’ credit, they often welcome input, so the SVS uses their political and fundraising events to educate them about our patients’ needs, our specialty, and our ability to do what we do in the most cost-effective and quality-driven manner possible.

As a result of past PAC activities, discussions are currently taking place regarding areas vital to us, such as:
• The future of surgical payments
• Removal of restrictive regulations
• Stopping the expansion of prior authorization requirements that impede our ability to offer timely vascular services

Other issues will surely appear on the horizon and new candidates will always surface, so the PAC’s work — being vigilant to protect and advocate for our specialty — is an ongoing mission.

The SVS PAC is in the process of identifying those candidates who embrace our values — quality and cost-effective patient care, the importance of physician input into health care policy debates, and appropriate reimbursement for services rendered — and that will be the PAC’s criteria for campaign contributions.
We will keep the SVS membership apprised of our meetings in articles that will appear in Vascular Specialist and the new SVS enewsletter, “DC Update.”

As for fundraising, the SVS PAC Committee has two goals: to raise at least $200,000 this 2019-20 election cycle and to get greater SVS member involvement in our PAC.

In the past, we had not had more that 17 percent of the membership donate, a paltry and anemic figure when compared to other PACS. Currently, we are only at 3 percent member involvement for 2019.

When one considers what is at stake for our specialty in the upcoming elections, it is time for all members to get on board and contribute to the SVS PAC. Even a small, monthly amount donated by credit card will help us reach our goal. Any contribution is an investment in vascular surgery’s future.

Sitting on the sidelines and expecting others to carry the load is no longer an option. Please become an SVS PAC supporter. There is no better way to secure your future.

SVS members, please donate at vsweb.org/PAC.

Yours truly,

Carlo A. Dall’Olmo, MD, Past SVS-PAC chair
Michael Dalsing, MD, SVS-PAC chair

Article Date: Thursday, November 14, 2019
Author: Re-posted from the November 2019 issue of Vascular Specialist
Tags: Vascular Specialist
Article Type: Article