



Vital importance of funding for pair of separate needs

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BY JOHN A. CURCI, MD, AND MICHAEL C. DALRING, MD

The Society for Vascular Surgery (SVS) has two dedicated member-supported service organizations fulfilling very distinct needs: the SVS Foundation and the SVS Political Action Committee.

Both are vitally important to the future of the vascular specialty and our lives as surgeons. Both are dependent upon direct financial support of the SVS membership.

The SVS Foundation funds basic and clinical research, community outreach, public education, and prevention and awareness. SVS expanded the Foundation's mission in 2017 to include awarding research grants to further disease prevention as well as patient awareness and education.

The SVS Foundation touches every SVS member, from our researchers searching for solutions to circulatory disease to our surgeons in private practice, saving patients' lives and limbs and enhancing health and healthcare. Your contributions to the Foundation may be tax-deductible.

The SVS Foundation's five funds support a wide array of projects:

- **Greatest Need (annual) Fund:** this unrestricted fund supports programs where needs arise.
- **Awareness and Prevention (community health initiatives) Fund:** supports the work in disease prevention, patient education and public awareness with outreach such as community health projects, screenings and patient education fliers.
- **Research Grants Fund:** supports awards to vascular surgeons at all career levels for research in critical areas of vascular disease. (Visit vsweb.org/Awards .)
- **Disaster Relief Fund:** supports programs that provide short-term emergency assistance and longer-term aid for vascular surgery practices and patients in communities devastated by disasters.
- **Alexander W. Clowes Distinguished Lecture Fund:** supports the lecture named for our late colleague and mentor, Alec Clowes, given annually at the Vascular Research Initiatives Conference.

The SVS Political Action Committee seeks to impact patient care in an entirely different way, by protecting vascular surgeons' ability to do their jobs well, in terms of legal issues and reimbursement.

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SVS has had, for more than a decade, a presence in Washington, D.C., with staff dedicated to representing the interests of vascular surgeons and vascular surgery.

Now, with health laws, payment models and reimbursement issues undergoing a seismic shift, this presence is more important than ever. We must be informed of pending bills and regulations that affect our patients and their access to care. We must actively advocate for them and our specialty and be able to provide expert opinions when asked. Contributions to the SVS PAC help support those lawmakers who, we believe, will be receptive to our concerns.

If we want a say in how the legislative process works—and that is an absolute necessity— supporting our PAC is vital. If we are “not at the table,” then our opinions will not be heard. The SVS PAC provides the avenue to put us in the discussion. Your contributions to the SVS PAC are not tax-deductible.

Through completely different activities, both of these SVS entities have, at their heart, the same end goal: to effect change that will lead to improved patient care.

Some of that will occur through public awareness projects, patient education efforts and through research funded by SVS Foundation projects. Some will occur with the election of members of Congress who share our aims, understand our goals and work to bring change via legislation, which we can influence by developing a relationship of mutual trust.

With so much at stake in both realms, we humbly ask for your help and your donations. To donate, visit vsweb.org/GIVE (Foundation) or vsweb.org/PAC (PAC).

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