STRONG COUNCIL – STRONG CHAPTER
IMPORTANCE OF DIVERSITY

AMERICAN COLLEGE OF SURGEONS
CHAPTER LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

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According to Merriam-Webster, Diversity is:

**diversity**

*noun*

di·ver·si·ty  |  də-ˈvər-sə-tē, dī-

*plural diversities*

**Definition of diversity**

1: the condition of having or being composed of differing elements : VARIETY especially : the inclusion of different types of people (such as people of different races or cultures) in a group or organization programs intended to promote diversity in schools
2: an instance of being composed of differing elements or qualities : an instance of being diverse
Most people believe diversity is making certain our Councils have equal representation

- Race
- Ethnicity
- Gender
- Sexual Orientation
- Socio-Economic Status
- Age
However, diversity goes hand-in-hand with “inclusion”.

Inclusion relates to how a Chapter and its Council values and includes all individuals.

Successful diversity strategies rely on inclusive leadership, utilizing the talents of all volunteers to fulfill your responsibilities to your membership.

Without a conscious effort to incorporate diversity and inclusion in your Council and your volunteers, your Chapter risks missed opportunities to recruit new members to become volunteers and leaders of the society and could miss out on innovative ideas that could move the Chapter forward.

Chapters need to focus on
“Where You Serve”
“Who You Serve”
Pennsylvania is unique.

- Four chapters affiliated with the ACS.
- I am the Chapter Executive Director for the Keystone Chapter and the Metropolitan Philadelphia Chapter.
- Pennsylvania is home to numerous medical schools and residency training institutions across the state.

The Keystone Chapter
- Comprised of 42 counties
- Span from the New York border to Maryland line and from the eastern side of the state to the Allegheny Mountains.
- There are nine surgical residency programs within this area.

The Metropolitan Philadelphia Chapter is more compact.
- Membership lives and/or works within Philadelphia and Delaware Counties
- Home to ten surgical teaching institutions.
How do you build a strong Council and Chapter?

How do you provide representation to all your unique member needs and situations?

**TALENT OPTIMIZATION!!!**

You must have a commitment by leadership to be inclusive of all levels of the surgical community including

- sub-specialty members
- varied age groups
- varied experience levels
KEYSTONE CHAPTER

• 42 Counties
• Divided into 8 regional areas
• Each region is represented by multiple Regional Council members based on total number of members in that region.
• Representatives include both employed and independent practitioners.
• Includes a cross-section of sub-specialty and general surgery.

METROPOLITAN PHILADELPHIA CHAPTER

• 2 Counties but home to 10 teaching institutions.
• Council has 10 member-at-large positions comprised of academic, employed and independent practitioners
• Cross-section of various sub-specialty and general surgeons.
BOTH CHAPTERS INCLUDE

- Resident voting members
- Young Surgeon voting members
- Committee on Cancer representatives
- Committee on Trauma representatives
- ACG Governors, both Chapter and Specialty appointed

- Residents have a SIG and meet in-person or via conference call to discuss their unique issues.
- Resident representatives bring those issue to the Council
- Resident representatives host highly competitive surgical jeopardy tournaments

- Young Surgeon representatives bring their unique concerns and issues to Council
• Diversity is more than just “WHO” sits at the table.
• Diversity is understanding each individual is unique and recognizing our individual differences.
• Focus on inclusion of various sub-specialties **AND** individual personalities and cultures.
• True diversity does bring challenges
  • Mix of personalities may lead to clashes and conflicts
  • Everyone wants to be heard
  • Diversity and inclusion brings new ideas and insights
  • One individual should not walk away from a discussion feeling they have “won”.
• Decisions should be a win-win, using all thoughts and ideas to make the best decision for the majority of your membership.
“Differences can be hard to deal with, but it tends to lead to better outcomes than uniformity and conformity.”
Your Diversity Plan Should:

• Include varying degrees of life experience
• More about inclusion and less about “categories”
• Individuals who bring diverse insights and perspectives

• Seasoned members bring wisdom, **BUT**, are often complacent with the “status quo”.
• Young surgeons bring energy and innovative ideas based on their current life experiences
• Residents bring a thirst for learning and trying new things.

• Embrace an open and broader conversation
• Increase engagement of Council and members
• Look to move the Chapter forward
• Think globally
• Don’t relay solely on current Council members to suggest candidates to fill an opening
• Send an “Open Call” to your membership when you have Council opportunities

You may be surprised at the response and willingness for new individuals to join the leadership team when they are given an opportunity to step to the plate.

Mix things up a little!
Enjoy the contributions a truly diverse and inclusive Council brings to the table!
You may be surprised at where your Chapter will go moving forward!

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