

What Is The ABVS Doing To Pursue An Independent Board And Why Hasn't It Done More?

Timur P. Sarac, M.D.

Jeffrey H. Hsu, MD
Sean P. Lyden, MD
Alan M. Dietzek, MD

Professor of Surgery
University of Virginia UVA Health Systems
Charlottesville, Virginia

Emeritus Professor, Chief & Director of the Aortic Center
The Ohio State University

Disclosure

- M Stent patents, AAA stent patents, endoleak patents.
- Shape Memory Medical Trial Proctor
- Editor "Gateways in Vascular Surgery"
- Treasurer American Board of Vascular Surgery
- Highly Opinionated

How Did This Begin? "A Call to Arms"

"Vascular surgery—is it different?" DeWeese, J A
Surgery (12/1978) - (0039-6060), 84 (6), p. 733.

- 1972-1978 – SVS and ISCVS call for formal training programs.
- 1978 James DeWeese: – former STS and SVS president
"Vascular surgeons require a fund of knowledge and surgical skills beyond general surgery with a special experience with vascular operations if they are to provide optimal patient care."
- 1980s to 1990s – Politicking and politicizing.
- 1996 and 1997 - Veith and James Stanley's - SVS presidential address called for vascular surgery to separate itself from the general surgery.
- 1996 - James Stanley MD and Robert Smith III MD, as the presidents of the SVS and NA-ISCVS, led the incorporation of an independent American Board of Vascular Surgery (ABVS).
- Their mantra was better patient care by better training.



Early ABVS Independence Efforts

- 2002 – After years of work, the ABVS petitioned the ABMS to become a distinct medical specialty with a formal proposal.
- December 18, 2002 - the ABVS and ABS representatives presented their briefs before to the ABMS.
 - The ABS was present for ABVS proposal, ABVS not for ABS response.
- December 20, 2002 – 2 days later the ABVS was notified in a letter the application was rejected on a "global basis".
- Undaunted, the ABVS didn't give up. As SVS President, Enrico Ascher, MD pushed hard to unify our leaders.
- The fight received national attention:
 - Burton TM. The surgery your doctor should not perform. *Wall St J* December 30, 2003.
 - Abelson R. Vascular surgeons bang on the specialists' door. *NY Times*, February 11, 2005.

Which Specialty Has Their Own Separate Board?

- Otolaryngology - 1933
- Urology - 1935
- Orthopedic Surgery - 1935
- General Surgery - 1937
- Plastic Surgery - 1941
- Colon and Rectal Surgery - 1949
- Thoracic and Cardiac Surgery - 1971
- Genetics - 1991 last one approved!
- Why Can't we have our own ?

New Blood Jeffrey Hsu, M.D.

A Call for Independence in Vascular Surgery
Doximity's Op-(m)ed

The Baton was Passed- The Next Generation

- Sparked w/ renewed interest, in November 2017 at the Veith Symposium, Enrico Ascher, MD led the appointment of 20 mid-career leaders to the ABVS as the next gen board.
- Alan Dietzek, MD, Ben Starnes, MD, Sean Lyden, MD and Jeff Hsu, MD were the newly appointed executive committee.
- I was appointed as treasurer in November 2023.

2023 - Cardiology Applies for Independence from Internal Medicine

- Everyone has heightened concern after Cardiology applied to the ABMS for an independent Board of Cardiovascular Medicine (ABCVM), adding they are the experts in PAD.
 - Details of this effort can be found on www.cvboard.org.
- The cardiologists have the support from the following national organizations:
 - The Society for Cardiovascular Angiography & Interventions (SCAI), The American College of Cardiology (ACC), Heart Rhythm Society (HRS) and Heart Failure Society of America (HFSA).

What Has The New ABVS Done to Advance the Cause?

	<u>New Board - post 2018</u>	<u>Old Board - pre 2018</u>	
Meet w/ SVS Executive Board	✓	✓	
Society Presidential Address	✓	✓	Stanley and Veith; Dietzek
Meet With ABS Chief Executive	✓	✓	Wallace Ritche, MD Joe Buyske, MD
Meet With ABMS	✓	✓	
Survey	✓	✓	
Politicking and rationalizing w/ leaders	✓	✓	
Newsletter	✓	✓	
Representative on SVS task force	✓		Alan Dietzek, MD
Frequent board meeting	ABVS Executive board only	✓	
Refine mission		✓	

Why hasn't the ABVS Done More? Trepidation?

- Fear of reprisal
 - At your own institution, who most fall under Gen surg.
 - National societal advancement – the old guard flexing their muscle.
 - Myself and Alan Dietzek were removed from SVS committees.
- **Cost** - the ABVS is a 501c3. Legally it can be changed.
 - Can't take donations.
 - No members, no dues.
- Enormous time commitment – this is voluntary.
- Too expensive???

Ball Park VSB-ABS Budget w/ Assumptions

- Recertify and maintenance fees for 4000 diplomats - \$285.
 - Total - **\$1,139,430.**
- 220 new graduates per year
 - Qualifying exam - \$1575.
 - Certifying exam - \$1700.
 - **\$720,500**
- V-site – 500 total integrated, 200 total fellows.
 - \$220/exam.
 - **\$154,000.**
- Total revenue: \$2,013,930.

THE AMERICAN BOARD OF SURGERY

A total of approximately 34,000 surgeons (known as diplomates) are currently board certified by the ABS. See below for the current totals by specialty. Note that some surgeons are certified in more than one specialty. (Data as of July 2024.)

32,140	General Surgery
3,998	Vascular Surgery

Exam Type	Exam Date	Fee
In-Training Exam (ISITE)	January 5, 2024 Any changes submitted after this deadline will incur a \$300 fee per change.	January 19, 2024 Feb. 23-24, 2024 Fee: \$220
Qualifying Exam	Jul. 1, 2024 Fee: \$550	Jul. 15, 2024 Fee: \$750 Sept. 17, 2024** Fee: \$1,575
Certifying Exam	TBD	None May 13-15, 2024 - Virtual Fee: \$1,700

What's Next?

- Await SVS task force recommendations
- Form Independent Academic Departments of Vascular Surgery (or CTVS) to remove retaliation fear.
 - Ex Caron Rockman and Dan Clair
- Seek greater independence beyond the board.

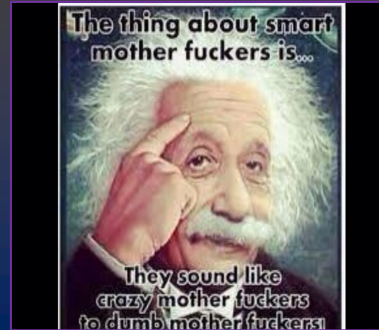
Form a New Society

The Society for Independent Vascular Surgery (SIVS)

- In 2024, it is apparent just an independent board is not enough.
- The SVS is too busy and has too much in its plate.
- *89% of our members want independence. Does the SVS executive board know that much more than the members?*
- *Independence needs to be more than a board exam.*



Original Leader's Thoughts on Clairvoyance



References

1. Veith F. Presidential address: Charles Darwin and vascular surgery. *J Vase Surg.* 1997;25:8-18. From the Society for Vascular Surgery.
2. The American Board of Vascular Surgery: rationale for its formation. *J Vase Surg.* 1997;25:411-413.
3. Stanley JC. Presidential address: The American Board of Vascular Surgery. *J Vase Surg.* 1998;27:195-202.
4. Burton TM. The surgery your doctor should not perform. *Wall St J.* December 30, 2003.
5. Abelson R. Vascular surgeons bang on the specialists' door. *NY Times.* February 11, 2005.
6. ABVS.org (Chrome only)
7. Veith FJ and Stanley JC. American Board of Vascular Surgery. *Annals of Vascular Surgery.* 2016; Volume 37 (entire volume).
8. Dietzek AM. Vascular surgery is the best kept secret in medicine and my thoughts on how we can change that. *J Vase Surg* 2019; 69(1):5-14.
9. <https://youtu.be/KIS-JdWmf9Y>