



THE NATIONAL BOARD  
OF SURGICAL TECHNOLOGY  
AND SURGICAL ASSISTING

November 3, 2010

The National Board of Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting (NBSTSA) would like to take this opportunity to announce that beginning January 1, 2011, a designation change will occur of the Certified First Assistant (CFA) credential to that of Certified Surgical First Assistant (CSFA). This designation change will not affect any individual's current certification cycle. Employers will still be able to verify individuals holding the CSFA credential via our online credential verification process found at [www.nbstsa.org](http://www.nbstsa.org).

To assist employers in this transition, the NBSTSA would like to provide the following information related to the CSFA credential and the practice of the surgical first assistant. First, information on specific job tasks related to the SFA may be found on the CSFA Examination "Content Area Outline". This outline may be found on the NBSTSA website and is contained within the 2010 Candidate Handbook for the surgical first assistant. Be sure to review the candidate handbook for the CSFA and not that of the NBSTSA Certified Surgical Technologist (CST) examination. These are two separate examination processes and professional credentials offered by the NBSTSA. Additional information on standards of practice for the SFA may be found through the Association of Surgical Assistants website at [www.surgicalassistant.org](http://www.surgicalassistant.org).

Finally, it is important to mention the CSFA credential represents a distinct surgical professional that has demonstrated knowledge of the advanced content of the CSFA examination. The CSFA examination is the only surgical first assisting examination in the nation that meets the stringent standards of accreditation as defined by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies ([www.credentialingexcellence.org](http://www.credentialingexcellence.org)). Individuals holding the CSFA designation have made the professional commitment to advance their education, knowledge, and skill to better serve the surgical patient and operative team in this advanced role. The NBSTSA encourages employers of the CSFA to understand the differences between the role of the surgical first assistant and that of other sterile team members. Analysis of the role, responsibilities, recognition and compensation of the CSFA is paramount to effective utilization of these allied health professionals.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide you with information on the CSFA credential. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions related to this upcoming transition or the examination development process for the CSFA.

Sincerely,

Ronald Kruzel CST, MA  
Chief Executive Officer