



### Stephanie Whitt

Being a surgical technologist has brought a new love for healthcare that I didn't know I had. I was a patient support tech for 6 years and decided to pursue surgical technology after I had to leave nursing school. It was the best decision I could have made. I've been a surgical tech now for 4 years and truly enjoy what I do. Every day is something different, and I love being able to help patients get better. I've met some awesome surgical techs along the way who have helped shape who I am today. I enjoy teaching new students and being an advocate for our patients' safety and sterility.

### Suyapa Soto

Suyapa is such a good team player. She is always willing to teach and help others in any way she can. Suyapa has been a CSTFA for many years and has always been true to her work. Suyapa always puts her patients first. She is a great asset to have on your team.

– Margie Diaz



### Rachel Clark

It was a challenge to select just one category within this award to nominate Rachel for, as she truly excels in all aspects of the profession. She embodies the highest standards of surgical technology, and I admire her greatly. While her ability to navigate through any surgical situation, particularly when others are circling the drain, is remarkable, what I respect most about Rachel is her unwavering commitment to the principles and practices set forth by the Association of Surgical Technologists (AST). Having worked alongside Rachel in both clinical practice and as a fellow surgical technology instructor, I have consistently witnessed her dedication to ensuring the "right way" is followed. Whether she is addressing a surgeon, nurse, or fellow CST attempting to compromise standards, or teaching students a skill, she always has the same unwavering conviction. She stands firmly in defense of what is best for the patient and our profession. Rachel is the go-to CST in our area when it comes to AST standards and guidelines, always knowing exactly where to find the right information. If she doesn't have the answer, she will relentlessly pursue it, even reaching out to the AST national organization when necessary. Her courage to speak up, even in difficult situations where her own position may be at risk, is a testament to her integrity. In my 23 years as a practicing CST, I have yet to encounter someone who protects the standards of our profession as fiercely and effectively as Rachel. She is a true embodiment of ethical practice, and her contributions to our field are invaluable.

– Tammy Schaefer

### **Holly Fritsche**

Holly is one of the best surgical technologists I have had the pleasure to work with. Her dedication to patient care and safety is of the highest level!

-Lauren Chmiel



### **Petra Bond**

I have been a CST and CSFA for 43 years. This is my final year. I always try to do the right thing in surgery



### **Ronna Knox**

I, Ronna Knox, have been a certified surgical technologist since 1985. I have served in both trauma settings for the majority of my career and in outpatient centers. I have also worked for the military twice in my career and have trained up-and-coming corpsmen/surgical technologists, inspiring several who have gone on to become surgeons or physician assistants. I have stood up for excellence, standards, and AST practices and guidelines, despite the unfortunate lack of willingness in some facilities to change and stand by AST standards and guidelines. I believe in surgical consciousness, even if it means sacrificing an assignment over a compromise of standards and AST diligence for the best possible patient outcomes.