As my predecessors forewarned, the year spent serving as President of ABC went by very quickly. It has been an amazing journey, but thankfully I feel that the rewards and benefits will never end. I am honored to hold the distinction of ABC’s first female president and am appreciative of the opportunity to lead an organization to which I feel so connected. While ABC has a storied 70-year history, we continually focus on remaining contemporary and planning for the future of the profession.

This year our board focused on leadership development, ambassadorship and continual improvement of our programs. Using our mission and vision statements as a guide, we revised the accreditation standards, updated the Bylaws with changes in board and committee composition, progressed in making changes to the exams and communicated with stakeholders regarding upcoming deadlines and eligibility changes.

In preparation for next year’s strategic planning, ABC reviewed the goals established in the 2014 strategic plan. Proudly, we acknowledge that the previous goals have been met or are in the process of being fulfilled. We have already begun the thoughtful process of planning the future of ABC for the next five years.

I had the privilege of attending most of the CPM exams for orthotics and prosthetics last year at our amazing testing center in Tampa where we had some of the largest exam groups on record. This was a great opportunity to meet many of ABC’s volunteers and to interact with the exam candidates. I am comforted by the enthusiasm, professionalism and dedication to the O&P profession that I experienced.

(continued on page 8)

Larry D. Word, CPO, FAAOP

Named ABC President

Larry D. WORD, CPO, FAAOP, assumed the role of president of the ABC Board of Directors on December 1 and takes over the presidency from Deborah M. Plescia, CPO, who will continue to serve as immediate past president. “I look forward to Larry’s contributions in fostering ABC’s mission and supporting our programs,” remarked ABC’s Executive Director, Cathy Carter. “Larry’s experience and insight not only as a clinician but as a long-time ABC volunteer will be a great benefit to the board and ABC’s staff as well as our certified individuals and accredited facilities.”

Word has been volunteering with ABC for over 19 years as an Orthotic Clinical Patient Management (CPM) examiner. He has also served as an item writer and exam team member for the ABC Orthotic Assistant exam and an examiner for the O&P Technician exam. He completed his orthotic education at the Academy of Health Sciences, Fort Sam Houston in 1983 and his prosthetic education at Northwestern University in 1994. Larry is currently senior clinical manager of the O&P department, Mississippi Methodist Rehabilitation Center. ♦
ABC Welcomes Three New Board Members: Retires Three

ABC WELCOMES THREE new members to its board of directors following the retirement of three members on November 30th. Those members who joined the board December 1st were Richard A. Babcock, CO, Deborah J. Curtis, RN, BSN, CFO, CFM and William I. Lester, CPO. At its September 25th meeting in Vancouver, the ABC Board of Directors confirmed these appointments and also bid farewell to James H. Hughes, CP, Dennis J. Janisse, C.Ped. and James H. Wynne, CPO, FAAOP.

Richard A. Babcock, CO of Franklin, TN has over 13 years of volunteer service with ABC. He is currently an active Orthotic Clinical Patient Management (CPM) examiner and served on the Orthotic CPM Administrative Committee from 2012-2016. After graduating from Michigan State University with a BS in Human Physiology, Babcock attended Northwestern University for his Orthotic education. He entered the O&P profession in 1990 and earned his Certified Orthotist credential from ABC in 1998. Babcock is currently the Orthotic Clinical Manager at Bulow Orthotic and Prosthetic Solutions in Nashville, TN.

Deborah J. Curtis, RN, BSN, CFO, CFM of Fruitland Park, FL began volunteering with ABC in 2010 as a member of the Mastectomy Practice Analysis committee that published the analysis in 2012 for the current ABC Mastectomy Fitter Exam. Curtis has also served as a member of the 2015 NCOPE Fitter Education Application Review Committee for post mastectomy and has volunteered with the Amoena Advisory Council for Best Practices and Essentially Women buying group. Curtis graduated with a BS in Nursing from West Virginia University. She has been providing care as a nurse to post-mastectomy patients since 1987 and earned both her mastectomy and orthotic fitter credentials from ABC in 2003. Currently, Curtis is the Manager of A Place For Her/BayCare Homecare where she developed and implemented the pre-post breast surgery division of BayCare Homecare.

William I. Lester, CPO of Lexington, KY has been volunteering with ABC since 2013 as a Prosthetic CPM examiner. Lester also served four years on the Kentucky Orthotic and Prosthetic Association Board, serving as president and taking an instrumental role in the passage of licensure for O&P in Kentucky. He has helped plan, develop and host educational seminars and workshops for state licensure requirements. Lester graduated with a Bachelor of Science from Miami University and completed his orthotic and prosthetic education at Northwestern University. He earned his Certified Orthotist and Prosthetist credentials from ABC in 2010/2011 respectively. Currently, Lester is a practitioner and senior partner with Kenney Orthopedics in London, KY.

Win a FREE LUNCH for Your Staff!
Wow us with your accreditation compliance knowledge and you could win lunch for your staff next year! See page 4 for details.
HARASSMENT OF ANY kind, especially sexual harassment, certainly is a sensitive subject but one that ABC feels is important to discuss. As the credentialing body for many O,P&P professionals and practices, we are committed to establishing and advocating for the highest patient care and organizational standards in O,P&P. As a leader in the profession, we also have the unique opportunity to help promote an anti-harassment culture. We hope you will join us in learning more through our two-part article series and harassment-focused podcast.

HARASSMENT IN THE WORKPLACE SERIES: Part 1– Fostering Harassment-Free Facilities

While we generally think of harassment as being an issue between two people, there is more to it than that. According to Jackson Katz, PhD, a leading activist, scholar and educator on issues of gender, race and violence, harassment and abuse are not only about the victim and the harasser, but also about everyone else – the bystanders. He defines bystanders as “anyone who plays some role in an act of harassment, abuse or violence – but is neither the perpetrator nor the victim. They are someone who is present and thus, potentially in the position to discourage, prevent or interrupt an incident.” Katz suggests that positive cultural changes will only begin to take hold when leaders among these bystander groups speak up, challenge and create an environment where harassing behaviors are clearly seen as unacceptable.

So, what role do employers, managers and other authority figures at O,P&P facilities play in preventing harassment and contributing to the culture change? Dr. Katz suggests it starts with leaders. Since a culture change isn’t likely to occur overnight, it’s also important to focus on ways to prevent harassment now. According to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), prevention is the best defense against harassment in the workplace. The EEOC suggests taking the following steps:

- Have a harassment policy that explicitly outlines what constitutes harassment, specifically sexual harassment, and declares that it will not be tolerated. The policy should be clearly and regularly communicated to employees and effectively implemented. Employers should affirmatively raise the subject with all supervisory and non-supervisory employees, express their strong disapproval of harassment and explain the sanctions for harassment.
- Have a procedure for resolving harassment complaints. The procedure should be designed to “encourage victims of harassment to come forward” and should not require a victim to complain first to the offender if it happens to be the supervisor. It should ensure as much confidentiality as possible and provide effective remedies, including protecting victims and witnesses against retaliation.
- Investigate all complaints or alleged harassment in the workplace promptly and thoroughly. The employer should take immediate and appropriate corrective action by doing whatever is necessary to end the harassment, make the victim whole by restoring lost employment benefits or opportunities, and prevent the misconduct from recurring.
- Develop a plan for disciplinary actions against the offending supervisor or employee, ranging from reprimand to discharge. Generally, the corrective action should reflect the severity of the conduct. The employer should make follow-up inquiries to ensure the harassment has not resumed and the victim has not suffered retaliation.
- Establish a procedure for raising complaints and communicate to everyone both the employee’s right to raise a complaint and how to do so. The procedure should include multiple pathways for complaints such as to HR, a CEO and/or another formal method for confidential complaints.

Carmen Feinberg, an experienced Human Resources executive-level consultant, takes these steps even further in her article Employers’ Cliffs Notes for Creating Sexual Harassment Policies in A #MeToo World. Feinberg provides specific suggestions about employee training such as explaining zero tolerance harassment policy and procedures during new employee onboarding, using various methods of communicating harassment policies, providing specific civility and bystander intervention training, training employees and supervisors separately and conducting formal training at least twice annually for managers and supervisors.

(continued on page 4)
THE 2019 ACCREDITATION COMPLIANCE KIT focuses on the script, the starring roles, the supporting players and most importantly, the director who pulls all of the compliance scenes together to create a blockbuster that will win rave reviews for your business and patient care team.

In addition to the 2019 calendar that accredited facilities will receive in the mail, there are four new resources available in the online Compliance Kit Resource Pack:

- **Annual Facility Review Checklist** – now includes three additional force-fail standards.
- **Simplified Equipment Maintenance Log**
- **Instructions for Establishing Privileging Criteria** – reflects the recent ABC Scope of Practice privileging changes
- **Disaster Prep Resource Sheet** – a compilation of helpful government resources available to help you avoid disaster!

Be sure to check out these and the 21 other templates and forms in our online Resource Pack!

**Watch the mail this month for your facility’s calendar** and remember that we are here to help with your accreditation needs. Your success is important to us and we hope that these tools will help take some of the stress out of compliance.

We’re once again running the postcard contest to test your accreditation compliance knowledge throughout the year. Simply answer the questions on the postcards included with your calendar and submit for a chance to win free lunch for your staff next December! Be sure to ask your facility’s accreditation compliance officer about participating. You can’t win if you don’t play – Good Luck!

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Whether you look at harassment from a legal or ethical viewpoint, having a clear anti-harassment policy and environment in place protects everyone involved and makes good business sense. Harassment isn’t a new issue by any means, but it has certainly been brought to the forefront in recent years and it is up to everyone – leaders and bystanders alike – to prevent harassment and help shift the culture.

Here is a list of additional harassment resources and guides for employers.

- [www.eeoc.gov/employers/smallbusiness/resources_harassment.cfm](http://www.eeoc.gov/employers/smallbusiness/resources_harassment.cfm)
- [www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/hr-topics/employee-relations/pages/workplace-harassment-training.aspx](http://www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/hr-topics/employee-relations/pages/workplace-harassment-training.aspx)
- [www.shrm.org/ResourcesAndTools/hr-topics/employee-relations/Pages/Workplace-Harassment-Compliance.aspx](http://www.shrm.org/ResourcesAndTools/hr-topics/employee-relations/Pages/Workplace-Harassment-Compliance.aspx)
- [nwlc.org/resources/thats-harassment](http://nwlc.org/resources/thats-harassment)

**Therapeutic Shoe Fitter Exam**

Volunteer ABC certified therapeutic shoe fitters recently met to establish the minimum passing score for the Therapeutic Shoe Fitter Certification exam. Participation by these individuals was critical to accomplishing this work.

Earlier this year, ABC’s Pedorthic Exam Committee, which is responsible for overseeing the CFts certification exam, approved a new form of the CFts exam. The new form was constructed from existing exam questions and new questions created through an item writing campaign, also completed earlier this year. This critical work assures that the CFts exam is a contemporary assessment of the profession.

“These efforts from dedicated ABC volunteers allow us to build a relevant and contemporary therapeutic shoe fitter exam. A relevant and updated certification exam will ultimately protect those individuals with diabetes who need these important services,” stated Deborah Merritt Plescia, CPO, ABC Immediate Past President.

The new CFts certification exam will be administered for the first time in February 2019.
THIS HAS BEEN not only a very busy year for the O&P Alliance, but a landmark one as well. The year began with a big victory on the legislative front. In February, Section 1834(h) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 16 1395m(h)) was amended by adding the following section:

“(5) DOCUMENTATION CREATED BY ORTHOTISTS AND PROSTHETISTS.—For purposes of determining the reasonableness and medical necessity of orthotics and prosthetics, documentation created by an orthotist or prosthetist shall be considered part of the individual’s medical record to support documentation created by eligible professionals described in section 1848(k) (3)(B).”

This new Federal statute represents a major step forward for the O&P profession. Recognition of certified orthotists’ and prosthetists’ clinical documentation as being a part of the patient’s medical record, although long overdue, is a welcome transformation in how O&P professionals are viewed. The impact of this new law has already been seen. In May, the DME MAC Medical Directors retired the 2011 Dear Physician Letter. This template letter was considered by many to be the beginning of a misguided effort by CMS contractors to audit and recover money from O&P providers.

Efforts are ongoing to oppose the proposed regulation that would give the Veterans Administration the sole authority to decide where veterans can receive O&P care. Representatives from the Alliance were invited to attend a House VA Committee roundtable meeting to discuss current issues concerning the care of veterans. The proposed regulation was discussed extensively as well as the benefits of the Injured and Amputee Bill of Rights proposed legislation.

The members of the Alliance also dedicated time in 2018 to focus on the topic of harassment in the profession. All of the Alliance organizations agreed that a public statement condemning any form of sexual misconduct and raising the awareness of this timely issue would be a positive step for the O&P profession. The joint public statement was sent to all ABC certificees and facility owners on December 10th.

In addition to the above topics, the Alliance also worked on a unified response to CMS’s Lower Limb Prosthetics Workgroup report, identified next steps concerning the withdrawn BIPA Section 427 regulation and addressed the VA OIG report on the use of Not Otherwise Classified codes. Many of these topics will be continued in 2019 as well as other issues as they arise. Providing a unified front to regulators and legislators is a core benefit of ABC’s continuing participation in the Alliance.

ALLIANCE UPDATE

ABC recently issued digital badges to all certified individuals in good standing via Credly’s Acclaim platform — our new digital credentialing partner.

For those of you who previously claimed a digital badge(s) through ProExam Vault, this is merely a switch to a new and improved platform. For everyone else, this is your chance to take advantage of an exciting free service from ABC that provides several benefits including:

• A web-enabled version of your certification that can be shared online
• A more efficient way of posting to social media platforms
• Access to current and relevant job postings from thousands of online job boards
• A trusted method for real-time certification verification

Your digital badge invitation email (one per credential) was sent to you from admin@youracclaim.com. If you did not receive this invitation email, please check your inbox or junk mail before contacting us at badge@abcop.org. For more information about digital badges, please visit abcop.org and select Digital Badges under Individual Certification/Resources.
Effective January 1, 2019, the practice of privileging non-credentialed caregivers will be eliminated. The ABC Board of Directors have revised ABC’s Orthotic, Prosthetic and Pedorthic Scope of Practice, specifically the way individuals can be privileged to provide patient care. A new definition of Support Personnel was also created allowing ABC credential holders to delegate certain non-critical patient care tasks to non-credentialed individuals. In addition, changes were made to the definitions of Direct Supervision and Supervision and Privileging of a Credential Caregiver. These Scope of Practice changes take effect January 1, 2019 and do not affect the privileging of certified individuals. These changes will ensure that individuals providing patient care are properly trained and educated. If you are not currently privileging non-certified individuals in your practice then no action is required. However, if you are using this business model in your practice, then you need to begin making changes. This could be accomplished either by those individuals obtaining certification or by assigning them to different roles as outlined in the Support Personnel definition.

**Addressing the Needs of Mastectomy Practices**

In addition, there is now a separate Mastectomy Scope of Practice that recognizes the unique challenges that certified mastectomy professionals and accredited mastectomy facilities face.

The most significant aspect of the scope of practice is the continued ability of certified or licensed mastectomy fitters to supervise and privilege non-credentialed caregivers in the provision of care. The board believes that the existing supervision and privileging requirements appropriately address the elements needed to protect individuals in need of post-mastectomy items and services.

For more information, please see the FAQs about privileging on the Patient Care Accreditation page of the ABC website.

**Oops! Did You Miss the Annual Renewal Deadline?**

The deadline for all annual renewal payments was December 1st. If you haven’t done so already, please make your payment today! You can easily pay online via your MY ABC account at ABCop.org. You can also print your invoice from your account page and mail it in with your payment or call to make your payment over the phone.

As an ABC credential holder, payment of your annual renewal fee is an essential part of maintaining your credential.

Please note that late fees will be assessed for payments made past the December 1 deadline. For questions concerning your annual renewal payment, please contact Roxanne Bobb-Semple at rbobbsemple@abcop.org or 703-836-7114, ext. 238.
HARD TO BELIEVE that the year is almost over. Jim’s finally starting to catch his breath after a busy fall jam-packed with great meetings and school visits! Where shall we begin?

WHERE’S JIM?

Home of Post-Its, Rollerblades and Bob Dylan
America’s favorite sticky note, in-line skating and some classic American songwriting were all born in Minnesota where Jim visited in October. Not only did he meet 80 wonderful students at Century College, Oct. 2-3, but he also spoke and exhibited at the Northern Plains Chapter of the Academy Seminar on Oct. 4-5 – both in Vadnais Heights! He will return to the North Star State in late December to speak to the MSOP students at Concordia University. Bundle up, Jim!

MOPA to VOPA in a Flash!
Jim was in Lansing for the Michigan Orthotic and Prosthetic Association’s one-day meeting, Oct. 19, then headed straight to Reston, VA the very next day to speak and exhibit at the Virginia Orthotic & Prosthetic Association meeting. Maybe we should start calling him “Jim the Flash Lawson”!

O SAY CAN YOU SEE...
Many attendees saw Jim at the 2018 AOPA National Assembly in beautiful Vancouver, Canada where he spoke, exhibited AND sang the US National Anthem at AOPA’s 101st meeting opening ceremony. ABC also celebrated its 70th anniversary of serving the O&P profession at the meeting. Thank you to everyone who visited our booth!

RAMBLIN’ WRECKS & OKLAHOMA SWING
Jim met with 20 Ramblin’ Wreck MSOP students at Georgia Tech on Oct. 12 in Atlanta. He will finish out the semester with a visit to the great state of Oklahoma on Dec. 4-5 to speak to a mix of pedorthic and technician students at two Okmulgee-based schools – Francis Tuttle and Oklahoma State University.

On the road again...literally!
Jim put some extra miles on his car this fall by driving to the Prosthetic & Orthotic Management Associates Corporation (POMAC) meeting in New York, Oct. 27 and the Pennsylvania Orthotic Prosthetic Society (POPS) meeting in Harrisburg, Nov. 5. His tri-state tour ended with the New Jersey Academy of Orthotists and Prosthetists meeting in Atlantic City, Nov. 7-9., held at Harrah’s Resort Hotel and Casino where he spoke to over 150 attendees.
January

1: Residency Completion Deadline for February Certification Exams
11-12: Orthotic CPM Exam
   ABC Testing Center, Tampa
25-26: Prosthetic CPM Exam
   ABC Testing Center, Tampa

February

1: Application Deadline for April Certification Exams
2-4: Essentially Women Focus Conference
   St. Pete Beach, FL
4-9: Written and Written Simulation Certification Exams
   Over 300 Locations Nationwide
18-21: Hanger Ed Fair
   Las Vegas

March

6-9: AAOP Annual Meeting and Scientific Symposium
   Orlando
29-30: Ohio O&P Association and AAOP Ohio Chapter
   Annual Spring Meeting
   Columbus

Calendar of Events For further information on these events, please visit abcop.org or contact us at 703.836.7114.

A Note of Gratitude (continued from page 1)

ABC volunteers unselfishly and tirelessly work to help deliver the most comprehensive, fair and professional standard of excellence. From committee work to exam administration, the volunteers are a vital component of the ABC machine. I would like to extend a special thank you to the ABC Board of Directors. Your support, guidance and confidence over the past year have been wonderful and much appreciated. Immediate Past President, Eric Ramcharran, was such a perfect resource and mentor prior to and during this year…Thank you Eric. This coming year we will have to carry on without retiring board members Jim Hughes, CP who has served four years; Past President Jim Wynne, CPO, FAAOP, who has served eight years; and Dennis Janisse, C.Ped. who has served a very generous 12 years. You have all had a meaningful impact on the thoughts and actions of our Board and you will be missed. We are fortunate to have Larry Word, CPO, FAAOP, as our incoming president and I look forward to a robust year of activity under his leadership.

ABC does not operate by volunteers alone! I would be remiss in not recognizing the hard work and dedication of our Executive Director, Cathy Carter, and her team at ABC. I have learned that there’s nothing Cathy will refuse to do if it is within her power or scope. She works tirelessly to uphold the ABC mission and vision and holds her team to the same expectation.

Finally, thank each of you who hold an ABC credential and work every day fulfilling the vision of Setting Standards, Improving Outcomes and Changing Lives. It has been an honor and a privilege serving as the President of such a great organization. I respect ABC’s proud history and trust that the future is in good and capable hands.  

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:

ABC Welcomes Three New Board Members (See page 2)
Harassment in the Workplace (See page 3)
New & Improved Digital Badge (See page 5)
Privileging Rules are Changing (See page 6)