**Candidates’ responses to the Q&A are presented in their entirety without changes, edits, or corrections.**

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Laura A. Gayton, MHCA, BSN, CNOR, CSSM

1. **Describe what makes you the most qualified candidate for the office of Board of Directors.**

All my years serving as a perioperative nurse leader has resulted in giving me a strong foundation for the role of Board of Directors. Delegating resources, advocating for patients, coordinating schedules and effectively communicating with staff and surgeons within perioperative and interdisciplinary teams will assist me to be an active participant in Board discussions on your behalf. Furthermore, I have served on a local church board and a USA swim team state board. I am not afraid to ask the tough questions while using an open and honest communication style in both speaking and listening to any discussion. I pride myself on being reliable and accountable and would like to have the opportunity to collaborate and work as a team to promote our Association. I continue to serve on national committees and specialty assemblies. My continued dedication and ambition speak to my commitment to AORN.

1. **Describe a time when you had to make a difficult and unpopular decision that would affect your staff or colleagues. How did you handle the situation?**

Earlier this year I decided to implement a change from a traditional staff schedule to staff self-scheduling. It was a necessary change because my OR Coordinator had to take on several other projects. I chose a staff self-scheduling model based on research that 80% of workers would choose or stay in a job that offers flexible scheduling. This was a big change. I reiterated the reasons for the change and ensured they had information they needed to be successful in the transition and mocked up a new self-scheduling model structure. I set up townhalls at different times and sat down for open discussions and solution driven ideas. Staff realized they had more control and would improve their work-life balance by having more autonomy and the benefits of a schedule that suited them. Staff moved past their initial reaction to the decision and saw the value it would bring to them.

1. **Share one life experience, hobby, or fact about you that most people don't know and would be surprised to learn about you.**

I like to hike. In 2016, I hiked the Rim to Rim of the Grand Canyon. Less than 1% of 6 million visitors a year to the Grand Canyon take up this challenge. The true Rim to Rim is taking the North Kaibab Trail on the North Rim and descending 14.3 miles and 6,000 feet to the bottom of the canyon before connecting with the Bright Angel Trail and climbing 4,500 feet and 9.6 miles back out to the South Rim. Total miles in 1 day is 24. There is mesmerizing scenery as you pass through two billion years of the Earth’s history and eleven layers of ancient rocks along the trail. It’s pure sensory overload - thrilling, dizzying and enlightening. I trained for 1 year and in preparation I hiked 26 miles around Geneva Lake, Wisconsin. Though unlike the Grand Canyon terrain, I completed that hike in 10 hours.