

Good evening. I am Julie Gill, a radiologic technologist **professional** employed by the University of Cincinnati as an associate **professor**. Have you ever given much thought to the origin or definition of the word 'profession'? Up until the early 1500s the primary use of the word was reserved for those in a religious order or for those with a profession in religion. Not until 1811 was the current meaning of the word "professional" given to one who makes a profession or business of any occupation. The word 'profess' is of Latin origin from the word "profiteor," which has two parts -- "pro," which means "towards," and "fiteor," which means "to confess, admit, allow, reveal or make known". So, "to profess" essentially means "to admit something." Doesn't sound very admirable, does it? Let's examine the definition of the word "professional."

Merriam Webster has a two-pronged definition. One is "a calling requiring specialized knowledge and often long and intensive academic preparation." I think that none of us would dispute this definition or the verity that we have personally experienced this definition. Webster's second definition is "an act of openly declaring or publicly claiming a belief, faith, or opinion." Now I ask you to consider the definition of the word "professional" as "one who openly declares and makes known his occupation, to move it forward." This definition was constructed by a brilliant, seasoned, scholar of the medical imaging and radiologic science profession - me!

I further opine that in order for us to be true professionals we **must** advocate and educate for and about our profession. By mere definition, one cannot be a professional without professing!

I believe that the initial construct and central core of who we are as radiologic technologists is in the provision of patient care. So I ask you if your self-perception is that of the doer of assigned tasks or the provider of optimal patient care and education. Are you providing professional care and communication that sets you apart from the myriad of other health care professionals who provide care to the patient? After his procedure is complete and the patient has left your department, will he know the profession of the person who did his exam or will you continue to think of you as the nurse or x-ray technician?

In order to influence the patient's way of thinking, we, **as professionals**, must catalyze change. **We** must engage in necessary introspection that allows for the development, maturation, and implementation of a system of patient care and communication that is **radically** differently from our current practice. The professional sets herself apart by **making known her occupation in an effort to move it forward!**

What other strategy can we use to move forward? - health care policy advocacy. When I visit legislators' offices on Capitol Hill, I purposefully introduce myself as a radiologic technologist professional employed by the University of Cincinnati as an associate professor. I then spend time "making known" the radiologic technology profession by thoroughly explaining the educational and certification requirements for practice and the multiple clinical modalities associated with being a radiologic technologist. Only after I have provided this foundational information do I advocate for the CARE and MARCA bills. Why do I do this? Why do others also advocate for our profession? **As professionals, we are engaging in a process of moving our profession forward.** This is what professionals do! If you have never been involved in professional advocacy, then I encourage you, **as a professional**, to take an active and personal role in moving your profession forward by contacting your state and federal legislators and spending time with them making sure that they know **who we are and what we do!**

As your president of the ASRT, I have four initiatives that are designed specifically to move our profession forward. My first initiative is to implement a public relations campaign to increase the visibility and perception of radiologic technologists as health care professionals and patient

advocates. Starting this fall, ASRT will provide every member with materials that they can share with patients, including posters that explain the R.T.'s role. By the end of the year, I hope to see these posters hanging in every radiology department, and every patient leaving with a handout that describes what R.T.s do.

My second initiative is to investigate opportunities to educate school-aged children about radiologic technology and medical radiation. We will do this by exploring potential partnerships with schools, pediatric hospitals, health care associations, and nonprofit organizations that serve children. If we "make known" our profession and medical radiation to children, then we increase the likelihood of them enthusiastically exclaiming that they want to be radiologic technologists when they grow up.

My third initiative is to provide additional resources and support to affiliate societies for state advocacy efforts. During the ASRT Update on Friday, you heard how we partnered this year with affiliates in North Carolina, Michigan and Missouri to organize local lobbying events. We will formalize these efforts in the coming year through an Affiliate Advocacy Program. The new program will allow ASRT to provide assistance and financial resources to affiliates that perform advocacy work at the state level.

My final initiative is to develop a strong volunteer leadership base by integrating the ASRT Leadership Academy into the Affiliate Development Program. This was piloted with one state affiliate this spring and proved to be very valuable so we will move forward with this initiative knowing that the strength and sustainability of any state affiliate society depends on the knowledge and skills of its volunteer leaders. We need strong state affiliates!

All four of my presidential initiatives were created with the sole purpose of moving our profession forward! Please join me, with a staunch resistance to practicing status quo as we know it, **as we move our profession forward by openly declaring and making known who we are and what we do!**

In closing, I would like to thank a few individuals who have encouraged and supported me throughout my professional career. Denise Moore is the person who taught me that I can be a part of so many great things simply by saying 'yes.' Tricia Leggett is the person who consistently believes in me and reassures me when I begin to doubt myself. Tracy Herrmann and Heather Moore are my colleagues at the University of Cincinnati, and I could not be standing here without them. They have covered my classes, attended meetings in my absence, and have never complained about doing so. I am truly fortunate to work with them as they are consummate professionals and excellent educators. I'd also like to thank ASRT staff members Liana Watson and Dana Aragon as they are the ultimate schedule coordinators and question answerers. Sal Martino, ASRT CEO, has the patience of a saint and the skill set of a top executive, which he is, and I sincerely appreciate his willingness to share both. My fellow Board members, Dawn McNeil, Donna Long, Bill Brennan, Donna Crum, Sandra Hayden, and Amanda Garlock-Corbin, have both challenged and encouraged me, and I think them for that. I am most fortunate to be following new Chairman of the Board, Donna Long. She is an excellent communicator and mentor, and I'm glad that I have one more year to learn from her.

On a personal level, I'd like to thank my family. My siblings have been enthusiastic and supportive of my professional growth, and I appreciate my sister, Gloria, being here tonight. My daughters Casey and Katie have always been understanding and even inquisitive about what I am doing, who I am meeting, and where I am going. I love them dearly and am extremely proud of the strong, young women that they have become. Jim, my best friend and husband, takes

care of me and never begrudges me for my long work hours, long computer hours, and multiple travels. After 28 years he still believes in me, encourages me, and loves me – and that's not always easy to do! He has amazing personal strength; he makes me laugh and keeps me calm, and I am so grateful for his love and support.

To all of you, I am thankful for you trusting me to serve as your ASRT president and please know that I will serve you and this profession with fervor, tenacity, and humility during this upcoming year.

Thank you and please join me for a reception that will begin in just a few minutes. This now brings us to the close of the 2013 ASRT Annual Governance and House of Delegates meeting. I look forward to seeing all of you next year in Orlando! Thank you and enjoy the rest of the evening.