

Connecticut Chapter GOVERNOR'S NEWSLETTER

ACP
AMERICAN COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS
INTERNAL MEDICINE | *Doctors for Adults*

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David N. Podell, MD, PhD, FACP
Governor, Connecticut Chapter



GOVERNOR'S CORNER

It gives me great pleasure to present to you this edition of the Governor's Newsletter from the Connecticut Chapter of the American College of Physicians. There is much work being done at the local and national levels to insure that our patients are able to receive superb care and that our profession continues to thrive in these very challenging times.

Tucson, Arizona was the site of the 2004 Board of Governor's fall meeting.

Several resolutions were presented and approved for introduction to the Board of Regents. Among those introduced included:

1. Supporting care management fees for Medicare patients.
2. Develop electronic membership recruitment material.
3. Unbundling of preventive and problem-related office visits.
4. Supporting associate and student representation at Leadership Day.
5. Refining residency-working hours.
6. Making maintenance of certification a high valued process.

These and all other resolutions will be presented to the Board of Regents for their action.

The most talked about and lively discussion session at the Board of Governors meeting was related to the topic of re-certification. The result has been an agreement upon several shared goals for maintenance of certification; the four components include:

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HEALTH & PUBLIC POLICY COMMITTEE REPORT

Robert McLean, M.D., FACP

The re-election of President Bush and the strengthening of the Republican majority in both Houses of congress would seem to increase chances for federal legislation to reform our medical liability system with limits on non-economic damage awards. As well, it would seem more likely that the Medicare Modernization Act will be allowed to become fully implemented over the next few years without alteration. This may prove problematic.

The Medicare Reform bill involved some crucial and necessary financial fixes to Medicare in the first few years but then included complex provisions to be enacted over the next few years which encourage (some may say "force") greater involvement of managed care insurance companies in Medicare delivery and which provide an incredibly complex prescription drug "benefit" (see excellent explanation of the bill in "Assessing the New Medicare Prescription Drug Law", by **Robert Doherty** in the Sept 7, 2004 Annals of Internal Medicine).

Several members of our Health & Public Policy Committee met with **Representative Nancy Johnson** in early December to discuss many of these issues. Rep. Johnson is a knowledgeable and effective advocate in Congress on health issues, especially as Chairman of the Health Sub-Committee of the House Ways & Means Committee. We clearly need to continue to help our legislators understand the crucial role which internists play in the health care system, frequently managing multiple and complex patients with great need for time and coordination of care. The reimbursement system continues to undervalue "evaluation & management"

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1. Professional standing demonstrated by state licensure.
2. Livelong learning and self-assessment.
3. Cognitive expertise fulfilled by the secure closed book exam.
4. Evaluation of performance and practice.

Further discussion regarding update of maintenance of certification is included in the accompanying article in this newsletter. Information technology also was a major topic of discussion at the Board of Governors meetings. Issues regarding how to incorporate information technology into clinical practice was discussed by **Dr. David Brailer**, who is the information technology advisor to President Bush. Dr. Brailer discussed the development of regional health information organization that will help facilitate this.

Finally, there was a very effective and important discussion regarding the widespread problems of health literacy and racial inept disparities in health care. **Dr. Ruth Parker** from Emory University discussed the difficulties that patients have in understanding what we tell them, as well as reading medication instructions, and being able to ask the right questions. Her presentation of actual videos of real patients describing the challenges that they have in being able to understand what their doctors told them left a very significant impression on all of the Governors. The College and the ACP Foundation are working to develop tools that will help physicians to help their patients with low health literacy.

In addition, ACP President **Charles Francis**, spoke to us regarding the racial and ethnic disparities within America. He summarized information in a position paper published in the Annals of Internal Medicine this summer showing how there are differences in the care that people received based on race and ethnic origin.

The meeting was very successful in bringing important and crucial ideas, affecting all of us in medicine today, out into the open with a chance to have effective and lively discussions.

At home in Connecticut, you will read in this newsletter much of the wonderful programs and projects that are going on. We had a superb **State Scientific Meeting** held on **October 29, 2004** at the **Aqua Turf Club** in Southington, Connecticut. **Dr. Sarah Walker**, past President of the American College of Physicians, was our College representative, and **Dr. Henry Lee**, one of the world's foremost forensic scientists, gave a provocative and interesting discussion regarding forensic medicine in the world today. We had a record number of abstracts by our associates, which provided tremendous excitement and stimulation for everyone. I was delighted to award **Dr. Stephen A. Atlas** the George F. Thornton Teaching Award.

In addition, it was a pleasure to congratulate **Dr. O.J. Bizzozero, Jr.** on receiving the College's Laurate Award. **Dr. Stephen Huot** and Dr. Scott Wolf were honored for their volunteerism efforts in Connecticut. In addition, we were fortunate to have an exciting educational program with **Drs. Henry Schneiderman, Steven Atlas, and Silvio Inzucchi**. **Drs. Howard Spiro, Vincent DeLuca, Robert Rossman, and Herbert Kaufman** provided a provocative and new workshop on "How to Retire: Life after Medicine". **Dr. Henry Schneiderman** gave a wonderful discussion in our Professor in Action session. I am very appreciative and thankful for the hard work of our Planning Committee headed by **Dr. Eric Mazur**, our Governor-Elect, as well as **Robert Nardino** and **Scott Wolf**.

Please enjoy reading the many activities of the College in this newsletter. This will be my last newsletter to you as Governor. I want you to know how fortunate I feel in being able to represent each and every one of you in Connecticut at the national meetings. It has been a privilege. I have learned a lot, have made many wonderful friends and hopefully with your help have made a difference. I want to take this opportunity to thank all of my old and new acquaintances in Connecticut. I also want to thank my council members and the many people who have given much of their time and energies to make the programs in the state successful. In addition I want to congratulate Dr. Eric Mazur on his election as Governor. He is a very talented and special leader. I know he will do a fantastic job and I wish him much success.

I wish all of you and your families much happiness and good health.

David N. Podell, MD, PhD, FACP, FACR
Governor
Connecticut Chapter
American College of Physicians

services in comparison to procedures and diagnostic tests, and we continue to try to help Rep. Johnson understand the scope of those inequities.

In mid-November, we also met with **State Senator Chris Murphy**, currently co-chairman of the Public Health Committee. Senator Murphy took the opportunity to learn the internists' perspectives on topics which included the crisis in health care access for the uninsured and underinsured, the crucial need for liability insurance reform, improving patient safety and medical error reporting regulation of pharmaceutical industry marketing and influence, and even the recent flu vaccine shortage. Many health care public policy issues are more affected by state than federal legislation, and so we must maintain an effective voice in Hartford.

But whether it is contacting legislators on important issues in Hartford or in Washington, D.C., we continue to need more ACP physicians to help us. I made a request for sign-ups for the "Key Contact" program at the State Chapter meeting in late October. I am happy to report that we have added 19 new "Key Contacts" to the 52 already listed! As Key Contacts, these physicians receive email or fax alerts from the D.C. office when specific votes or issues come up which the College has determined warrant significant input from our members. It is really not more than several times per year (maybe it should be more frequent to help our legislators feel our presence more!), and I urge more our state membership to sign up. To become a Key Contact or get involved with our H& PP Committee, please contact me at rmmclean@optonline.net

The Connecticut State Medical Society (CSMS) remains the strongest advocacy force for medicine in Hartford. Some may feel CSMS is too specialty-oriented, but one must realize that the major health policy issues facing legislators in Connecticut impact on all medical specialties. I urge all physicians who are not currently members of CSMS to join in 2005. It is frightening to consider all the special interests and lobbyists in Hartford who are working directly against the interests of physicians, and we crucially need an effective voice.

I frequently hear concerns among physicians that the ACP is not trying hard enough to improve our dysfunctional physician payment system, our disastrous liability system, or even the recent flu vaccine shortage. How untrue! One can get a brief summary of recent Congressional testimonies and letters submitted by ACP leadership on all these issues by going to www.acponline.org/advocacy. You will be impressed at the quality and volume of correspondence to various policy makers on a diverse array of health policy issues. You can also sign up to be a Key Contact at this web site!

BRUCE E. GOULD, M.D.
2004 AMA FOUNDATION PRIDE IN THE
PROFESSION AWARD RECIPIENT

The American Medical Association member and internist, **Bruce E. Gould, M.D.** was honored with the AMA's Foundation 2004 Excellence in Medicine Pride in the Profession Award. Dr. Gould, who received the Connecticut Chapter Volunteerism Award of the American College of Physicians, is a caregiver to migrant farm workers and Director of Hartford, Connecticut Inner-City Health Center. He is also an advisor to student run homeless clinic, as well as an Associate Dean at the University of Connecticut. The Connecticut Chapter of the ACP congratulates Dr. Gould on this wonderful award.

—VISIT OUR CHAPTER WEB SITE—

<http://www.acponline.org/chapters/ct>

STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Barry Wu, M.D., Chair

This year we were thrilled to have the birth of the Yale Internal Medicine Interest Group. This group was established to enhance ACP student membership, revitalize internal medicine as a career choice for students, provide a mentoring program for students and opportunities for students to serve active roles in the ACP. This year's leaders include **Mandy Krauthhamer**, a senior Yale medical student and ACP New England Representative to the Council of Student members, **Lucy Goddard** and **Lu Anne Dinglasan**, second year Yale medical students, **Walter Kernan, MD**, and **Barry Wu, MD**, faculty advisors.

The group has sponsored a variety of activities this fall. **Lucy** and **Lu Anne** were tireless in recruiting students at the Yale Activities Fair on September 8. A total of 50 students enlisted at this event. The first meeting was held on September 20 and 25 students learned about the diverse opportunities in internal medicine. We were delighted to have Lucy and Lu Anne at our Council Meeting on September 22 to share their vision for the group. One of the highlights of the year was on September 29 when a lunchtime lecture titled "Health Care Policy and the 2004 Election" was sponsored at the Yale medical school. Over 150 students attended this session that was given by **Dr. John Hughes** and **Mandy Krauthhamer**. On October 2, students from both Yale and the University of Connecticut were participants at the 6th Annual ACP National Medical School Board Review Tournament held at the Hospital of Saint Raphael. The University of Connecticut has won the past 2 consecutive years. Although New York Medical College emerged as the winner this year, we were excited about Yale's third place and hope the winner will return to Connecticut. Primary Care Week was held on October 18-22 and the group help sponsor a panel discussion that included physicians from internal medicine, family medicine, pediatrics and obstetrics and gynecology. We were grateful for second, third and fourth year Yale medical students participation at our Annual meeting on October 29. **Mandy Krauthhamer** spoke before the keynote speaker inviting members to participate in mentoring students.

We look forward to the continue growth of the Yale Internal Medicine Interest Group and training students who will be leaders in medicine. If you would like to mentor students, please contact me at bwu@srhs.org.

RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS AT THE 2004 CONNECTICUT CHAPTER SCIENTIFIC MEETING OCTOBER 29, 2004

Under the skillful aegis of **Dr. Scott Wolf**, the resident research presentations again proved to be the cornerstone of the annual meeting. An overwhelming record total of 175 abstracts were submitted by residents from across the state of Connecticut. Each residency program selected one abstract for oral presentation and 12 such abstracts were presented, four in each of three simultaneous sessions. The remaining abstracts, detailing either a resident's original research work or an instructive clinical vignette were presented as posters. Each resident was permitted to serve as first author on only one abstract. The judges and attendees remarked again that this year's research presentations were in aggregate, the "best ever" and judging proved to be exceptionally difficult. Awards for the best three oral presentations went to **Dr. Joe Khoury** (Hospital of St. Raphael) for his abstract entitled, "Retrospective Review of Anal Pap Screening in HIV Positive Patients"; **Dr. Ivel De Freitas** (Danbury Hospital) "Correlation Between Serum Levels of Apoptosis and Endothelial Injury Associated Molecules and Clinical Outcome in Sepsis Syndrome"; and **Dr. Emmanuelle Clerisme-Beaty** (Yale Primary Care Internal Medicine) entitled "Incidence of Deep Vein Thrombosis and Pulmonary Emboli in Patients with Cirrhosis". The award for the most outstanding research poster presentation went to **Dr. Lisa Tilluckdharry** (Bridgeport Hospital) for her work "Outcomes of Critically Ill Patients Stratified By Duration of Emergency Department Length of Stay" and that for the best clinical vignette poster presentation to **Dr. Janardhan Srinivasan** (Bridgeport Hospital) for "Case Series of Tako-Tsubo Cardiomyopathy (Transient Left Ventricular Apical Ballooning) Evaluation by Myocardial Perfusion Echocardiography".

2004 CONNECTICUT CHAPTER ACP SCIENTIFIC MEETING OCTOBER 29, 2004

Attendees were treated to an unusually candid and sometimes grisly view into the world of high profile forensic medicine during this year's annual Connecticut Chapter ACP Scientific Meeting. **Dr. Henry Lee**, both flamboyant and provocative, presented the salient aspects of a number of criminal murder cases in which forensic medicine and he personally played a prominent role. From **Nicole Brown Simpson** and **Jon Binet Ramsey** to **Lacey Peterson**, Dr. Lee engaged the audience in an insider's review of the evidence and drawing conclusions regarding "who done it". As audience members answered Dr. Lee's questions correctly, they were called forward to the stage and "deputized" by Dr. Lee, receiving small sheriff's badges for rewards. Blood staining patterns, victim positions and the types of mortal wounds all provided clues to the guilty party. Dr. Lee also demonstrated how easily and inadvertently a crime scene can be disturbed. Like Sherlock Holmes, he worked backwards from the crime scene and elucidated by example how even the most minute and apparently trivial clue can ultimately lead to the solution of a case. While some of the members of the audience may have found the photographs excessively graphic, all were engaged by Dr. Lee's energetic and inclusive style, his energy and his sense of humor.

Dr. Lee's presentation was not the only highlight of this year's very successful meeting. The Multiple Small Feedings of the Mind session, organized by **Dr. Robert Nardino**, included outstanding presentations by **Dr. Henry Schneiderman** on diagnostic "pearls" derived from physical examination of the hand, by **Dr. Stephen Atlas** on perioperative medical management and by **Dr. Silvio Inzucchi** on management of the diabetic inpatient. All of these presentations dealt were clinically relevant and useful for the practicing physician. At the other end of our professional lives, **Drs. Howard Spiro** and **Vincent DeLuca** addressed the extremely important and rarely discussed issue of "Life after Medicine - How to Retire". Those who remained for the entire program were rewarded by an outstanding case discussion by **Dr. Henry Schneiderman** who dissected a complex case of hepatitis C related vasculitis. From his perspective as both an internist and pathologist, **Dr. Schneiderman** was able to approach the case from the perspective of both specialties, providing a unique insight. Attendees had the opportunity to enter their diagnoses from a case abstract distributed at the beginning of the meeting and remarkably, one resident from Yale Primary Care Residency, **Dr. Devan Kansagara**, identified the exact diagnosis, which was Hepatitis C-associated Necrotizing Vasculitis. For his diagnostic acumen, he was awarded a completed copy of ACP Medicine.

The 2004 Annual Scientific Meeting again demonstrated the strength and vitality of the Connecticut ACP Chapter. Over 350 members and associates from around the state actively participated and were all essential to the meeting's success. The ACP Annual Meeting is unique in providing a regular forum for the presentation of internal medicine resident research and for residents practicing internists alike to meet, to network and to consider together some of the greater issues and pressures impacting our profession.



Dr. Deepak Thiagarasan and Dr. Keith Swan with former ACP President and College Representative, Dr. Sara Walker, at the Connecticut State and Scientific Meeting.



Dr. Nelson Nicolasaro and Dr. Seung Kang with Dr. Sara Walker in front of their poster at the Connecticut Chapter Meeting.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!!!

Connecticut Chapter Annual Fall Meeting
Friday, October 28, 2005
Aqua Turf Club
Southington, Connecticut