

Georgia Chapter GOVERNOR'S NEWSLETTER

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

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Ruth-Marie E. Fincher, MD, FACP
Governor, Georgia Chapter

FROM THE GOVERNOR'S CORNER



The following article was excerpted from my talk at the Awards Banquet, 2003 Chapter Scientific Meeting in Savannah, GA, March 8, 2003.

It has been a true honor and privilege to serve as your Governor these past four years. I have personally received far more from the position than I could ever possibly give back. From my vantage point as Governor, I wanted to reflect for just a few moments on whom we are and where we are as internists, and perhaps, where we need to go.

We all live and work in a very difficult time. Increasing numbers of uninsured, declining reimbursements, increasing overhead costs, and increasing knowledge of disease and treatment options are all weighing in on us. In addition, post September 11, we also bear the angst associated with having to live with the ever-present danger of a terrorist attack using weapons of mass destruction.

So, do I stand before you like Jenny Curran in the movie *Forrest Gump* and shout her warning, "Run, Forrest, Run"? Or hang from this podium, the inscription in Dante's *Inferno*, "Abandon all hope, you who enter here."

No, I rather stand before you to say that I believe a great treasure still exists here in the practice of medicine worth fighting to preserve and cherish. Contained in that priceless treasure are two key pieces- our heritage as professionals and our patients.

The field of modern medicine is literally teeming with physicians that have come before us and who exemplified the ideals and values of professionalism. Certainly, there are the giants- Sir William Osler, Paul Beeson, J. Willis Hurst to name but a few. But each of us at one time or the other, in our training or work, has also been touched by a mentor or colleague whom we have admired and desired to emulate. These are the physicians who with humble quietness committed themselves to the service of others, committed themselves to excellence, and committed themselves to a life of learning. Such personification of the principles of professionalism have enabled us to know first hand not only the value of internists to the

community at large but also the value that being that kind of person is for our own sense of happiness and fulfillment. It is the privilege and opportunity to follow in these individuals' footsteps, ourselves personifying the ideals and values of professionalism for which we must fight. It is this opportunity that is key to preserving a redemptive sense of joy and fulfillment through our own work.

The other piece to this treasure are our patients. They are perhaps the *raison d'être* of the internist. The opportunity to convert scientific knowledge and understanding into real life stories and drama gives true meaning to the internist's life. Because of our professional role and capabilities, we have the opportunity every day to not only cure and prevent disease, but also to help heal the heart and soul of our patients. The deep gratitude patients show us for simply being there to listen is a reward rarely found in today's bottom line, what's in it for me world.

So, what sort of "smart bombs" do we have with which to fight to preserve and protect this treasure- this heritage of professionalism and this patient-doctor relationship. I see our success resting on three main pillars: patients, accountability, and medical organizations.

Patients strongly desire a professional relationship with a doctor, a personal physician. As Hal Sox, editor of the *Annals*, recently stated in an editorial, patients want a physician who knows their medical history and knows them by name. This is a deeply ingrained and heartfelt need. They are prepared to stand at our side as a fierce ally as long as we do not let the third party payers, government regulations, or the malpractice crisis force us to abandon them in provision of that basic need.

Accountability is a great challenge. Measuring the quality in health care continues to remain elusive and its pursuit, if not done with careful and objective forethought, can be deceptive and lead to many pitfalls. Nevertheless, we live in a world of finite resources, and society understandably demands accountability for how those resources are utilized. Many of the so-called report cards and physician profiling done by third party payers have been little more than veiled excuses for further cuts in reimbursement and had little to do with quality. We need to develop the infrastructure and systems within our own practices to be able to measure the quality of what we do, learn from the findings, and

improve the performance. Such accountability measures are needed to substantiate our conviction and belief that improved reimbursement for our services as “the doctors for adults” can result in the delivery of safe and excellent healthcare at the most affordable price.

Finally, we must support our medical societies, and in particular our own specialty society, the American College of Physicians. To third party payers and government leaders, our individual cries for relief and help are like a cacophony of meowing cats, totally irritating and totally ineffectual. We must learn to speak with one voice through the advocacy efforts of our medical societies. In unity there is power and influence, but our organizations’ power and influence will only be as good as we make it. It cannot stand on the opinions of a few of the old stalwarts. It must ring true with the entire membership. We need your input and your active involvement to make its voice resonate with strength and conviction.

I am also proud to say that our College is not a self-serving body, guided by personal agendas and self-interest. But rather a body whose actions are based upon the principles of its mission, “to enhance the quality and effectiveness of health care by fostering excellence and professionalism in the practice of medicine.” In supporting the College, you are in effect supporting a voice trying to do “the right thing” for healthcare as a whole.

I very much intend to remain in the ring to “fight the good fight” because of my conviction that there is still a great treasure in the practice of medicine worth fighting for. Certainly, had I to do it all over again, I would indeed have done it differently- I should have dropped out of Multivariable Calculus when I had the chance, and I should have learned how to whistle during my childhood, but as for medicine, I did it right the first time.

Again, I want to thank you for the wonderful privilege of serving as your Governor. I want to thank all of my council members who through the years have so ably directed the course and activities of this Georgia Chapter. And I want to especially thank our executive administrator, Nancy Brady, who always seems to get the job done before you even know to ask. I also want to thank my wife Annabelle and my family for their enduring support and love.

I leave this office with the great satisfaction of knowing that future of this Chapter could not be in any more able or dedicated hands than those of Dr. Rhee Fincher. I look forward to watching this Chapter grow and flourish under her leadership both internally and in its contribution to the College as a whole.

Thank you for your time and patience.
Joseph W. Stubbs, MD, FACP

NEW PDA STORE AVAILABLE TO MEMBERS

The College has just signed a one-year, non-exclusive agreement with PDA Verticals of Seattle, Washington to provide members with access to the latest PDA hardware and software. The new web site is called PDA MD, and members accessing the site receive a 5% discount on hardware and software purchases. This brings the hardware price within range of current retail pricing. Members have access to the latest models of PDAs as well as a wide array of medical software to include specially priced “ACP Bundles” for internal medicine, geriatrics and childcare. Experienced PDA buyers who want to “build their own” can do so using the “build to order” section of the web site. Within 3-5 days of placing their order, the PDA will arrive on the physician’s desk, loaded, charged and ready to go. With this option there are no downloads, no mistakes and no troubles. For first time buyers, there are help screens and articles to help the novice become acquainted with the PDA world.

In November, ACP Observer will publish a 12-page supplement on PDAs that will provide some extremely valuable information and background for the new user and experienced member alike. A recent survey from Observer indicates that 47% of College respondents own and use a PDA and 38% of non-users plan to be using one in 2002.

If you’re just starting your Christmas shopping or are in the market for a PDA, this is the first place to begin.

For more information, please visit the PDA MD site, or contact Robin Bartlett at rbartlett@mail.acponline.org.

COLLEGE WILL TAKE ON ‘NEW’ NAME THIS MONTH, BUT WITH A TWIST

From the March ACP-ASIM Observer, copyright © 2003 by the American College of Physicians-American Society of Internal Medicine, By Deborah Gesensway

For the first time since ACP and ASIM merged in 1998, the College will once again be known as the American College of Physicians-but with a twist. The “new” name, which will take effect on March 31 during the week of Annual Session, will also feature this official tagline: “Internal Medicine. Doctors for Adults.” College officials hope that pairing the old name with a new tagline will take advantage of the organization’s reputation-and reflect important changes the organization has undergone since the merger.

“While we are reverting to a simpler name, it doesn’t mean we’re backing off from the strengthening of the College that happened with the merger,” said David C. Dale, FACP, Chair of the Board of Governors. “The College gained a lot from the merger, and we are not going to give that up with this name.” Adding a tagline to the organization’s name, coupled with a new logo and updated graphics, will help improve the College’s name recognition and public awareness with patients and politicians, explained David L. Sgrignoli, the College’s Senior Vice President for Marketing and Communications. College research, he said, found that the name “American College of Physicians” resonated strongly with many of the College’s audiences. Those groups include not only internists and other physicians, but individuals from academic medicine and health care organizations like the Institute of Medicine, the National Institutes of Health and medical foundations.

HELP YOUR PATIENTS QUIT USING TOBACCO

What is the Georgia Tobacco Quit Line?

The Quit Line provides free counseling, screening, support and referral services for tobacco users. The Quit Line is available for adult Georgia residents and concerned parents of adolescents using tobacco. It is easy and accessible for all Georgians because most have access to a phone and there are no constraints such as transportation or support-group fees. The Quit Line is funded by the Master Tobacco Settlement through Georgia’s Tobacco Use Prevention Section, Division of Public Health, Department of Human Resources in partnership with the Georgia Cancer Coalition.

How does it work?

You advise your patients to stop using tobacco and give them the Quit Line phone number (1-877-270-STOP). The call is free and so is the service. Callers to the Quit Line are connected to a trained counselor who provides:

- An assessment of readiness to quit
- A customized quit plan, including up to four additional counseling phone calls
- Motivation and problem-solving advice
- Current information about physician recommended pharmacological support, such as nicotine gum, nicotine patches and other items
- Information about cessation insurance benefits
- Information about and referral to other cessation services, including local resources
- A Tobacco Quit Kit, including materials tailored to the patient’s readiness to quit

Why a Tobacco Quit Line?

Tobacco is the number one preventable cause of death in Georgia and around the world. Almost 10,000 people die in Georgia every year from tobacco related illnesses. Counseling is a proven, effective treatment for patients. Studies show that telephone-based cessation programs like the Quit Line produce significantly higher quit rates than programs that use self-help materials alone.

How Successful is the Quit Line?

The Quit Line was launched in November 2001 and has experienced high call volumes and quit rates. Over 22,000 Georgians have called the Quit Line since its inception. More importantly, one year data shows that Georgia quit rates are higher than the national average. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Public Health Service, June 2002, Clinical Practice Guideline shows seven-day quit rates with counseling for tobacco cessation between 13 to 16 percent nationwide. Georgia ranks well above the national average with a seven-day quit rate of 23 percent.

How Can You Help?

As providers you have considerable influence over your patients and opportunities to check a patient’s smoking history and then offer treatment options. Please encourage your patients who use tobacco to beat their addiction by advising them to quit and referring them to the Georgia Tobacco Quit Line at **1-877-270- STOP**. Spanish speakers should call **1-877-266-3863**. If you would like patient education materials please call **404-657-4660**.

LITERARY RETREAT

The Georgia Chapter of the American College of Physicians conducted the third annual Literature and Medicine Retreat this spring at the Lodge at Amicalola Falls State Park in the beautiful North Georgia mountains. The registrants, Georgia physicians and their spouses, gathered to discuss works of literature with a master teacher, Dr. Gregory O’Dea, Director of the University Honors Program at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga. Ten continuing medical educational credits are earned in four two and a half hour sessions beginning Friday night and ending Sunday morning, with Saturday afternoon being devoted to hiking and other activities at the park and its surrounding areas.

This year’s readings included a play, a novel, a work of non-fiction and a personal journal under the topic “Imagining the Self”. Dr. O’Dea is superb at encouraging participation. Each year his evaluations are outstanding and those who have attended are likely to return. The informal setting is conducive to camaraderie and by the

end of the weekend, most participants are acquainted with one another. Enjoying a breakfast and evening in a private dining area helps in this regard. If this sounds attractive to you, consider registering when you receive a brochure this Fall describing our fourth annual meeting.



Pictured left to right: Marsha Epstein, Dr. Warren Jacobs, Dr. Nancy Weisman, Dr. Bill Elsea, Ms. Nancy Elsea, Dr. Brian Catto, JoEllen Catto

COVER THE UNINSURED WEEK

by Dr. Richard Fullerton, Co-Chair, HPPC, Georgia Chapter

I am pleased to report on the Georgia Chapter ACPs participation in “Cover the Uninsured Week,” sponsored by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. This was a very valuable and effective week. The Health and Public Policy Committee participated in the activities of the week, representing ACP by its presence, service and by information packages provided. There were weekly meetings for two months prior to the week of activities. During these meetings, the ACP, through its representatives, planned the week with various organizations for town hall meeting day, campus day, health fair day, labor and business day and interfaith day. On February 23rd, as a representative of HPPC, I participated on a live NPR sponsored radio show, “Journey to Wellness”, along with the president and CEO of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Dr. Risa Lavizzo-Mourey. The HPPC directly participated in Town Hall meeting day. The white lab coats were present on the steps of the Georgia Capitol while Lt. Governor Mark Taylor and several state legislators voiced their support for increasing the awareness of the uninsured. After the press conference, the ACP was represented as one of the six “expert” panelists. Each panelist was given a 5 minute presentation and then fielded questions from the audience. On Health Fair Day, the ACP had a booth at the West End Mall in Atlanta during the entire fair from 11 am to 7 pm. Atlanta Mayor Shirley Franklin spoke about the uninsured at the opening. The ACP booth was titled “The Doctor is In” and advertised medical advice for five cents. The service was well received, constantly busy and collected about \$2.50.

In summary, the conclusion of the HPPC was that with so many different views on the problems and potential solutions for the medically uninsured, it requires a national leading force such as the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to pull these factors together. It was obvious that any one of these organizations, including the ACP, does not have the influence or credibility to lead this country to a solution for this national health crisis. We thank the Robert Wood Foundation for their leadership and ask that they continue to be involved and help us all go from “awareness” to “solutions”.

HOT TOPICS IN INTERNAL MEDICINE WAS HOT

The 2003 annual Georgia Chapter ACP meeting in Savannah was March 7-9 and was a resounding success. We had one of the largest numbers of attendees in the last five years. The program, co-chaired by Joyce Doyle and Harold Szerlip, and the Associates’ program, chaired by Eisenhower Army Medical Center’s Chief Resident, Kevin Chung, and Chair of Eisenhower’s Department of Medicine, Dr. William Browne, did an outstanding job of planning and coordinating the three day event. Highlights of the program included Dr. William Golden, from the University of Arkansas Medical Sciences, who served as our College Representative. He updated our membership on the activities of the College, including ongoing discussions with the American Board of Internal Medicine regarding recertification; the College’s name change to “The American College of Physicians: Internal Medicine. Doctors for Adult”; the College’s advocacy efforts to improve physician reimbursement and to provide quality insurance coverage for the uninsured; and the College’s many new products, such as PIER. Further highlights included Dr. Joyce Doyle’s team of speakers from Emory speaking on advances in diabetic management and hormone replacement therapy. We also heard from Dr. Laura Mulloy from the Medical College of Georgia speaking about advances in the management of hypertension, and Dr. Arshed Quyyumi from Emory speaking on the role of inflammation in coronary artery disease. Dr. David Parish from Mercer updated everyone on the latest information and developments with regard to cardio pulmonary resuscitation.

We also experienced for the first time ever the use of an audience response system. Dr. Harold Szerlip used the response system as he led the audience through a number of practice recertification questions.

The meeting also provided an opportunity for all the attendees to hear a number of outstanding presentations by associates during the associates' competition. Everyone had an opportunity to enjoy the intensely competitive second annual associates' competition in medical jeopardy.



College Representative, Dr. William Golden, discusses College matters with members of the Georgia Chapter Governor's Advisory Council (3/7/03).

GEORGIA CHAPTER HONORS PHYSICIANS

Laureate Award

The 2003 Georgia Chapter Laureate Award winner was Dr. Joe Stubbs. Dr. Stubbs was a graduate of Emory University School of Medicine Summa Cum Laude, and completed his residency training in internal medicine at the University of Washington, Seattle, Washington. He is currently President of Albany Internal Medicine, a private single specialty internal medicine group practice, where he has been practicing since 1982. He was presented with the award for his contributions to the community of Albany, Georgia, as well as for his service to the Chapter. He has served as a mentor for medical students and served on the Governor's Advisory Council since 1988. As Governor of the Georgia Chapter from 1999-2003, the Chapter received four Chapter Excellence Awards, three Evergreen Awards and four Evergreen Award nominations. He helped to organize the Georgia Primary Coalition which was an organization of primary care medical specialties to more effectively advocate for patient care issues in the state of Georgia. He also enabled the Georgia Chapter to participate in a pilot project with the National Library of Medicine to increase public awareness of MEDLINEplus. In 2003, he was one of two Governors elected to serve on the Board of Regents.



Laureate recipient, Dr. Joe Stubbs, with presenters Dr. J. Willis Hurst and Governor-Elect Dr. Rhee Fincher (3/8/03)

Volunteerism and Community Service Award

This year's Volunteerism and Community Service Award recipient was Jacqueline W. Fincher, MD, FACP. Dr. Fincher received her medical degree and did her residency at the Medical College of Georgia. Since that time, she has practiced as a general internist in private practice with her husband at McDuffie Medical Associates in Thomson, Georgia. Dr. Fincher was the recipient of this award for her tremendous contributions to her community as well as to the Georgia Chapter and to many other health professional organizations, including the American Heart Association and the American Cancer Society. Herself, a survivor of breast cancer, she founded the breast cancer support group in Thomson in 1994, and presently leads it on a monthly basis. She was a member of the inaugural class of Leadership McDuffie and subsequently was a member of Leadership Georgia. In September 2002, Governor Roy Barnes appointed her to the Advisory Council for the Georgia Office of Women's Health. She and her family have twice been recognized as Family of the Year in Thomson, Georgia. In 1996, she was named a community hero and was one of the Olympic torchbearers for the Olympic Games in Atlanta, Georgia. In 2000, she received from the American Heart Association, the Physician of the Year award presented each year to one practicing physician for outstanding contributions to the accomplishment of the American Heart Association mission. She has served on the Governor's Advisory Council from 1997 until the present, and has served as Chair of the Public Relations committee, Vice President of the Chapter, and Chair of the Health and Public Policy committee. An internist of great talent, faith, compassion and commitment, Dr. Jacqueline Fincher is a richly deserving recipient of our Chapter Volunteerism and Community Service Award.

J. Willis Hurst Teaching Award

This year's J. Willis Hurst Teaching Award went to James T. Waller, MD. Dr. Waller received his medical degree from the University of Tennessee, and subsequently did his residency at Vanderbilt. He currently works with the Department of Internal Medicine Education at Memorial Health University Medical Center in Savannah, Georgia, where he also carries the academic titles of Professor of Medicine with Mercer University, and Clinical Professor of Medicine with the Medical College of Georgia. Dr. Waller has dedicated his professional career to teaching residents as well as being a busy internist delivering direct patient care. He is the recipient of numerous teaching awards by both medical students and faculty at Memorial Health University Medical Center, and is highly revered by his peers. The Georgia Chapter proudly awarded Dr. James Waller the J. Willis Hurst Teaching Award as a physician whose career was a model of professionalism.

ASSOCIATES' COMPETITION

CLINICAL VIGNETTE COMPETITION

1ST Place

AN UNUSUAL CAUSE OF CHRONIC COUGH

Tanna Lim (Associate), Louis Lovett (FACP), Brian Pearlman (FACP), Atlanta Medical Center, Atlanta, GA

2nd Place

A "Bull Frog-like" Herniation of an Esophageal-Gastric Pull-through Pouch in a Man with Metastatic Squamous Cell Carcinoma of the Esophagus

Matthew W. Pantsari, MD, Charles Farrington, MD. Dwight David Eisenhower Army Medical Center

2nd Place Tie

Acute Myocardial Infarction in a High-Risk Patient Masking Recurrent Carbon Monoxide Poisoning

Colleen Kraft, MD, Daniel Beless, MD, Jay Steinberg, MD. Crawford Long Hospital, Emory Healthcare, Atlanta, GA



Pictured left to right: Dr. Matthew Pantsari, Dr. Colleen Kraft, Dr. Tanna Lim, and Dr. Joe Stubbs

RESEARCH COMPETITION

1ST Place

Intensive Insulin Therapy in the Medical Intensive Care Unit: A Feasibility Analysis.

Sweeney L, Chung K, Pamplin J, Wood J. Department of Internal Medicine, Eisenhower Army Medical Center

2nd Place

The Self Management of Long Term Oral Anti-coagulation: A Systematic Review

Colombo CJ1, Basta SA2, Pace AA3, Anderson RN4, Bhagat S5, Bleier SJ6, Joyner SE7, Rhodes TE8, Tabangin ME9 Dwight David Eisenhower Army Medical Center, Ft Gordon, Georgia (1) Eastern Virginia Medical School, Norfolk, Virginia (2-9)

3rd Place

Physical Activity Levels and Counseling Behavior Among Primary Care Resident Physicians

Elizabeth Tong, MD, MPH (Associate), Rita Louard, MD, Erica Frank, MD, MPH; Atlanta Medical Center (Tong, Louard), Emory University (Frank); Atlanta, GA



Pictured left to right: Dr. Elizabeth Tong, Dr. Chris Colombo, Dr. Lori Sweeney with Dr. Joe Stubbs

POSTER COMPETITION

1ST Place

A Case Report of A Ventricular Tachy-Arrhythmia Leading to A Reversible Dilated Cardiomyopathy Associated With General Anesthesia And Sub-Cutaneous Epinephrine

CPT James Stephens, MD (Associate), CPT Kevin Chung, MD (Associate), MAJ Susan Noe, MD (Member).

2nd Place

Metformin-Induced Hepatotoxicity

CPT Scott T. McNear, MC USA, CPT Beth A. Steinberger, MC USA, MAJ R.K. Fincher, MC USA, Dwight David Eisenhower Army Medical Center, Fort Gordon, Georgia.

3rd Place

An Unusual Cardiac Mass

L. Suzan Egeli, MD, (Associate), Randolph E. Patterson, MD Emory University School of Medicine, Atlanta, Georgia



Pictured left to right: Dr. James Stephens, Dr. Suzan Egeli, Dr. Scott McNear being congratulated by Dr. Joe Stubbs



ACP ANNUAL SESSION 2004 NEW ORLEANS IS HOME TO ANNUAL SESSION 2004 APRIL 22-24, NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA

- Save up to \$50 on registration fees when you register by July 31, 2003
- Get first choice of hotel reservations
- Enter to win free airfare to Annual Session for you and your guest

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