Dear Friends & Colleagues,

As I sing my “swan song” as your Governor, I want to take this opportunity to thank you for the privilege and honor of serving as your ACP Georgia Chapter Governor for the past four years. It has truly been the highlight of my professional career. As I have gotten to know many more of you in our Chapter, I have been inspired by your dedication to our profession and to our patients. I am constantly impressed with how intelligent, insightful, and passionate our members are, from students and residents, to our early and mid-career physicians, to our senior and retired physicians that still give back to their communities and the profession in so many ways. You are all truly amazing!

Personal Reflection

As I reflect over the past four years both professionally and personally, I am astounded at the rapid transformation of health care in our country, in my community, in my practice, and even in my own family. I have watched our colleagues and patients as we struggle with the good, bad, and very difficult rollout of the Affordable Care Act. I’ve watched my own small private practice in Thomson, GA, go through the Medicare PQRS, the NCQA PCMH process and certification, Meaningful (meaningless) Use Stages 1 & 2, and become part of an IPA and an ACO. As my small group private practice has continued to be pounded by this alphabet soup of health care, we have come to the conclusion that our 54 year old small group private practice must now merge with a much larger regional group practice to remain viable. I have also watched my rural hospital almost close over mounting debt with indigent care and low government reimbursement, be rescued by a regional hospital that bought it and built a whole new hospital in our town.

Over these same four years, I have watched my daughter, Laura, major in Biology/ Pre-med, take the MCAT, graduate from Wake Forest, interview for medical school, and now is already halfway through the Medical College of Georgia School of Medicine. She is the third generation of physicians on both her maternal and paternal sides of our family. At a time when many of us have great frustrations with the practice of medicine, I see the excitement and wonder in Laura and her medical school classmates as they learn the tenets of our sacred profession. The future of medicine is no doubt changing dramatically. As the mother, wife, and daughter of a physician, and a physician myself, I must say this next generation of physicians is amazing! They will do great things in medicine. They will do them differently for sure and with far greater access to information and technology than we can fathom. They are coming into a whole new world in health care, but they remain dedicated to the profession and to patient care. The future of medicine is in good hands.

Jacqueline W. Fincher, MD, MACP
Governor, Georgia Chapter
American College of Physicians
Email: jwfinchermd@gmail.com
Office: 706-595-1461
http://www.gaacp.org/

Chapter Reflection

Hanging gears, our Georgia ACP Chapter has certainly accomplished a lot in these four years, but the work and future of our Internal Medicine specialty and our Georgia Chapter will continue to require all the voices of Internal Medicine to be present and heard. It will demand increasing excellence and relevance in our educational opportunities and thoughtful and diverse policy-making in our advocacy efforts on behalf of our patients and profession. It will also require greater involvement of our membership from all types of general internal medicine specialists, hospitalists, and subspecialists and from all types of practice settings to truly represent our increasingly diverse membership. The wonderful thing about Internal Medicine is the very
wide range of practice and employment opportunities in the various aspects of our specialty. This wide range also makes it more complicated to “herd the cats” in any single direction, educational opportunity or health policy. With the extremely capable assistance of our Executive Director, Mary Daniels, and our Governor’s Advisory Council we have had great success and will continue to do so in the future under our new Governor, Walt Moore.

As your Governor I have diligently focused my efforts on Advocacy, Education, and Membership. Obviously, membership makes the other two areas possible. Increasing membership in all categories only helps our organization to provide more diverse and wide-ranging educational opportunities and areas of advocacy at the state and national levels. We have made significant strides in these areas the past four years, but continue to have opportunities for improvement.

**ADVOCACY**

At the state level, we have worked very closely with our primary care colleagues in the state through the “Patient Centered Physician Coalition” (GA Chapter ACP, GAFP, GA Chapter of AAP, GA Ob/G Society, and GA Osteopathic Assoc) to leverage our considerable memberships, over 7500 physicians, to negotiate important legislative and regulatory issues with the state government. In addition, our Chapter has been a major founder and participant in the annual state Primary Care Summit, involving stakeholders from all aspects of the educational pipeline and the state government. We have also worked closely with the Medical Association of Georgia (MAG) through their House of Delegates and through the Council of Legislation on state legislation and regulations, as well as providing input on resolutions sent to the AMA House of Delegates.

We have significantly increased the attendance at our annual state legislative day at the Capitol over the past four years, getting more of our membership down to the Capitol to engage with our legislators on issues important to our patients and profession. In addition, our Health & Public Policy Committee, headed by Emmett Doerr, has provided policy briefs along with live testimony to Legislative Committees on Medicaid expansion to the poorest citizens in Georgia, Medicaid parity payment with Medicare, tax incentives for physicians providing clinical clerkships, funding for more residency slots, increasing the state tobacco tax, scope of practice issues regarding pharmacists, nursing, and PAs on vaccinations, narcotic pain prescriptions, etc. Please click [here](#) to see the full GA HPPC report.

I have also had the opportunity to write some op-eds in state newspapers, represent internal medicine at stakeholder meetings, and participate in a panel discussion of health care on Georgia Public Broadcasting.

At the Federal level, we have significantly increased and paid for Chapter members to attend the national Leadership Day in Washington, DC. We have talked to each one of our now 14 Congressmen and 2 Senators on major issues including getting rid of the SGR payment formula, GME funding, Medicaid payment parity, expanding NHSC scholarships, etc. We have continued to maintain ongoing relationships with both our Senators and with key Congressmen throughout the legislative cycles. I have also had the great privilege of serving on our national ACP Health & Public Policy Committee for four years, and now on the Medical Practice and Quality Committee and the Medical Informatics Committee, weighing in on key national ACP policy and regulatory regulations.
E D U C A T I O N

We have revived and revamped our annual Chapter scientific meeting over the past four years under the leadership of Brian Ribiero and the Education Committee, leading to dramatic increases in attendance. We changed the Chapter meeting from the Spring to the Fall time of year and rotated the meeting to different locations to give many more physicians and students an opportunity to attend. Our meeting at The Lodge at Callaway Gardens, last October was exceptional and the largest attended Chapter meeting we have ever had. (Please click here to see Dr. Ribiero’s detailed report. Click here to view pictures from the October, 2014 meeting.) We have introduced additional Maintenance of Certification (MOC) SEP modules at the annual meeting in October and in June for the past two years to respond to the increasing MOC needs of our members. We also have introduced separate Hospitalist and Ambulatory physician tracks at the Chapter meeting to meet the needs of our rapidly diverging range of internal medicine practice. In addition, we brought back the resident research and clinical vignette competitions and expanded the resident and student poster competitions at the Chapter meeting. Our Education Committee has done a fantastic job of organizing a truly outstanding meeting with something for every internal medicine physician and medical student. I hope you will join us October 23-25, 2015 at Lake Lanier Lodge for our next great Chapter meeting, which will be a gorgeous time of year at a beautiful facility. Go ahead and put it on your calendar. I look forward to seeing you there.

M E M B E R S H I P

Our membership continues to grow although not as much as we need to grow. Currently we are reaching only ~ 45% of all eligible internal medicine physicians in Georgia. EVERY internal medicine physician and medicine subspecialist in our state should be a member of their primary professional organization. The ACP is your professional home.

F I N A L T H A N K S G I V I N G

I want to especially thank our Executive Director (ED) par excellence, Mary Daniels for her outstanding work over these past 4 years. Mary and I started on this journey together as new ED and new Governor. We have both learned a lot along the way and have had an excellent working relationship. Mary has truly become the “face” of ACP throughout our state and also within the national ACP organization. She is a tremendous asset to our organization as we grow our Chapter.

I also want to thank my executive committee made up of Vice-President Henry Patton, Secretary Joyce Doyle, Treasurer Cody McClatchey, and new Governor-elect Walt Moore. They have provided Mary and me with their time, talent, leadership, and very wise advice over the past 4 years. Furthermore, I want to thank my outstanding Committee Chairs, Brian Ribiero-Education, Emmett Doerr – Health & Public Policy, Jim Hotz & Danny Newman – Membership, Amy Eubanks – Early Career Physicians, Henry Patton and Joyce Doyle – Awards, Joe Stubbs- Nominations, along w/ the rest of my Governor’s Advisory Council (GAC); Drs Rhee Fincher, Vince Nicolais, Ed Grimsley, Andy Albritton, Clyde Watkins, Lisa Bernstein, Len Lichtenfeld, Mike Quinn, Paul Donnan, Lee Mencher, Dan Dressler. All of these outstanding physicians are excellent leaders in their own institutions and practices, in addition to devoting their time and efforts to our ACP organization. And finally, thank you to all our GA Chapter members for your membership, your input, your participation, and especially your trust in me to lead our Chapter over the past four year. It has truly been an honor and blessing to serve you.

Sincerely your friend and colleague,

Jacqueline

Georgia

Membership Counts 2014-15

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<th>Governor: Jacqueline Fincher</th>
<th>Governor-elect: Walter Moore</th>
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**Latest on MOC and the ABIM**

By now you are aware of the landmark apology by the ABIM, with a reassessment of MOC requirements now occurring. I hope you have been reading the updates regarding MOC from our ACP President, Steven Weinberger, along with the ABIM President, Richard Baron. Please know how much effort your Georgia Chapter Leadership along with many other state chapters and national leadership have made on your behalf to advocate MIGHTILY with the ABIM. Change of any institution often comes slowly. Change does not come with sitting by quietly, saying and doing nothing. Our ACP organization will continue to “have your back” on MOC. Please see MOC at the ACP website. [ACP Leadership Comments on MOC], [MOC Update], [ABIM “I’m sorry” letter].

**Georgia Chapter ACP Awards Committee - March 2015**

The Georgia Chapter American College of Physicians (ACP) includes many inspirational members who are very accomplished. Many Georgia Chapter members honored at the October, 2014 meeting are shown in pictures below. The American College of Physicians will recognize accomplishments of distinguished Georgia Members through the College’s awards and Masterships program at the Centennial Internal Medicine Meeting in Boston on April 30, 2015. The College will recognize outstanding contributions in the practice of medicine, teaching, research, public service, leadership, and medical volunteerism. The Georgia Chapter ACP members and Georgia health care organizations will be honored with the following awards as nominated by Georgia Chapter and approved by the ACP Board of Regents:

**Mastership in American College of Physicians:**
Otis W. Brawley Jr., MD, MACP, Atlanta, Georgia,
Ruth M. Parker, MD, MACP, Atlanta, Georgia

**Edward R. Loveland Memorial Award for a Distinguished Contribution in the Health Field**
HealthSTAT, Atlanta, Georgia
To be accepted by Jenny Bussey, Director

**Jane F. Desforges Distinguished Teacher Award**
John F. Fisher, MD, MACP, Augusta, Georgia

**Richard and Hinda Rosenthal Award**
Mercy Care Clinic Atlanta, Georgia
To be accepted by Dr Richard Hansen

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**2014 Community Teaching Award**
Dr Donna Whitfield

**2014 J Willis Hurst Teaching Award**
Dr Joyce Awke

**Governor’s Award for Dedicated Service to the Chapter**
Dr Henry Patton

**2014 Mark Silverman Award**
Dr Lisa Bernstein

**2014 Leadership Award**
Dr Rhee Fincher

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**2014 Volunteerism and Community Service Award**
Dr Robert Campbell

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**2014 Community Teaching Award**
Dr Mary Bond
This is the time of the year when we start saying goodbye to our fellow residents who are months away from completing their residency training at our Georgia programs. The Georgia ACP RFC is pleased to have so many wonderful outstanding residents. The resident fellow council is currently compiling pictures and lists from all the internal medicine residency programs in Georgia. This list will be published in the Governors’ next Newsletter. As we say goodbye, we are also looking ahead and welcoming the new incoming classes of residents and fellows to our Georgia Programs.

**Saying goodbye to the upcoming graduates and welcoming the new upcoming classes…**

**What does being a Resident/Fellow member of the ACP entail?**

By: Eddie Fatakhov MD, MBA  
Chair of the Resident/Fellow Council-GA ACP Chapter

ACP has had a long commitment to education and considers medical students, residents, and fellows to play a vital role in the organization. ACP provides activities such as advocacy, oral and poster presentations, and the Doctors’ dilemma competition as well as MKSAP for board review, which demonstrates that the ACP cares and considers Residents and Fellows a crucial part of their organizational success.

Locally, the Resident/Fellow Council promotes advocacy at the Georgia State Capitol, provides educational resources by means of webinars, and promotes and provides support for the possible formation of a medical student council.

The Resident/Fellow Council is an important voice in the college with regards to activism. For example, members of the Resident/Fellow Council attended Leadership Day in Washington D.C., representing ACP by meeting their representatives both in the house and senate. The ACP Resident/Fellow Council provides many opportunities to develop presentation and critical thinking skills, and trains future doctors to be leaders in their community.

For those interested in legislative activism at the local level, the ACP Georgia Chapter Day at the State Capitol along with the Georgia Physician Coalition scheduled for March 5, 2015 at the Georgia General Assembly are fantastic ways to learn more about how legislation can affect physicians and patients, and to voice the opinions of students, residents, and fellows on matters that are important to internal medicine physicians.

Additional resources that are available for residents and fellows include MKSAP for internal medicine board review, the Annals of Internal Medicine, ACP smart medicine, and High Value Care curriculum.

All Resident/Fellow members are encouraged to visit the Georgia Chapter website for more details.

The Resident/Fellow Council (RFC) is here for you!

The ACP RFC Georgia Chapter includes members from each residency program in the state, with the goal of representing all members within the state chapter. Our council communicates with members about activities of the chapter that residents/fellows can participate in as well as about various benefits that are available to residents.

The Resident Fellow Council (RFC) has been officially formed and funded.

The purpose of the RFC is to be the voice of advocacy, cost effective care, and leadership for Internal Medicine Residents/Fellows at the state, regional, and national levels.

The Resident/Fellow Council is planning to organize webinars, and cost effective medicine talks to residents and fellows in the state of Georgia.

The Resident/Fellow Council of the Georgia ACP Chapter would like to present a wonderful opportunity to increase your knowledge about the state legislative process by sponsoring a two-week to four-week Health Legislative-Advocacy Internship program at the Georgia General Assembly. Residents/Fellows will be given the opportunity to work with key members of the House and Senate office. This rotation is for anyone who is interested in learning about how the legislative process works at the state level. In addition, this rotation will help you learn about the power advocacy has on your profession, and stay informed of all advocacy initiatives and leadership opportunities in your state. Furthermore, you will learn about public health issues concerning the state and national levels; topics include health disparities, obesity assessment and management, adolescent health, infectious disease, geriatrics, etc. If you have any specific questions or you are considering applying but are not sure what to expect please do not hesitate to call or email me. Funding up to $500 dollars per resident is available during your time at the Georgia General Assembly.

Please contact our current representatives with any suggestions you may have to better our councils’ work.

Sincerely,

Eddie Fatakhov, MD Chair

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**Executive Board**

Eddie Fatakhov Chair  
Mosher Bachar vice Chair  
Scott Graupner Secretary

**Members at Large**

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Bret Stysly  
Amer Sayed  
Elizabeth Wiles  
Rusty Johnson  
Sasha Baker
**ACP Day at the Georgia Capitol – A Medical Student’s Perspective**

Hello, fellow ACP members! My name is Ashruta Patel, and I am currently a first-year medical student attending the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine – Georgia Campus. I recently had the chance to visit the Georgia Capitol to take part in voicing my opinions about different legislative issues that influence the future of medicine. The meeting was a great opportunity to experience a different side of medicine, and in this article, I want to capture my perspective on some of my interactions.

After starting a rigorous curriculum that involves taking back-to-back exams about detailed molecular mechanisms or memorizing a tremendous amount of anatomical structures, I sometimes have difficulty appreciating the practical applications of medicine that I know will somehow integrate with my future medical career. Prior to my matriculation into medical school, I was convinced I wanted to pursue a career in internal medicine, with the hopes of serving underserved populations in the Southeast. Many of my decisions have been influenced by experiences working with various Alabama Black-Belt populations, local free-clinic uninsured patients, and other disadvantaged communities where chronic diseased states are prevalent in significantly high percentages.

After joining the American College of Physicians (ACP) network, I began to explore the different aspects of primary care. Prior to my Capitol Hill visit, I believed I would be able to incorporate my course work knowledge with rotation experiences and successfully be able to practice as a future physician. Taking part in the patient-centered physician coalition of Georgia at Capitol Hill provided me the perfect opportunity to understand the legislative decisions most individuals are not particularly aware of and how these decisions influence health care. The day started with some speeches from a variety of physicians who introduced legislative priorities, including Medicaid parity, tobacco tax, physician loan forgiveness, physician tax incentives, and tort reform. Being present in a room full of knowledgeable individuals was overwhelming at first; however, my understanding of pertinent issues improved greatly after talking to other attendees. We later voiced the issues we had discussed as a group to different senators serving our local communities. Being able to experience how government officials tackle issues introduced by the local public and how public opinion can make an impact during such events was an amazing experience. I had been almost oblivious to the impact I could have on future legislative decisions until I attended the Georgia ACP day event at Capitol Hill.

When I think back to my personal experiences and relate them to the topics of discussion at Georgia ACP day, I notice one common theme influencing the current status of health-related conditions in various populations throughout the United States. Many individuals neglect straightforward preventive measures until they develop a serious health condition. Neglect becomes a greater issue for people residing in areas lacking access to quality health care, medical resources, transportation, and educational support. Recognizing the inadequate number of patients per primary-care provider in rural, impoverished, and underserved communities helps emphasize the dire need to increase the number of physicians serving such populations.

ACP provides me the opportunity to engage in a variety of experiences that spotlight different aspects of the status of health care in the U.S. and to understand the underlying challenges that impact patients and physicians of the future. My experience with community-based research helps me appreciate the importance of community participation in identifying the health needs of various populations, along with service planning that might be necessary to tackle those needs. Multiple factors, such as income, employment, education, housing, genetics, environment, and social support systems, need to be considered when assessing a patient’s health. A modeled approach to prevent illness before its onset with coordinated treatment and management and follow-up results can provide integrated and accessible health care services. Addressing health promotion, disease prevention, management of chronic disease, improving health services, increasing access to primary health care resources, identifying integral community partners, and allowing qualified health professionals to efficiently practice can create successful results. I believe a combined effort from patients, physicians and government officials in managing health outcomes before increased risks for chronic illnesses are encountered, emergency room visits are increased, and specialist referrals occur on a consistent basis can assist in controlling disease states.

My commitment to playing a dedicated role as a future physician stems from my extended interactions with patients, appreciation of social health disparities, comprehension of people’s needs, ability to form successful future patient-physician relationships, and knowledge of available resources. The ACP network has allowed me to relate my patient interactions to current governmental influences on health care decisions. Legislative roles play a significant impact on the future of health care, and voicing our opinions from current knowledge and experiences can provide the prospect of positive health outcomes necessary for populations throughout the United States. I encourage all individuals to interact, contact legislative members, and promote changes that can positively affect health outcomes.
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