

Georgia Chapter GOVERNOR'S NEWSLETTER

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

Spring 2006

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



GOVERNOR'S CORNER

This issue of the *Governor's Newsletter* highlights the superb GA Chapter meeting and the reflections on the extremely successful Leadership Day 2006.

On behalf of the entire Chapter, I extend many thanks to **Walter Moore**, MD, FACP who served as program chair for 2004 and 2005, and created two truly outstanding programs. I am delighted that Walt has agreed to serve as co-chair for the 2006 meeting and **Chesley Richards**, MD, FACP will be the program chair. Please send suggestions for topics or speakers (including yourself) to **Nancy Brady** at e-mail nbrady@numail.org, Walt at e-mail wmoore@mail.mcg.edu, or Chesley at e-mail chesley.richards@med.va.gov.

The Governor's Advisory Council (GAC) has engaged in chapter strategic planning over the last two years. The GAC identified 4 key priorities:

- Membership: Without members we have no chapter
- Health and public policy, including advocacy on behalf of patients and physicians
- Education, including continuing medical education and nurturing the next generation of internists

Henry Patton, MD, FACP has identified regional membership coordinators for various parts of the state to lead a one-on-one campaign to attract new members. Please let Henry know (henrypatton@hotmail.com) if you would be willing to be a regional coordinator. I encourage each of us to identify one new member this year. If we did, we would have more than 4000 members!

Jacqueline Fincher, MD, FACP continues to do a wonderful job as chair of the Health and Public Policy Committee (HPPC). Her column in the newsletter provides an update on key legislative activities, especially Leadership Day 2006.

The GAC extensively discussed strategies to enable our chapter to move to the next level of effectiveness in education, membership enhancement, and advocacy. The Council concluded we need a chapter executive director to supplement the wonderful work done by **Nancy Brady**, our chapter administrator, for us to move to the next level of excellence as a chapter. I appointed a committee to assess the need and feasibility of creating a position of executive director for the chapter. I asked Governor-elect **Vince Nicolais**, MD, FACP to chair the committee and **Chris Gibbs**, MD, FACP, Chapter treasurer, **Jacqueline Fincher**, MD, FACP, **Glenn Carter**, MD, FACP, **Henry Patton**, MD, FACP, **Len Lichtenfeld**, MD, FACP, and **Joe Stubbs**, MD, FACP to serve on it. The responsibilities of this individual will include playing a key role in our legislative efforts, representing the Chapter in interactions with other physician organizations in the state, and assisting the Governor in leading the chapter.

The 2006 Annual Session in Philadelphia was a grand success! The high quality sessions covered numerous pertinent topics. I believe the attendees were rejuvenated as they met new members and caught up with old friends and colleagues. Congratulations to the New Fellows from the chapter who were inducted at the annual convocation:



CONGRATULATIONS to **Vince Nicolais** who has been elected **Governor-elect of the Chapter**. Vince will serve as **Governor-elect** for one year and will begin his 4-year term as **Governor** at the conclusion of the **Annual Session in San Diego in April 2007**.



Mr. William Todd
President & CEO,
GCC



Dr. Joseph Simone,
Moderator
GCC Educational Session



David Hess

THE ANNUAL SPRING CHAPTER SCIENTIFIC MEETING: A COMBINED MEETING WITH THE GEORGIA CANCER COALITION EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

The combined spring meeting held in Savannah March 24-26, 2006 was a resounding success. There were two hundred and thirty-three participants for the meeting. The ACP Georgia Chapter was pleased to partner with the Georgia Cancer Coalition (GCC) for the first session of the meeting.

The Friday morning opening session focused on the efforts of the Georgia Cancer Coalition to fight cancer in the state of Georgia. Cancer is a leading health problem found in citizens of Georgia. This session was the first comprehensive presentation by the GCC to any state physician's society. The presentations by Mr. William Todd, Joseph Simone, M.D., Morris Geffen, M.D., Ruth O'Regan M.D., Stephen Peiper, M.D., Jim Hotz, M.D., and Ms. Nancy Paris were well received by the large group of morning session attendees. The presentations generated much discussion between the presenters and the audience.

The GCC is a national model for comprehensive cancer control. It represents one of the most visionary uses of tobacco settlement dollars in the country. Through GCC investments, Georgia is working to become a national leader in cancer treatment and research over the next decade. Georgia has recruited over 77 of the most distinguished cancer clinicians and researchers to join GCC programs over the past 4 years. The GCC process was thoroughly reviewed by the Institute of Medicine and their report confirms the immense potential of this innovative approach.

The theme of the spring scientific meeting was "New Technology and Innovations in Internal Medicine." Dr. **David Hess**, Chairman, Department of Neurology, Medical College of Georgia, opened the afternoon session with a comprehensive discussion of Stroke Prevention strategies. The meeting was an exciting mix of practical clinical updates on stroke prevention, congestive heart failure, use of non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, adult vaccines,

exciting areas of new diagnostic and therapeutic advances, leading edge research, alternative and complementary medicine, health and public policy discussions of current issues affecting members in the areas of *MEDICARE* and *MEDICAID* among others, and answers to the challenges of managing a wide range of clinical conditions confronting patients and their physicians.



Dr. Lynne Kirk, ACP President, was the College Representative who presented an update of the college's activities in addition to a well received lecture on health care disparities.

Presentation of the ACP GA Chapter's Third Annual Leadership Award for 2006 to Dr. R. Kirby Godsey, President of Mercer University, by Dr. Rhee Fincher.



The meeting was a great opportunity to gain up to 19.25 credit hours of CME credit while meeting and sharing a weekend with other ACP members and our next generation of internists. Participants had an opportunity to enjoy springtime in the South with azaleas in full bloom, walking tours, fabulous dinner cuisine, nightly entertainment, moonlight river cruises and a wide array of shopping boutiques, candy stores and antique shops for an exciting and fun filled weekend. The meeting concluded with three Sunday morning sessions that included an Internal medicine board type review session with the use of the ever popular "audience response" system.

Program participant comments speak for themselves from their written feedback for the combined spring meeting of the Georgia ACP Chapter and the Georgia Cancer Coalition:

Outstanding meeting, excellent organization, plenty of collegiality; Well done Georgia Cancer Coalition Educational Program; Very excellent experience; Coding info best and real world! Will change my practice most!; Coding seminar was excellent; Very cordial atmosphere; Well run meeting, the banquet was run perfectly and the service was great.; Superb meeting; Excellent program/hot topics discussed; Well-organized and well run meeting; Coding session very helpful
The coding session was fantastic! I learned a great deal.; I would like to see this as a part of the meeting every year.; (This is the reason I came to the meeting this year.); Savannah always a great location; Great meeting

The meeting offered many opportunities for exchange of ideas, establishing new friendships and the renewing of prior friendships for students, associates, and members.

The Awards Dinner on Saturday night was a gala affair held in the Riverside Dining Room at the Hyatt Regency Savannah. The room was completely filled with attendees and their friends and families. Dr. **Rhee Fincher** served as the Master of Ceremonies. The Chapter was very proud to recognize the accomplishments of many colleagues.

Special Recognition award to the College Representative, **Lynne Kirk, MD, FACP**



Former Governors: Robert Copeland, MACP, and Joseph W. Stubbs, FACP and current Governor Rhee Fincher, FACP



Former Laureate Awardees: Robert Copeland, MD, MACP; J. Leonard Lichtenfeld, MD, FACP; Vincent Nicolais, MD, FACP; and Joseph Stubbs, MD, FACP with David Haburchak MD, FACP, Chairman of the Awards' Committee and Richard D. Levere, MD, MACP.

New fellows: **Erica Brownfield, MD, FACP; Nathan Spell, MD, FACP; and Clyde Watkins, MD, FACP**

ASSOCIATES AWARDS

ORAL CLINICAL VIGNETTE COMPETITION

1st Place

Infliximab Therapy in Takayasu's Arteritis

David Sarkar, DO

Eisenhower Army Medical Center, Ft. Gordon, GA

2nd Place

Iodixanol Induced Acute Pancreatitis

Mufaddal Kheda, MBBS

Medical College of Georgia, Augusta, GA

3rd Place

Finding the AFB in the Haystack: Making a Diagnosis of Tuberculosis

Camille Vaughan, MD

Emory University School of Medicine, Atlanta, GA

ORAL RESEARCH COMPETITION

1st Place

Willingness to Deceive Insurance Companies among Residents

Mariela Molero, MD

Mercer University School of Medicine, Macon, GA



Associates' Competition
Winners

2nd Place

Importance of Different Patterns of Transient Cavity
Dilation at Stress in Myocardial Perfusion Imaging:
Implications for Presence of Coronary Artery Stenosis

Mahdi Ajjan, MD

Medical College of Georgia, Augusta, GA

3rd Place

How Good Are We At Lowering The Cardiovascular Risk
Factors?

Mufaddal Kheda, MBBS

Medical College of Georgia, Augusta, GA

RESEARCH POSTER COMPETITION

1st Place

Internal Medicine Residents' Knowledge and Management
of Hepatitis C Virus Infection

Improve With a Targeted Educational Intervention

Anupama Ravi, MD

Atlanta Medical Center, Atlanta, GA

2nd Place

Up Regulation of Matrix Metalloproteinase 9 (MMP 9)
expression and activity by endotoxin: Implications for under-
standing predisposition to acute lung injury in the setting of
endotoxemia.

Ashish Mheta, MD

Emory University School of Medicine, Atlanta, GA

3rd Place

The Effect of Head of Bed Position on Aspiration of
Gastric Contents in Patients Receiving Mechanical
Ventilation: A Comparison of 30 versus 45 Degrees

David Armstrong, DO

Eisenhower Army Medical Center, Ft. Gordon, GA

CLINICAL VIGNETTE POSTERS COMPETITION

1st Place

Reset Osmostat in a Healthy Active Duty Soldier

Meagan Bacharach, MD

Eisenhower Army Medical Center, Ft. Gordon, GA

2nd Place

Lemierre's Syndrome



The Winning Team from
MCG for the Medical
Jeopardy Competition
Drs. Nirav Patel, Matt
Diamond and Alok Sachdeva
(not in picture)

Group photograph of the
Associates' Competition
Winners



Jennifer Rittenhouse Cope, MD

Emory University School of Medicine, Atlanta, GA

3rd Place

A Rare Cause of Gastrointestinal Bleed: A Mole in the
Stomach

Anupama Ravi, MD

Atlanta Medical Center, Atlanta, GA

The chapter Awards' Committee was chaired and coordi-
nated by **David Haburchak, MD, FACP** who participated
in the awards' presentation ceremony.



Community-based Teaching Award recognizes a physician who
has had a sustained and significant impact as a teacher in the
community on medical students, residents and other medical
professionals. This year's recipient was John T. Cope, MD.



The J.W. Hurst Award was established in 1991 to honor a Georgia
member or Fellow in the College for his/her outstanding
teaching activities. This year's recipient was John A.
Hudson, MD FACP.



Prior Chapter J.W. Hurst Teaching Award Winners



The Community Service-Volunteerism Award recognizes chapter members who have made exemplary contributions through volunteerism and community service, including selfless devotion for the welfare of others. This year's recipient was **Richard D. Levere, MD, MACP.**



The Laureate Award honors Fellows or Masters of the ACP who have demonstrated an abiding commitment to excellence in medical care, education, or research, as well as service to their community, their Chapter, and the American College of Physicians. This year's recipient was **Robert J. Dibenedetto, MD, FACP.** Ed Grimsley MD, FACP participated in the presentation ceremony with Dr. Rhee Fincher.

The meeting was a great success. It reflected upon the excellent work and efforts work of the program planning committee chaired by **Walt Moore, MD, FACP.**

Thanks to **Jeff McCallum** for organizing the Associates' program for the second year in a row.

The planning committee members were **Thomas (Andy) Albritton, MD, FACP; William T. Browne, COL, MC, FACP; Kaveh Ehsanipoor, MD, FACP, FACE; Jacqueline Fincher, MD, FACP; Ruth Marie Fincher, MD, FACP; Ed Grimsley, MD, FACP; David Guidot, MD, Michael**

Heisler, MD; Jim Hotz, MD; Nancy Monahan, MD; Jeff McCallum, MD, Vince Nicolais, MD, FACP, Nancy Paris, MPH, James Repella, PhD, and Chesley Richards, MD, MPH.

The meeting reflected the singularly spectacular efforts of Ms. **Nancy Brady**, GA Chapter administrator. She once again displayed her remarkable organizational skills and her dedication to the success of the meeting and all of the chapter's activities.

Nancy Brady was presented a small token of our appreciation by Dr. Fincher for her dedicated service and commitment to the ongoing success of the chapter.



The contributions of all of the speakers, the attendees, and the support of the sponsors of the Georgia Chapter's annual meeting ensured a highly successful chapter meeting. You are cordially invited to the 2007 annual meeting of the GA Chapter of the American College of Physicians.

Mark your calendar!

Dates: **March 9-11, 2007**

Place: **Hyatt Regency Savannah**

See you there!

Walter J. Moore, MD, FACP
Program Chair, 2006 Chapter Meeting

HEALTH & PUBLIC POLICY REPORT, SPRING 2006

STATE ISSUES

1. State Legislative Wrap Up - Key Legislation and Regulation

SB 480 Nurse Prescribing now allows NPs to put into writing what they can call in, within the Medical Practice Act as a "delegated physician act" under the Composite Board of Medical Examiners. We are requesting the Composite Medical Board to give doctors formalized instructions about implementing the new law. Go to www.mag.org to see the specifics of SB 480 and how it differs from current law. It really is a win-win-win for physicians, nurses, and patients. HB 801 Physical Therapy Independent Practice - PTs were given authority to implement services for fitness, wellness, or prevention only, not related to an injury or disease without

prescription or referral. SB 422 Chiropractor Expansion passed the Senate but died in House HHS committee. SB 422 would have allowed chiropractors to treat “organ system function” problems along with DM and HTN! HB 1390 Optometry Prescribing passed both House and Senate and went to Conference Committee. The House approved it. The Senate failed to take up the Conference Committee report before midnight deadline, so it died. **SB 123 Pharmacists Refusal of Prescriptions** for birth control pills, Plan B, & RU 486 passed only with reference to RU 486, which is only available to physicians' offices anyway. Georgia Pharmacy Association did not endorse bill, since a much broader right of refusal is already written within their scope of practice. And finally, the budget for the Health Check fee was increased by \$12 from \$55.

2. Medicaid HMO Roll Out began June 1 in the Atlanta, Macon, and Columbus areas and will be followed by the rest of the state September 1. As the roll out progresses please email me your feedback on how it's going. We want to give DCH and the Governor's office feedback from the “front lines.”

3. Legislative Agenda for 2007- A lot will depend on how the election comes out. Top issues we would like to address include: increasing the tobacco tax which dramatically decreases teen smoking rates, working on an improved State Cancer Plan, since the last one done was 2000 and the Georgia Cancer Coalition is well established now, work with other health partners to address obesity, and finally, work with the State Health Dept/Governor's office on funding for vaccinations (since there is an increase in available vaccinations recommended now) and vaccinating the underinsured. We will continue to defend tort reform and carefully watch scope of practice issues as always.

FEDERAL ISSUES

ACP Leadership Day in Washington DC, May 16 -17, was a major success.

The GA Chapter was led by our Health & Public Policy Chairman, Dr. **Jacqueline Fincher**, FACP, Thomson, who was accompanied by our Chapter Governor, Dr. **Rhee Fincher**, FACP, Augusta; Dr. **Clyde Watkins**, FACP, Atlanta; Dr. **Richard Gomez**, FACP, Gainesville; Dr. **Will Maddox**, Associate, PGY 2/ MCG; **Jim Small**, Student Member, Emory; and Amy Walthour, Student Member, MCG. After a full day of being informed on the critical issues affecting Internal Medicine, our team went to Capitol Hill and met with Congressmen Deal, Gingrey, Barrow, Marshall, Norwood, Scott, and the Health Legislative Aides for Congressmen Bishop and Price, as well as Senators Isakson's and Chambliss' aides. We talked with all our Congressmen and Senators about the impending collapse of primary care medicine. In 1998, 54% of third year internal medicine residents planned to practice general internal medicine. In 2005, only 13% of first year internal medicine residents planned to do the same. These alarming statistics are directly related to the tremendous under valuation of primary care services, poor reimbursements, and more complex, sicker, older patients. Our

group shared our views on key legislative issues and requested our Congressmen and Senators action on the following:

1. Recognize the Value of Primary Care by supporting the increase of Medicare relative values for the undervalued evaluation & management codes and allowing separate payment for coordinating care outside of the patient visit care (e.g., email and telephone consults, care coordination services and use of HIT).

2. Consider a new model, the Advanced Medical Home by working closely with ACP to develop and/or support legislation that would direct CMS to design, implement and evaluate this new model of physician-guided, patient-centered management and coordination of care for patients with chronic diseases.

3. Repeal & Replace the Sustainable Growth Rate (SGR) Formula with an alternative for updating the Medicare fee schedule that is: predictable; not connected to measures of per capita GDP; reflective of increases in physician practice costs, including resources to support quality improvement; and aligned with creating incentives for quality measurement and reporting of evidence-based standards and the value of primary care. We also asked them to promptly move legislation to replace the 4.6% cut projected for 2007 with a 2.8% increase as recommended by MedPAC.

4. Support the Implementation of Health Information Technology by the adoption of standards for HIT and the creation of incentives targeted at health professionals in small practices and rural communities to help acquire and use HIT.

5. Direct CMS to implement a phased-in program to reward physicians who voluntarily engage in quality improvement and care coordination. Concern was expressed about the definition of "quality." Who will define it? How will it be measured? Pay for improvement vs. pay for high performance?

6. Fund Title VII and VIII Health Programs that were gutted by ~50% last year and are particularly important in Georgia where we need significantly more primary care physicians in the very large underserved rural areas.

Conclusion: Your To Do List:

1. Assess your practice setting, your reimbursement, your hassle factors, and your bottom line. How are all these things directly related to government regulation, compensation, taxation, and representation? Now decide if you will get involved.

2. Contact your state and federal representatives and senators. Go to www.vote-smart.org for contact information. It is vitally important for our representatives to hear from us regularly concerning these critical issues impacting internal medicine. Give them a glimpse into your everyday practice. Invite them to visit your practice and see first hand the issues you deal with everyday.

3. It's an election year; find a candidate(s) you can support. A campaign donation from you lets your elected officials know you are willing to put money where your mouth is. Also understand running for office is expensive. If we want good people to represent us, we have to help them get elected. In Georgia's 2004 election, lawyers gave over \$7000 each toward political campaigns

and doctors gave an average of \$3.50. Let's work to get the representation we need.

4. Join the ACP Services, Inc. - the ACP PAC. There is NO OTHER organization at the federal level that supports you and the practice of internal medicine better in the political arena than our own PAC. www.acpservices.org

5. Join the Medical Association of Georgia. There is no other organization at the state level that supports the practice of medicine in the state of Georgia better than MAG. We passed Tort Reform in Georgia in 2005. The trial lawyers will continue to try to dismantle it. MAG defends the practice of medicine by physicians every year against the numerous efforts by other allied health providers to dramatically expand their scope of practice. www.mag.org

6. Mark your calendar for Primary Care Physician State Legislative Day on Thursday, February 8, 2007 in the Gold Room of the Sloppy Floyd Building across from the State Capitol. Be there!!

7. Remember the state and federal government dramatically affect the daily practice of medicine. I hope you will decide it is time to step up and get involved in your government.

JUST DO IT!

LEADERSHIP DAY ON CAPITOL HILL



Georgia Chapter delegates meeting with U.S. House of Representatives David Scott and Nathan Deal

HATS OFF

Congratulations to **Jacqueline Fincher, MD, FACP** who was selected as a Key Contact Award winner for the second time in 3 years! Jacqueline was honored at the dinner during the National Legislative Leadership Day in Washington, DC, May 17, 2006. Jacqueline's work in Health and Public Policy on behalf of us and our patients is truly remarkable. I hope you will support her efforts by becoming a Key Contact.

Congratulations to **Clyde Watkins, MD, FACP** who has been selected by the national ACP to be the ACP representative to the Multisociety Task Force on Colorectal Cancer Screening. This is very nice recognition for Clyde and for the Chapter.

SUPPORTING OUR CHAPTER THROUGH CHAPTER DUES

Chapter dues are the backbone of local activities and vital to the success of our chapter. While we are provided some financial support from the national office, chapter dues provide the majority of financial support for local activities. Educational meetings, mentoring programs for medical students, local Associates' research competitions, advocacy with state legislators, and participation by chapter leaders in Leadership Day on Capitol Hill are some of the activities supported by your chapter dues. These activities are orchestrated by volunteer leaders in our chapter. The increase in activities at the local level, particularly in the domain of advocacy on behalf of members and, ultimately, our patients, has created the need for additional support. Your chapter dues help support the cost of chapter activities and enable us to become an even more effective chapter. Please remember to include the chapter dues when you pay your national dues. Thanks very much.

Dates to Remember

ACP annual session 2006, San Diego - April 19-21, 2007

GA Chapter annual meeting 2006, Savannah - March 7-9, 2007

Literary Retreat, October 20-22, 2006 - Amicalola Falls, GA

GA Primary Care Leadership Day, February 8, 2007

VISIT OUR CHAPTER WEBSITE

[HTTP://WWW.ACPONLINE.ORG/CHAPTERS/GA/](http://www.acponline.org/chapters/ga/)