



## Governor's Corner

There is no question that the upcoming months will be very interesting with respect to what the final product of health care reform legislation will look like. The American College of Physicians became intimately involved in this important process at its inception when our immediate past president, **Jeffrey Harris MD, MACP**, was one of a handful of select health care leaders invited to the White House to participate in the Summit on Health Reform. As the legislative process for health care reform continues toward a final product which will likely involve unprecedented change in our system, the ACP continues to have an influential voice in the development of the final product. Our voice is strong for two primary reasons: our membership size (now at an all time high of over 128,000), and our leadership in policy development.

As usual, Internal Medicine 2009 was a well attended, successful meeting. For those of you who plan to attend Internal Medicine 2010 in Toronto, Canada, remember that your passport will need to be current in order to cross the border efficiently; your driver's license is no longer sufficient for this.

The Board of Governors met prior to Internal Medicine 2009 meeting in Philadelphia. Our national organization has certainly not been exempt from our nation's recent economic struggles. Due to the impact of the economic downturn on the College's investment portfolio, expenses are anticipated to be greater than revenues for 2009 and 2010. Numerous budget cuts have already been made within our national organization, and our Board of Regents will continue to critically assess how the College can achieve its strategic goals with less resources.

At the Internal Medicine 2009 meeting, our Montana Chapter hosted a joint reception for its members with the Oregon and Washington ACP Chapters. As always, I enjoyed this opportunity to meet colleagues from nearby states, and reconnect with friends from my training years in Washington. Unfortunately, I experienced some embarrassment when the Oregon and Washington Chapters introduced numerous new fellows, yet I did not have any to introduce! Surely, some of this relates to the small size of our Chapter, but it also motivated me to promote Fellowship more vociferously in the coming year. The Regents of the College have recently made revisions to the Fellowship application process which make becoming a Fellow much smoother and involve much less effort for qualified candidates (see "Invited Fellowship Pathway" below). There are numerous candidates for this new pathway to Fellowship in our Chapter and I hope that they will all take advantage of the opportunity. Those of you who are eligible will be notified soon.

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## PRI-MED ACCESS WITH ACP

ACP is now collaborating with Pri-Med Institute in order to offer outstanding two day CME programs in 27 U.S. cities in 2009. The closest programs to Montana will be offered in Minneapolis and Seattle. These conferences are large - approximately 500 attendees at primary care programs. This new collaboration helps provide a new

revenue source for the ACP and allows the ACP leadership to have strong influence on program curriculum. The Pharmaceutical industry offers financial support to Pri-Med programs, but has no influence on choice of speakers. For more information on future programs, go to [www.pri-med.com](http://www.pri-med.com).

## WHAT HAPPENED TO OUR RESOLUTION?

As you may recall, our Montana Chapter drew up a resolution at our Fall 2008 meeting which asked the Board of Regents to find ways to collaborate with the American Osteopathic Association to increase the number of medical students who choose primary care internal medicine as a career. The Board of Governors passed this resolution at its Spring 2009 meeting. The resolution then went on to review by the Board of Regents, which voted to refer it to the Membership Committee for further study; this Committee will report back to the Board of Regents and include input for the Education Committee.

## NEW MEMBERS WANTED!

There are two ways that our Montana Chapter is trying to enhance membership:

- 1) Recruit a Colleague- this national program rewards successful recruiters with \$100 dues credits for each new full Member recruited and a chance to win a trip to an annual Internal Medicine meeting.
- 2) Montana Chapter is attempting to encourage non-members to join ACP by partnering with national headquarters to offer local and national incentives for new membership. For a limited time, non-members can join ACP for 30% off national dues AND receive a \$50 gift certificate for Starbuck's.

Although ACP membership is now at an all time high of over 129,000 members, we need new members to continue to strengthen our voice.

## EMAIL ADDRESSES

Please notify **Carrie Reisig** at [creisig@bresnan.net](mailto:creisig@bresnan.net) of any email address changes in order that our Chapter may communicate with you optimally in the future.

## ACP LEADERSHIP DAY ON CAPITOL HILL

### Ron Loge, MD, FACP

ACP Leadership Day on Capitol Hill was held May 19-20, 2009 with ACP Montana represented by **Drs. Jay Larson, FACP, Eric Hughson** and **Ron Loge, MACP**. ACP leadership under the direction of **Bob Doherty**, ACP Senior Vice President for Governmental Affairs and Public Policy provided a full and rousing agenda of advocacy skills plus panel discussions with key congressional health committee staff to provide the participants with the current landscape of health care reform. **Robert Kocher, MD**, Special Assistant to **President Obama** presented the Administration's plans and priorities for reform. In his enthusiastically delivered and received report he truly instilled a sense of hope and possibility for meaningful and significant reform this year. This is President Obama's highest domestic agenda.

Congressional delegation visits were equally positive. We pressed ACP's top four priority issues to them and their health care staffers, namely 1) guarantee access to affordable health insurance coverage to all Americans, 2) enact comprehensive payment reforms to align incentives with value and not volume, 3) support comprehensive legislation to address the crisis in pri-



mary care including improved funding and establishing a national workforce policy, and 4) support of the patient centered medical home concept (PCMH).

Pursuing a legislative agenda for substantial reform legislation which includes ACP's positions is **Senator Baucus's** primary objective this summer. He is aware of the primary care workforce crisis and relative underpayment that primary care doctors receive. In fact, he greeted the three of us and introduced us to Senator Tester saying, "*These are my heroes. They are all primary care doctors.*" We do have a powerful advocate in Washington.

**Senator Tester** supports all of these proposals as well. All of our issues resonated with **Representative Rehberg**. Given the Republican minority status in the House, we encouraged his support of several important Republican-sponsored legislative items that would contribute to meaningful health care benefits for primary care doctors and their patients. Please contact Representative Rehberg so that he can hear your stories and understand that he has strong constituent support of the upcoming legislation. We were well received and left with a new sense of hope.

The Awards Dinner at Leadership Day is the crowning event of this annual meeting, and Montana's **Jay Larson, FACP** was himself crowned. For his persistent and passionate voice for internal medicine and having had the ear of Senator Baucus, Jay was awarded the "*Key Contact of the Year Award*," ACP's top award for political advocacy. Thanks to Jay, Senator Baucus does really understand our issues and plans to incorporate solutions in the upcoming health reform legislation. Thank you Jay and congratulations!

## DR. JAY LARSON SELECTED AS 2008 KEY CONTACT OF THE YEAR



The Key Contact Award recognizes individuals who have made exceptional efforts in support of the ACP's advocacy program. **Dr. Larson** has had first-hand experience with the escalating problem of a dwindling primary care workforce and has been tireless in his effective advocacy to improve the conditions of his fellow primary care physicians and their patients. In recent years, Dr. Larson has helped Senator Baucus become keenly aware of the crisis that has recently evolved in primary care, most recently exemplified by **Senator Baucus'** invitation to participate in his Health Care Advisory Council. Dr. Larson received the Key Contact of the Year Award at the Leadership Day Awards Dinner on May 19 in Washington, D.C.

At the time that this Newsletter is written, Dr. Larson notes that the Senate Finance Committee, under the Chairmanship of Sen. Max Baucus, is looking at a 10% increase in primary care reimbursement over the next 5 years. The definition of "primary care" will be determined by billing codes (eg., office visits, nursing home visits, and hospital visits) for the previous three years. **President Obama** is currently giving consideration to adding another 6 to 8% to the above 10% increase. Sounds like potential good news for primary care, but stay tuned.

## NEW MEMBERS

**Dr. Tobin Hoppes, Kalispell**

**Dr. Charlotte Nelson, Missoula**

## ASSOCIATE MEMBERS THAT TRANSITIONED TO FULL ACP MEMBERSHIP

**Dr. Erin Reis, Butte**

**Dr. Sarah Robinson, Kalispell**

## COUNCIL MEMBERS

**Dr. F John Allaire, Great Falls**

**Dr. Warren Bowman, Billings**

**Dr. Steven Chrzanowski, Great Falls**

**Dr. Phillip Griffin, Billings**

**Dr. David Jordan, Helena**

**Dr. Jay Larson, Clancy**

**Dr. Dana Nehring, Helena**

**Dr. Scott Sears, Billings**

**Dr. Richard Anderson, Billings**

**Dr. Robert Byron, Hardin**

**Dr. Kenneth Eden, Helena**

**Dr. Lucinda Husby, Billings**

**Dr. Brett Kronenberger, Butte**

**Dr. Ronald Loge, Dillon**

**Dr. William Reynolds, Missoula**

**Dr. Ronald Smith, Billings**

## CHAPTER EXCELLENCE AWARD

Our Montana Chapter received a Chapter Excellence Award for 2008! This award recognizes chapters which successfully meet objective standards indicative of good chapter management. Certain objective criteria in various areas of management must be met to receive this award (eg., communication with membership, education, recruitment, and advocacy).

## INVITED FELLOWSHIP PATHWAY

This pathway to Fellowship was recently originated by the College in order to make it more straightforward for physicians who were leaders or experts in the field of medicine to obtain FACP status. At its April 2009 meeting, the Board of Regents approved expanding the Invited Fellowship eligibility requirements to include candidates qualified for Fellowship via the traditional application process. Therefore, there are now only two requirements for qualified candidates:

- 1) Recommendation from current or former member of the Board of Regents or the Board of Governors, a current Governor-elect, or from a current MACP/FACP ACP staff physician.
- 2) Current curriculum vitae.

Pretty simple for those that are eligible! Note that there is no longer a lengthy application to fill out, no Governor's letter required, and no sponsoring letters required. Contact **Dr. Yturri** if you are interested in advancing to Fellowship with your current CV!

## CHAPTER AWARDS

Do you know of any Montana Chapter members worthy of recognition for their exceptional efforts? Our Chapter would like to recognize these individuals, but we need to know who they are! If you know of any such nominees in the areas of volunteerism, teaching, or community service who deserve recognition, please contact **Dana Nehring** at [danameinke@hotmail.com](mailto:danameinke@hotmail.com).

## ANNUAL CHAPTER MEETING

**Drs. Scott Sears** and **Deric Weiss** have put together another excellent scientific program with the help of our Executive Director, **Carrie Reisig**. This year's meeting will be held at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Billings on September 24-26. Please register via the program brochure that you have received in the mail or by visiting [www.acponline.org/about\\_acp/chapters/mt/news\\_meet.htm](http://www.acponline.org/about_acp/chapters/mt/news_meet.htm) and completing the registration form. If you attend the entirety of this meeting, you will receive 15 CME credits.