

2009 ACP Leadership Day Report

Over 400 members from across the country participated in Leadership Day on May 19th and 20th in our nation's capital. The timing was outstanding, as our lawmakers are actively considering major healthcare reform. The ACP was advocating strongly for patients and our Members. Thanks to the efforts of many, our legislators now know that "Internal Medicine is the best prescription for lower costs and better health!"

The Ohio Chapter of ACP was well represented by nine members including one Medical Student, one Associate, and three Young Physicians. We were an energetic delegation with five first-time participants. Our delegation included Drs. **Carlos Aguilar** (Member, ACP Ohio Health and Public Policy Committee, Associate from Cincinnati), **Moises Auron-Gomez** (Chair, ACP Ohio Young Physicians, from Beachwood), **David Bronson** (Regent, and Immediate Past Chair, ACP Board of Governors, from Moreland Hills), **Robert Crook** (Chair, ACP Ohio Health and Public Policy Committee, from Findlay, and one of our "Young Physicians"), **David Dunbar** (Member, Ohio ACP Health and Public Policy Committee, from Lancaster), **Arlene Fedorchak** (Member, Ohio ACP Health and Public Policy Committee, from Columbus), **Mark Mayer** (ACP Ohio Governor, from University Heights), **Jonathan Roylance** (Young Physician from Marietta), and Medical Student (a Doctor as of 5/17/09!) **Sam Edwards** (from Cleveland Heights).

The preparatory meeting May 19 included discussion of advocacy skills for first-time attendees, an update on the Washington landscape by ACP Public Policy VP Bob Doherty, and briefings on health issues by congressional staffers. Several awards were given at dinner, including the Top Ten Key Contacts of the Year - one of these was given to **Dr. Mark Mayer**, who has visited with our delegation for 13 of the last 15 years.

ACP's priority issues this year include ensuring universal access to affordable health care; improving Medicare fee for service system payments to make primary care competitive; piloting new Medicare payment models that re-align incentives to support effective, efficient, patient centered, coordinated care; as well as establishing a national workforce policy to ensure sufficient numbers of primary care and other physicians.

On May 20, our delegation visited Representatives Austria, Driehaus, Fudge, Jordan, Kaptur, Kilroy, Kucinich, LaTourette, and Wilson, and Senators Brown and Voinovich.

HR 2350, the Preserving Patient Access to Primary Care Act, was introduced by Representative Schwartz of PA a week before our meeting. Over 100 co-sponsors have signed on (6 from Ohio), several after our meetings with them on Capitol Hill. We are working with Senator Cantwell of Washington to help garner co-sponsors for a companion Senate act she plans to introduce soon. ACP is closely tracking and giving input into major health reform bills being drafted in Senate and House committees, and will be asking for calls, emails, and letters to your representatives and senators soon.

As our organization forges stronger relationships with our legislators they look to us for our leadership in healthcare. The ACP is a well respected organization on Capitol Hill and it is always an honor to represent the College's legislative agenda.

It was a fantastic meeting and the Members of the Ohio Chapter advocated well for Internists and our patients.

Robert E. Crook, M.D.
Chair, Ohio ACP Health and Public Policy Committee