



Governor's Message

Since my last Governor's letter, our country has elected a new President and a new year has begun. Our Western PA Chapter continues to grow, and now has 1,635 members. It is exciting to see a healthy 10% increase in residents and students this past year. These represent the future of medicine.

I hope many of you will join us at the annual ACP session, Internal Medicine 2009, which always is a very organized event. **Mark your calendars now for April 23 - 25, 2009 at the Pennsylvania Convention Center in Philadelphia. The Pennsylvania Chapter will host a reception on Friday evening, April 24th. The location will be the Vietnam Palace, 222 North 11th St., immediately behind the convention center. Registrations are appreciated. Email pcim.hq@verizon.net with your name and your guest's name.**

The annual Internal Medicine Resident Poster Competition and Medical Jeopardy Tournament was held on November 8, 2008 at Western Pennsylvania Hospital. **Andreas Achilleos, MD** conducted the Medical Jeopardy program and **Andrew Adams, MD** organized our residents' poster competition.

Western Pennsylvania Hospital won the resident's Medical Jeopardy competition for our region. Congratulations to team members **Abhishek, Archana Sodagam, Casey Moffa** and alternate, **Swapna Goday**.

Once again, a student team from Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine (LECOM) won first place in the Student Medical Jeopardy Competition. Congratulations to team members **Jessica Conkle, Sarah Bendel** and **Roger Rogers**.

On behalf of the ACP, special thanks to **Dr. Achilleos** and **Dr. Adams** for the work they did putting the Residents' Day program together.

On December 6, 2008, our Chapter's governing council met for its quarterly meeting in Hershey PA. This meeting featured **Richard Baron, MD, FACP**, Chair of the American Board of Internal Medicine who spoke about "ABIM and the Future of Maintenance of Certification." The secure computerized examination for the MOC is now much more relevant to clinical practice. The board members of ABIM and ACP have worked together so that a number of ACP self-evaluation products such as the MKSAP can be used for MOC credit. **Dr. Baron** also spoke about the special role of the Performance Improvement component of MOC. There is a growing number of Practice Improvement Modules (PIM) available including Clinical Preventive Services, Diabetes, Preventive Cardiology, Asthma, Hypertension, Care of the Vulnerable Elderly, Hospital Care, Care of the Mechanically Ventilated Patient and Communication, just to name a few. The value of physician self-audits should not be overlooked.

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Let me share a story from Eastern Pennsylvania **ACP Governor Rich Simons, MD, FACP**, on his personal experience with the MOC. *"From a personal perspective, I have recently completed the requirements for the MOC in Geriatrics including the PIM on communication. I utilized the American Geriatrics Society's Geriatric Review Syllabus to prepare for the exam and attended several ACP sponsored SEP Modules including the one our Chapter sponsored in Hershey last spring. The Communication PIM was very enlightening for me as the patient survey results caused me to reflect on how I could improve in some areas. For example, I learned that too many of my patients perceived that I was interrupting them during office visits and that I needed to be more thorough in communicating my plan of care. I must admit that seeing this data was a humbling experience. It was also gratifying to see a marked improvement on a follow-up patient survey on these specific domains of patient communication. Most importantly, I believe my patients are benefiting as a direct result of this Practice Improvement Module."*

Our Chapter will once again sponsor a full day SEP program on Update in Ambulatory and Update in Hospital Medicine on March 14, 2009 in Hershey, PA. **Edward Bollard, MD, DDS, FACP** and **Marc Shalaby, MD, FACP**, 2 highly respected internists and residency program directors, will again serve as faculty for this educational program. It will be a highly interactive session utilizing the audience-response system. Please plan to attend. If you are interested, contact **John Derrickson** at pcim.hq@verizon.net.

Our annual Awards Dinner was held December 6, 2008 at the Hershey Country Club. This event is always a highlight for our Chapter as we recognize outstanding internists in Pennsylvania, and I would like to name all of them. Our good friend and former Governor, **Herb Diamond, MD, FACP**, was recognized for his service to the ACP and the profession. In April the ACP will recognize him as a Master of the College (MACP). Laureate recipients included **Howard H. Weitz, MD, FACP**, Director of Cardiology at Thomas Jefferson University; **Arnold R. Eiser, MD, FACP**, Vice President for Medical Education and Director of the Internal Medicine Residency program at Mercy Catholic Medical Center; and **Robert C. Aber, MD, MACP**, Chair of the Department of Medicine at Penn State/Hershey.

Dan Kimball, MD, FACP received the Pressman Award for his outstanding service to organized medicine. He serves as our Trustee to the PMS. **Charles S. Sawyer, MD, FACP**, Director of Internal Medicine, at Geisinger Wyoming Valley; and **Roger B. Daniels, MD, FACP** from Jefferson received our Clinical Practice Management awards.

Our Waxman Award is very unusual. It is presented to an internist who teaches on a voluntary basis. I am pleased to tell you this year we presented it to **William Lipshutz, MD, FACP**. He is gastroenterologist at Pennsylvania Hospital in Philadelphia.

Dan Kimball, MD, FACP, will continue to chair our Health and Public Policy for the Pennsylvania Chapter, and **Arnie Eiser, MD, FACP**, will continue as vice-chair. Our former lobbyist, **Ken Lawrence, Jr.** took a position as Senior Government Officer for Temple University. We are grateful for **Ken's** work on behalf of our Pennsylvania ACP Chapter over the last few years. On January 20, 2009, **John Nikoloff** accepted the position of lobbyist for our Chapter. **John** has more than 30 years of experience in health care, public policy, and business issues. He is widely recognized for his experience and unequalled legislative/regulatory successes for health care, environmental and energy clients. He served as our Chapter's lobbyist from 1988 through 2004, and now serves as the lobbyist for the Primary Care Physicians' Coalition. He has represented more than 50 corporations, trade and professional associations, and has been responsible for passage or amendment of more than 100 current Pennsylvania laws.

Since our last newsletter, **Ralph Schmeltz, MD, FACP, FACE** has been elected vice-president of the Pennsylvania Medical Society. He is a former Pennsylvania ACP Governor from the Western Region. **Daniel Glunk, MD, FACP** is the current PMS President. He is a frequent contributor to our Chapter Council.

As I think about the year ahead, it is clear that we face many of the same challenges that we have confronted over the past year: relatively low reimbursement rates, growing patient panels; excessive administrative burdens, and a real need to improve the quality of healthcare for our patients. Our country is now in the midst of a recession, which is also having an impact on the entire healthcare industry. Our patients, many of whom face higher out-of-pocket costs for healthcare services, are cutting back on preventive visits, elective procedures

and even emergency room visits. There is a glimmer of hope for a major overhaul of the US health care system with a new administration in the White House. Our country will hopefully take some meaningful steps toward the goal of achieving universal access to care, which is a major goal of the American College of Physicians.

The ACP will continue its advocacy efforts at both the national and state level. We will continue to lobby for support of the Patient-Centered Medical Home, debt relief programs for medical students selecting primary care careers, and improved reimbursement payments for physician visits.

ACP Leadership Day 2009 will take place on May 19-20, 2009 in Washington, D.C. This is a great opportunity for the College and our members to increase our presence and bring our issues of concern to the attention of U.S. lawmakers. If you are interested in sharing your main concerns with me prior to the visits, please contact **John Derrickson** or me.

I end by wishing you all continued personal and professional success in this New Year. If you have any specific suggestions how our chapter can better serve you, please send your comments to me at Alexgon42@verizon.net.

Alejandro R. Gonzalez, MD, FACP
Governor, Western Region
Pennsylvania ACP



John Nikoloff Returns to Pennsylvania Chapter As Lobbyist and Legislative Advisor

John Nikoloff was selected recently to be our lobbyist and legislative advisor. Many of you may remember John. He represented our members for sixteen years, until he decided to go into industry in 2004. Now he is back in Harrisburg, and we are fortunate to retain him.

Let us know if you have any questions or suggestions for John and our Health and Public Policy Committee. **Chairs Dan Kimball** and **Arnie Eiser** welcome you to these monthly conference calls (and strategy sessions.) Let me know if you want to join us.

It must be a coincidence that the IBC/Highmark merger moved off the table, but John Nikoloff's timing could not be better. His contact info is: John Nikoloff & Associates, 200 N. Third Street, Suite 1100, Harrisburg, PA 17101, Phone: (717) 443-2293 - Fax: 717 233-8665 - Email: JNikoloff@comcast.net. **Welcome back, John!**

Visit the Chapter Website at
www.acponline.org/about_acp/chapters/pa

Eight Pennsylvania Physicians Honored At Chapter Awards Dinner

Special Recognition Western Region



Herbert S. Diamond, MD, MACP
Recently retired as Chief of Medicine at West Penn Hospital in Pittsburgh. Dr. Diamond is past Governor for the Western Region of the Pennsylvania / ACP.

Laureate Award-Southeastern Region



Howard H. Weitz, MD, FACP, FACC
Chief of Cardiology, Professor of Medicine and Director of Jefferson Heart Institute, and Senior Vice Chair for Academic Affairs, Department of Medicine, Jefferson Medical College, Thomas Jefferson University

Laureate Award-Southeastern Region



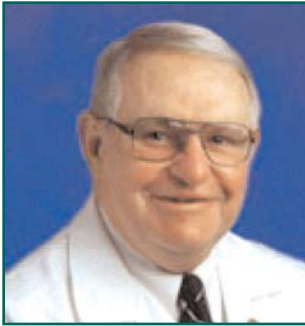
Arnold R. Eiser, MD, FACP
Vice President of Medical Education, Mercy Health System, Associate Dean for Mercy Programs at Drexel University College of Medicine and Professor of Medicine, and Internal Medicine Residency Director at Mercy Catholic Medical Center

Clinical Practice Management Award Eastern Region



Charles S. Sawyer, MD, FACP
Director of Internal Medicine, Vice Chairman, Department of Medicine, Geisinger Wyoming Valley Hospital, Wilkes Barre

Laureate Award-Eastern Region



Robert C. ABER, MD, MACP
*Chair of the Department of Medicine, and
Physician-in-Chief for Adult Medical Services
at Penn State's College of Medicine and
Milton S. Hershey Medical Center.*

**Clinical Practice Management Award
Southeastern Region**



Roger B. Daniels, MD, FACP
*Private practice in Internal Medicine
and Associate Clinical Professor of
Medicine at Thomas Jefferson University
Hospital.*

Waxman Award-Southeastern Region



William Lipshutz, MD, FACP
*Clinical Professor of Medicine at the
University of Pennsylvania and
Co-Chief of Gastroenterology at Pennsylvania
Hospital*

Pressman Award Eastern Region



Daniel Kimball, MD, FACP
*Senior Active Staff Physician in the Section of
Internal Medicine at the Reading Hospital and
Medical Center, Chair of the Composite Committee
of the United States Medical Licensing Examination,
and Host of "Health Talk" a Berks County radio
show*

Western Region's Poster Competition Was a Huge Success

Congratulations to all participants in the Western Region's annual poster competition. Held on November 8, 2008 at Western Pennsylvania Hospital, ninety-nine abstracts were submitted for review, and 46 were accepted for poster presentation.

Listed below are the winners in the Research and Case Report categories.

1st Place: Research

Name: Amit Barve, MBBS

Program: UPMC Mercy

Title: *Quality of Care and Optimization of Medical Management Among Patients with Heart Failure: Are ACE Inhibitors and Beta-blockers Underdosed?*

Runner up: Research

Name: Akinwande Akinfolarin, MBBS

Program: Western Pennsylvania Hospital

Title: *Studies of the Parkinson's Disease Associated Protein, Alpha-Synuclein, Evaluated Using Lentiviral Delivery in Mice*

Runner-up: Research

Name: Bhavna Gakhar, MD

Program: Allegheny Hospital

Title: *Improving Sign-Out Practices Among Medicine Housestaff*

1st Place: Case Report

Name: Rangolee Arora, MBBS

Program: Western Pennsylvania Hospital

Title: *Primary Pulmonary Botryomycosis: A Case Report and Review of the Literature*

Runner-up: Case Report

Name: Anthony Niyamuddin, MD

Program: UPMC McKeesport

Title: *The Zebra that Tried to Disguise Itself as a Horse*

Runner-up: Case Report

Name: Dustin Wallace, MD

Program: Allegheny Hospital

Title: *Whipple Procedure? Not So Fast! A Case of Pancreatic Lymphoma*

Runner-up: Case Report

Name: Dierdre Warde, MD

Program: Allegheny Hospital

Title: *Cardiac Sarcoidosis: Is There a Better Way?*

Runner-up: Case Report

Name: Monika Jhaveri, MD

Program: UPMC McKeesport

Title: *SMA Syndrome: A Diagnostic Dilemma*

Western Region Holds Annual Jeopardy Competition

Under the leadership of **Andrew Adams, MD**, five teams competed in the annual Medical Jeopardy competition.

Congratulations LECOM B team for placing first in the Student Medical Jeopardy Competition. Team members **Jessica Conkle, Sarah Bendel** and **Roger Rogers** did a great job.

Western Pennsylvania Hospital won the resident's competition. Congratulations to team members **Abhishek, Archana Sodagam, Casey Moffa** and alternate, **Swapna Goday**.

Lehigh Valley Hospital Medical Jeopardy Team Wins Pennsylvania State Championship



Congratulations Lehigh Valley Hospital Medical Jeopardy Team! Pictured left to right are the 2008 Medical Jeopardy State Champions (L to R) **Program Director Marc Shalaby, MD**, Program Director with team members **Pearlie Chong, MD; Tim Coyle, DO; Nasir Shariff, MBBS;** and **Yehia Mishriki MBBS**. Team coach **Ashish Kabra, MBChB** is on the right.

The Lehigh Valley team will represent Pennsylvania at the ACP's National Jeopardy Competition held during Internal Medicine 2009, April 23rd to 25th in Philadelphia.

**Sign Up Today For A Single Day
SEP / Maintenance of Certification Event**

When: March 14, 2009

Where: Hershey, Pennsylvania

Time: 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM

The PA Chapter of the ACP again is offering a single-day Maintenance of Certification Learning Session designed to help internists to complete two American Board of Internal Medicine (ABIM) medical knowledge modules that can be used to earn MOC credit.

Using the popular automated audience response system, two expert internists will help the group work through two ABIM Annual Update modules, each worth 10 points, as well as seven hours of Category 1 CME.

Either email pcim.hq@verizon.net or call 800-846-7746 for more information.