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Governor's Corner

As I enter my last year as Governor I am grateful to know that I am leaving the Chapter in the very capable hands of our Governor-Elect, **Mike M. Hawkins MD, FACP**, and the many loyal and selfless men and women who serve on your Governor's council. Together we may not be able to fix all of the problems that face Internal Medicine and her patients, but we sure as heck will continue to give it our best under the tutelage of **Dr. Hawkins**.

Leadership Day on Capitol Hill this year was much the same as it has been for the last seven years I have been attending. However I think there is a true understanding this year that primary care is on life support and, unless something is done, it will die a slow and painful death for its patients. We have once again been promised the 21% cut in Medicare reimbursement we are to receive in January will not happen, but the legislators continue to act as though it will be a holiday gift to us rather than realizing it is the right thing to do for their constituents. Trust me, those of us that were present tried to make sure they knew averting the cut was not for us but was for the patients. I wish I could say they got it, but I am not sure they did. We, however, especially with the help of all members of the SC Chapter of the ACP, will continue to remind them of that, often. Please join us as a Key Contact so you, too, can constantly remind them of the importance of Internal Medicine in the life of all patients by going to <http://capwiz.com/acponline/mlm/signup/> to enroll or by calling 800-338-2746, ext. 4532 for more information about ACP's Key Contact Program.

On a happier note – we had a wonderful number of SC ACP Members become Fellows over the last year. Fellowship is a distinction bestowed upon Internists who have been active in practicing their art and/or have given of themselves to the ACP. In the last 18 months we have been fortunate enough to welcome **Donatus Maxwell Egbonim** of Manning, **Henry T. Yu** of Piedmont, **Muhammad I Akhtar** and **Bamidele A. Ekunsanmi** of Rock Hill, **James D. Atkisson** of Greer, **Anthony C. Geraci** of Loris, **Shreedhar M. Nagnur** of Aiken, **Stuart M. Smith** of Columbia, **Akinwale O. Olatosi** of Camden, **James M, Principe** of Murrells Inlet, **Sameh Hanna** of Greenwood, and **Shanon W. Honney, Robert Cain, Chris McLain, and Robert Ball** of Charleston. We congratulate all these physicians in their accomplishments and encourage them to become even more active in this, their chapter. As long as they are dues paying members of the College they will have the distinction of using FACP behind their names.

We were also fortunate enough to welcome a Master into the Chapter – **Allen H. Johnson, MACP. Dr. Johnson** is truly a physician we should all try to mirror in our daily lives with his commitment to patients as well as to teaching students and residents in the art of Internal Medicine. I can think of no one more deserving of such a distinction and am honored to have been serving as Governor when he was awarded his Mastership.

Indeed, we are fortunate in South Carolina to have very talented Internists and I hope they will all join the ACP, if they are not already members, and assist our new Governor as he works towards the betterment of life for internists and their patients throughout the state.

Last, but not least, we also have our Annual Meeting on the horizon; October 8-11, 2009. Topics this year include updates in Hypertension, Pandemic Flu, SC Medicare and Medicaid, Endocrinology, Rheumatology, Ultrasonography in the Internist's office, the Hospitalist Movement, the winds of change in Washington, in addition to a few other intriguing topics. Pay attention to your mailbox for the brochure that will be coming your way soon and plan on joining us in Charleston for what will be an informative and exciting meeting, especially as we watch the best and the brightest Internal Medicine students and residents give their presentations. **Dr. Steve Saunders**, one of our S.C. Governor's Council members, shares with us, below, why he thinks going to the annual meeting is so important and beneficial.

Why Should You Attend the ACP SC Chapter Meeting?

Steve P Saunders, MBBS FACP, General Internal Medicine, Greenville, SC



I have been attending the ACP SC Chapter meeting continuously for several years and I thought I would share with my colleagues why I believe they should do the same. The benefits of attending include the following:

1. CME of exceptional value; we are provided with current educational information that covers both inpatient and outpatient topics,
2. Interesting oral and poster clinical presentations by residents from our Residency Programs at MUSC, USC and GHS,
3. Updates on the business of medicine and the policies that affect the practice of medicine nationally and locally,
4. A town hall style session where you can have your voice heard and various ideas shared and discussed, and
5. An opportunity to network with physicians from across the state.

I believe these are all great reasons to attend the 2009 ACP SC Chapter meeting in Charleston on October 8-10, and in the coming years. I look forward to seeing you there.

Governor-Elect Comments

Michael M. Hawkins MD, FACP, FHM, Hospitalist, Megette, S.C.



Let me again say I thank you for the opportunity to serve you as your next Governor of the South Carolina Chapter of the American College of Physicians starting in 2010. Over the remainder of this year, I will be receiving training and mentoring from our present Governor, **Dawn Clancy**.

Recently I attended the Board of Governors and National ACP meeting in Philadelphia and learned that the challenges we have in front of us are great. Dawn and I will update you through the portal as we know more about the potential solutions for these challenges as we hear of them.

I also attended ACP Leadership in Washington to do my part in representing you in an effort to have your voice heard as our national legislators draft policy on healthcare

reform. Top on our list was educating our policy makers on the crisis in primary care. It will take a team effort, from all of us, to accomplish our goals for the upcoming years and I hope I can depend on help and support from each of you. During that trip to Washington you were well represented by **Anne Cook** of Anderson, **John DuBose** of Camden, **Mary Beth** Poston of Columbia, **Mac Chapman** of Hartsville, **Shak Rehman** of Charleston, **Bill Boulware** of Florence, **Chris McLain** of Charleston, **James Adamson** of Conway, **Dawn Clancy** of Johns Island, who, incidentally, won a Top-ten Key Contact Award for the 7th year in a row, **Shanon Honney** of James Island, and me, **Mike Hawkins**, of Meggette. We met with our Senators and Representatives in an effort to guide them in making the right decisions for our patients as they craft legislation which will affect them as well as all of us. Health care reform is now on the front burner as never before and it is paramount that the house of medicine speaks with a solid, unified voice.

As the leadership transition is made over the remainder of this year, I want to develop new lines of communication with you in order to represent you well and ensure I am expressing the concerns and opinions of internal medicine physicians across the state. As you know, our strength is in numbers, and I want to accurately represent our state as a whole. We need a unified voice, and the ACP is one medium through which this can be accomplished. I encourage you to continue your support of the ACP through your membership. In addition, please work with me by identifying physicians in your locale who are not members, and recruit them in order that we can grow our membership. As you have heard many times before, the strength of the wolf is the pack.

Thank you for this opportunity to serve. I decided a long time ago that I needed to quit whining and complaining in the physicians' lounge, and to become proactive and involved. I hope that you will join me in this quest to improve healthcare within our great state.



ACP Council Member John Black is Working Hard for the Doctors of South Carolina

John G. Black MD, FACP, Private Practice, General Internal Medicine Columbia, SC

**West Columbia Doctor to Lead State Group
Article in The State May 25, 2009 written by Bertram Rantin**

West Columbia physician **John G. Black** recently was elected the 148th president of the South Carolina Medical Association.

Dr. Black, who specializes in internal medicine, was formally installed during the association's annual meeting in Hilton Head.

Dr. Black has been a member of the SCMA and the American Medical Association for almost 30 years.

"Dr. Black will serve the physicians of this great state well," said **Gregory Tarasidis**, SCMA president-elect. *"His love of medicine is sincere, and he will work diligently to defend it to protect the citizens of South Carolina."*

Dr. Black is a fellow of the American College of Physicians. In 2006, he received the SC American College of Physicians Laureate Award, given annually to the outstanding internal medicine physician on the basis of activities to help his profession and all patients.

Black received his bachelor's degree from Wofford College and his medical degree from the Medical University of South Carolina, where he remained for his internship and residency.

He and his wife, **Anne**, live in Lexington and have one son, **Jonathan**, who attends the Charleston School of Law.

The SCMA was founded in 1848 and includes nearly 6,000 physicians. The association aims to support South Carolina physicians and advocate for quality medical care and good health on behalf of the citizens of the state, as well as represent and serve the interests of physicians.

KUDOS

Congratulations to South Carolina's own Internal Medicine Resident from the University of South Carolina School of Medicine, **Justin L. Mitchell**, on his having been awarded first place in the national competition for Clinical Vignette Posters in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania at Internal Medicine 2009.

At a young age **Dr. Mitchell** has already distinguished himself as a true champion for the prevention of pandemic flu, presently serving as the South Carolina Chapter's American College of Physician's representative on the Statewide Pandemic Flu Task Force (timely in light of the Swine Flue Scare), having just won at the National ACP Internal Medicine 2009 for his presentation 'A 20 year old Vietnamese female with respiratory failure after contact with domestic ducks.'

This presentation describes the emergence of an avian influenza with an exceptionally high mortality rate (61%), that was thought to be the next pandemic by the CDC and the WHO. He discussed the genetics of the virus, in addition to showing how it has spread from birds to pigs to humans since its discovery. He also compared the virulence and severity of its inflammatory response with the H1N1 virus (responsible for the 1918 pandemic) which is now re-emerging. Of note and as an aside, **Dr. Mitchell** reminds us that if the 2000 patients hospitalized in Mexico had suffered from infection with the H5N1 strain instead of H1N1 strain, 1200-1300 people would have died instead of 149, a significant difference. Fortunately, as human to human transmission of H5N1 is extremely poor, we 'lucked' out.

Dr. Mitchell represents the best and the brightest of Internal Medicine Residents in South Carolina, a fact about which we, the ACP membership, are not surprised. Congratulations to **Dr. Mitchell** as well as to all the Internal Medicine programs that educate our residents so well throughout the state.

SC ACP Represented at South Carolina Medical Association Annual Meeting

This year, as last, **Dr. Steve Saunders** represented the SC. Chapter of the ACP at the SCMA meeting. While there he witnessed the historic event of our own SC.ACP Council member, **Dr. John Black**, being inducted as the President for the SCMA. What a wonderful moment that must have been and we are proud to have had **Steve** there to represent us so well.

A few of the highlights which otherwise pale in comparison to **Dr. Black** taking office but which must be mentioned are as follows:

South Carolina Board of Medical Examiners Concerns

- 1-The S.C.State Board of Medical Examiners (SCSBME) was ranked number one in the nation by the Federal State Medical Boards.
- 2-The SCSBME reminded all physicians that they are responsible for any services and/or procedures provided by physician extenders and therefore must be on the premises or in office when extenders provide such services and/or procedures.
- 3-The SCSBME expressed concerns about the possibility of a National Licensing entity.
- 4-The SCSBME feels restricted by the LLR and would like to once again be autonomous.

SCMA Concerns

- 1-The SCMA still hopes for a cigarette tax increase of 50cents/pack.
- 2-The SCMA is still working on the initiative to Limit the Scope of Practice expansion; e.g. by optometrists (laser) or pharmacists (vaccine). Favorable legislation is in the works. This still needs your vocal support.

Resolutions Presented

- 1-Off-label use of medications;
 - 2-Medical Necessity Liability to be shared by Insurance Medical Directors;
 - 3-Limit practice expansion;
 - 4-Concerns about impact of bundling reimbursement between hospitals and private physicians;
 - 5-Encourage efforts to promote healthy nutrition in SC schools by collaborating with DHEC and education department;
 - 6-Limiting "Prior Authorization;"
 - 7- Work with Insurance Commission to require Insurers adopt standardized online verification.
- For any further questions please contact **Steve Saunders** at bandoo66@charter.net

Congratulations to Our First SC Recipient of the LEAD Certificate

The LEAD Certificate is another benefit of ACP membership. It is the Leadership Enhancement and Development (LEAD) Program and targets internists early in their careers, offering a variety of activities designed to provide participants with the skills, resources, and experiences necessary to become effective leaders in any setting.

It can be awarded to any member who has completed at least five out of seven of the following leadership development activities within a three-year time frame:

1. Attained or maintained active Fellowship status within the College;
2. Attended at least seven hours of CME focused on leadership competencies. At least three of these must be sponsored by the ACP at the local or the national level;
3. Participated in at least two pathways to leadership at the chapter level;
4. Served on a national workgroup, committee, or council of the ACP;
5. Served as a mentor/facilitator in at least one ACP sponsored mentoring event or program;
6. Participated in Leadership Day on Capitol Hill or similar state legislative activity;
7. Demonstrated leadership competencies in the community setting, examples of which may include chairing a hospital committee or council, serving on a steering committee for church/synagogue/temple, serving on a Board of Directors for local youth, sports, or arts group, among others.

Certificates are awarded at the College's Internal Medicine Meeting every year. The first LEAD certificates were awarded at the 2009 Internal Medicine in Philadelphia. **Shakaib Rehman, MD, FACP** was among the first recipients of the LEAD certificate representing the South Carolina chapter. Questions about the LEAD programs can be sent to LEAD@acponline.org or visit www.acponline.org/lead for more information and a list of mentors to help you in your leadership training.

Visit the Chapter website at
www.acponline.org/about_acp/chapters/sc