



The Capitol Key

A newsletter service for the Key Contacts of the American College of Physicians by ACP Services, Inc.

September 2009



Leadership Day 2009 was a Resounding Success

We just came off what many considered the most successful Leadership Day to date. Over 400 ACP members participated in Leadership Day from 47 states and the District of Columbia—the largest turn-out ever in a year without back-to-back Leadership Day and Internal Medicine events. This large member turnout was likely due to the knowledge that primary care is at the center of the debate on health care reform today and recognizing the importance of educating congressional members on the College's priority issues as they deliberate comprehensive health care reform.

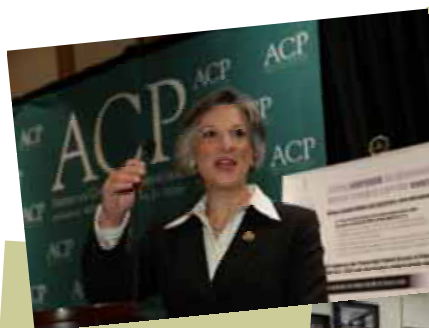
Some of the highlights of this year's Leadership Day event were:

- ACP President, Joseph W. Stubbs, MD, FACP, was a key participant in a joint press conference with Congresswoman Allyson Schwartz (D-13th PA) and other primary care groups in the introduction of her bill "The Preserving Patient Access to Primary Care Act, H.R. 2350."
- Robert Kocher, MD, special assistant to President Obama, who is involved in the Administration's health care reform initiative, spoke on how the medical community can contribute positively toward building a consensus for reform.
- Attendees had the opportunity to hear from Representatives Blumenauer (D-3rd OR), Cassidy (R-6th LA), and Schwartz about their views on health care reform.
- Our keynote speaker for the Awards Dinner, Paul Begala, political consultant, political commentator, and a former advisor to President Bill Clinton who appears frequently on CNN's "The Situation Room," gave a rousing speech on the political process.

There is still more work to be done no matter what Congress does this year. So as you begin to plan your schedule for 2010, please remember to include Leadership Day in your plans. The 18th annual

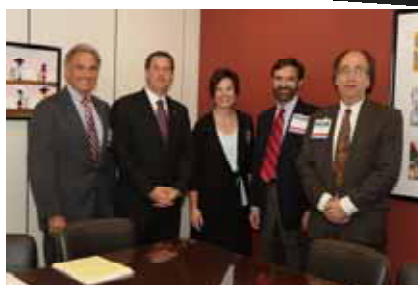
Leadership Day on Capitol Hill 2010 will be held on May 18-19 at the L'Enfant Plaza Hotel, 480 L'Enfant Plaza, SW, Washington, D.C.

We look forward to Leadership Day 2010! If you have any questions about Leadership Day, please contact Shuan Tomlinson at stomlinson@acponline.org or (800) 338-2746 ext 4547.



Rep. Allyson Schwartz (D-13th PA) addressing the Leadership Day crowd.

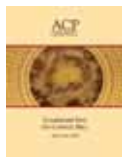
Members of the Nebraska delegation meet with Sen. Nelson (D-NE).



Members of the Louisiana delegation meet with Sen. Vitter (R-LA).

Leadership Day 2010
May 18-19

L'Enfant Plaza Hotel
Washington, DC



Key Contact of the Year

By Jay L. Larson, MD, FACP, Helena, Montana

Editor's note: Following is the acceptance speech delivered by Jay L. Larson, MD, FACP, Key Contact of the Year, at the 2009 Leadership Day awards dinner.

I am honored and surprised by this year's Key Contact Award. I am just a community internist who happens to live in Senator Max Baucus' home town. For those who do not know, Senator Baucus is the Chairman of the Senate Finance Committee and is pretty much spearheading Congress's health care reform effort.

A retired internist once said to me "Dude, internal medicine is dead, you just don't know it."

The current trends support his claim. In 2007, only 23 percent of third-year medical residents, 14 percent of medical interns and only 2 percent of fourth year medical students intended to pursue careers in general internal medicine.

Of internists who started their medical career in the early 1990's, over 20 percent have left internal medicine. As workload and financial burdens continue to increase, the number of internists will drop off sharply. Since there are fewer recently trained internal medicine physicians to replace us, chronic disease management will continue to fall on those of us remaining in primary care.

Chronic disease is not going away. The weight of chronic disease is crushing our primary care system. In January 2006, our very own American College of Physicians warned that primary care, the backbone of the nation's health care system, was on the verge of collapse.

Helena, Montana, is a perfect example. After 19 years of practicing in Helena, I have developed a wonderful practice. But I am worried. When the system breaks me, the people that I care for will not end up with another internist. In the past 6 months, 4 internists have left their practices in Helena resulting in only 6 general internists for a service area of 80,000 people.

Unfortunately we all have similar stories.

This past year the Physicians' Foundation completed the largest survey to date of primary care physicians. The results reflect what internists are feeling.

Half of primary care physicians said that over the next three years they plan to reduce the number of patients they see or stop practicing entirely. Two thirds of primary care doctors said non-clinical paperwork has caused them to spend less time with their patients. Only 6 percent of physicians described the professional morale of their colleagues as "positive."

So I decided to educate my patients about the internists' demise, I created an informational booklet "Save the Internist Campaign Kit" or STIC-KIT for short. This booklet included



Jay L. Larson, MD, FACP, delivers his Key Contact of the Year address.

information about general internists, factors contributing to general internists' decline, United States Healthcare statistics, and a sample letter to send to Congress. It also contained some tips for patients to extend the career of their internists with the "Save Your Medicine Physician and Then Help Yearly" or SYMPATHY program.

The meat of the kit focuses on educating patients about the factors contributing to general internists' extinction. Student debt is high. Our cognitive skills are not valued. Medicare part B premium increases have not been directed to primary care. Medicare part D confuses everyone and increases our administrative costs significantly. We have an increasing amount of non-reimbursable task requirements. We face increasingly complex medical decisions. If every guideline and recommendation is followed, one office visit for a person with multiple chronic diseases would last over 7 hours.

After months of educating patients about the state of general internists, a patient told me that I should meet Senator Max Baucus. This patient happened to be the neighbor of Max's mother and Max was in Helena for the Christmas break. The day after Christmas 2007, Max and I sat down to discuss the plight of primary care. Max listened for an hour and a half. He then directed me to his Senate Finance Committee health care staff. Max and his staff learned about our dysfunctional health care system. Several Senate Finance Committee meetings and an all day Health Reform Summit were held to unveil the flaws of our broken system. When possible, I shared the challenges of practicing general medicine and articles on healthcare reform. Max and the Senate Finance Committee health care staff politely reviewed the pile of information that I sent them for the past year and a half.

This past fall Senator Baucus released "Call to Action Health Reform 2009". This white paper outlined a road map to health care reform and emphasized the importance of primary care. "Primary care is the keystone of a high-performing health care system.

Key Contact of the Year cont.

Increasing the supply and availability of primary care practitioners by improving the value placed on their work is a necessary step toward meaningful reform”.

A few weeks later the ACP released their white paper “How Is a Shortage of Primary Care Physicians Affecting the Quality and Cost of Medical Care? A Comprehensive Evidence Review”. This white paper reviewed twenty years of research, which documented the value of primary care. The evidence demonstrates that we deliver high-quality care, reduce mortality, provide continuity of care, and reduce health care costs.

Last year I was invited to join Senator Baucus’ Montana Healthcare Advisory Committee. Each committee member was charged with up to 5 policy recommendations for healthcare reform. My final policy recommendations focused on strengthening primary care.

Serious healthcare reform will be happening in this year and I am glad to be part of it. You need to be part of the process too. We all do. Internal medicine is going extinct. Our patients need us. Our profession needs us.

“Change is disturbing when it is done to us. Change is exhilarating when it is done by us.”

I ask you to join me. Maybe fixing our healthcare system is a bit more difficult than treating a patient with multiple medical problems on multiple medications with a dysfunctional social situation, but not that much. We’re highly trained and respected professionals. We can make a difference. We’re on the right side of the issue.

We all have at least three members of Congress. Those are votes that we need. Share with lawmakers what needs to be done. Tomorrow, when we visit The Hill, is just one day of the year. It will have great impact, but it’s not the end of our work.

Maybe you, too, have a patient, or neighbor, or friend, who knows somebody who knows one of your members of Congress. Will you talk to them about primary care?

Thank you.

PICTURES



LEADERSHIP DAY 2009



ACP Top-10 Special Recognition Awards for Key Contacts

In addition to the Key Contact of the Year, the College also presents the Top-10 Special Recognition Awards during the Leadership Day dinner to recognize the significant efforts and achievements of other Key Contacts during the year. The names of the recipients follow, along with a short description of their contributions to internal medicine's advocacy efforts.

Dawn E. Clancy, MD, FACP, of South Carolina was recognized for her continuing effort to increase the strength of the South Carolina Leadership Day delegation with more students and associates; always sending solicited and unsolicited e-mails to Congress and being selected to attend special congressional events in South Carolina.

Vincent J. Calamia, MD, FACP, of New York, was recognized for his continued dedication to the development and the expansion of the Key Contact program in New York; attending Leadership Day for many years and taking the time to maintain a personal relationship with his elected representatives.

Jacqueline W. Fincher, MD, FACP, of Georgia, was honored as being the guiding force in organizing Georgia's members to participate in Leadership Day; making sure they know the importance of constantly communicating with congressional members and continuing to promote the Patient Centered Medical Home video with the Georgia Academy of Family Physicians.

Robert A. Gluckman, MD, FACP, of Oregon, who recently completed his term as chapter Governor, made advocacy and engagement in public policy a major focus of his tenure. He created and energized his chapter's Public Policy Committee, which has brought more members into the Key Contact program and expanded the number of members attending Leadership Day.

Jason M. Goldman, MD, FACP, of Florida, has enthusiastically recruited ACP members to get involved in Florida's grassroots program and has recruited members to become Key Contacts. Also, he was instrumental in arranging the Florida delegation's meeting with Congressman Wexler during Leadership Day 2008 as well as lunches with Congresswoman Wasserman-Schultz and Congressman Klein.

Robert M. Greenfield, MD, FACP, of Maryland, has been a compassionate advocate for the patient and the patient's family and extends this passion in many forums. A few examples are his service on Maryland's Chapter Council and his serving as Chair of its Health and Public Policy Committee. We thank him for his participation in Leadership Day for the past four years and for leading the chapter's delegation in 2008.

Mark E. Mayer, MD, FACP, of Ohio, has helped to coordinate Ohio's Leadership Day delegations from 2000-2006, and 2008. His leadership continued with coordinating Ohio's ongoing contacts with their congressional representatives after Leadership Day and personally communicating with many of the congressional offices with follow up information, including ACP's "Lessons Learned" paper.

George W. Meyer, MD, FACP, of Northern California, is a true champion for advocacy and the Key Contact program. In 2008, he brought in over 300 new Key Contacts and was the College's most successful Key Contact recruiter.

Viral D. Patel, of Kentucky, is an advocacy leader amongst his peers. As a student, he is already aware of the impact government can have on our nation's health care and the importance grassroots advocacy plays in shaping public policy. He continues to jump at the chance to promote advocacy to his colleagues in meetings.

Maher A. Roman, MD, FACP, of Southern California, coordinated and hosted a well attended and highly successful Health Care Community Forum for the President-elect in December 2008, recruited Key Contacts at various meetings and has participated in Leadership Day since 2003.

Share What You Think

The ACP Advocate Blog by Bob Doherty

The ACP Advocate Blog with Bob Doherty fosters dialogue about advocacy news for internists.

Recent topics

- Is it Time to Purchase an EHR?
- Is Making Money on Health Care a Bad Thing?
- Congress to recess without finishing health reform
- What's the deal with the deals?
- Singing the health reform blues

<http://blogs.acponline.org/advocacy/>

Congressman C.W. "Bill" Young Presents an American Flag to Michael A. Zimmer, MD, FACP

By Dawn Moerings, ED, Jacksonville, Florida

On May 20, during Leadership Day, Congressman C. W. Bill Young (R-10th FL) met with the ACP Florida Chapter, which was led by Michael A. Zimmer, MD, FACP. The group discussed the residency shortage in Florida and the impact that health care reform will have on physicians throughout the state. The big surprise of the meeting was when Congressman Young presented Dr. Zimmer with a flag that was flown over the United States Capitol.

Congressman Young presented the flag to Dr. Zimmer in recognition of his election as Governor of the Florida Chapter of the American College of Physicians. Dr. Zimmer will begin serving his four-year term as Governor on April 24, 2010. Congressman Young and

his Legislative Director Brad Stine had planned the event beforehand and had the congressional photographer come to the office to take the official photo.



Lior Shamai, DO, Daniel Strand, MD; Rep. C. W. "Bill" Young (R-10th FL); Michael A Zimmer, MD, FACP; Juan Vilaro, MD; and Don Davis, MD, enjoying the flag presented to Michael Zimmer.

KEY CONTACTS ENGAGING IN ADVOCACY MEETINGS

Patricia E. Sadler, MD, FACP, visited Rep. J. Gresham Barrett's (R-4th SC) local office on August 21 to share the points that ACP President Joseph Stubbs, MD, FACP, sent in his e-mail to the membership on August 14.



Yul D. Ejnes, MD, FACP, was asked to be part of Sen. Whitehouse's (D-RI) August 20 Town Hall meeting. (Sen. Whitehouse, pictured.)

Richard A. Dart, MD, FACP, was contacted directly by Sen. Feingold (D-WI) to participate in a future health care event with the senator.

Michael E. Norins, MD, MPH, FACP, was on a panel forum set up by the Winston-Salem, High Point and Greensboro medical societies with Sen. Hagan (D-NC) on August 17.

Nitin S. Damle, MD, FACP, along with the Rhode Island Medical Society meet with Sen. Whitehouse on August 17. Dr. Damle reiterated the four ACP priorities and talked about the senator's co-sponsorship of the Preserving Patient Access to Primary Care bill, S. 1174.

Peter J. Reiter, MD, FACP, invited Rep. Loeb sack (D-2nd IA) to his medical office for an August 13 meeting.



Rep. Loeb sack toured the office, then met with several of the partners to discuss health care reform, physician payment and Medicare issues, along with H.R.

2350. Dr. Reiter plans on attending Loeb sack's community forum in Ottumwa on August 29. (Rep. Loeb sack and Dr. Reiter, pictured.)

Thomas C. Wood, MD, MACP, spent some time with Sen. Murkowski (R-AK) on August 11 at the clinic where he volunteers. She is primarily concerned about the cost of a change in health care programs, but did come out against the many false rumors being circulated. She is an advocate for better access and primary care.

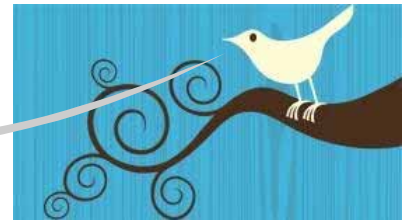
Owen E. Linder, MD, FACP, participated in an August 5 roundtable discussion, to discuss H.R. 3200 along with Rep. Meek (D-17th FL). Dr. Linder suggested the value of the bill is promoting a medical home for every American. Rep. Meek asked for more information on the PCMH.

Thomas A. McCabe, MD, FACP, met with Rep. Jim Moran (D-8th VA) on August 4, along with the Arlington County Medical Society. Rep. Moran supports ACP's positions.

IN THE PRESS

H. Joan Waitkevicz, MD, FACP, of West Palm Beach, and Robert A. Briskin, MD, FACP, of Jupiter, had letters printed in the Palm Beach Post on August 23.

Stuart J. Levin, MD, FACP, of Raleigh, had a letter printed in the North Carolina News & Observer on August 8.



Congress Tweets. Are you Listening?

(well, nearly 170 of them do—and counting—as of August 2009)

Many members of Congress are also communicating via Twitter, the social network used by millions of people. They are using it to send—and receive—short messages with constituents (and anyone else who wants to follow). Are you listening? Below, senators are underlined and listed first, followed by representatives in alphabetical order.

President's Office

Barack Obama
Joe Biden

Congress

Alabama

Richard Shelby
Artur Davis

Alaska

Lisa Murkowski

Arkansas

John Boozman
Mike Ross

Arizona

John McCain
Jeff Flake
Trent Franks
Gabrielle Giffords
Harry Mitchell

California

Barbara Boxer
Joe Baca
Mary Bono Mack
Elton Gallegly
Mike Honda
Duncan Hunter
Darrell Issa
Kevin McCarthy
Buck McKeon
George Miller
Nancy Pelosi
George Radanovich
Dana Rohrabacher
Maxine Waters

Colorado

Mark Udall
Mike Coffman
Ed Perlmutter
Jared Polis

Connecticut

Chris Dodd
Jim Himes

Delaware

Michael Castle

Florida

Mel Martinez
Bill Nelson
Gus Bilirakis
Vern Buchanan
Ander Crenshaw
Kendrick Meek
Bill Posey
Tom Rooney
Ileana Ros-Lehtinen

Georgia

John Barrow
Paul Broun
Phil Gingrey
Henry "Hank" Johnson
Jack Kingston
Tom Price

Hawaii

Neil Abercrombie

Illinois

Richard Durbin
Judy Biggert
Mark Kirk
Donald Manzullo
Peter Roskam

Aaron Schock
John Shimkus

Indiana

Richard Lugar
Dan Burton
Mike Pence

Iowa

Chuck Grassley
Leonard Boswell
Steve King
Tom Latham

Kansas

Sam Brownback
Lynn Jenkins

Kentucky

John Yarmuth

Louisiana

Dave Vitter
Joseph Cao
John Fleming

Maine

Susan Collins
Michael Michaud
Chellie Pingree

Massachusetts

John Kerry

Michigan

Debbie Stabenow
Dave Camp
Pete Hoekstra
Sander Levin
Thaddeus McCotter
Candice Miller

Minnesota

Michele Bachmann
Keith Ellison
James Oberstar
Erik Paulsen

Mississippi

Roger Wicker
Gregg Harper

Missouri

Claire McCaskill
Roy Blunt
Russ Carnahan

Montana

Denny Rehberg

Nebraska

Ben Nelson
Jeff Fortenberry
Lee Terry

Nevada

John Ensign
Harry Reid
Dean Heller

New Jersey

Robert Menendez
Frank Pallone
Albio Sires

New Hampshire

Paul Hodes

New Mexico

Jeff Bingaman
Tom Udall
Ben Lujan

New York

Steve Israel
Randy Kuhl
Christopher Lee
Eric Massa
Gregory Meeks
Charles Rangel

North Carolina

Richard Burr
Virginia Foxx
Walter Jones
Patrick McHenry

Ohio
Sherrod Brown
 Steve Austria
 John Boehner
 Steve Driehaus
 Marcia Fudge
 Jim Jordan
 Mary Jo Kilroy
 Dennis Kucinich
 Robert Latta
 Tim Ryan

Oklahoma
Tom Coburn
Jim Inhofe
 Mary Fallin
 John Sullivan

Oregon
Jeff Merkley
 Earl Blumenauer
 Kurt Schrader
 Greg Walden

Pennsylvania
Arlen Specter
 Mike Doyle
 Jim Gerlach
 Joe Sestak
 Bill Shuster
 Glenn Thompson

South Carolina
Jim DeMint
 Gresham Barrett
 Bob Inglis
 Joe Wilson

South Dakota
John Thune

Tennessee
 Zach Wamp

Texas
John Cornyn
 Joe Barton
 Kevin Brady
 Michael Burgess
 John Carter
 John Culberson
 Kenny Marchant
 Pete Olson
 Lamar Smith

Utah
Orrin Hatch
 Jason Chaffetz

Virginia
Mark Warner
 Eric Cantor
 Randy Forbes
 Bob Goodlatte
 Jim Moran
 Glenn Nye
 Tom Perriello
 Rob Wittman

Washington
 Jay Inslee
 Cathy McMorris Rodgers
 David Reichert

West Virginia
Robert Byrd

Wisconsin
Russ Feingold
 Paul Ryan

Wyoming
 Cynthia Lummis

On Attending a Town Hall Meeting

By Kristin L. Anderson, MD, Riverside, Rhode Island

In June, I attended a "Health Care Community Dinner" with Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI), my first Town Hall meeting. Sen. Whitehouse has been hosting these dinners to hear members of the Rhode Island community share their experiences and ideas surrounding health care.

Sen. Whitehouse began the event with an update about his work concerning health care reform, but quickly opened the meeting to members of the community. Questions focused primarily on universal health care (a majority of those in the audience were supportive and wanted further details). Some were skeptical and opposed to any major federal role in reform.

He listened to everyone's comments and gave thoughtful responses that demonstrated his depth of understanding of the complexities of our health care delivery system at both a local and national level.

As both a primary care physician (trained in Internal Medicine and Pediatrics) and clinician educator, I had prepared some comments about the primary care workforce and anticipated shortages, but due to the large number of participants did not get the chance to speak. After the meeting, however, I waited in line to speak to the senator.

We had met briefly during ACP's Leadership Day in May while lobbying for the Preserving Patient Access to Primary Care Act, S. 1174, which he ultimately co-sponsored with Senators Cantwell (D-WA) and Collins (R-ME). I felt it was important to thank him for his co-sponsorship of a bill so crucial for our profession. After thanking him, I reiterated the predicted shortage of 35,000-44,000 primary care physicians and also the paucity of medical students and residents in our own state entering the field. He reassured me that workforce issues were included in the current proposals.

Albeit a brief interaction, I was grateful for this experience as a relatively novice ACP Key Contact. It is my hope that by being part of a collective voice, we *will achieve* much needed reform for both our profession and our patients.

Find Congress's newest Tweeters
 at

[www.congressional140.com/
 tweeting.php](http://www.congressional140.com/tweeting.php)

