

Dear Colleagues,

As we close out the month of September 2020, I want to acknowledge it as **Women In Medicine Month**, but also as part of Hispanic Heritage Month (from September 15 to October 15). September is also Suicide Prevention Awareness Month. As physicians, we all grapple with more obligations and responsibilities than ever before, much of which have been brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic. We are not immune to the toll stressors can have on us.

The tragic death of Dr. Lorna Breen, who died from suicide several months ago, after taking care of COVID-19 patients in New York as a frontline physician, is a reminder to all of us to be sure to prioritize our own self-care, to seek help when we need it, and to reach out to colleagues who may be struggling. The physician suicide rate is estimated to be 28 to 40 per 100,000, is among the highest of any profession, and is double that of the general U.S. population. Approximately 400 doctors die by suicide each year

More details about physician suicide prevention and awareness is here, from national ACP:

"ACP is an official supporter of the Council of Residency Directors in Emergency Medicine (CORD) effort to help spread awareness about the issue of physician suicide. CORD is leading a collaborative effort with ACP and other medical organizations to encourage grassroots activities around National Physician Suicide Awareness Day (NPSA) on September 17. This year's theme is One of Us in recognition that suicide can affect us, our friends, and colleagues. Follow the hashtag, #NPSAday on social media.

CORD's resources (<https://www.cordem.org/npsa>) include a curriculum, podcasts, videos, and articles. CORD's Vision Zero statement calls on individuals, residency programs, health care organizations, and national groups to make a commitment to break down stigma, increase awareness, open the conversation, decrease the fear of consequences, recognize warning signs, and learn to approach colleagues who may be at risk.

Through ACP's Physician Well-being and Professional Fulfillment initiative (https://www.acponline.org/practice-resources/physician-well-being-and-professional-fulfillment?_ga=2.77853396.1955782395.1601475810-2089684375.1596764442), ACP continues to work to address the root causes that affect physician professional fulfillment and well-being and also features COVID-19 Well Being Resources."

ACP Statements

Many updates continue to evolve with the COVID-19 pandemic. ACP has made or joined recent statements supporting scientific, data driven decisions and public health officials during the COVID pandemic.

- On September 27, ACP joined close to 100 other organization representing physicians and other clinicians, public health experts, scientists, patients, and other advocates, urging FDA Commissioner Hahn and Director Marks of the Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research to ensure that a COVID-19 vaccine is only authorized or licensed when it meets the Food and Drug Administration's (FDA's) existing high standards of safety and efficacy.
https://www.acponline.org/acp_policy/letters/joint_letter_requesting_covid-19_vaccines_follow_existing_fda_standards_sept_2020.pdf
- On August 27, ACP again expressed public support for the use of science, based on the best available evidence, in the fight against COVID-19 and emphasized that public health **agencies** should not be subjected to pressure or be influenced to issue policies that are not based on evidence and expert recommendations of their own scientists.
<https://www.acponline.org/acp-newsroom/acp-supports-the-use-of-science-to-stop-the-spread-of-covid-19-warns-against-interference>
- On July 14, ACP issued a statement supporting the use of scientific expertise, based on the best available evidence, in the fight against COVID-19 and urging national, state and local officials to heed the advice and information from leading experts. This statement included explicit support for Dr. Anthony Fauci, who received Mastership from ACP, in his effort to help stop the spread of COVID-19. <https://www.acponline.org/acp-newsroom/acp-supports-the-use-of-scientific-expertise-to-stop-the-spread-of-covid-19>

Collaboration with MMS

For many, school re-openings have created new and unexpected challenges. I had the honor of collaborating with the Massachusetts Medical Society (MMS) and other MA Chapter medical society leaders on a virtual town hall program, “**COVID- 19 and School Re-opening**”, that was hosted by MMS, earlier this month.

Here is the link to the event details and the post-meeting content:

<http://www.massmed.org/Patient-Care/COVID-19/MMS-Virtual-Town-Hall-Member-Forums/>.

COVID-19

We also hit an unfortunate milestone in the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic as we surpassed 200,000 deaths due to SARS-CoV-2, earlier this month. We absolutely cannot let our guard down while COVID-19 continues in our communities. While Massachusetts overall has been relatively successful in containing COVID-19, we are learning about resurgences of COVID-19 cases in numerous states across the country, and hearing about outbreaks of COVID-19 in some of our healthcare organizations and hospitals. School re-openings may also impact the COVID-19 pandemic in future weeks, as there have already been some COVID-19 clusters in schools and colleges. Likewise, the arrival of influenza will create even more challenges for frontline physicians. In hopes of mitigating the possibility of a "twindemic", we as physicians can help protect our patients and promote and encourage influenza vaccinations as much as possible. While the promise of a COVID-19 vaccine provides some guarded

optimism, the reality that we may be operating under the current pandemic restrictions through the rest of 2020, and likely a good part of 2021, is a reminder of the gravity of the current situation we are all experiencing.

Chapter Highlights

Despite all of this, I want to share some positive highlights from our MA ACP Chapter. As members of ACP, the largest physician specialty organization in the world, we have access to the support ACP provides to all of us from its many direct resources. Through our connections with ACP, we also benefit collegiality with each other. I have the privilege of representing our MA ACP Chapter at the ACP Board of Governors (BOG) meeting this week, and as I reflect on the experience thus far of serving as an ACP Governor, one of the highlights has been the deep and meaningful relationships within the College that have developed from this role, and from involvement in the work of our Chapter.

I urge all of you to continue building relationships with each other as fellow ACP members, and to retain your access to all the various educational, clinical, policy, and advocacy support that membership in ACP provides. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the deadline for dues payment for membership in ACP for the 2020-2021 year was extended to September 30. I do hope all of you, if you have not already done so, renew your membership by today's deadline. Here is a link where you can renew your ACP membership to remain in good standing: <https://www.acponline.org/membership>.

Annual Chapter Meeting

Our MA ACP Chapter continues to be quite active and busy. Our Chapter Annual Meeting Planning Committee has been putting the final touches on what will be a really wonderful program, happening **Saturday, October 10**. Full details of the program can be found in the detailed agenda for the meeting (*link at the bottom of the newsletter*). This will be an all virtual meeting, and we have a terrific lineup including ACP's own CEO/EVP **Darilyn Moyer, MD, FACP, FIDSA**, **Bob Doherty**, who is ACP's Senior Vice President of Governmental Affairs and Public Policy, a **live podcast** moderated by **Dr. Adam Rodman and Dr. Tony Breu**, and an outstanding panel discussion of COVID-19 and health disparities moderated by **Dr. Lauren Doctoroff**, with panelists **Drs. Daniele Olveczky, Andrew Jorgensen, Thomas Lincoln, Larissa Lucas, and James O'Connell**.

We also will be applauding and supporting the winners of the Poster & Abstract competition, who will be presenting their clinical vignette or research findings at the meeting: Medical Student clinical vignette winner **Rebecca Scharf** from Tufts University School of Medicine; Medical Student research winner **Adam Beckman**, from Harvard Medical School; Resident/Fellow clinical vignette winner **Dr. Anish Bhatnagar** from Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center; Resident/Fellow research winner **Dr. Parul Sarwal**, from St. Vincent Hospital.

Be sure to participate and support these talented emerging young physicians and future physicians. I want to personally thank all the members of the Abstract/Poster Competition Planning Committee, led by **Dr. Prarthna Bhardwaj**, who all invested a significant amount of time in reviewing a record-breaking number of abstracts received, and in preparing for the medical student and resident/fellow presentation portions of our annual meeting.

At our meeting **October 10**, I will be delighted to congratulate the winners of our state chapter awards, who are as follows: Laureate Award, **Dr. Gene Lambert**; Distinguished Service Award, **Dr. Susan George**; Humanism in Medicine Award, **Dr. Elizabeth Eagleson**; Chapter Leadership Award, **Dr. Lauren Doctoroff** and **Dr. Andrew Jorgensen**; Chapter Early Career Physician Leadership Award, **Dr. Ryan Quarles**; Chapter Resident/Fellow Leadership Award, **Dr. Asad Khan** and **Dr. Masood Pasha Syed**; Chapter Medical Student Leadership Award, **Abraham Lin**; Robert A Lebow Advocacy Award, **Dr. Shela Sridhar**. There will be additional awards that will be presented and recognized at a future special awards event in the forthcoming weeks, but be sure to attend our virtual meeting on **October 10** to applaud and acknowledge the outstanding accomplishments and contributions of these dedicated chapter members.

In late breaking news, just announced today September 30, several MA ACP Chapter members have also been recognized with national awards (MACP Masterships to **Dr. Susan George, Dr. Joseph Li, Dr. Kerri Palamara McGrath, Dr. James O'Connell, Dr. Nancy Rigotti**; named awards to **Dr. Don Berwick, Dr. JoAnn Manson, Dr. Thomas Lincoln, and Dr. Christopher Shanahan**):

ACP Announces New Masters and Awardees for 2020-2021 -

<https://www.acponline.org/about-acp/awards-masterships-and-competitions/acp-announces-new-masters-and-awardees-for-2020-2021>

Congratulations to all the awardees, for Chapter and national ACP awards!

Thank you to all those who spent time writing supporting letters for these national ACP awardees, and to the MA ACP Chapter Awards Committee, and to Committee Chair **Dr. Judy Melin**.

I would love to “see” as many of you from our Chapter at this meeting as possible, particularly as the meeting is virtual this year, which will make attendance more convenient. Please note that even if you cannot stay for the entirety of the meeting your registration will grant you access to durable content from the meeting afterwards. Please be sure to register here: <https://www.acponline.org/about-acp/chapters-regions/united-states/massachusetts-chapter/news-meetings/massachusetts-chapter-virtual-meeting>.

Feel free to also circulate registration information to other colleagues and recruit your colleagues to come to the meeting. If your colleagues are already ACP members, they

can take advantage of discounted registration. If they are not ACP members yet, they will have an introductory view of what ACP has to offer by attending this virtual event, and they will also have an opportunity to earn CME and MOC credit.

ACP Board of Governor's Meeting

The upcoming ACP Board of Governors (BOG) meeting will also be held completely virtual this year, the first time in BOG meeting history that this is occurring, due to COVID-19. Nevertheless, all BOG members are eagerly anticipating the opportunity to work together to advance the work of ACP. Our superb Chapter Administrator, **Ms. Lynda Layer**, and I will have the opportunity to facilitate a workshop discussion about Chapter Leadership Development at the upcoming BOG meeting, and we look forward to the opportunity to further engage with other Chapter Leaders and Governors.

As many of you know, ACP policies and position statements often arise out of Resolutions originating from grassroots level membership input. I had recently requested input from all of you as chapter members on the Resolutions that will be discussed at the BOG meeting. Thank you to those who shared their input. I will be representing this feedback at the BOG meeting. I also want to bring to your attention to the next cycle of Resolutions for the April 2021 Board of Governors meeting, which has an upcoming deadline. If you wish to submit a Resolution for consideration to be discussed and debated at the April 2021 BOG meeting, reach out with your proposed resolution draft **no later than October 9, 2020**, and send your draft resolution to the email: maacp2@mms.org. Feel free to also reach out to that email with any questions.

Council of Students/Council of Residents/Fellows Program - October 15

As we continue to navigate the conversion of many of our events and activities for our Chapter to the virtual realm, I am excited to announce an upcoming collaboration between our MA ACP Chapter Council of Student Members and Council of Resident & Fellow Members. Further details can be found at the link at the bottom of the newsletter, with the flyer for this upcoming event, and also here, from our Council of Student Members Chair Abraham Lin:

Save the date! "Preparing for Residency Interviews and Finding the Right Fit" Webinar - October 15, 7-8 PM

The Council of Student Members and Council of Residents & Fellows would like to invite all student members to attend our upcoming FREE webinar on preparing for residency interviews and finding the program that is the best fit for you! This event will feature a diverse panel of current residents from Internal Medicine programs across the state and will include a Q&A segment for participants to ask additional questions. Registration will be opening shortly!

Here is the link to register for this event: <https://bit.ly/33gm4OH>.

Feel free to circulate the information about this event and the registration link to any interested medical students but note that this is ONLY open to ACP medical student MEMBERS. Medical student membership is FREE, but please do help recruit some new ACP student members to our chapter membership and help promote this event.

Health and Public Policy Committee (HPPC)

Our Health and Public Policy Committee (HPPC) continues to remain very active, though much of the focus of legislative efforts currently is related to COVID-19. Here is an update from our Massachusetts ACP HPPC Co-Chair Dr. Zoe Tseng:

State legislative session was due to end in July, but it has been extended into the fall. Legislators will be working through the fall on key legislation including a larger Health Care bill that will incorporate telehealth bills from the Senate and the House. The House bill is more restrictive, limiting coverage to telehealth for primary care, behavioral health, and chronic disease management and putting in place originating site restrictions. The Senate bill is less restrictive. Both bills require all insurers to cover telehealth services equal to in person office visits. It is now in a Conference Committee for debate, which consists of 3 House members and 3 Senators. We are currently reaching out to these 6 legislators about the telehealth stipulations.

We are planning to schedule virtual meetings with these legislators in the near future and it would be very helpful to have the voice of their constituents included. Please let us know if you are a constituent of one of these legislators. If you are not sure, you can look up your legislator here: <https://malegislature.gov/search/findmylegislator>.

*House Majority Leader Ron Mariano (D-Quincy) - Holbrook, Quincy, Weymouth
House Health Care Financing Vice-Chair Rep. Dan Cullinane (D-Dorchester) - Milton, Boston
Rep. Randy Hunt (R-Sandwich) - Barnstable, Bourne, Sandwich
Sen. Cindy Friedman (D-Arlington) - Woburn, Billerica, Arlington, Burlington, Lexington
Sen. Julian Cyr (D-Truro) - Cape and Islands
Sen. Dean Tran (R-Fitchburg) - Fitchburg, Gardner and Leominster and the towns of Berlin, Bolton, Clinton, Lancaster, Lunenburg, Sterling and Westminster; and the town of Townsend.*

Additionally, we have joined tMED – the Massachusetts Telemedicine Coalition, which is made of 35+ healthcare provider organizations, consumer advocates, technology organizations, and telecommunication associations who are working to advance telemedicine in Massachusetts.

Here are some members of our HPPC from a recent virtual meeting:

As Dr. Tseng pointed out, our Chapter now is formally a part of the tMED coalition (see attached), which will continue to advocate on behalf of telemedicine, which is now ubiquitous during this COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, I am very pleased to announce that our Chapter is formally collaborating with a voter and civic engagement effort called "Vote RX", an all volunteer medical student and resident physician led effort arising out of Massachusetts General Hospital. Further details can be found here: <https://linktr.ee/voterx>.

This non-partisan effort seeks to enhance voter participation amongst our patients and physicians and provides some resources for us to discuss safe voting with our patients. Your participation in these "VoteRX" efforts is voluntary, optional, and "opt in". See the additional information about "Vote RX" attached. With 2020 being an election year, voter engagement and participation could not be a timelier topic to address.

Our MA ACP Chapter recently co-sponsored a survey we helped distribute to our membership, regarding COVID-19 effect on physician practices. With your help and input, the data that was gathered from this survey has now produced a paper, **"Economic and Clinical Impact of Covid-19 on Provider Practices in Massachusetts"**, that has been published: <https://catalyst.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/CAT.20.0441>.

MMS Interspecialty Committee

As Governor of our Chapter I also have the opportunity to represent the MA ACP at the Massachusetts Medical Society (MMS) Interspecialty Committee.

MMS President Dr. David Rosman was at the most recent Interspecialty meeting earlier this month, which featured a robust discussion about the MMS commitment to anti-racism and health disparities. The MA ACP Chapter, as well as national ACP, also support anti-racism and efforts to address and eliminate health disparities. Our Chapter looks forward to future opportunities to collaborate with MMS and other Massachusetts Chapters of physician specialty societies in antiracism and health disparities work. I am pleased to announce that Dr. Rosman will be joining our Annual Meeting on October 10 and will be providing some welcoming remarks.

Chapter Excellence Award – Gold Level

National ACP recently presented the Chapter Excellence Awards for the 2019-2020 year just ending in June 2020. I am delighted to announce that our Chapter is in receipt of the Gold Level of the 2020 Chapter Excellence Award! The Gold level is the highest level of distinction an ACP Chapter can achieve. The award recognizes truly extraordinary chapters that surpass excellence in chapter management. We are in the company of 34 other outstanding ACP chapters. To achieve the Gold Level of the Chapter Excellence Award, chapters must meet twenty-one Bronze criteria, fourteen

Silver criteria and multiple Gold level activities. I would like to extend a special thanks to those Chapter members who assisted us in all these endeavors! Much thanks and gratitude to ALL the leaders of our Chapter Committees, Subcommittees, and Councils, as your leadership helped make this award achievement possible. Most importantly, I want to express sincere and continued gratitude to our Chapter Administrator extraordinaire **Ms. Lynda Layer**, and our Chapter Coordinator support **Ms. Debbie Brennan**, without whom our Chapter achievements would not be possible. I look forward to ongoing engagement from all of you, as MA ACP Chapter members, as we continue to support your professional needs.

Call for Nominees for national councils

For any of our MA ACP Chapter medical student members, resident/fellow members, or early career physician members (defined as within 16 years or less of graduation from medical school), if you are interested in serving on the Council of Student Members, Council of Resident/Fellow Members, or Council of Early Career Physicians, at the national ACP level, you can find more information here:

Council of Early Career Physicians:

https://www.acponline.org/system/files/documents/membership/benefits/physicians/early_career_physicians/cecp-call-for-nominations-2020.pdf?_ga=2.153155064.1955782395.1601475810-2089684375.1596764442

Council of Resident/Fellow

Members: https://www.acponline.org/system/files/documents/membership/residents/crfm-call-nominations-2020.pdf?_ga=2.116037958.1955782395.1601475810-2089684375.1596764442

Council of Student Members:

https://www.acponline.org/system/files/documents/medical_students/resources/csm-call-for-nominations-2020.pdf?_ga=2.116037958.1955782395.1601475810-2089684375.1596764442

These applications require endorsement and support from Chapter Governors and are due to national ACP by November 1, 2020. To complete these applications with support from me, as Chapter Governor, you would need to submit your completed application to our Chapter no later than **Friday, October 16, 2020**. Submit your complete application in its entirety to: maacp2@mms.org. Completed applications need to be received by this deadline to ensure timely Governor support letters. Late applications will not be considered.

Women in Medicine Month

Finally, in recognition of Women In Medicine month of September, I wanted to share updates regarding our Leadership Development for Women In Medicine (LDWIM) efforts. The LDWIM steering committee has met a few times, and we have decided that for upcoming programming we will be utilizing a multimedia strategy (social media, Zoom, podcast, email newsletter, and others) in the upcoming weeks to further illuminate the "leadership gap" for women in medicine. Please stay tuned for more details.

In the meantime, I want to direct your attention to the robust array of resources that national ACP has curated in its Women in Medicine section: <https://www.acponline.org/advocacy/where-we-stand/women-in-medicine>.

Last year I spoke on a webinar for ACP's Leadership Academy on the topic of "Networking for Women in Medicine" with my colleague Dr. Pam Hiebert, which addressed numerous issues related to the "leadership gap" for women in medicine. Link to that webinar is here: <https://www.acponline.org/meetings-courses/acp-courses-recordings/acp-leadership-academy/acp-leadership-academy-webinars/networking-for-women-in-medicine>

Earlier this month, as part of ACP's activities supporting Women In Medicine Month, I had the opportunity to serve as a discussion facilitator for the topic of "Imposter Syndrome". It was a wonderful opportunity to share insights, and to support and amplify fellow women physician ACP members' accomplishments and achievements.

"Imposter Syndrome" will be a topic that will be further addressed in more detail in an upcoming newsletter column, but a brief description is as follows: "**Imposter Syndrome (IS) is defined as feelings of self-doubt and fear being discovered as an intellectual fraud despite obvious achievements and qualifications.**" While "Imposter Syndrome" can affect both women and men, women are particularly susceptible to the impact of "Imposter Syndrome" as systemic, structural, and implicit gender biases also create obstacles to career advancement. I encourage all Chapter members to promote and support gender equity in your professional settings and do your part to help close the "leadership gap" faced by women in medicine.

I look forward to further conversations in the coming days and weeks about this and other topics related to our Chapter's Leadership Development for Women In Medicine (LDWIM) efforts, and to address the "leadership gap" for women physicians. These LDWIM activities will overlap and intersect with some upcoming DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion) efforts, as the composition of the DEI Committee gets finalized. Please reach out if you have an interest in contributing to these ongoing efforts.

In closing, and until my next communications to you all, I thank each of you for your continued membership in ACP. I hope those in our ACP community who recently observed Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur enjoyed a restful and cherished time with

loved ones. I look forward to ongoing communications with you, to help enhance and guide my efforts to serve you and our MA ACP Chapter, in supporting your professional needs and in the care of your patients.

Thank you for your commitment, dedication, and professionalism.

Best wishes to you and yours for continued safety and health.

Warmest regards,

Elisa Choi, MD, FACP, FIDSA (She/Her/Hers)
Governor, Massachusetts ACP Chapter
American College of Physicians (ACP) - Board of Governors
Internal Medicine / HIV Medicine / Infectious Diseases

Register for the MA ACP Chapter Annual Meeting October 10, 2020: <https://www.acponline.org/about-acp/chapters-regions/united-states/massachusetts-chapter/news-meetings/massachusetts-chapter-virtual-meeting>

Governor's Social Media:

Follow MA ACP Governor on **Twitter:** [@MAACPGovernor](#)

Follow MA ACP Governor on **Instagram:** [@maacpgovernor](#)

"Like" the MA ACP Governor Page on **Facebook:** [MAACPGovernor](#)

Website: [ACP Massachusetts Chapter](#)

Chapter Social Media:

"Like" Massachusetts ACP Chapter on **Facebook** - [American College of Physicians, Massachusetts Chapter](#)

Follow Massachusetts ACP Chapter on **Twitter** - **ACP Massachusetts:** [@ACPMChapter](#)