GOVERNOR’S MESSAGE

The Fall meeting for the Board of Governors of the ACP-ASIM was recently held in Quebec City, Canada, from September 26-28, 2002, at the Loews Le Concorde Hotel. This was an excellent meeting and there were several issues that we should review:

1. Out of the work of the ACP-ASIM and ABIM representatives, there has been a memorandum of understanding (MOU) regarding continuous professional developments (CPD). These memoranda basically address all of the issues that the Board of Governors resolution from the April national meeting asked to be addressed. The memorandum of understanding will be presented to the Board of Regents and then to the ABIM Board for approval, and they will be made available in public after that. I do think that there is hope that the recertification process will meet the major desire for all of us in that there will be multiple pathways that will have relevance to a variety of practice settings, a reduction of redundancy, will accommodate different learning styles, and will be very sensitive to time and cost. I am encouraged with the directions these negotiations have taken.

2. A second issue was the subject of revitalization of internal medicine. Over the last several years, there has been a marked reduction in students entering General Internal Medicine training programs nationwide, and specifically an associated reduction of physicians going into practice of General Internal Medicine. It is thought that this relates to many factors, not the least of which is increasing student debt and decreasing reimbursement at a national level. In the coming months and over the next few years, I’m sure that we will hear more on this subject. There will be a national push for legislative change in some of the requirements for repayment of loans that have pushed loan repayment to start within the second year post-graduation instead of deferral until training is complete, which is the way it was in past years. Hopefully, we will be able to make progress on that issue.

3. We also discussed bioterrorism. Dr. Donald Henderson, who is in charge of the federal task force on bioterrorism gave a wonderful discussion on this subject. He thinks that the most likely agents would be Anthrax and/or small pox. There will be federal recommendation within the next weeks regarding small pox immunization for individuals who are most likely to be in contact and at risk if there was a small pox outbreak. That would specifically be individuals in the medical profession and their families. This would be on a voluntary basis. We are all aware that there are adverse effects to vaccines, and small pox is no exception to that. Most individuals under 40 years of age have not been vaccinated at all. Re-vaccination of individuals who had prior vaccinations would be needed.

4. We continue to lobby in Washington to reverse the Medicare pay cuts that are scheduled for physician payments over the next several years. The House bill HR 4954 passed, and will recommend physician pay increases of 2% for calendar years 2003, 2004, and 2005. Although Medicare reimbursement was decreased by 5.4% this year, these recommendations would prevent the scheduled declines, as well. The Senate has a similar bill and will likely approve that bill in early October.

5. Nationally, medical liability legislation has been pushed through the House in the form of HR 4600 (the so-called “Health Act”). This puts caps on non-economic and punitive damage by health care lawsuits. The non-economic jury awards are set at a cap of $250,000. Although this bill passed the House, it is the feeling of our lobbyist that it has no chance in the Senate, and we are continuing to work very hard in our state to push liability reform at the local level.
MS ACP-ASIM ASSOCIATE NEWS
Shirley Schlessinger, MD

The 8th Annual Mississippi Associate’s Competition was held November 21, 2002 in the Norman Nelson Student Union Conference Center on the campus of the University of Mississippi Medical Center (UMMC). Twenty-six Residents and Subspecialty Fellows from the Departments of Medicine at Keesler Air Force Base in Biloxi, Mississippi and UMMC participated in the program, presenting either clinical vignettes or original clinical research in poster and oral formats. Special congratulations are extended to this year’s winners, listed below with their award-winning abstracts:

Oral Presentations:
1. Bryan Batson, MD (UMC): Post-streptococcal Glomerulonephritis with Normal Urinalysis
2. Capt. Amy Strassburg, MD (Keesler Air Force Base): A Critical Analysis Of Laboratory Evaluations For Hereditary Thrombophilia At Keesler Medical Center

Poster Presentations:
1. Bryan Batson, MD (UMC): Atypical Presentation of Polyarteritis Nodosa
2. Mary Jane Burton, MD (UMC): Two Cases of Neurocysticercosis in Patients Without Travel Histories
2. Rodrigo Valderrama, MD (UMC): Cushing's Syndrome due to Ectopic ACTH Secretion

All the participating trainees did an excellent job, once again high-lighting the varied and fascinating medical pathology in Mississippi. The winning abstracts will be presented at the Regional Mississippi-Louisiana meeting in New Orleans in spring 2003. Dr. Batson has been invited to present his winning oral abstract, “Post-Streptococcal Glomerulonephritis with a Normal Urinalysis,” as a poster at the National ACP Meeting in San Diego in April 2003. We encourage all Mississippi ACP-ASIM members to mark your calendar now and plan to attend next year's Associates competition scheduled for Thursday, November 20, 2003.

ANNUAL SESSION 2003 IN SAN DIEGO

Make Your Plans to Be There — Internal medicine’s best and brightest are coming to San Diego, California. ACP-ASIM’s Annual Session 2003 will be held April 3-5, 2003 in Sunny San Diego. Pre-Session Courses will be held April 1-2, 2003.

Learn the latest information on internal medicine and discover the answers to common, yet difficult, patient-management problems. Enhance your knowledge and effectiveness as a physician by choosing from over 260 high-quality CME offerings in a wide variety of formats, from lectures to small-group discussions.

Refresh and refine your skills and learn new ones at hands-on Clinical Skills workshops featuring small-group tutorials led by experts in techniques and tools for the outpatient setting. Through demonstration, practice, and feedback, develop important skills in physical examination, medical interviewing, office-based procedures, and more.

Apply what you learn immediately to improve your practice and patient care. Come away with the latest information on internal medicine and new insights into effective patient-management issues.

Connect with your peers and with leading experts in their fields. Annual Session is the year's premier opportunity to meet and exchange ideas with fellow internists from around the globe, including those whom you know and those whom you would like to know. Attended by acknowledged leaders in virtually every area of internal medicine, Annual Session offers a rich array of networking and social opportunities.
**Expect** to have a great time in San Diego, America’s Most Family-Friendly City! Consider spending an extra day or two in the city that *Family Fun* Magazine rated the Most Family-Friendly City in the Southwest two years in a row.

**Make your plans now** to be in San Diego, April 3-5, 2003 for ACP-ASIM’s Annual Session! For additional information visit <http://www.acponline.org/cme/as/2003/index.html>.

**NEW MEMBER BENEFIT: ONLINE CME TRANSCRIPTS**

The College is pleased to announce a new member benefit — **Online CME transcripts**. ACP-ASIM members may view and print a transcript of their CME credit earned for participation in activities sponsored by the College. The transcript provides a six year listing and includes credit earned for:

- Annual Session
- Postgraduate Courses
- Chapter/Regional Meetings Accredited by the College (Starting November 1999)
- MKSAP and Related MKSAP Enhancements
- MKSAP Audio Companion
- Clinical Problem Solving Cases
- Audio and Video Products

![Image of a notebook with a pen and paper]

Work is underway to include credit earned for The Medical Laboratory Evaluation Program and the educational component of the ABIM recertification program.

Members can also print documentation of their participation in sessions related to state specific CME requirements. If you have any questions, please contact ACP-ASIM’s Customer Service Department at (800) 523-1546, ext. 2600, or by email at <custserv@mail.acponline.org>.

**AMA’S CARING FOR HUMANITY INITIATIVE**

The American Medical Association is launching a new initiative called “Caring for Humanity,” which extends medicine’s mission for the sick and suffering beyond U.S. borders. The first Caring for Humanity project is WorldScopes, a campaign to collect 100,000 stethoscopes from U.S. physicians and distribute them, with the help of humanitarian organizations, to communities around the world where medical supplies are scarce.

The AMA is seeking the support of ACP-ASIM and its members for this initiative by encouraging online purchases of one or more stethoscopes at the following web site <http://www.caring4humanity.org>. Stethoscopes ordered online are shipped directly to one of the AMA’s partnering humanitarian organizations for distribution around the world. The AMA receives no royalty for the sale of stethoscopes for WorldScopes and each stethoscope donation is tax deductible.

The success of WorldScopes depends upon leaders like yourself and members of the U.S. physician community acting individually and collectively to donate stethoscopes to their colleagues abroad. Your participation matters. Please do not hesitate to contact Katherine Rouse at (312) 464-4075, or <Katherine_rouse@ama-assn.org>, if you have any questions.

**EMAIL—THE COLLEGE CONNECTION**

Help us keep you up-to-date on the latest College news and important happenings in internal medicine! Please take a moment to provide ACP-ASIM with your email address. ACP-ASIM will not sell or share your email address.
Governor’s Newsletter