AMWA Names
1993 Health Priorities

At the annual President’s Retreat, held in Alexandria, VA February 5-7, AMWA leaders named AMWA’s top women’s health priorities for 1993: health care reform, curricula in women’s health, and gender equity in medicine.

The retreat brought AMWA President Leah J. Dickstein, MD, together with the new board members and committee chairs, for board meetings and free-wheeling strategy sessions facilitated by consultant Denise Cavanaugh. AMWA leaders discussed strategic plans, fundraising and regional development.

Among their decisions: to approve recommendations for AMWA’s women’s health priorities for the year. These health issues will receive top attention and resources in AMWA’s legislative, media, and program activities.

AMWA chose health care reform “to ensure that women’s health needs are not neglected in this year of debate and change in health care delivery.” says Dr. Dickstein. AMWA will focus on broad discussions of how to address women’s health in any reform; for example, how to guarantee that women’s basic health needs — from pap smears to breast cancer screening — are covered by the insurance system.

Leaders identified the women’s health curriculum issue because of the growing demand for more atten-

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Clinton Lifts Restrictions

AMWA was one of three medical associations invited to the White House, as President Bill Clinton made good on his campaign promise to end Reagan and Bush-era restrictions on abortion and family planning services.

Executive Director Eileen McGrath, JD, CAE, represented AMWA at a January 22 White House ceremony, where the President signed orders to lift the “Gag Rule” at federally-funded family planning facilities; end the “Mexico City policy” that limited U.S. funding of international family planning programs; halt the ban on federal fetal tissue research; and permit abortions at overseas U.S. military hospitals. The President also ordered a review of the current FDA “import alert” prohibiting personal use of RU 486: if no scientific basis is found for the alert, the President will order it lifted.

“I was amazed that, with the stroke of a pen, many of the battles AMWA has been fighting for the past year were gone,” said McGrath. Last spring, AMWA led a coalition of 23 medical and nursing organizations that urged Congress to pass legislation overturning the Gag Rule, which prohibited abortion discussions at federally-funded family planning clinics. President George Bush later vetoed the legislation.

Joining AMWA as a guest at the White House — along with family planning and women’s rights organizations — were the two medical groups that had testified with AMWA in Congress last April: the American Medical

Continued on page 3

Women at the Helm

Congratulations to AMWA member Joycelyn M. Elders, MD, of Little Rock, Arkansas, who was tapped by President Bill Clinton to be the next Surgeon General of the United States.

Dr. Elders, the Arkansas Public Health Director and a popular speaker at past AMWA meetings, will join two other notable women on the President’s health care team: Donna E. Shalala, PhD, the new Secretary of Health and Human Services, and First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton, who heads the President’s Task Force on Health Care Reform.
Mark Your Calendar for Interim

As Washington’s political leaders focus on health care, mark your calendars now for a chance to participate. “Women Promoting a Women’s Health Agenda” is the theme of AMWA’s 1993 Interim Meeting, set for June 25-28 at the Washington Court Hotel in Washington, DC.

The meeting will combine business sessions on Friday and Saturday with a fully accredited CME program on Sunday that highlights women’s health policy. Participants will hear from and talk to congressional leaders and health care experts. On Monday’s Lobby Day, AMWA members will visit their congressional representative, then enjoy a Capitol Hill luncheon with a well-known speaker.

Watch for a schedule and registration form in our April issue.

Final Call for Nominations

April 1st is the deadline for nominations for national offices in AMWA.

The 1993 Nominating Committee invites nominations for the following offices, to be elected at the November 1993 Annual Meeting:

1. President Elect (one-year term)
2. Vice President of Communication (two-year term)
3. Vice President of Program (two-year term)
4. Vice President of Career Development (two-year term)
5. Resident Representative (one-year term)
6. Director of Students (two-year term)
7. Speaker of House of Delegates (one-year term)
8. Vice-Speaker of House of Delegates (one-year term)

To be considered for a national office, nominees must meet two criteria: they must be an AMWA member in good standing for five years; and they must have served two years in a leadership position in national AMWA. Nominees (with the exception of candidates for the position of President Elect) are disqualified if they have served seven consecutive years on the AMWA Board of Directors.

Self-nominations are welcome, or nominees may be identified by other AMWA members or by the Nominating Committee (whose members are not eligible for candidacy).

Nominees must obtain a Candidate Questionnaire from Jackie DeSarno at AMWA, 801 N. Fairfax, Suite 400, Alexandria, VA 22314. Tel. 703-838-0500; fax 703-549-3864.

Submit curriculum vitae and completed Candidate Questionnaires to Jackie by April 1, 1993.

Understanding Menopause

Would you like a chance to counter all the misinformation about menopause?

AMWA has joined forces with the Business and Professional Women’s (BPW) Foundation to present UNDERSTANDING MENOPAUSE, a program supported by an educational grant from Wyeth-Ayerst Laboratories. All AMWA regular and resident members will soon receive a letter asking if they are interested in participating.

The program responds to the growing need to educate women about menopause — to answer questions and empower women to make informed decisions about their health care.

Participation is simple. Interested AMWA physicians are matched with BPW chapters in their community: physicians help deliver a prepared slide presentation and lead a discussion about menopause at a local BPW meeting. Materials are provided.

Watch for your letter. Or contact AMWA Public Affairs Director Alice L. Kirkman at 703-838-0500.

Retreat, continued

...tion to women’s health in medical education. AMWA has created such a curriculum for continuing medical education: AMWA’s first courses of the Advanced Curriculum in Women’s Health will be offered for primary care physicians in New York City on October 30 - November 2. The concept of a women’s health curriculum in medical schools is also attracting the attention of Congress. (See p. 3.)

“The curriculum is really a `big tent’ way to discuss the many women’s health issues that are important to us,” notes AMWA Deputy Executive Director Lois Schoenbrun, who has been dealing with congressional staffers on the issue. “For example, we can point out how cardiovascular diseases in women receive short shrift, both in medical research and patient care.”

On gender equity, AMWA will continue to pave the way for women in the medical profession, working to eliminate both sexual harassment and the “glass ceiling” barrier to professional advancement.

Retreat participants received an afternoon of training on Sunday, when the AMWA government affairs staff and committee chair Omega Silva, MD, conducted sessions on “How to Maximize Your Advocacy Impact.” Marilyn North Arnold, Medical Sciences Liaison for Upjohn, conducted a video role-playing session, where participants could evaluate their public speaking skills. About 15 leaders put those skills to the test on Monday, when they headed to the Capitol to visit congressional representatives.

(More news in our April issue.)
LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

The 103rd Congress

The 103rd Congress, which convened on January 5, is full of new members who bring energy and new perspectives to the nation’s capital. The number of women serving in the House of Representatives increased to 48—a 66% increase over the 102nd Congress. Six women now serve in the Senate: while that number is small, it represents a 300% increase over last year’s total. The number of African-American members in both houses increased from 27 to 40, and the number of Hispanic members from 13 to 19.

From Losses to Wins

With the new Administration, AMWA is already witnessing gains for many of our target issues. On the reproductive health agenda, President Clinton kept his campaign promise to lift several abortion restrictions. (See page 1.)

A number of bills that previously generated heated legislative battles may attract little conflict this time around, because veto-proof margins may no longer be needed. As one example, the Family and Medical Leave Act easily won both congressional passage and presidential approval.

Some battles will continue, but with a different focus. The Freedom of Choice Act has a good chance of passage—something unthinkable last year. But the biggest challenge will be to fight off amendments involving mandatory physician lectures, parental notification, waiting periods, and other restrictions. It also remains to be seen how Congress will respond to the recent Supreme Court decision in Bray v. Alexandria Women’s Health Clinic, which removed federal protection for abortion clinics against blockades by groups like Operation Rescue. Despite lingering questions about how to protect the delivery of abortion care, the climate for abortion rights is markedly friendlier than in past years.

Spotlight on Women’s Health Curricula

The coming congressional and executive branch activity should bring a new focus on women’s health. AMWA has been asked by several members of Congress and the presidential transition team to help set their women’s health agendas—for example, to assess ways in which women’s health needs can be addressed in a far-reaching way during any reform of the health care system.

One of the concepts that is gaining ground: to promote a women’s health curriculum in medical schools. The idea is based on the example of AMWA’s Advanced Curriculum in Women’s Health, a CME course for practicing physicians that starts in the fall of 1993.

AMWA has been working with the offices of Representative Nita Lowey (D-NY) and the Congressional Caucus for Women’s Issues to craft specific legislation. Rep. Lowey plans to introduce a bill making federal grants available to medical schools that develop model curricula, based upon the AMWA curriculum’s framework. The legislation may direct the Department of Health and Human Services—particularly the Office of Research on Women’s Health—to study how women patients are currently addressed in medical school training.

Legislation on medical school curricula is likely to be a part of the Women’s Health Equity Act, an omnibus measure addressing women’s health prevention, education and treatment.

Says Omega Silva, MD, Chair of AMWA’s Governmental Affairs Committee, “The new Congress presents AMWA with tremendous opportunities for advocating important changes. We look forward to keeping AMWA members up-to-date about all the important issues.”

Clinton, continued

Association and the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists.

“So many of these restrictions were impacting women’s health,” adds McGrath. The French drug RU 486 is an antiprogestin with potential uses not only as an abortifacient, but also in the treatment of breast cancer, endometriosis, and other women’s health conditions. “We applaud the President for acting so swiftly.”

“The President stressed that he was not promoting abortion, but simply removing any political agenda from scientific decision-making and patient care,” notes McGrath. “He kept emphasizing that people should be free to make their own health decisions.”

Before she left the White House, McGrath left an AMWA gift for the President and his family: three colorful t-shirts from AMWA’s anti-smoking campaign, with slogans about the dangers of tobacco use.

“There’s no doubt that health care is a dominant theme in Washington this year,” says McGrath. “AMWA plans to be on the scene every step of the way.”
STUDENT SENATE

On Politics
by Sofia Ali and Rachel Curtis
National Student Coordinators

We want to introduce ourselves, as the 1993 National Student Coordinators (NSCs). Here are the student election results from the AMWA Annual Meeting in San Francisco. Congratulations to all new and returning Regional Student Coordinators (RSCs). We look forward to a great year!

National Student Coordinators:

Sofia Ali
Medical College of Pennsylvania
Box 2
Philadelphia, PA 19129
215-848-6480 (h)

Rachel Curtis
Texas Tech University
Graduate Medical Education Office
4800 Alberta Avenue
El Paso, TX 79905
915-545-6517 (o)

Regional Student Coordinators:

Region I
Lily Chang
50 Island View Place, #709
Boston, MA 02125
617-436-7144

Region II
Amy Ferry
733 W. Summerset
W. Amherst, NY 14228
716-691-7739

Region III
Kristen Savola
80 Haven Avenue
Apt. 6C
New York, NY 10032
212-923-3937

Region IV
Debra Beavers McCormack
14891 St. Andrews Lane
Chapel Hill, NC 27514
919-929-6202

Region V
Michelle Brochmer
527B N. Fulton
Lubbock, TX 79416
806-799-3160

Region VI
Jennifer Miller
119 Tuna
Galveston, TX 77550
409-762-2716

Region VII
Beth Dowell
2303 Bellfield, #1
Cleveland Heights, OH 44106
216-791-7140

Region VIII
Latha Palaniappan
1980 Traver Road, #209
Ann Arbor, MI 48105
517-995-9413

Region IX
Rose Baghdady
245 Union Blvd.
St. Louis, MO 63108
314-367-0837

Region X
Deborah Wilson
641 Chimney Canyon Dr.
Tuscon, AZ 85748
602-298-6924

Jeanette I. Moore
217 Napa Drive
Augusta, GA 30909
706-731-0691

Your New Officers

AMWA's National Student Coordinators Rachel Curtis (front row, seated, on left) and Sofia Ali (front right), pose at the AMWA Annual Meeting with the new student officers. Behind them are Regional Student Coordinators (RSCs): (middle row, kneeling, from left) Kristen Savola, Kathy Parker, Beth Dowell, Rose Baghdady, and Pamela Stein; and (back row, standing, from left) Jo Marie Holm, Michelle Brochmer, Jennifer Miller, Deborah Wilson, Debbi Davis, Debra Beavers McCormack, Jeanette Moore, Amy Ferry, Lily Chang, and AMWA's Director of Students, Jeanne Arnold, MD. Not pictured: RSC Latha Palaniappan.

Continued on page 5.
Message from the Director of Students

What do you do if you find that your values are at variance with your institution? As a medical student, you are an adult with a set of values and ethical positions. You may have already discovered that some of the principles espoused by leaders are not always followed in practice. So you already knew that we "borrow" pens and paper clips and gloves. And you've come to grips with "truth telling" as a sometimes socially inappropriate activity. But...What do you do if the leaders are saying that it's okay to bash certain groups like women? We frown at the jokes. What if you hear that physicians who swear to the Hippocratic Oath are restricted from supporting a woman's right to choose?

Does an individual professor speaking in class on an issue represent the institution? If the student body is offended, does the institution have a responsibility to the student body? Does free speech allow freedom to express positions?

When our heroes have defects, we need to decide what we do in response. We may take a stand, discuss it in small groups, talk to the individual, attempt a compromise. We may want to make an effort to have the institution establish policy.

Some women medical students have taken such experiences and become involved in school-wide discussion forums in which the institutions have been willing to address the issues. Some AMWA students have led letter writing campaigns on issues important to women.

We can wait for it to go away, but it won't.

—Jeanne Arnold, MD

Student, continued

With the recent Clinton election and transition, our thoughts can't help but turn to politics. Clearly the winds of change are blowing hard; we have been promised new ideas and policies on health care, reproductive rights, and women in the workplace. Already there are more women than ever before in our national government.

Now that the ballots have been cast, most of the country is tired of politics, but it is as important as ever to remain active. Our challenge to you is to continue to be political in everyday life, at whatever level you feel comfortable.

Use your purchasing power, speak up when you disagree, do not tolerate gender stereotypes. AMWA provides a unique framework for advocacy and activism, but not all is done by sign carrying and letter writing. Branch programs on maternity and medicine, stress reduction or mentoring programs also serve to effect change. In fact, just being a woman in medical school is a political statement.

As NSCs, we are your voice on the Board of Directors of AMWA. We will also represent AMWA student members at four consortium meetings for student leaders of 22 organizations. We see our role as source of information and inspiration, and as problem-solvers for you. Please do not hesitate to call us.

—Sofia and Rachel

Student Loan Deadline

Reminder: Applications for AMWA's 1994 Student Loan Program are due in the AMWA office no later than April 15, 1993.

AMWA offers $1,000 or $2,000 loans at 10% interest rates to qualified AMWA student members in their 1st, 2nd, or 3rd year of medical school.

For an application, contact Marie Glanz at 703-838-0500, or write her at AMWA, 801 N. Fairfax St., Suite 400, Alexandria, VA 22314. Fax (703) 549-3864.

Call for Student Awards

The Janet M. Glasgow Essay Award is presented to an AMWA student member for the best essay of approximately 1,000 words about a women physician who has been a significant role model. The awardee will receive a cash award of $1,500 and will be recognized at an awards presentation at AMWA's annual meeting.

Mail entries to AMWA's national office, 801 N. Fairfax St., Suite 400, Alexandria, VA 22314. The deadline for receipt of manuscripts is May 31, 1993.

The Carroll L. Birch Award is presented for the best original research paper by a student member of AMWA. The recipient wins a cash prize of $500 and is recognized at an awards presentation at AMWA's annual meeting.

Send two copies of the manuscript, a letter from your faculty sponsor, and a cover letter stating your medical school, graduation date, permanent mailing address and telephone to AMWA's national office. The deadline for receipt of entries is June 30, 1993.

Experiencing Sexual Harassment?

Call AMWA's Gender Equity Hotline

703-838-0500, Ext. 311.
RESIDENT ROUNDS

A New Year
by Kathy Keller, DO,
Resident Representative

I begin 1993 looking ahead to a year of change. I am just getting used to being the new Resident Representative to the Board. This past week, I received my first overnight express letter, had two items come by fax, and was on a conference call. Quite a change for a lowly Family Practice resident! Also, as this is my third and final year of residency, the job search is on, and panic is setting in as I realize how much I don’t know. It’s a good thing that learning is lifelong for us all. I’ll let you know how it goes.

AMWA also has a new president, Dr. Leah Dickstein. She is a wonderful role model and educator, especially sensitive to the concerns of medical students and residents, as was Dr. Pardo before her. We should see great things coming from AMWA.

The 1992 Annual Meeting in San Francisco was very exciting. There were over 800 in attendance; unfortunately, only twenty-six of us were residents. We enjoyed workshops on women’s health, AIDS in women, and maternity in medicine, to name a few. It is very difficult to get to national meetings during residency, but I would urge all of you to make the effort. You will find it pays off in terms of an infusion of energy, increased self-worth, and enhanced awareness of the problems facing physicians (especially female physicians) today. It is one of the few meetings that blends clinical care, self improvement, practice management, political activism, and networking.


The Training Year

We have reached the (hallelujah!) halfway point of the academic and training year. Congratulations! We all have worked hard and learned a great deal so far. It is ironic that the winter months of January, February, and March are often when the “residency blues” hit, especially for interns. Somehow the halfway point passes, but it seems the end will never come, especially here in cold, cloudy Michigan.

It is hard to measure how much we have learned in the last six months, especially as so much of the learning is experiential, and in-training exams are often not a good measure of practical experience or knowledge gained. Many residencies are appallingly lacking in positive feedback, or even constructive criticism.

It will only be in July, when the new crew begins, that you will realize how far you’ve come. You will suddenly notice how automatic some things have become, how you are rattling off those orders that came so haltingly a few months ago. It is a great feeling, but one that seems far away when it’s dark outside as you leave the house and as you return home as well. Hang in there! You’re through the worst; it only gets better from here!

I found the main reward of my internship to be increased confidence, a prize not without pain. My favorite phrase in internship was “Pressure creates diamonds.” It’s a useful mantra when you’re feeling stressed.

Resident News

As the Resident Representative of AMWA, I have been invited to attend a meeting of the National Consortium of Resident Physician Organizations to be held near Washington, D.C. on February 19-20. There will be presentations on topics including reimbursement in primary care, practice management, and funding for graduate medical education. This organization represents an important gathering of residents from widely different groups who share similar concerns. The forum should prove an exciting vehicle for speaking out on issues important to residents.

The AMWA Residents Committee is in the process of suggesting resident appointments to the various committees who do much of the work of AMWA. It is important that residents be represented, that our voices be heard within the organization. It is a wonderful opportunity to meet or become one of the “movers and shakers” within AMWA. This is also a springboard for national office if you have an interest.

If you have not served on a committee before, but would be interested, please write or call me as soon as possible. [Address: 4255 Oak Street, Leslie, MI, 49251. Tel. 517-377-0323 (o); 517-589-8886 (h).] Committee meetings take place during the interim and annual meetings, so attendance at these for resident committee members is strongly urged. Please get involved!

Finally, an Emily Note: Emily is my eight-month old daughter, and I’m so excited watching her grow and develop, I thought I’d share that with you each newsletter. She is getting closer to crawling each day. Two days ago she managed to get herself to a sitting position for the first time and already she’s a pro, doing it over and over. No teeth yet, for which I’m thankful, as she’s still breast-feeding. We’ll cross that bridge when we come to it.
Foundation Gifts

The AMWA Foundation is pleased to announce three new Charter Corporate Members of the Foundation. United States Surgical Corporation of Norwich, CT, the very first charter member, was recognized by AMWA at the November 1992 annual meeting. Recently, Sanofi Winthrop Pharmaceutical Company of New York City became the first pharmaceutical firm to join as a charter member. The Upjohn Company of Kalamazoo, MI became a member with their generous educational grant to AMWA's Advanced Women's Health Curriculum.

In other Foundation news, Bristol Myers of New York City made a generous unrestricted gift to the Foundation.

These contributions to the Foundation — along with generous gifts from AMWA members — enable AMWA to carry out programs promoting women's health.

Friends: Join FAMWA

Friends and families of AMWA members — or anyone else who is ineligible for AMWA membership but wants to support the organization — can become members of the Friends of the American Medical Women's Association (FAMWA). The auxiliary furthers the goals of AMWA through volunteer action and support.

FAMWA's co-chairs Barbara A. Cadwell, JD (daughter of Past President Anne Barlow, MD), and Daniel and Steven Dickstein, MD (sons of AMWA President Leah J. Dickstein, MD) encourage all family members and significant others to join AMWA's women physicians in efforts to promote women's health and medical service.

President Dickstein, an active recruiter, notes that AMWA members can give FAMWA memberships as gifts for others. FAMWA members join ranks with health activists, and receive a subscription to the newsletter and the Journal of the American Medical Women's Association, for an annual fee of $40. Contact the AMWA Membership Department at 703-838-0500.

Upcoming Meetings

First Annual Congress on Women's Health, June 3-4, Washington, DC, by the Journal of Women's Health and BioConferences International. AMWA is a co-sponsor. For information, call 212-996-5679.

Medical and Orthopedic Issues of Active and Athletic Women, April 30 - May 1, University Park, PA, by the Penn State Center for Sports Medicine. Call Roger Maclean, 814-863-6106.


AMWA Region X Conference, September 10-12, at the Hallmark Resort of Cannon Beach, Oregon. Many speakers and topics. Call Kaaren A. Nichols, MD, 206-625-0202 (0).

President's News

AMWA President Leah J. Dickstein, MD, has been busy since her inauguration in November 1992.

Immediately following the AMWA Annual Meeting, she met with AMWA-member students at the University of Texas in San Antonio, was interviewed for Hippocrates Magazine, and began helping to reorganize the Cincinnati chapter of AMWA.

After strategizing with AMWA leaders at the President's Retreat in February, Dr. Dickstein heads for the People's Republic of China in late March, to represent AMWA at the International Conference on Women's Health.

Mentor Program

The Ruth Jackson Orthopaedic Society, a support and networking group for women orthopaedic surgeons, has a mentor program for both women students and residents. Orthopaedists interested in having or being a mentor or students wanting to know more about this specialty, should write or call: Diana D. Carr, M.D., P.O. Box 4040, Sebring, FL 33871. Tel. 813-382-7777.

Call for Award Entries

It's time for AMWA's annual "Award for the Positive Portrayal of Women Physicians." Each year, AMWA honors the best advertisement that pictures a woman physician in a positive manner.

The award-winner, and any runners-up, will be announced at AMWA's Annual Meeting in New York City in November 1993.

Send copies of any advertisement — from newspapers, journals, brochures, or other publications — along with the name and address of the publication it came from, to Mary Guinan, MD, Centers for Disease Control, M.S.D.-21, Atlanta, GA 30333. The deadline for submission of entries is May 31, 1993.
MARK YOUR CALENDAR

June 25-28, 1993
AMWA Interim Meeting
Washington, D.C.

October 30 - Nov. 2, 1993
AMWA Women's Health
Curriculum Course
New York City

November 3-7, 1993
AMWA Annual Meeting
New York City

June 24-26, 1994
AMWA Interim Meeting
Washington, D.C.

November 2-6, 1994
AMWA Annual Meeting
Orlando, Florida

AMWA MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

NAME ________________________________

ADDRESS ________________________________________

CITY ______________________ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE (H) ___________________ (W) ________________

MEDICAL SCHOOL ___________________ GRAD YEAR ______

SPECIALTY(S) __________________________

LICENSE(S) ____________________________

SPECIALTY BOARD CERTIFICATE(S) _________

☐ Regular Member $195
☐ Resident $70
☐ Student Member $45
four years including subscription to Journal
☐ Check Enclosed

VISA / MC # _____________________________

(90 day minimum charge)

Exp. Date _____________

MAIL TO: AMERICAN MEDICAL
WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION
801 NORTH FAIRFAX STREET
ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314

WHAT'S HAPPENING

AMWA

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