

AMWA Connections

Newsletter of the
American Medical Women's
Association
Volume XX, No. 2
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Highlights From AMWA's Interim Meeting

by Clarita Herrera, MD, President

The 1999 Interim Meeting entitled "Complementary Medicine: Establishing a Scientific Basis" held June 25-27 at the Hyatt Regency Capitol Hilton Washington, DC was a great success. The weekend was filled with many productive meetings and activities.

On Friday, June 25, AMWA held Lobby Day activities including a Congressional Breakfast Briefing on Women and Mental Health. After I welcomed the attendees and congressional sponsor Rep. Juanita Millender-McDonald (D-CA), Past President Sharyn Lenhart, MD, Past President

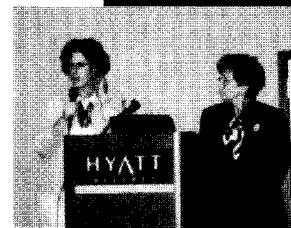


Interim Meeting attendees listen intently to James Gordon, MD at the General Session

overview of Lobby Day activities, please see the Advocacy section of the AMWA Web site.

Also on Friday, Cheryl Lambing, MD, Advisory Group member for the Arthritis Education Initiative, supported through an educational grant from Searle and Pfizer, Inc., spoke on osteoporosis at the AMWA Foundation Health Care Roundtable. More detailed information about the Health Care Roundtable can be found in this newsletter in the AMWA Foundation's article. AMWA Foundation Board members Marilyn Castaldi and Ellen Miller shared their expertise on public relations with our members in a highly relevant talk. A workshop on fundraising and membership drive by Berit M. Lakey, PhD, of the National Center for Nonprofit Boards, served as lingering food for thought for those who were present.

On Saturday, June 26, the continuing medical education program featured James Gordon, MD



Susan Sklar
Diana DeLuncheon

Debra Judelson, MD, and Tobacco Control Sub-Committee Chair Michele Bloch, MD, PhD addressed the audience. Martha Manning, PhD, an advocate from the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill, also spoke about her personal battle with mental illness, specifically severe clinical depression. Destigmatization, parity in insurance coverage, and recognition of psychiatry as pivotal in the comprehensive treatment of the patient will remain a high priority for AMWA. AMWA was very pleased to have five members of Congress and several federal agency officials attend the breakfast briefing, all expressing their enthusiasm for the work AMWA has done and continues to do. For an extended

Candidates for 1999 AMWA National Elections

President-Elect	Omega C.L. Silva, MD
Vice President Career Development	Lynn C. Epstein, MD
Vice President Communication	Michele Bloch, MD, PhD
Vice President Program	Laura L. Morris, MD
Director of Students	Willa Brown, MD, MPH
Resident Representative	Larissa Nekhlyudov, MD
Speaker of the House of Delegates	Terri Tuckman, MD
Vice Speaker of the House of Delegates	Carolyn A. Webber, MD

A postal ballot will be mailed to all members in August in accordance with the bylaws changes adopted by the House of Delegates in 1998.

Continued on page 2

In this issue

Student Senate	2
Overactive Bladder Initiative	2
Member-to-Member	3
Members in the News	4
Osteoporosis Focus of Roundtable	4
Sex & Sensibility Campaign	5

Student Senate

Seema Kumbhat, National Student Coordinator

Standing in the ICU, my attending looked at me directly and said, "You can't get too emotionally involved!" Then we turned to the 28 year old father of two who just last night was ejected from a motor vehicle that had been hit by a drunk driver. "I've seen residents get emotional early on, and then they become depressed and cannot carry out what's necessary for their patients." That may have been true, but wasn't feeling for our patients and then doing something to help them part of the reason why we chose to become doctors? Isn't it possible

that we might actually be motivated by the passion we have for our patients?

As my other team members assembled away from the patient, I looked at him one more time. Although seemingly stable, the sullen look in his eyes said there was something wrong. I looked at a chest x ray taken just one hour before, and it revealed atelectasis in both lung bases along with bilateral pleural effusions. He needed antibiotics. My attending agreed and wondered why no one had noticed this apparent problem. Although his fever could have derived elsewhere, and a lung source as a possibility was certainly no brilliant conclusion, I attributed this dis-

covery to passion. I thought the passion that I felt gave me instant clarity, and beyond that, motivation.

It is true that practicing medicine requires a cool head and logical mind, but to deny ourselves passion and emotion, two very human qualities, would in my mind deny ourselves one of the best parts of being a physician: to let the experiences of others impact our lives, and to grow from those encounters. As physicians, passion can guide us to see that our patients have the best care. Passion will allow us to love our job and to continue to find ways to do it. Why would we dare give it up?

Introducing AMWA's Overactive Bladder Initiative

AMWA is pleased to introduce a project supported through an unrestricted educational grant from Pharmacia & Upjohn to develop a comprehensive curriculum on urinary dysfunction in women. Jean Fourcroy, MD, PhD leads this initiative as project chair. A multi-disciplinary team is working with her to develop a curriculum targeted toward primary care providers. Topics that will be covered in the curriculum include epidemiology, quality of life, drug and hormonal issues, and diagnostic and treatment considerations.

If you are interested in being trained as a Master Faculty for this initiative, please contact Brenda Johnson, MEd at the National Office at bjohnson@amwa-doc.org.

Master Faculty training will be conducted November 7-8, 1999 in San Francisco, CA at AMWA's Annual Meeting.

Interim Meeting
Continued from page 1

giving an overview of an Integrative Medicine Practice; Yingming Zhao, PhD discussing the scientific principle of Qigong; and a panel of speakers including Freddie Ann Hoffman, MD; Matthew Daynard, JD; Barbara Altman, PhD; and Richard Nahin, PhD, speaking about the government's role with regulation and research in complementary medicine. The luncheon presentation on Saturday featured AMWA Past President Diana Dell, MD speaking about "Physicians Collective Bargaining Units and Unionization." A straw poll taken among the attendees revealed that two-thirds favored unionization. The Campbell bill, which will afford relief from anti-trust laws to the self-employed physician, continues to gather support in Congress.

The Interim Meeting wrapped up on Sunday with committee meetings. As usual, the committees worked very diligently and managed to complete their assigned tasks while still being able to network and do some museum hopping. I am indeed very pleased to report that the four task forces have been highly productive in pushing forward the President's initiatives set forth at the January retreat. A more detailed report from each of the task force and committee chairs can be found on our Web site in the Members Only section, as well as this article and others from me in the new "President's Watch" column.

In closing, the success of a challenging and forward thinking Interim Meeting was fulfilled because of the intelligence and physical stamina of our leaders and our tireless and dedicated Executive Director, Eileen McGrath, JD, CAE, and her staff. To all, thank you.

Member-to-Member

Part 3 of Dr. Mom
by Cynthia Ikner, MD

Dr. Cynthia Ikner shared in the previous issue of AMWA Connections, her experience with choosing a rotation program. In part three, Dr. Ikner concludes this series with helpful hints for residency and support for single parent "Dr. Moms."

Residency is here! Obtaining a residency in a city with family support is optimal, especially if you are a single parent. This is especially important if you are making a geographic change. The stress of a new job and a move can be a set up for significant health problems. All of these changes affect the children too. And, don't forget the significant emotional drain that becomes evident when choosing where to finish your training.

Through AMWA, I received offers to "share" residencies with other Dr. Moms. Shared residencies involve a six month on, six month off residency. Many schools offer this

type of arrangement. However, this option is not always financially possible, as your pay only occurs every six months. If you are a single parent, seek out a residency program that has a strong network of single parent Dr. Moms, for they are out there. Place a telephone call to the contact for the Director of Medical Education to find this support. Be sure to express that you are a single parent moving to a new city. You will need to know how close the hospital is to public schools, child care options, etc.

Once again the budget and activity schedule are critical. Carrying a pager and cell phone is a must for the single parent Dr. Mom resident—the kids or sitters need to be able to reach

"If you are a single parent, seek out a residency program that has a strong network of single parent Dr. Moms, for they are out there."

you while you are on the "roller coaster hours" of resident rotations. Finances can be difficult at this stage, but if you have graduated from medical school with your credit intact, there are companies willing to lend you money against future wages.

Being a mom and a physician is not a matter of timing. There is never an ideal time to be a mother in medical training, but it can be very rewarding with careful planning and development of a support network. Most importantly, it is a special feeling to have rewarding professions at the hospital and at home. Who says you can't have it all!

For more information or to participate as a writer of the Member-to-Member column, call or e-mail Member Services at 1-800-995-AMWA or member@amwa-doc.org.



New Benefits For AMWA Members

We are pleased to announce that AMWA members will soon be able to take advantage of new benefits such as:

Mentoring Program for Students and Residents

Career Connections —An on-line job listing service

Chat Rooms—chat with AMWA leaders and trainers on hot topics affecting your personal and professional development

Listservs—network with your colleagues via e-mail

Membership Cards In The Mail

Members who have paid their 1999 membership dues will be receiving their new membership card in the mail soon. Keep your card handy to access AMWA's Members Only Section on the Web (www.amwa-doc.org). If you have any questions, contact Member Services at 1-800-995-AMWA.

Health Care Roundtable Focuses on Osteoporosis

The realities of osteoporosis and the new treatments available for women at risk were the topics at the AMWA Foundation Health Care Roundtable held at the Interim Meeting. More than 29 million individuals suffer from osteoporosis, a systemic skeletal disease characterized by low bone mass which can lead to frail bones and fractures. It is estimated that 1.5 million fractures are due to osteoporosis each year at a direct cost of \$14 billion.

Cheryl Lambing, MD, an Assistant Clinical Professor at the University of California, Los Angeles and an advisor on AMWA's successful arthritis project, presented a comprehensive lecture covering all risk factors, bone mass measurement techniques, therapies, and impact. "Osteoporosis is not an inevitable condition of aging," said Dr. Lambing. "As physicians we can help our patients through nutrition, exercise, and various medications."

The health care roundtable facilitated by Foundation Chair Kathryn Bemmann, MD, is an important benefit of the AMWA Foundation's Corporate Partners Program which seeks to enhance and strengthen communication between AMWA and health care companies. 1999 Corporate Partners include AstraZeneca; Eli Lilly & Company; Genentech; Glaxo Wellcome, Inc.; Merck & Company; Organon; Ortho-McNeil Pharmaceutical, Inc.; Pfizer, Inc; Pharmacia & Upjohn; The Procter & Gamble Company; and Searle.

Members in the News

Gail Barton, MD, MPH, has co-authored a book with her father, William Barton, MD, *Shrinking Time for Health Administrators: Father-Daughter Psychiatrists Discuss Time Management*.

Anne E. Bernstein, MD, FAPA, has been elected a Life Fellow of the American Psychiatric Association in recognition of her significant contributions to psychiatry.

Past President Claire Callan, MD, as President of the Illinois State Medical Society, has agreed to create a collective-bargaining body to negotiate with health maintenance organizations (HMOs) over what services will be covered by their respective policies.

Past President Roselyn Payne Epps, MD, MPH, MA, and her daughter Roselyn E. Epps, MD were featured in the Mother's Day issue of *Life* magazine.

AMWA President Clarita Herrera, MD was interviewed on MSNBC on Sunday, June 27 and Past President Debra Judelson, MD was featured on NBC's *Weekend Today Show* on Saturday, June 26. Both interviews concerned whether women ages 40-49 should have insurance coverage for annual mammograms.

Clarita Herrera, MD was elected as Chair of the International Medical Graduates section of the AMA at its recent annual meeting.

from the Tobacco
Control and Prevention
Initiative



Coronary Heart Disease (CHD) in Women Project

Did you know that a recent study in the *Journal of Women's Health and Gender-Based Medicine* found that most women who receive heart bypass surgery resume the unhealthy lifestyle choices that initially contributed to their coronary heart disease? The study found that six months after surgery 59% of these patients were hypertensive and 85% exceeded recommended limits for total cholesterol. One year post-surgery, 10% of these women continued to smoke. To do its part, AMWA's Education Project on Coronary Heart Disease in Women continues to provide CME training to physicians to diagnose and treat women who have or are at risk for coronary heart disease. For more information on AMWA's CHD project, visit the AMWA Web site or contact Julie Schafer at the National Office.

Reproductive Health Initiative (RHI)

The U.S. House of Representatives recently passed legislation that bars the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) from using federal funds to approve or regulate any drugs that induce medical abortion. This marks the second consecutive year that the House has voted to block FDA approval of mifepristone (RU 486), a drug that is predicted to be approved at the end of this year. The U.S. Senate is not expected to adopt similar legislation. In addition to terminating a pregnancy, mifepristone has been studied for efficacy in the treatment of fibroid tumors, ovarian cancer, endometriosis, HIV, glaucoma, Cushing's syndrome, and some types of breast cancer. For more information on AMWA's Reproductive Health Initiative, which includes information on mifepristone in the curriculum, please contact Julie Schafer at the AMWA National Office.

On June 15th, AMWA launched Sex & Sensibility, a public education campaign aimed at generating greater awareness and sensible use of emergency contraception to help reduce unintended pregnancies and abortions in the United States with the help of an educational grant from

Gynetics, Inc. Drew Pinsky, MD, the popular host of "Loveline," will be the program's spokesperson along with AMWA experts in reproductive health. The program was announced at a unique press conference which used actors and actresses as well as physicians. AMWA members Clarita Herrera, MD; Wendy Chavkin, MD, MPH; and Carolyn Westhoff, MD spoke at the event. Media coverage of the event was excellent, and AMWA expects to generate increased awareness with this effort. More information about Sex & Sensibility can be found on the AMWA Web site. ✦

NEW NATIONAL OFFICE STAFF

AMWA is pleased to announce that Julie Schafer has joined the staff as the new RHI/CHD Project Associate, replacing Stephanie Woodfin who has begun her medical studies at the Western University of Health Sciences College of Osteopathic Medicine of the Pacific.

Calendar

August 31, 1999

Proposed Resolutions Due with Action/Fiscal Notes

October 8–19, 1999

International Outreach on Women's Health President's Trip

November 10–14, 1999

Annual Meeting—Forging Alliances on Global Health Issues; San Francisco, CA



Newsletter Committee and Staff

Clarita Herrera, MD, *AMWA President*

Mary Guinan, MD, *Co-Vice President, Communications*

Carolyn Webber, MD, *Co-Vice President, Communications*

Diana Dell, MD, Chair, *Publications Committee and*

Director of Students

Seema Kumbhat and Heather Williams, *National*

Student Coordinators

Wendy McCurdy, MD, *Resident Representative*

Eileen McGrath, JD, CAE, *Executive Director*

Beth Feldpush, *Managing Editor*

Kelli Mills, *Editor*

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Web Site Update

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