

Summer 2004



*America's medical schools
and teaching hospitals
working together to inform
Congress and other
policymakers about medical
education for the benefit of
all Americans*

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Policymakers and Opinion Leaders Across the U.S. “Enroll” in Medical School and Experience Life as a Resident



Spring and Summer Programs Held in Missouri, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Texas and New York

Several AAMC member institutions took advantage of congressional recesses and invited their U.S. Senate and House legislative staff to come to their campuses and experience life as a medical student, resident, and physician. For some of the programs, the target audience included state legislative staff, county officials, and other opinion leaders.

Using the AAMC Project Medical Education (PME) model as a guide, each institution developed unique programs tailored to showcase the process of medical education and the need for sustained and sufficient public funding.

Following is a summary of recent programs:

During the spring congressional recess, **Washington University in St. Louis School of Medicine, Barnes-Jewish Hospital, and St. Louis Children's Hospital** collaborated on a program attended by seven members of congressional staff from both Washington, DC and district offices. The April 7-8 program began with each of the attendees receiving a “profile” of an actual medical student along with an admissions essay, and each attendee was asked to assume that identity and provide details to the group.



After receiving their white coats on the first afternoon, the staffers learned about the role of basic research at the medical school and the career path of an M.D./Ph.D. Following some hands-on sessions (photo courtesy of Robert Boston), the attendees received their own medical school debt letters, learned about the residency match program, and then attended a session on medical school and teaching hospital financing. An

evening trip to a St. Louis Cardinals game was a special treat for the staffers and gave each of them the opportunity to have informal conversations with the real medical students and residents. The second day began with early morning rounds at Barnes-Jewish and St. Louis Children's Hospitals, and the program concluded with a lunch program that included a talk with a former patient who had received a lung transplant and was about to celebrate the fifth anniversary of his surgery.

Thomas Jefferson Medical College and Thomas Jefferson University Hospital hosted their inaugural PME in July and specifically geared the program to three

senior legislative staff members in three state senate offices. On the first day, attendees received a lunch overview of Jefferson as an academic medical center and the health care marketplace. They were then whisked off in their new white coats to begin their undergraduate medical education in the anatomy lab and medical simulation lab. Patient care rounds with residents and medical students the next day rounded off the last-half of their "M.D. program." Following graduation and a match day ceremony, the staffers attended their residency orientation with residency directors. A tour and explanation of the neurosciences research underway at Jefferson followed lunch. The staffers then served as residents in a simulation of rounds in various specialty areas. Graduation exercises were held later that afternoon.

Seven Washington, DC-based congressional staffers representing Senate and House offices flew to **East Tennessee State University's James H. Quillen College of Medicine** to attend the August

16-17 PME event. After meeting with ETSU's president and the dean of the medical school, the staffers took part in "The Newly Med Game" where they learned more about the process of medical school admissions, the costs of attending medical school, and some of the unique characteristics of the curriculum including Quillen's rural primary care track. A hands-on exercise in the patient simulator lab and a session with faculty members about the technologically advanced medical records system at the VA Hospital provided insight into the increasing role of technology in medical education and practice.



This was the first visit to ETSU's campus for several of the staffers and a road trip to one of the rural communities served by the medical students. The staffers also visited the nation's second smallest hospital while on their return ride to the main campus.

Parkland Hospital, Parkland Foundation, and the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas collaborated to develop "Project Parkland", a two-day program that took place on August 19-20. Attendees of this program included U.S. Congressional staff, as well as aides to Dallas County commissioners and officials. Sessions included a visit to the OR, an informative session on Parkland's Women and Infants Services, and a tour of the nation's largest (16,000 births last year) single-site delivery facility.

Conversations with the president of the UT-Southwestern Medical Center, CEO of Parkland, other senior administrators, and Parkland residents along with a visit to a one of Parkland's community-oriented primary care centers increased the attendees' awareness of the many benefits provided by both the medical school and hospital. The event was such a success that Parkland administrators hope to plan a similar program for state legislators.

After having hosted a PME program in 2001, **SUNY Upstate Medical University** sponsored a second program on August 23-25. The eight Capitol Hill staffers attending began their medical school experience with a dinner presentation by the University's president and later followed by a white coat ceremony conducted by the dean of the college of medicine. Of course, the students also received financial aid advising along with a tuition bill. After an explanation of the medical school curriculum, the new "students" observed a standardized patient demonstration. On the following morning, the attendees spent time with a neurosurgery resident who had recently taken a break from his medical education to work in Senator Clinton's office. The staffers then found themselves enrolled in Anatomy and Physiology, where they also learned about the willd body program. Later, they had the opportunity to "walk the walk" of a new resident as they participated in clinical experiences including surgery and pediatrics.

A significant portion of the SUNY-Upstate program focused on biomedical and clinical research. Staffers gained a better understanding of the research process and had the chance to hear from some of the leading NIH-funded researchers at

SUNY-Upstate. Another panel of faculty members filled the group in on the day-to-day life of a faculty physician. Just before graduation on the third day of the program, the staffers walked the hospital halls with the COO and heard about some of the immediate challenges that SUNY Upstate faces from an operational standpoint.

Special thanks to the following individuals (as well as all the planners and presenters) for their time and dedication to the PME project and to making these recent programs such a success:

Washington University in St. Louis School of Medicine, Barnes-Jewish Hospital, and St. Louis Children's Hospital: Nancy Parker-Tice, Don Clayton, LeAnn Chilton, Emmy McClelland, and Brenda Kay Chaffee

Thomas Jefferson Medical College and Thomas Jefferson University Hospital: Timothy Brigham, Ph.D. and Hugh Lavery

East Tennessee State University's James H. Quillen College of Medicine: Ronald Franks, M.D., Robert Acuff, Ph.D. and Joni Cannon

Parkland Hospital, Parkland Foundation, and the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas: Ron Anderson, M.D., Kern Wildenthal, M.D., Ph.D., Barbara Lord Watkins, Steven Bristow, Jennifer Cutrer, Ph.D., and April Foran

SUNY Upstate Medical University: Gregory Eastwood, M.D., Steven Scheinman, M.D., Ronald Young and Daniel Hurley

Capitol Hill staffers get a look at patient safety initiatives at AAMC member institutions

June luncheon seminar focusing on patient safety and the reduction of medical errors reunites PME alumni and attracts new interest in PME programs

Forty-six congressional staffers attended an AAMC PME luncheon seminar on Capitol Hill on June 7. The seminar addressed how AAMC member institutions are improving patient safety and educating tomorrow's doctors about ways to reduce medical errors. Many of the staffers in attendance had participated in a previous PME program at medical school and teaching hospital campuses across the country. For others, the seminar served a compressed example of the interactive non-lobbying, educational experience that PME provides.

The featured presentations demonstrated specific ways that two AAMC member institutions are currently addressing patient safety in the undergraduate and graduate medical education process. Dr. Eliot Sussman, CEO of **Lehigh Valley Hospital** and chair of AAMC's Council of Teaching Hospitals and Health Systems, served as moderator and provided an overview of patient safety underscoring the commitment that AAMC member institutions are making to reduce the incidence of medical errors.



In the first presentation, Dr. Joseph Halbach, associate professor and chair of the department of family medicine at **New York Medical College**, asked the staffers to assume the role of a third-year medical student as he discussed one of the innovative techniques he employs with his own medical students. Using an actual case of a fatal medical error, Dr. Halbach addressed the systemic ways that errors can occur as well as the very human side of errors and the importance of creating a culture where medical



mistakes are openly reported. To illustrate one of the ways he approaches the subject with medical students, Dr. Halbach showed two videos of actual medical students working with a standardized patient to learn how to discuss a medical error with a patient effectively and compassionately.

The second presentation, conducted by Dr. Clay Dunagan, associate professor of medicine at **Washington University** and vice president for quality, **BJC**



HealthCare and Dr. Thomas Bailey, associate professor of medicine at Washington University and director of medical informatics for BJC HealthCare, discussed the ways that information technology is being used to enhance the safety of medical care. By showcasing the pharmacy and microbiology expert systems implemented in BJC hospitals, Dr. Bailey provided case studies and statistics that illustrate the progress that has

been made in reducing medical errors. He also emphasized the importance of reporting systems that provide research data so that continuous improvements and results can be achieved.

Want to plan a PME program on your campus?

Upcoming planning workshops to be held in Chicago, Illinois and Scottsdale, Arizona

Two workshops have been planned in coming months to assist AAMC members in planning a PME program. Members may select either date/location for attending the workshops. Registration information is available at www.aamc.org/meetings.

**Friday, October 1, 2004, 9am-2pm
W Chicago City Center**



**Friday, February 11, 2005, 9am-2pm
Renaissance Scottsdale Resort**

By attending one of these workshops, you and other members of your planning team will:

- find out more about the advantages of hosting a PME program at your institution;
- gain step-by-step planning instructions for organizing your PME event;
- determine the key messages that you want to send to legislators and influential policymakers;
- and hear about best practices, lessons learned, and ways to make sure your program is a success.

Who should attend?

These one-day workshops are designed for faculty and staff who are responsible for education affairs, public relations, institutional affairs, government relations or any other discipline that may be involved in educating policymakers and influential stakeholders. **If you are considering hosting a PME program at your institution within the next year, the workshop will prove to be extremely valuable.**



More winning ideas...

Faculty and staff involved in planning and hosting PME programs are developing new and creative ways to present the key messages and to ensure that the program remains interactive and educational. Here are just a few of the innovations to the PME model utilized at the most recent programs:

- East Tennessee State University's program planners not only provided bios of all the speakers during the course of the program, but they also included photos of the key speakers with the bios in the participants' notebooks. This will certainly make it easier for the participants to feel at ease following up with speakers and recalling the topics covered by each speaker. In addition, each participant was given a photo student I.D. and the individual photos were placed into a one-page composite much like the annual photo spread of actual medical student classes.
- SUNY-Upstate Medical University developed a session that addressed some of the reasons why physicians pursue careers in academic medicine. A panel of senior and junior faculty talked about their careers, their families, some of the hard choices they have had to make along the way, and the satisfaction they receive from their work.
- PME hosts not only concentrate on having attendees experience life as a medical student and resident, they also like to give their guests a chance to sample some of the local cuisine or culture. From Ted Drewes frozen custard in St. Louis to Dinosaur Barbeque in Syracuse to Tex-Mex in Dallas, to dinner accompanied by live bluegrass in Johnson City, Tennessee, recent PME hosts added these local "features" for legislative staff who don't often have the chance to visit a places that many of their constituents "call home."

PME Steering Committee: Elizabeth Stengel, Chair, Conference of Boston Teaching Hospitals and Boston University School of Medicine; Lois Bready, M.D., University of Texas Medical Branch School at San Antonio; Dennis Boulware, M.D., University of Alabama School of Medicine; Brent Ennis, Lehigh Valley Hospital; Jerry Friedman, Ohio State University Health Sciences Center; Patricia Green, AAMC; Deborah Kallick, Cedars-Sinai Medical Center; Steven Kanter, M.D., University of Pittsburgh; Mary Koppel, University of Minnesota Academic Health Center; Jennifer Litchman, University of Maryland School of Medicine; David Moore, AAMC; and Paul Vick, Duke University Health System.