

The Group on Student Affairs Northeast Region Annual Report 2009

The Northeast region enjoyed a very active year with a number of exciting initiatives occurring at member schools. In April 2009, the annual regional meeting was held in conjunction with our colleagues from NEAAHP, NEOSR, and NEMAS. This was an incredibly successful meeting with over 300 attendees. The theme of the conference was “Unlocking the Doors to Healthcare Education and Access” and focused on those challenges/barriers faced by students seeking to enter and succeed in medical school as well as similar issues faced by patients in accessing quality medical care. Highlights of the meeting included:

- An opening plenary from Dr. Sondheimer which discussed matriculation, graduation, and specialty choice data from the AAMC that raised questions about the conventional wisdom about factors influencing that choice. Other presentations included a talk on the importance of systems education from a Vice President from the American Board Internal Medicine, and a discussion of communication and race issues in the access to and delivery of quality healthcare from a MacArthur Genius Grant recipient.
- A new “Meet the Deans” format where representatives from different schools addressed initiatives in four distinct areas (Financial Aid, Diversity Climates, Curricular/Academic Supports, and Admissions), providing a window into how institutions confront challenges in these arenas.
- Sessions on mental health issues in our students, holistic review, financing of medical education, and a presentation entitled, "How Inclusive Are We," in which students discussed diversity issues on their respective campus and its impact on the learning environment.
- A successful recruitment fair for local premedical students.
- A wonderful social event at the Constitution Center.
- A closing session on the new changes to the American with Disabilities Act and implication for our students including the issue of accommodations on the MCAT, USMLE, and other standardized exams.

Special thanks go to Connie O'Hara, the NEAAHP Program Co-Chair, and Susan Maxwell for their invaluable assistance and incredibly hard work.

The spring meeting also saw the change in succession for the region's leadership. Current officers are: Past Chair Lori Alvord, Dartmouth Medical College; Chair Tom Koenig, Johns Hopkins School of Medicine; Chair Elect Kathleen Reeves, Temple Medical School; Secretary Adam Aponte, Mt. Sinai School of Medicine; Treasurer Scott Waterman, University of Vermont School of Medicine.

Our current Committee representatives are: COA Mercedes Rivero, UMDNJ-New Jersey Medical School; CODA Carlyle Miller, Cornell Univ. Weill Medical College; COFSA Betsy Groves, University of Massachusetts Medical School; COSA Scott Schroth, George Washington University School of Medicine; COSR

The region is looking forward to the National GSA meeting in Austin next spring. A site for the regional meeting in 2011 is not finalized at the time of the writing of this report.

Thomas Koenig, M.D.
Chair, GSA Northeast Region 2009-2010