

GSA Reporter

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Group on
Student Affairs
GSA



Greetings from the National Chair

Georgette A. Dent, M.D.

Oil reaches another record high! Price of wheat doubles! Stores prohibit rice hoarding! Inflation may raise concerns about our own personal pocket books and it should raise concerns about the costs of financing medical education. Inflation has the potential to make an already bad situation—student educational debt—much worse.

During the past two decades, America has enjoyed relatively low inflation. Many items, such as clothing, food (until very recently) and electronics, have actually become cheaper. In spite of low inflation, health care costs and higher educational costs have soared. In medical education, we have the confluence of two of the fastest rising costs in our economy. From just 2001 to 2006, the average tuition at private medical schools increased from \$31,296 to \$39,413,¹ an overall increase of 26 percent or a compound annual rate 4.7 percent. The increase for public medical schools was even more dramatic in percentage terms. Public medical schools tuition increased from \$12,411 in 2001 to \$20,978, in 2006, for an overall increase of 69 percent or a compound annual rate of 11.1 percent¹.

Most of us are familiar with the impact of the high costs of medical education on students from the excellent report by Paul Jolly, Ph.D., *Medical School Tuition and Young Physician Indebtedness*. This report, first published in 2004, was updated in October 2007. In the update, Jolly noted that, for students at public medical schools, educational debt has increased from \$86,000 in 2001 to \$120,000 in 2006. The figures are even higher at private schools. Because physician salaries have

not kept pace with inflation, Jolly posits that repaying debt is going to become increasingly difficult and some physicians may be repaying their educational debt into their 50s.

Increasing educational debt will make it more difficult to increase ethnic and socioeconomic diversity among medical students. In an *Analysis in Brief* also written by Jolly and published earlier this year, he noted that already approximately 50 percent of medical students come from families with incomes in the highest quintile and the percent of students from households in the highest quintile of income may be increasing². Minority groups that have traditionally been underrepresented in medicine suffer from significant disparities in wealth and are also underrepresented among households whose incomes are among the highest quintile.

Some students have already started to adapt to the new economic realities. Schools are getting requests from students to reimburse their higher fuel costs due to their now more expensive commutes to clinical sites. I recently spoke with a student who proudly announced that he was now driving more slowly in an effort to save on gasoline costs, a form of the practice of “hyper-miling.” Students may modify their lifestyle in an effort to reduce their educational debt, but because so much of the debt is due to high tuition costs, lifestyle modification will only be successful up to a point.

In the report released a few years ago by the AAMC Working Group on Student Educational Costs and Debt, several recommendations were made regarding ways in which schools could ameliorate the costs of medical educational and help students reduce educational debt, and schools have already started implementing some of them. For example, the Cleveland Clinic Lerner College of Medicine will

begin making tuition free and the Harvard Medical School will reduce their tuition by, on average, \$50,000 a year to students from families with household incomes of \$120,000 or less a year.

There may be relatively few of our medical schools that have the resources to offer free tuition, but one thing all of us can do is be as informed as we can on the best financial options for our students. A couple of months ago, the AAMC announced the FIRST campaign in an effort to provide financial aid officers and students better access to financial information on a wide array of issues including debt management, lenders, and loan repayment options. FIRST stands for Financial Information Resources, Services, and Tools. The FIRST campaign could not have come along at a more opportune time. The goal of FIRST is to help medical school borrowers expand their financial literacy, make smart decisions about student loans, and manage their student debt wisely. FIRST is a terrific resource, not only for students and financial aid officers, but also for applicants, residents, and financial advisors.

The financial crisis facing higher education has been and will continue to be extremely challenging to medical schools and students. Our ability, and the ability of our students, to efficiently get access to the best financial information we can will be an important component of helping us meeting this challenge. To this end, the FIRST campaign is definitely a first step in the right direction.

¹ Paul Jolly, *Medical School Tuition and Young Physician Indebtedness, An Update to the 2004 Report*, Association of American Medical Colleges, October 2007.

² Paul Jolly, *Analysis in Brief* Volume 8, Number 1, January 2008, Association of American Medical Colleges.



Greetings from the GSA-MAS National Chair

*Cynthia E. Boyd, M.D., FACP,
MBA*

In late fall of this year our nation will head to the polls to make its collective voice heard and counted towards electing the forty-fourth president of the United States. When one considers the challenges and critical issues that we all face as Americans, it will be crucial that everyone who is eligible to vote fully participates in the electoral process. Similarly, there have been significant issues and challenges facing medical education and our academic institutions over these past many years that have required the full participation of the AAMC's professional development groups, teaching hospitals and regional constituents. Healthcare work force issues including the anticipated physician shortage, medical educational costs and student debt, increasing diversity in the medical workforce, insuring patient safety and quality of care; these are just some of the significant challenges that medical education currently faces.

Over the past year, the AAMC has reorganized and restructured itself as an organization, adopting new mission and vision statements as well as nine strategic priorities that will guide the Association's efforts over the next several years. In concert with these changes, the Group on Student Affairs-Minority Affairs Section (GSA-MAS) has also been working with AAMC leadership to help expand the scope and focus on diversity within the structure of the organization and throughout the spectrum of medical education. The MAS Coordinating Committee, along with GSA-MAS regional constituents have worked diligently for the past eighteen months to provide AAMC leadership with ongoing feedback, suggestions and recommendations regarding the governance, structure and key characteristics that should be considered for inclusion regarding the proposed new affinity group on diversity. Structurally, there are fundamental elements that must be well contemplated and considered during the

process of establishing a new group, including: the group's name, mission, purpose, membership, leadership/management of the committee's affairs, as well as the rules, regulations and strategic priorities. A GSA-MAS working group, comprised of representatives from the MAS Coordinating Committee's leadership has already initiated the work of addressing and defining these key characteristics, to be proposed and presented to AAMC leadership at a date in the near future. I am confident that this group will work to define the core elements of mission, vision and purpose and set forth the priorities that will drive the leadership and membership of the new group. Adding to the importance of this newly proposed group is the fact that as an organization, the AAMC has also targeted diversity in medical education as one of its nine strategic priorities going forward. In the AAMC publication titled: "Learn, Serve and Lead," the AAMC's stated goal is to: "Lead efforts to increase diversity in medicine." In this area, the AAMC has noted the following as potential goals: "to catalyze national efforts to enroll and graduate more medical and life sciences students from diverse backgrounds, with particular emphasis on historically underserved populations; promote strategies for increasing diversity among faculty and leaders in medical schools and teaching hospitals; foster research on the impact of diversity in medicine; collaborate with constituents and strategic allies to advocate for the benefits of diversity to the public and policymakers; press for a K-12 educational system that prepares students—regardless of background—for the challenges of medical, graduate, or health sciences education with our members and others."

In meeting its mission and purpose, the GSA-MAS has long recognized and addressed the crucial work and significance of the medical school experience for those individuals who are underrepresented in medicine through creative, committed and resourceful recruitment measures, establishing and maintaining robust pipeline programs, working to continually improve admissions processes

that will serve to recognize the multidimensional characteristics, talents and life experiences that add value and texture to medical education. And last but not least, the GSA-MAS has worked to ensure that our schools have built-in support mechanisms and an infrastructure that will serve to retain the students that we actively recruit and admit to our institutions. The goal now is to expand that pipeline and extend its reach beyond medical school and student affairs into graduate medical education, faculty affairs and beyond.

The GSA-MAS has indeed enjoyed a successful working relationship and partnership over these many years, but most will agree that the issues and concerns relative to diversity and those individuals who are underrepresented in medicine are myriad and extend well beyond student affairs. Looking ahead, one of the key objectives for the GSA-MAS working group [for the establishment of the new affinity group on diversity] will be to strategize and develop a plan on how best to expand and broaden the reach of diversity to all levels of academic medicine and medical education while also maintaining the successful and vital partnership that has been mutually shared between the GSA and MAS. Considering the many past challenges we have all faced and tackled together, I have no doubt that we are well positioned and seasoned to meet this challenge and many more that are certain to come our way in the future.

Spotlight on the 2008 AAMC Annual Meeting

GSA 50th Anniversary Reception

The GSA community will be celebrating its 50th year anniversary of “Creating a Better Tomorrow” during this year’s AAMC Annual Meeting, in San Antonio, Texas. The reception will take place on Friday, October 31st, from 5:30-7:30 pm at the Convention Center; room 205. All GSA members are welcome to attend.

The Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) Group on Student Affairs (GSA) originated as a direct result of the 1956 AAMC Teaching Institute on the Appraisal of Applicants to Medical School. This event brought together for the first time every medical school in the country, representatives who are primarily concerned with medical school admissions and medical student issues.

In 1957, medical school representatives reconvened during AAMC Annual Meeting and established the Continuing Group on Student Affairs (CGSA). At this meeting the CGSA decided to initiate regional meetings in addition to an annual national meeting. Since 1958 meetings on the regional level have convened. Today, the GSA mission is to advance medical education and to represent the interests of medical schools and medical students in five areas of practice and expertise:

- Admissions
- Financial Aid
- Minority Affairs
- Student Affairs
- Student Records

Please mark your calendar for this special event!

Visiting Student Application Service (VSAS) to Present a Mini-Update Session for the Student Records Officers

Since many of our student records officers hold dual roles, Melissa Donner, VSAS Sr. Specialist, has been working with Karen Lewis, chair to the GSA Committee on Student Records (COSR), to include a Mini-VSAS Update during the Registrars Session. The Registrars Session will be held on Saturday, November 1, 2008 from 3:00pm to 4:00pm. The VSAS Update will occur on Friday, October 31, 2008 from 1:00 to 2:00pm concurrently with the NRMP Update. Please consult the GSA/GSA-MAS Annual Meeting at-a-Glance for location information.

Minority Student Medical Career Awareness Workshops and Recruitment Fair

Saturday, November 1, 2008

Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center
San Antonio, Texas

Your free online registration is now available at <http://www.aamc.org/students/minorities/medicalcareerfair.htm>. Please consider sponsoring an interactive medical and health activity!

For questions, please contact Juan Amador, at 202.862.6149, Angela Moses, at 202.862.6203, or e-mail CareerFair@aamc.org.

Election Night Party— Tuesday, November 4, 2008

Please join the AAMC for drinks, dessert and election returns! More information will be provided to registered attendees in early October. Also, don’t forget to vote absentee!

And the winner is...

This year marks the 6th year that the GSA will present the AAMC-GSA Award for Exemplary Service. The Exemplary Service Award, as it is most commonly known, is presented by the AAMC—GSA to a current or former GSA representative who has demonstrated exemplary service to the GSA.

“Exemplary service” is defined as significant and sustained leadership, expertise, and/or creativity in addressing an issue or issues of importance to the GSA. Nominees for this award shall have demonstrated, in activities appropriate to membership in the GSA, an extraordinary record of accomplishment, collaborative leadership, resourcefulness, dedication, mentoring of GSA colleagues, and commitment to the mission of the GSA. This service can be as a medical school faculty or staff member; a GSA Institutional Representative or GSA Individual Member; the chair or a member of a GSA national committee (Admissions, Minority Affairs, Student Affairs, Student Financial Assistance, Student Records); a GSA representative to a AAMC advisory committee (AMCAS, ERAS, Medical Student Performance Evaluation, MCAT, Expanded Medical School Admissions, and so forth); or a GSA regional or national officer.

Past recipients are:

2003-Norma Wagoner, Ph.D.
2004-Hershel “Pat” Wall, MD
2005-Jane Thomas, Ph.D.
2006-Maria Savoia, MD
2007-Bruce Ballard, MD

To find out who will receive the 2008 AAMC-GSA Award for Exemplary Service, you’ll have to join us at the GSA Business Meeting on Sunday, November 2, 2008 from 10:30am to 12:30pm in room 214C/D of the Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center in San Antonio TX.

2008 AAMC Annual Meeting - At-A-Glance

San Antonio, TX • October 31 - November 5, 2008

This Year's Meeting Theme: Creating a Better Tomorrow • WEB SITE: <http://www.aamc.org/meetings/annual/2008/start.htm>

GSA/GSA-MAS Annual Meeting-at-a-Glance

DATE/TIME.....SESSION NAMEROOM ASSIGNED

(Italics indicate AAMC general programs) All GSA/GSA-MAS sessions will be held in the Gonzales Convention Center unless otherwise indicated.

Friday, October 31

7:30am – 10:30am	.....GSA Committee on Admissions	Travis C (Grand Hyatt)
7:30am – 10:30am	.....GSA Committee on Student Affairs.....	Travis D (Grand Hyatt)
7:30am – 10:30am	.....GSA Committee on Student Financial Services.....	Travis B (Grand Hyatt)
7:30am – 10:30am	.....GSA Committee on Student Records	Travis A (Grand Hyatt)
11:00am – 2:00pm	.....GSA-MAS Coordinating Committee.....	Lone Star E (Grand Hyatt)
1:00pm – 2:00pm	.....NRMP Update.....	Rm 205
1:00pm – 2:00pm	.....Visiting Student Application Service (VSAS) Update	Rm 209
2:00pm – 3:20pm	.....ERAS Update.....	Rm 213 A/B
2:00pm – 3:00pm	.....AMCAS Update.....	Rm 211
3:30pm – 5:30pm	.....GSA/OSR Joint Plenary: The Millennial Becomes a Physician.....	Rm 214 C/D
3:30pm – 5:30pm	.....MCAT Update	Rm 214 A/B
5:30pm – 7:30pm	.....GSA 50th Anniversary Reception.....	Rm 205

Saturday, November 1

8:00 am – 10:45am	.....GSA Plenary Session: Holistic Review: Remaking the Face of Medicine... ..	Rm 007 A-D
11:00am – 12:45pm	.....MAS Central Region Meeting	Rm 217 C/D
11:00am – 12:45pm	.....MAS Northeastern Region Meeting.....	Rm 217 C/D
11:00am – 12:45pm	.....MAS Southern Region Meeting	Rm 217 C/D
11:00am – 12:45pm	.....MAS Western Region Meeting	Rm 217 C/D
1:00pm – 2:30pm	.....GSA Central Region Meeting.....	Rm 006 A
1:00pm – 2:30pm	.....GSA Northeastern Region	Rm 006 B
1:00pm – 2:30pm	.....GSA Southern Region.....	Rm 006 C
1:00pm – 2:30pm	.....GSA Western Region.....	Rm 006 D
1:00pm – 2:45pm	.....MAS/OSR/DPP Session: Meet and Greet Session.....	Rm 217 C/D
3:00pm – 4:00pm	.....Registrars Session.....	Rm 006 D
3:00pm – 4:30pm	.....GSA Legislative Update	Rm 006 B
3:00pm – 5:00pm	.....Transition Forum: Is the MSPE Dead?	Rm 008 A/B
3:00pm – 6:30pm	.....MAS Minority Student Medical Career Awareness Workshops.....	<i>See next page</i>

Sunday, November 2

7:00 am – 8:15 am	.....OCOMM Session MAS/Aspiring Docs	Rm 205
8:00am – 10:30am	.....GSA/GSA Mini-Workshops	<i>Consult Meeting Website</i>
8:30am – 10:20am	.....MAS Business Meeting	Rm 214 B
10:30am – 12:30pm	.....GSA Business Meeting.....	Rm 214 C/D
1:30pm – 3:30 pm	.....AAMC Leadership Forum.....	<i>Consult Meeting Website</i>
3:30 pm – 5:00 pm	.....AAMC Focus Sessions	<i>Consult Meeting Website</i>
5:00 pm – 7:00 pm	.....AAMC Reception and Exhibits.....	<i>Consult Meeting Website</i>
5:30pm – 7:00 pm	.....MCAT Session	Rm 214 A

Continues on next page.

Monday, November 3

8:30 am – 10:15 am	.....AAMC Plenary	Consult Meeting Website
10:30 am – 11:45am	.....AAMC Focus Sessions	Consult Meeting Website
12:00 am – 12:45 pm	.....2009 GSA Annual Planning Committee Meeting.....	Goliad (Grand Hyatt)
1:00 pm – 2:30 pm	.....GSA Plenary: Assuring Better Applicants and Physicians.....	Rm 214 C/D
3:00 pm – 4:30 pm	.....GSA-MAS Program.....	Rm 217 D
4:30 pm – 6:00 pm	.....AAMC Assembly	Consult Meeting Website
5:00 pm – 6:30 pm	.....MAS Town Hall Meeting.....	Rm 217 D
6:00 pm – 7:00 pm	.....AAMC Music & Medicine	Consult Meeting Website
6:30pm – Until	.....Diversity Policy and Programs Reception	Consult MAS meeting Website

Tuesday, November 4

8:30 am – 9:30 am	.....AAMC Political Spotlight	Consult Meeting Website
10:00 am – Noon	.....DPP: Diversity Research Forum.....	Rm 214 B
11:00am – 12:30pm	.....CiM Session.....	Rm 006 B
12:30 pm – 3:30 pm	.....GSA Steering Committee Meeting.....	Travis A/B (Grand Hyatt)
1:00 pm – 4:00 pm	.....GEA/GSA Mini Workshops.....	Consult Meeting Website
1:00 pm – 5:00 pm	.....GEA/GSA Group Discussions	Consult Meeting Website

Wednesday, November 5

10:30 am – Noon	.....GEA/GSA Small Group Discussions	Consult Meeting Website
1:00 pm – 6:00 pm	.....GEA/GSA Mini-Workshops	Consult Meeting Website
1:00 pm – 6:00 pm	.....GEA/GSA Small Group Discussion	Consult Meeting Website

MAS Minority Student Medical Career Awareness Workshops & Recruitment Fair

12:00 pm – 3:00 pm	.....Recruiters and Interactive Medical and Health Activities Setup.....	Hall D
12:30 pm – 5:00 pm	.....Registration	Tower View
1:30 pm – 2:45 pm	.....MAS/OSR/DPP Session: Career Awareness Participants Meet & Greet	
	Current Medical Students	Consult MAS meeting Website
2:00 pm – 3:30 pm	.....Prehealth Advisors, Guidance Counselors, & School Admin Workshop.....	Consult MAS meeting Website
3:00 pm – 4:30 pm	.....College Students (CS) and Parents Workshop	Consult MAS meeting Website
3:30 pm – 4:30 pm	.....Pre-health Advisors, Guidance Counselors, & School Admin	
	on Advising Minority Premedical Students Networking Session	Consult MAS meeting Website
4:30 pm – 6:30 pm	.....Recruiter fair and Interactive Medical & Health Activities for College Students, Parents, Pre-health Advisors, Guidance Counselors, & School Admin.....	Consult MAS meeting Website

Innovations in Medical Education (IME) and Commercial (C) Exhibit Hours:

Sunday, November 2	9:00 am – 1:00 pm	(Cont. Breakfast at 9am; Lunch at 11:30am)
	3:30 pm – 5:00 pm	
Monday, November 3	9:00 am – 1:30 pm	(Lunch beginning at 11:30)

FUTURE AAMC ANNUAL MEETING DATES

2009	November 6 – November 11	Boston, MA
2010	November 5 – November 10	Washington, DC
2011	November 4 – November 9	Denver, CO

***Election Day is November 4, 2008. Please remember to cast your vote via absentee ballot.**

GSA Meetings of Interest

2008

AAMC Annual Meeting

October 31 – November 5, 2008

2009

Financial Aid Administrators Professional Development Conference

January 14–17, 2009

San Francisco, CA

NEGSA Spring Meeting

April 2–5, 2009

Philadelphia, PA

WGSA Spring Meeting

April 18–21, 2009

Santa Fe, NM

CGSA Spring Meeting

April 15–19, 2009

Chicago, IL

SGSA Spring Meeting

April 23–26, 2009

Dallas, TX

Careers in Medicine Professional Development Conference

June 15–16, 2009

Savannah, GA

Admissions Officers Professional Development Conference

June 25–28, 2009

Ft. Lauderdale, FL

Student Records Officers Professional Development Conference

June 25–28, 2009

Ft. Lauderdale, FL

Congratulations

1958-2008 **50** years
GSA
Group on Student Affairs

GSA Reporter

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