

AAMC Organization of Student Representatives Annual Meeting Digest 2008 – San Antonio, Texas

An Abridged Version of Our Adventures in the Alamo City

Communications Committee

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HEADLINES:

- **Tuition and Debt Town Hall Meeting** – As our national presidential election loomed, the OSR utilized a town hall format to discuss the ever increasing problems of student debt and appropriate solutions to these problems. With average medical student outgoing debt rising to an astonishing average of \$154,607, many OSR representatives discussed their prospective state or school policies to decrease debt and even forgive loans for those students who choose a career in primary care. Solutions consisted of organizing a study to determine the true cost of medical education, meeting with legislators and policymakers to advance the cause, and discovering venues to subsidize our education with work students can perform during their clinical years.
- **Principles for Health Care Reform** – Each region was visited by Dr. Joanne Conroy, AAMC Chief Health Care Officer, to discuss the recently published AAMC document entitled [Principles for Reform of U.S. Health Care: A Guide for Policymakers](#). Dr. Conroy discussed her willingness to work with all sides of medicine from business to academia in order to promote the agenda outlined by the AAMC. The six principles for reform include covering the uninsured and underinsured, rethinking the delivery system, health care financing, preserving the current safety net, developing health care work force, and advancing discovery and innovation.

NATIONAL COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- **Communications** – The “Questions to Consider” document was unveiled right before the Annual Meeting, which provided useful and thought-provoking questions for OSR representatives to facilitate optimal discussion during the Annual Meeting. Additionally, the committee was active in improving the features and functionality of the OSR Online Community. Periodic e-mails were sent to the regions with updates on discussions and debates.
- **Community and Diversity** – The number one priority continued to be promoting and advertising AspiringDocs.org. The committee has acquired the toolkit materials and will be using them to advertise the web site to high school and college students in local communities across the country. Another wonderful career fair was organized during the meeting, which featured an updated *Things I Wish I Had Known* document to better serve participating students.
- **Legislative Affairs** – Four focus newsletters were published and the Physician Policymaker Interview Series was continued with new interviews with Senator Tom Coburn (R-OK), Representative Paul Brown (R-GA), and Former Surgeon General C. Everett Koop.
- **Medical Education** – Tracking Innovations in Medical Education (TIME) highlighted seven innovative programs from across the country including Global Health in Changing Environments (Ohio State), Leadership in Medicine for the Underserved Program (Michigan State), and Co-Curricular Credit Program (Wayne State). The Tools to Teach Professionalism in Medical Education was also created summarizing five programs and tools. Both of these documents can be found on the OSR Online Community.
- **Student Affairs** – The [Profiles in Career Advising](#) document outlined approaches from nine medical schools that have been effective in assisting students with their specialty choice and residency placement. Interesting topics include Career Speed Dating at Vanderbilt, 2-week electives at New York Medical College, and Resident Roundtable Sessions at UCLA.

SESSIONS GALORE:

- **FIRST** (Financial Information, Resources, Services, and Tools) Web site – Created by the AAMC in collaboration with the medical school financial aid community and the OSR. FIRST for Medical Education is designed to help members of the academic medicine community navigate the intricacies of student debt. The goal is to help medical school borrowers expand their financial literacy, make smart decisions about student loans, and manage their student debt wisely. Some of the tools include: the new Economic Hardship Deferment (HRD) calculator, an interactive [Budget Worksheet](#), and information about the new [Doing Well by Doing Good: Loan Forgiveness for Public Service](#).
- **Career Advising for the Match** – As medical education continues to change, good and accurate career counseling is critical in preparing students for the transition to the residency of their choice. Medical school classes are increasing in size while graduate medical education positions stay stagnant. It is possible this may make the Match process increasingly competitive in the future and career counseling will become even more important. In this session, current career counseling methods, the effect of the publication of "Charting Outcomes of the Match," and what residency directors are looking for when selecting candidates for their programs were discussed.
- **Public Health: What MDs Need to Know** - There is increasing recognition that physicians must have a grounding in public health that allows them to promote a healthier population and intervene to improve health determinants instead of focusing solely on acute and chronic illness. While many medical students and practicing physicians have chosen to pursue public health training, medical curricula are also beginning to teach principles of public health. This session explored the knowledge and skills that all MD graduates should have to be prepared to practice medicine in a way that promotes a healthier public. It also examined this intersection of clinical medicine and public health and how the overlap will impact both fields in the future.

STUDENT PROGRAMING SHOWCASE:

- **Co-Curricular Credit Program** – *Jessica Slim, Wayne State University SOM, jslim@med.wayne.edu*
Students are awarded both formal recognition as well as one month of elective credit for structured, self-selected involvement in their local communities. Programs include volunteerism, social or political action in the community, curricular improvement projects, and humanism in medicine.
- **3rd Year Curriculum at Bassett Hospital** – *Mitul Kanzaria, Albany Medical College, kanzam@gmail.com* - This program impresses the importance of continuity care to third year medical students who complete a year of inpatient (12 weeks), longitudinal (32 weeks), and rural (4 week capstone) care at one community hospital, the Mary Imogene Bassett Hospital in Cooperstown, NY.
- **Pre-Medical Mentoring Program: Medical Students Mentoring Future Medical Students** – *Rajiv I. Nijhawan, University of Miami Miller SOM, rnijhawan@med.miami.edu* – A program partnering 100 volunteer medical students with 250 undergraduate pre-medical students from Miami-Dade County to provides mentoring, advising programs, research opportunities, and extra clinical experiences.
- **The Next Level of Care: Innovation and Expansion at Well Established Student-Run Clinics** – *Rajiv I. Nijhawan, University of Miami Miller SOM, rnijhawan@med.miami.edu* – The Mitchell Wolfson, Sr. Department of Community Service at UMMSM coordinates volunteer medical students and physicians at 8 free health screening fairs and 2 free clinics, serving approx. 1,500 patients annually.
- **Human Context in Health Care** – *Eric Meyer, Uniformed Services University, s10emeyer@usuhs.mil*
– This course, which encourages self-exploration and critical analysis of individual perceptions, has been taught at USU for over 20 years and achieves 95% class attendance without being mandatory. Participants are asked to confront their own feelings regarding everyday patient scenarios presented by experienced, practicing physician moderators.

REGIONAL DISCUSSIONS

• **Northeast**

- The "selling" of clerkship spots to offshore medical schools.
- How students responded to the pilot year of VSAS
- Career advising - how does your school approach it?
- Effectiveness of professionalism programs
- Effects of combined undergraduate and medical school debt.
- Students participating in LCME visits at different medical schools.
- Future goals of AAMC to publish ranking criteria for medical schools as an alternative.
- Have any of your schools gone green?

• **Southern Region**

- Research time for students, designated as specific track or time set aside during elective rotations
- CAM in the curriculum, is it introduced via lectures, grand rounds, or clinical elective time?
- Evidence Based Medicine as first year case presentations, journal clubs, and clerkships projects
- USMLE Board teaching and reviews occurring during second year with varied success.
- Student Governments generating more involvement by emailing SOAP-styled updates.
- International service trips facilitated as away electives require creative fundraising efforts
- Faculty mentors/advisors are assigned or chosen to assist with academic performance
- Honor Codes and Councils have student representation, some with student-run subgroups
- Student health insurance is difficult for schools with satellite campuses
- Match Day has related expenses and celebrations paid for by fundraising, class dues, book sales, and more casual activities which require less funds
- Completion of clinical competencies accounted for by mobile clinical "passports"
- Business of medicine taught over lunch lecture series

• **Western Region**

- Profiles of career advising programs at various schools
- Third Year Clerkship Innovations – expanding elective options
- Dean's Letters (MSPE: medical school performance evaluation) – Time to get shorter and sweeter?
- The Interview Trail – cutting travel expenses in an energy-scarce world

• **Central Region**

- Profiles of career advising programs at various schools
- School policies on health insurance for students: are students required to go to resident clinics?
- Peer-feedback during all years of medical school: how it is done at each school?
- Learning basic clinical skills: is it done over the first two years or before third year?
- Clinical exposure during the first two years: how much is it done at each school??
- Academic tracts: what are the options, and what are the requirements?
- Increase in student enrollment: are there enough resources for all students?

THANK YOU

The Communications Committee would like to thank the outgoing OSR Administrative Board for their outstanding work planning the Annual Meeting and throughout the 2007-2008 year. Thank you to Dianne Reis – Chair, Matt Rudy – Chair Elect, Jim Littlejohn – Immediate Past Chair, Bryan Harris – Legislative Affairs Delegate, Jason Lott – Communications Delegate, Ricci Sylla – Student Affairs Delegate, Catherine Spina – Medical Education Delegate, Dominique Arce – Community & Diversity Delegate, Roxanne Richards – Central Region Chair, Jenny Olges – Southern Region Chair, Sarah Milliken – Western Region Chair, and Elisabeth Pierson/Janae Phelps – Northeast Region Chair.

For more detailed information on any of the items discussed above or any comments about the digest, please feel free to e-mail Sameer Vohra at svohra@siumed.edu.