

OSR News

Organization of Student Representatives

Regional Updates

Congratulations to the newly elected officers! Please visit <http://www.aamc.org/members/osr/reports/start.htm> for a list of new officers for each region as well as complete reports from the spring regional meetings.

Central Regional Update

KRISTINA TONCRAY, CHAIR, TONCRAYK@MSNOTES.WUSTL.EDU

- ◆ The 4th year housing exchange program, presented by Halil Kanaan, Wayne State, would assist students in finding housing and making their housing available to other students for away rotations. Susan Goldsmith from MCW will create a survey to assess schools' interests. The Ad Board will review this initiative at the June meeting.
- ◆ The responses from the central regional health insurance survey are being collected. This information will be available soon for anyone who would like to compare school plans.
- ◆ Keith Ridel, our new Legislative Affairs Regional Delegate, is currently working on a letter-writing campaign in regards to tuition increases.

Southern Regional Update

DARRELL BASKIN, CHAIR, BASKOWNIN@HOTMAIL.COM

- ◆ Medical Student Work Hours – Interest was expressed in pursuing a cogent policy that would mirror the recent ACGME guidelines on residents' work hours. Several students voiced a desire for protected study time during rotations.
- ◆ Restriction of Tuition Increases – There apparently has been a push from U.S. Representative McKeon to impose federal sanctions on schools that raise tuition prices above a set limit two years in a row. Here is the URL of a letter in opposition of such a proposal: <http://www.acenet.edu/washington/letters/2003/04april/McKeon.cfm>.
- ◆ Community Outreach to Medicine's Future Practitioners – There was an interest in recruiting high school students for medicine via several different mechanisms: 1. The Great American Teacher project (email Karl: kwaite@hsc.usf.edu for more info); 2. An open house; or 3. As part of the family medicine core clerkship (email Meg: zembala@uthscsa.edu for further info).
- ◆ Compilation of a Compendium of Information about Residency Programs – We are interested in obtaining more information about residencies than is currently available (i.e., FRIEDA) and are interested in pursuing a modified version of the Residency Review Committee reports which are currently private property of said committee and the described program. Our Student Affairs Regional Delegate, Christi Kidd, is looking further into this (for more information, email her at ckidd@lsuhsc.edu).

Northeast Regional Update

MIRIAM POST, CHAIR, MDP001@JEFFERSON.EDU

- ◆ Medical Student Evaluation by Residents & Faculty – Several students expressed concern over the way clinical evaluations are completed at their schools and the need for increased education for evaluators so they have a better understanding of what criteria to use for

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grading and the mechanics of a given school’s evaluations. It should not be the student’s responsibility to interpret the grading system to each resident/faculty they encounter. Additionally, how do various schools weight an exam (shelf or school-specific) versus the resident/attending evaluations?

- ◆ Medical Student Notes in the Chart – There is substantial confusion over reimbursement issues surrounding student notes that appear in patient charts. It’s unclear whether reimbursement is being denied if there is ONLY a student note (co-signed or not) or if there is ANY student note. The background for this issue includes concerns about liability (on the part of both the hospital and individual physicians), patient safety, problems surrounding co-signing of notes, and educational value of writing the notes. Various schools have taken different approaches to the problem, in part dictated by state laws about reimbursement.
- ◆ OSR-Student Affairs Relationship – Is information shared well between you and the Student Affairs Dean(s)? If not, what can be done to facilitate that relationship?
- ◆ International/Away Electives – Different schools have varying policies about where students may rotate and for how long. Many students are unaware of the opportunities available to them during medical school.

Western Regional Update

JOULE ADLER, CHAIR, JADLER@UCL.EDU

- ◆ Aid for Iraq’s medical school – Sharon Rose, U. Colorado, proposed that the OSR may be able to provide monetary aid for Iraq’s Medical School by making caducei pins and selling them for \$2. Questions: How do we make the pins? How do we sell them? Whom could we sell them to? What does the Iraqi school need? Ask at our schools to see if anyone has a medical contact in Iraq. Contact the International Red Cross and the World Health Organization. How would we ensure that money raised would reach the people who need it? Everyone agreed that if we show the need and have the means to get money there, the project could be successful.
- ◆ Cover the Uninsured Week – U. Colorado’s OSR coordinated with AMSA and had lectures and speakers all week. At other schools, AMSA managed the project or nothing was planned. WOSR discussed that the timing was not ideal for their schools; finals week or vacations impeded scheduling an event.

Building Community in Puerto Cabezas

KRISTINA TONCRAY, CENTRAL REGIONAL CHAIR

Spending time on the beach? Sounds like a typical spring break. Spending time on the beach after a day of digging wells with the people of Puerto Cabezas, Nicaragua? Sounds like a typical spring break for some students at Washington University.

Mixing concrete and doing home visits with clinic nurses may not be what comes to mind for many people when they think of spring break, but for 12 students at Washington University School of Medicine, it was the perfect way to spend a week away from classroom study. Every year, 2nd year students at WUSM are given the opportunity to spend a week abroad on a grant from the school’s Forum for International Health and Tropical Medicine. This year, a group traveled to Puerto Cabezas with Bridges to Community, a non-profit organization that organizes service-based travel in Nicaragua, Kenya, and Nepal.

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Along with Dr. Bob Greenburg from Dartmouth Medical School (the students’ physician mentor for the week), students spent their time building wells in the barrios alongside people from the community, teaching HIV educational sessions at a grade school, seeing patients in the “Centro Clinico Bilwi,” and doing home visits to see people who could not make it to the clinic for care. In addition, the students experienced the local culture through dance performances by local children, a visit with a traditional healer, chats with host families, and a discussion with Dr. Myrna Cunningham, a physician, first governor of the “Autonomous Region of the North” and an expert on traditional medicine in Nicaragua.

Though the week spent there was short, the connections students made with each other and with the people of Puerto Cabezas will remain in their hearts for much longer than simply a week.

For more information on organizing a service-based trip, contact toncrayk@msnotes.wustl.edu
For more information on Bridges to Community, go to www.bridgestocommunity.org

Calendar of Events:

June 22-23

OSR Ad Board Meeting
Washington, DC

September 16-17

OSR Ad Board Meeting
Washington, DC

November 6-9

OSR Annual Meeting
Washington, DC

Medical Students Lobby for Caps on Tuition Increases

CHRISTIANA RUSS, NATIONAL DELEGATE FOR STUDENT AFFAIRS

Tuition increases at the University of Tennessee College of Medicine have prompted the student government to lobby on students’ behalf. The class of 2003 matriculated paying \$10,611 per year in tuition and fees for in-state residents; now during their senior year they are paying \$17,172. This year’s fees are above the public medical school national average fees of \$14,635 and also above the Southern regional average of \$11,409. UT is now the second most expensive public medical school in the South behind the University of Virginia.

In response to students’ concerns, the Medical Student Executive Committee at UT formed a tuition subcommittee, whose first objective was to gather information and distribute it to classmates, faculty and administrators. The subcommittee also composed a letter lobbying for no increases in tuition this coming year and for a permanent cap on tuition increases. The letter was sent to the University of Tennessee Board of Trustees, as well as to members of the Tennessee Commission on Higher Education and to some of the legislators. One subcommittee member commented that they are eager to hear what effect their efforts might have on tuition this year: “They seemed to hear us well, but we will have to see if that goodwill results in action. We are ready to continue increasing our efforts until they come up with a good resolution.”

The UT tuition subcommittee is interested in hearing how students at other medical schools have responded to tuition increases. Please email information to Christiana Russ, cruss@utm.edu.

Hot Topics

RYAN GREGORY, OSR CHAIR

Professionalism in Medical Education – Dipesh Navsaria, OSR National Delegate for Medical Education (dipesh@navsaria.com) has been working with the Ad Board and Regional Delegates in Medical Education to evaluate the role of medical students in learning, modeling, and teaching professionalism in medicine. The Ad Board would like to make recommendations on how students can contribute more to discussions on “professionalism” in medical school curricula and

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in medical education. Of note, our joint plenary session with the ORR at the Annual Meeting this year will feature a talk by Dr. Kenneth Ludmerer on the role of students in facilitating professionalism in medical education and their future roles in social leadership as physicians.

Community Building Through the Consortium of Medical Student Organizations – The OSR has been committed to increasing collaboration between the major student organizations in medicine by organizing meetings for leaders of these organizations and creating networks for sharing information and collaboration on common agenda items. The most recent meeting was hosted by SNMA and included participants from AMSA, AMA-MSS, APAMSA,>NNLAMS, SNMA and was chaired by the AAMC-OSR representative (Ryan Gregory). After collaborating on the RWJ Cover the Uninsured Week, the CMSO will now focus on student debt as our common objective.

Medical School Tuition and Personal Debt – Several student organizations (especially AMSA and AMA-MSS) are preparing major initiatives to address medical student debt in the coming months; the OSR will collaborate with them in these efforts. Christiana Russ, OSR National Delegate for Student Affairs (cruss@utm.edu), has been collecting data from individual schools about how tuition rates are set. The OSR Ad Board is interested in drafting an advisory document recommending that tuition rates be “fixed” for students at matriculation for their class (i.e. four years) to avoid dramatic tuition hikes after admission.

OSR National Service Project – Anti-tobacco Project with University of Kentucky – The School of Public Health and Department of Community Medicine at the University of Kentucky (UK) and the OSR have proposed a joint project to train students at individual medical schools to carry out anti-tobacco projects on a continuing basis within their communities. Although the OSR is taking the lead in developing this project, any eventual program would be open to all medical students, not just OSR reps. For more information, please contact Ryan Gregory, OSR Chair (scgregor@sas.upenn.edu).

FREE PDR for your PDA – mobilePDR™

The Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) has entered into a partnership with Thomson Healthcare to provide FREE downloads of the Mobile Physicians' Desk Reference (PDR). This service is provided to medical students enrolled in accredited US allopathic medical schools and is at no cost to the AAMC. The non-physician cost for this service ranges from \$79.95 - \$99.95. Please visit <https://www.pdr.net> for more information.

The AAMC will validate medical student enrollment for Thomson Healthcare. The validation provides no information to Thomson other than verification of student status by name, school and expected date of graduation, which is provided only when requested by the student. Students have the option to decline to receive advertisements from the company when they register for the service.

The AAMC will receive no benefit from Thomson Healthcare from this partnership other than a one-time grant to create a Web-based system to verify student enrollment in an AAMC-member medical school.

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