

Special Report: An insider look at lobbying

On Sept. 20, 2007, American Academy of Dermatology members met to advocate for the interests of their specialty on Capitol Hill as part of the Academy's 2007 Washington Conference. Included in that contingent were a number of young physicians fresh from their dermatology training and eager to become involved in the regular lobbying efforts of the Academy. As experienced member physicians retire or cut back on regular travel, this new generation of dermatologists represents the future of the Academy's efforts to influence policy makers — not only on a national level — but on state and local levels, as well. Many issues facing residents are significantly affected by members of Congress.

While some misperceptions about lobbying persist, it has become an essential part of the American political system, and has a long and rich history. One popular (if ill-supported) legend holds that the practice began during the presidency of Ulysses S. Grant. The president was forbidden from smoking in the White House by his wife, and as a result enjoyed his cigars with a glass of brandy in the lobby of the nearby Willard Hotel. Fellow lawmakers and favor seekers began to approach him during this time, and a new industry was born — at least, allegedly. No matter the origins of the term, it's undeniable that direct appeals to legislative leaders have become an effective way to espouse the views and protect the interests of an organization.

Today, the practice is undertaken by any number of organizations, but the healthcare industry spends the second largest amount of money annually — over \$2.2 billion dollars per annum, according to OpenSecrets.org. With so many organizations vying for both time and money, the general perception of lobbying is one of secret meet-



ings and clandestine agreements. In reality, Academy physicians have seen great success meeting with representatives and stating the facts clearly and honestly, and most say that their representative or senator proved approachable and down to earth. Getting involved in federal advocacy often means letting go of more than a couple of preconceived notions.

"Learning lobbying is not unlike learning dermatology. You start off as a first year and struggle just to get the basics," said Jeffrey Benabio, M.D. "But over time you begin to understand the big picture and to know the small details. The better you know the subject, the more effective you will be as a lobbyist. I hope to continue to

See **LOBBYING** on p. 6

2008 annual meeting

Resident Transitions a must for your 2008 Annual Meeting itinerary

Resident Transitions, from 2 to 5 p.m. on Sunday, Feb. 3 in Ballroom C3 of the convention center, is a newly-formed, interactive symposium (replacing the Resident Colloquium and Resident Hot Topics), and a must for all residents and dermatologists in fellowships. The symposium will include "Battle Scars from the First Year of Practice," presented by Neal Bhatia, M.D. It will cover some of the issues new practitioners encounter and offer advice on what to avoid. A hot topics update, "What's New in

Dermatologic Therapy" will be presented by Lindsay Ackerman, M.D., that will provide information on new therapies in clinical and procedural dermatology.

A highlight of the symposium will be an American Board of Dermatology (ABD) examination update. Antoinette Hood, M.D., executive director of the ABD, will be on hand to provide information about the examination process, how the examination is constructed, and answer questions about taking the Board examination. 

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Symposium will provide practice management gems

The American Academy of Dermatology will hold a daylong Practice Management Symposium for Residents on Thursday, Jan. 31, at the 66th Annual Meeting. "Building a Foundation for Success" will take place at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in San Antonio.

Designed for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd year dermatology residents, the Practice Management Symposium for Residents course provides a balanced overview of the "business side of dermatology and provides an opportunity to expand residents' knowledge through a variety of topics and formats.

From 7:30 to 8:30 a.m., there will be concurrent workshops that will include "Coding Scenarios," "Become a Better Negotiator," and "How to Have the Best Employees (coworkers): Hiring and Training."

Course director Victor J. Marks, M.D., will welcome attendees to the general session at 8:45 a.m. with his talk "Exceptional Service is Good Business," which will be followed by "Financial Mistakes that Young Dermatologists Make," "Practice Options," and "30 Tips in 30 Minutes."

In the afternoon, highlighted topics will include "Employment

Contracts," "Combining Surgical Practice and Cosmetics – Office Space Design," "7 Things I Wish That I Knew When I Started My Practice," "Coding Tips," and "Practice Management and Marketing."

Registration

Those who did not complete advance registration before the Sept. 18 deadline may register for the meeting at the on-site registration desk at the Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center on Wednesday, Jan. 30, from 5-7 p.m., or Thursday, Jan. 31, from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. 

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Marriott Rivercenter
Salon E & F
101 Bowie, San Antonio, TX

February 1, 2008
5:00 pm – 7:00 pm

For more information please contact the Member Resource Center at (866) 503-SKIN (7546).

Resident and Fellows Symposium will expand knowledge

Fox Award winners to be selected, recognized

New knowledge about the pathophysiology and treatment of cutaneous diseases is crucial for the future of dermatology. The Resident and Fellows Symposium — which presents the latest laboratory-based and clinical-based research findings — will be held Sunday, Feb 3, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. in Room 216A of the Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center. The symposium will be led by Jeffrey B. Travers, M.D.

The symposium has been updated for 2008. Three winners will be selected from each category (clinic-based research and laboratory-based research) – based upon their abstract – and the six winners will be presented onsite with the prestigious Everett C. Fox Award. The winners will be featured in the Spring 2008 issue of *Directions in Residency*. The co-recipients of the 2007 Everett C. Fox Award were Zakiya M. Pressley, M.D., and Richard B. Warren, M.D. 

Review of retinoid biology

Mariana Phillips, M.D.

| Photobiology | |
|---|--|
| UVA | UVA1- 340-400 nm UVA2- 320-340 nm Responsible for photo aging Can penetrate glass Predominately UVA sun blocks: anthranilates, oxybenzone, avobenzone |
| UVB | UVB- 290-320 nm Most important in photocarcinogenesis Vitamin D synthesis: 7-dehydrocholesterol pre-vitamin D3 Predominately UVB sun blocks: PABA, cinnamates, salicylates, Padimate O |
| UVC | UVC <290 Absorbed by ozone in the atmosphere |
| Acute tanning | "Immediate pigment darkening" UVA, long wave UVB, and visible light Secondary to oxidation and redistribution of existing melanin |
| Delayed tanning | Begins 2-3 days after light exposure and may last 10 days Increased number and size of melanocytes, increased tyrosinase activity, and increased melanocyte dendrites |
| Sunburn | UVB |
| Thymidine dimer photoproducts | Occurs in DNA following excitation with short wave UVB "UV signature mutations" Results in transition mutations during DNA transcription Occurs due to covalent linkage between two pyrimidines Most common: T-T > C-T > T-C > C-C |
| Pyrimidine- pyrimidone photoproducts | Same as above with thymidine dimers Most common: T-C > C-C and T-T |
| 8-hydroxyguanosine photoproduct | Characteristic DNA damage generated by UVA Generates G:C to T:A transversion mutations during transcription |
| Sunless Tanning | Dihydroxyacetone Provide SPF2-3 |
| Sunscreens | |
| SPF (Sun protection factor) | Measures protection in the UVB spectrum |
| Water resistant | Maintains SPF after 40 min water immersion |
| Water proof | Maintains SPF after 80 min water immersion |
| Timing and amount | Must apply sunscreen 20 minutes before sun exposure Must use 1 oz of sunscreen to cover entire body (2 mg/ cm ²) |
| Physical Sunscreen | Titanium dioxide and zinc oxide Reflect sunlight Low incidence of contact sensitivity UVA and UVB protection (Zn broader than Ti) |
| Oxybenzone (benzophenone) | Broad spectrum UVA & UVB #1 sunscreen used Most common cause of sunscreen allergy |
| Avobenzone (Dibenzoylmethanes, Parsol 1789) | UVA protection Photo-stability unreliable when combined with cinnamates |
| Parsol MCX (Cinnamates) | UVB protection Cross-react with Balsam of Peru Frequent cause of allergic reactions |
| Helioplex and octocrylene | Photo-stabilizers of avobenzone |
| Mexoryl | Broad UV absorber (290-390 nm) Also acts as a photo-stabilizer |
| Cross reactivity with PABA | Sulfa Drugs, Benzocaine (ester anesthetic), Paraphenylenediamine, Azo/ aniline dyes |



Mariana Phillips, M.D., is currently an assistant professor at the Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond, Va.

Cosmeceuticals

| | |
|---|---|
| Vitamin C | L-ascorbic acid is the predominant anti-oxidant in the skin Essential for collagen biosynthesis and is cofactor for collagen transcription Increases collagen I and III mRNA Increases tissue inhibitors of matrix metalloproteinases (MMPs) Reduces solar elastosis Inhibits tyrosinase thus decreasing pigment synthesis Improves epidermal barrier function by stimulating ceramide production |
| Vitamin E (tocopherol) | Body's major lipid phase anti-oxidant Protects against cytotoxic effects of UVB Major function is to prevent lipid peroxidation Inhibits melanogenesis and has activity against tyrosinase Inhibits thymidine dimer formation |
| Niacinamide (nicotinamide) | Important in energy related cellular metabolic functions (increases NADPH) Increases synthesis of collagen, fillagrin, and keratin Improves epidermal barrier function by stimulating ceramide production Decreases pigmentation by suppressing melanosome transfer to keratinocytes |
| Retinoids | Thickens the nucleated epidermis — promotes differentiation: increased keratohyaline granules, Odland body secretion, increased fillagrin Thins the stratum corneum Increases collagen I fibers in the dermis Increases inhibitors of tissue MMPs Increases production of hyaluronic acid and fibronectin |
| Hydroxy-acids | Keratolytic Increases type I procollagen mRNA Stimulate TGF-beta expression due to acidic pH |
| Ferulic acid (N ⁶ -fufuryladenine) | Aka: Kinetin Plant growth factor Acts as an anti-oxidant retarding aging of fibroblasts in culture |
| Soy | Most plentiful isoflavones in soy are genistein and diadzein May have collagen stimulating effects Reduces pigmentation by inhibition of tyrosinase kinase Potent antioxidant and inhibitor UV induced immunosuppression |
| Alpha-lipoic acid (ALA) | Potent lipid and water soluble anti-oxidant Strong intracellular free radical scavenging abilities |
| Coenzyme Q10 | Aka: ubiquinone-10 (serves as coenzyme for energy production within cells) Anti-oxidant protecting cells from UVA damage Reduces expression UVA induced MMPs |
| Copper peptides | Known co-factor in anti-oxidant reactions Used in promoting healing in diabetic foot ulcers, surgical wounds, and post-follicular unit hair transplants Stimulates glycosaminoglycan synthesis |

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Get on board!

Do you have a good idea for a Boards' Fodder? *Directions in Residency* is accepting submissions for its 2008 editorial calendar. If you would like to contribute to this

popular, widely-read feature (and assist your fellow residents in the process), please contact the editor, Dean Monti at dmonti@aad.org. The deadline for the spring issue is

March 1. For a full list of previously published Boards' Fodder topics, visit the Resident and Fellows section of the Academy's Web site, www.aad.org. 

grow and learn with each visit.”

“As a fan of *The West Wing* when it was on television, I had some vision of the Senate office buildings and erudite, witty staff members supporting movie star-like congressmen,” said Dr. Benabio, who recently became involved with Academy lobbying efforts. “It turns out the office buildings are not as glamorous as they are portrayed on television, the congressmen are much more down-to-earth than they might seem, and the staff members are a lot younger than I expected.”

Still, the whole experience is not unlike meeting your favorite football player or movie star, except in some instances, the congressman actually sits down and talks with you.” Another unfortunate result of the lobbying boom of recent decades is that a perception has developed of lobbying as a full-time job, or an extremely labor-intensive effort. Instead, Academy members arrived in Washington on the 19th, and were given a quick primer on the three main issues that they would be lobbying about during the following day (see sidebar). Further, lobbying expert Christopher Kush of Soapbox Consulting coached the dermatologists in attendance to pick a single issue or pair of issues and focus on highlighting the most salient points in a concise and simplified manner.

One of the most important points for the physicians to learn was that medical knowledge doesn’t necessarily translate to lobbying prowess, and a new skill set is required. “The organizers conducted issue briefings that were clear, concise, and convincing. I used much of the data provided to present a cogent argument to the elected officials on Capitol Hill,” Dr. Benabio said. The majority of physicians who decide to

become advocates for their specialty do so with the assistance and encouragement of mentors encountered during the formative medical school or residency years.

Even an off-the-cuff suggestion or gentle push toward becoming involved with one pursuit or another, or the example of an inspiring mentor — be it academia, research, or advocacy — can profoundly influence a young doctor’s career. Dr. Benabio traces his current passion for advocacy back to his graduate school days at Brown University working with a physician who was similarly passionate in his pursuit of results on the Hill. Dr. Benabio worked with David Lewis, M.D., who is a physician in addiction medicine.

“At the time,” Dr. Benabio said, “he was working to change the widespread perception that addiction was a social and law enforcement problem rather than a medical problem. I saw him present before Congress, write editorials in national newspapers, and even work with [well-known journalist] Bill Moyers. His charisma, work ethic, and confidence made an impression on me that continues to define who I am today.”

With his involvement in the April 2007 Skin Disease Research Day, Dr. Benabio’s first foray into Academy advocacy, he found the experience of lobbying to contain an entirely new set of challenges and rewards.

“At the time, Congressman Dana Rohrabacher was my representative. He took the time to meet with me personally and engaged me in a twenty minute long discussion about funding for research, balancing the budget, and working in Congress,” he said. “It was at once intimidating and inspiring. I was honored by his genuine interest in me and the cause I was advocating. When I left his office, I was already thinking about how I would approach him if I had the

opportunity to meet with him again.”

Despite his brief experience lobbying with the Academy, Dr. Benabio has already amassed a cache of communication skills and lobbying tactics — not the least of which is to learn how to put a positive spin on any situation. “I was scheduled to meet with Congresswoman Davis in person. She regretfully was unable to keep that appointment ... I saw the congresswoman walking by accompanied by a highly decorated military officer,” he said.

“Apparently I had been bumped for a ranking member of the military — at least he wasn’t a plastic surgeon.”

Academy members departed the 2007 Washington Conference having gained valuable lobbying experience, attended a dinner with Sen. Ron Wyden (D-OR), and been given the opportunity to meet and network with a diverse cross-section of colleagues from across the nation. As with any lobbying effort, there were gains made and setbacks weathered, but without exception, each dermatologist took something positive away from the experience. 

2007 Washington conference issues

Dermatologists from across the United States gathered in Washington, D.C., Sept. 19-20 to ask lawmakers to support the following:

- Taking action to forestall deep cuts in Medicare Physician pay for 2008 resulting from the much criticized sustainable growth rate (SGR) formula used by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). Practice costs are projected to rise 20 percent during that time. Academy members were asked to encourage their representatives to halt the cuts and work toward positive changes to the program.
- Retaining the exemption from the Medicare multiple surgery reduction rule for Mohs surgery.
- Lifting the 1996 residency cap by supporting the bipartisan Residency Physician Shortage Reduction Act of 2007, which would incrementally increase the residency training cap. 

Residents, don't miss the Academy's evening of networking



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RESIDENTS' RECEPTION

Friday, February 1, 2008
5:00pm - 6:30pm

Marriott Rivercenter
Salon I & J

JAAD self-assessment authors sought

The American Academy of Dermatology is currently seeking dermatology faculty and residents to help develop questions for the bi-monthly self-assessment examination in the *Journal of the American Academy of Dermatology*. Contributors will be taking advantage of a unique opportunity for growth and recognition not only for physicians, but for residency programs as well. The published work is cited in *Medline*, a comprehensive source of life sciences and bibliographic information, with nearly 11 million records.

To assist interested physicians, the Academy is offering volunteers its new *Guide to Preparing Self-Assessment Questions*. This guide provides aspiring authors with a comprehensive look at the current test question writing standards and includes tools that improve productivity and enhance the quality of the author's content.

Members interested in authoring JAAD self-assessment questions should contact Michelle Adams in the Academy's Education Department at (847) 240-1693 or by e-mail at madams@aad.org.

Travel fellowships available for 2008 meeting in Kyoto

The International Investigative Dermatology Meeting (IID) will take place May 14-17, 2008, at the Kyoto International Conference Hall, Kyoto, Japan and fellowships are available through the World Congress Fund, which was established in 1992 to support travel to international clinical and scientific meetings. The fund is overseen by the American Academy of Dermatology's World Congress Fund Review Task Force. Residents

See **KYOTO** on p. 8

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PICMED

PROGRAM FOR INNOVATIVE CONTINUING MEDICAL EDUCATION IN DERMATOLOGY



Dermatology (PICMED). The program was established to facilitate the continuing education of dermatologists through support and development of innovative continuing medical education programs.

The endowment fund, to be awarded twice yearly, will be used to support the activities of PICMED, including but not limited to:

- Creative needs assessment mechanisms;
- Innovative uses of technology;
- Unique approaches to specific subject matter(s);
- Novel presentation techniques;
- Utilization of existing educational paradigms in new environments.

The deadline for submission of requests for the 2008 Call for Grants is September 3, 2008.

Successful applicants will be notified of their award by February 15, 2009.

For PICMED details and an application, visit the AAD website at www.aad.org/education/grantsandawards.htm

The American Academy of Dermatology (AAD) is dedicated to promoting the highest quality of dermatologic care through continuing medical education and research. The AAD is proud to announce that through a generous contribution by the Elsevier Foundation and the Skin Disease Education Foundation, who share with the AAD a commitment to continuing excellence in dermatology, the AAD has created an educational program called the Program for Innovative Continuing Medical Education in

World Congress in Buenos Aires showcases Academy



World Congress scholarship winners.

The American Academy of Dermatology was well represented at the 21st World Congress of Dermatology held Sept. 30 - Oct. 5, 2007 in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Academy staff displayed in the exhibition hall, showcasing the Academy's products and services. Many World

Congress attendees obtained information on becoming an International Fellow of the Academy, while more than 100 completed the membership application on site. The World Congress Fund Review Task Force of the Academy provided scholarships to 50 U.S. and Canadian residents in dermatology, fellows, and young dermatologists to attend the World Congress. A networking dinner was held on Oct. 2 for scholarship recipients to meet one another and Academy leadership.

The 21st World Congress of Dermatology organized by the International League of Dermatological Societies, hosted more than 12,000 dermatologists from 130 different countries around the world. Brazil, Argentina, United States, and Mexico had the most representation at the Congress. 



KYOTO from p. 7 in dermatology, post-doctoral fellows, and junior faculty from the U.S. and Canada are eligible to apply for a fellowship to attend the IID. Up to 50 awards will be made in 2008, each for up to \$1,500. An applicant

must be the presenting author on the abstract submitted to the IID Meeting. Note that previous recipients of this fellowship and recipients of the World Congress of Dermatology Scholarships are not eligible.

Applications may be completed online at: <http://www.aad.org/professionals/International>.

The deadline for application submission is Jan. 9, 2008. 

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Questions or Comments?

Contact the AAD Member Resource Center (MRC) toll-free at (866) 503-SKIN (7546) or mrc@aad.org.

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Mission Statement

Directions in Residency is published by the American Academy of Dermatology Association to provide a forum for information concerning resident dermatology physicians, and providing news, views and actions of the Academy, the Residents & Fellows Committee, and the American Board of Dermatology.

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Boards' Fodder: Derm surgery

AMA meeting report

2008 Annual Meeting highlights