



LIFELINE

The Newsletter of the Pennsylvania Medical Society Alliance

Summer 2015

President's Message

The American Medical Association Alliance (AMAA) National Convention in Chicago was as stimulating as I remember it from years ago. Although there have been changes – location for one and also open seating at business meetings to encourage interaction between states, what has remained is the same enthusiasm and camaraderie from all Alliance members.

The Convention was well attended by members from across the United States. The speakers were engaging and presented topics very pertinent to the times. With the growing use of the internet, the AMAA procured speakers who spoke on the importance of being internet savvy and presented procedures to protect ones' "digital fingerprint." They discussed the increasing use of social media and how easy it can be for Alliances to communicate and grow via Google, Facebook and other social media.

The Legislative segment highlighted the work the American Medical Political Action Committee (AMPAC) is engaged in. Together, with the national Alliance, AMPAC works hard to promote the interests of our physicians, spouses and the patients they serve. In the end, all the success achieved by AMPAC emphasizes the importance of supporting the committee with monetary donations and serves as a reminder to continue our support of our own PAC fund – PAMPAC. One of the highlights of the AMPAC session was the honorable mention of Joanne Bergquist as runner-up to the *Belle-Chenault Award* for her work on legislative issues.

The AMAA celebrated its' first year of the Alliance Health Education Initiative (AHEI) by awarding grants to four Alliances to be used for their health related programs in the coming year. The celebration also included a successful and entertaining fundraiser auction to raise funds for future grants.

The AHEI award applications are open to any state or county Alliance developing a project based on their communities' needs. All Alliances

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Save the Date

Fall Annual Meeting
&
Silent Auction



Hershey Lodge
&

Convention Center

October 24-25, 2015

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are encouraged to apply. Applications are available on the AMAA website, www.amaalliance.org.

By the way, did you know this is the 20th Anniversary of the SAVE program? What better way to honor the Alliances' SAVE program than to do a SAVE project in your county! For those of you who don't know, SAVE stands for **Stop America's Violence Everywhere**.

Julie Newman, was installed as the new AMAA President on the last day of the national meeting. I am happy to report that President Julie Newman will be the featured guest of honor and speaker at the Northeast Regional meeting which will be held in **Gettysburg, PA, April 15-17, 2016**. Now, It is our turn to host the North Eastern Regional conference. Please save the date for this conference on your calendars. This event was one of the many reasons that Caryl Schmitz and I made sure to attend the national meeting in Chicago.

During the meeting, we were able to network with other Alliance members who had hosted or are planning to host a regional meeting.

The input and advice we received was deeply appreciated and their support encouraging. We came away with a blueprint of ideas that can be applied to Pennsylvania's Regional Spring Conference.

We need your help to make the spring regional conference a success. Volunteers are needed to help with our out-of-state guests. This will also be an opportunity to highlight the interests, talents and businesses of our PMSA members. We can make this a Regional Conference other states can emulate.

Summer is passing quickly and soon we will be looking forward to the Hershey Convention. A wonderful project of the Alliance is the AMES Fund which has been and continues to be important to its' recipients. \$2500.00 may seem like such a small amount, yet, in the scheme of what medical students pay for their education, it can provide a bit of relief. In the words of one recipient "...it is encouraging to know that people like you care about my education enough to dedicate time and funds to help us graduate medical school with decreased debt. I really appreciate it." This fund has provided that bit of relief for many students through the years. See Caryl's message for additional AMES Auction information.

Anna Kosenko

News from Lawrence County Medical Society Auxiliary

One of the most rewarding things about being part of the LCMSA is being able to give back to the community. As current president of the LCMSA, I had the great privilege of presenting a \$1,500 donation to the Nurse-Family Partnership of Lawrence County on behalf of our members. The funds were raised through our annual public sale of Georgia pecans, cashews & almonds.

The Nurse-Family Partnership is a highly valued national non-profit organization providing free assistance to first time, high risk moms and their babies. The Partnership strives to break the cycle of poverty and build stronger communities across America. Their Registered Visiting Nurses are in the field daily giving hands-on education, emotional support, and encouragement to new and expecting moms who are typically very young, financially distraught and who often lack family support. They follow these "moms" throughout their pregnancy and continue until the child is 2 years of age. Their outcomes include long-term family improvements in health, education, and economic self-sufficiency. Our members look forward to nurse manager Mary Ellen Penwell's periodic updates of lives that have been turned around because of their caring intervention.

Our members feel honored to be able to support the efforts of the Nurse-Family Partnership and believe it is a great fit with the overall mission of the Alliance. For more information on this Partnership, see their website at: www.nursefamilypartnership.org.

Theresa Kaul, President
Lawrence County

An AMES Fund Reminder

It's not too early to start planning your contribution to the AMES Fund Silent Auction at the 2015 Pennsylvania Medical Society's inaugural dinner and gala! In 2014, we had a great selection of auction items donated by so many of you.

YOU continue to make the AMES Fund a success and help ease the burden of medical school costs for many deserving medical students in Pennsylvania.

Thanks for being a part of this wonderful venture, and watch for donation information soon!

Ideas for Donations:

- Vacations/ Timeshares
- Art
- Pottery
- Quilts
- Décor
- Fine Wine
- Fine Chocolates
- Jewelry

Message from AMES Fund Chair

October will be here before we know it and the **AMES** Fund Silent Auction will be under way. Seeing the smile on the faces of those medical students as we give them their scholarship is all the incentive I need to get to work on raising more money! You have all been an integral part in the success of the **AMES** fund all these years and I thank you and ask for your help once again. The **AMES** committee is looking to make this year's fundraising auction another successful event with YOUR help! Auction items and donations are needed. If you know of an organization or medical practice that would support this fabulous cause, please ask them to donate or send me their contact info. Please start getting your wonderful county and personal auction items/baskets together. We are excited to see what you all have up your sleeves for this year's event!

Thanks so much for your enthusiasm and hard work in making this event such a yearly success!

Caryl Schmitz, President Elect
AMES Fund, Chair

Please note: There is no room available to store auction items at the PA Medical Society building due to reconfiguration of the Society's office space. I am happy to set up transport of any item. Feel free to call, email or send me a text with questions at 717-357-1860 or schmitztc@comcast.net.

Spring Leadership Meeting

On April 22, 2015, 29 Alliance members gathered at The Historic Farnsworth House in Gettysburg, PA. The meeting was formally opened at 10:00 AM by President, Anna Kosenko. Caryl Schmitz, our President-Elect, read the Alliance Mission Statement and Prayer. Legislative updates were given by Larry Light, a Senior Legislative Staff member of the PA Medical Society along with Donna Rovito and Matt Balazik of the Alliance. Marjorie Lamberson of the PA Medical Society Foundation provided an AMES Foundation update which was followed by a presentation by Walt Jones. Mr. Jones discussed the development and current status of the Adams County Foundation. The group ate lunch at The Farnsworth House while members provided County updates. The last event of the day was a Wine Tasting held at Reid's Winery and Cider House across the street from The Farnsworth Hotel.



Legislation and Politics at AMAA Annual Meeting

In addition to fellowship, fun and lots of great food, there was a healthy serving of legislative, political and advocacy information served up at the AMA Alliance Annual Meeting in Chicago June 6-9.

Representing Pennsylvania were PMSA President Anna Kosenko and President-Elect Caryl Schmitz. Also in attendance were Joanne Bergquist and Donna Rovito both PAMPAC Board members and past state Alliance presidents.

Longtime PAC Board member and political guru **Joanne Bergquist** was honored as the runner up for this year's *Belle Chenault Award* for Political Participation. Joanne was nominated by the PAMPAC board for her consistent support of both PAMPAC and AMPAC, as well as for her political acumen and support of medicine-friendly candidates. Joanne and Dr. Eric Bergquist were seated with AMA Alliance President Sarah Sanders and President-Elect Julie Newman when Kim Moser, the first non-physician state PAC chair in the nation, accepted the award.

We are very proud of Joanne for her ongoing support of the political action committees which give physicians and their families a voice at the state and federal levels and her deep understanding of how to be an effective advocate and political volunteer.

A panel discussion followed the AMPAC breakfast and award ceremony, the discussion featured three legislative experts from the AMA: Vice President for Government Affairs Cynthia Brown, Chair of the AMA Council on Legislation Randolph Gould, MD and Senior Legislative Attorney Daniel Blaney-Koen. The three shared "inside" information about AMA's legislative efforts and touched on some of the issues which will be on the agenda in the coming year. The big legislative success story at both the AMA and the AMA Alliance meetings was the repeal of the flawed SGR formula for physician reimbursement from Medicare. H.R. 2 was passed by 392 Members of the U.S. House of Representatives and 92 Members of the U.S. Senate, a significant bipartisan victory in both chambers. Repeal of the SGR means an end to annual scrambles for temporary fixes and the constant disruption to physician practices. Both AMA and AMA Alliance leaders attributed this victory to hundreds of thousands of legislative contacts made by physicians and physician family members throughout the long fight to repeal the SGR.

The important issues on the AMA agenda in coming months are funding for graduate medical education, implementation of ICD-10 coding and repeal of the ACA's Independent Payment Advisory Board (IPAB).

By Donna B. Rovito, PMSA Legislative Co-Chair



Pennsylvania Delegation at the AMAA Meeting: Joanne Bergquist (seated), Anna Kosenko, Erick Bergquist, Donna Rovito, and Caryl Schmitz.

INFORMATION UPDATES

Have you moved recently? Do you have a new email address? Have your county officers changed?

Please notify the Alliance office about changes to your personal or county information. You can simply call the office or send us an email. If you received this newsletter in the mail, we do not have an email address on file for you.

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