



President's Comment

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President

El Paso County Medical Society



Dear Colleagues:

On behalf of all the physician members of the El Paso County Medical Society, I congratulate the first medical class of the Paul L. Foster School of Medicine. On July 13, forty students started their lifelong journey in medicine. The opening of the school marks a milestone for El Paso and particularly the medical community. The hope of our community became a reality as the future doctors started classes. We invite the medical class of 2013 to join our efforts and become involved in organized medicine.

The enthusiasm and energy of the students was palpable when I had the opportunity to address the 2013 medical class during the first week of school. The EPCMS looks forward to helping the students form an active and vibrant chapter to represent the future of medicine within the TMA medical student section. Through this effort, the students will learn how physicians can and will make a difference when they unite as one voice. They also will understand the responsibility that each and every physician has to become an advocate for our profession and, most importantly, for our patients. It is a priority for the EPCMS to educate and provide the opportunity for medical students to become involved in the political and policy making process.

I applaud Dr. Manuel de la Rosa, the founding Dean of the medical school, and the dedicated faculty for the innovative approach they have created to teach the curriculum using the fully integrated clinical presentation model and the impressive Clinical Simulation Center. The school will become a model of the future of integrated medical education. We are proud of our colleagues who are leading the way.

I also extend an invitation to any of the 232 faculty physicians of the Paul L. Foster School of Medicine who are non members to join the El Paso County Medical Society, one of the 120 County Medical Societies that together form the TMA, the largest and most powerful state medical society in the country. TMA stands united to protect you and the profession of medicine and strives to be a member driven association. Its commitment is to improve the health of all Texans.

TMA continues to be a leading legislative advocate for academic medicine and graduate medical education. It was the EPCMS led by the late Dr. Gordon McGee that assisted with the legislative agenda through TMA and the Higher Education Coordinating Board to begin the process that brought the first medical school on the Border. We need further cooperation for membership recruitment from the Medical School to further unite our medical community and increase representation for our region in order to improve the healthcare of our patients. I ask the faculty to lead by example and show the medical students how to be an advocate for their profession.

The participation of El Paso physicians in TEXPAC, the political arm of TMA, has been strong. Our district leads the large Texas County Medical Societies at a 19 percent participation rate by TMA members. Please help us reach the goal of 25 percent set by the Board of Trustees. It truly is an achievable goal. By doing so, you will help our PAC be even more effective in providing financial support and grass roots organization on behalf of medicine friendly candidates. Your contribution will allow for TEXPAC to advocate for us, and thus, allow you to focus on the Hippocratic Oath and take care of your patients.

Healthcare reform is evolving and changing daily in Washington DC. As healthcare reform goes forward, TMA will provide frequent updates to keep you informed. Congress is crafting a package that has the potential to fundamentally change the way health care is delivered in the United States. It may become necessary for you to become involved and mobilized to contact your Senators and Representatives. You can sign up for updates at www.texmed.org.

We must each help to inform our lawmakers on the possible effects of health care reform. To be successful, health care reform must 1) allow for economically viable physician practices in order to care for our patients especially in underserved poor regions by replacing the SGR with a rational Medicare physician payment system; 2) support and protect physicians following evidence based clinical guidelines with medical liability reform; 3) continue to allow physician investment and ownership of health care facilities which provide efficient high quality care, access and choice; and 4) outlaw coverage denials for preexisting conditions, require health plans to demonstrate they are providing access to an adequate network of physicians, and support far-reaching reforms that would hold health insurance companies accountable to the promises they make for the premium dollars they receive.

Lastly, the EPCMS will sponsor a meeting with Dr. James Rohack, the President of the AMA and an Outstanding UTEP Alumni, on September 1, 2009 at 6:30 PM. We invite all physicians to attend the meeting being held at the Larry K. Durham Sports Center on the UTEP campus overlooking the Sun Bowl. This is your opportunity to come and ask the tough questions of the AMA's controversial stance. Please call 533-0940 or email epmedsoc@aol.com to RSVP. Your opinions and participation are very important.

Only united will we succeed. Divided we will fail.

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