

LETTERS TO THE MJM**AMERICAN COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS,
INTERNAL MEDICINE CONFERENCE 2010**

Imagine thousands of physicians under one roof, on a three day mission to strengthen their clinical knowledge with the latest guidelines. Each year, the American College of Physicians organizes a meeting to update internal medicine physicians, fellows, residents and medical students on the most current data available on the pathogenesis, diagnosis, and treatment on everything from congestive heart failure to eosinophilic esophagitis. Perhaps even more impressive, this conference offers free registration to all student members. This year, the event took place at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre (April 22-24, 2010) and, for the first time, was held outside of the United States (http://www.acponline.org/meetings/internal_medicine/2010/).

The American College of Physicians (ACP) is, with a membership of 129,000 people, the largest international organization of internists which includes internists, internal medicine subspecialists, fellows, residents, and medical students. One of the College's missions is education, and the annual Internal Medicine conferences are an excellent example of this commitment. The meeting is structured to appeal to all participants, with seminar tracts focusing on each subspecialty of internal medicine as well as ObGyn, Neurology, Community Medicine, and Psychiatry. As such, it is a great opportunity for early trainees and medical students to obtain high-quality, concise information about the latest trends in health care. In addition to providing seminar sessions, hands-on clinical skills demonstrations, and opportunities to present research, the meeting is a good way to network with colleagues and leading physicians throughout the United States and Canada during the multiple social events organized at the culmination of daily academic activities.

This year's conference opened with a keynote address by Dr. James Orbinski, former president of *Medecins Sans Frontieres* and recipient of the 1999 Nobel Peace Prize on their behalf. Dr. Orbinski is one of the world's leading scholars dedicated to global health policy, improving access to health care, and medical humanitarianism. His inspiring talk set an enthusiastic tone which was evident during the remainder of the conference – individuals with a vision improve the lives of others

– one patient, one hospital, one country at a time. Over the three days, IM2010 offered over 250 scientific sessions taught by top-rated, internationally recognized faculty on subjects ranging from clinical updates to ethical issues, and even options for models of practice. This allowed attendees to fully tailor their experiences to their own areas of interest. In addition, the conference featured student and resident abstract, poster and clinical vignette competitions. Students could also take advantage of sessions on thriving during clerkship, mastering the match and student-physician mentorship forums.

Perhaps most appealing to students early in their training was the impressively equipped Herbert S. Waxman Clinical Skills Center. This area featured small group sessions (with fewer than 15 learners) on numerous procedures including ultrasound-guided central line placement, intra-articular injections, airway management, incision and drainage and many other techniques. The center also featured physical exam skills development through an audio tour of cardiac murmurs, a fundoscopy training area and a mock OSCE track in which participants are mailed written feedback by experienced standardized patient-evaluators.

Lastly, the Internal Medicine conference features 'Doctor's Dilemma', a Jeopardy-style competition, billed as the 'World Series' of medicine. This exciting game pitted teams of top residents from across the world against one another in a test of clinical knowledge from all areas of medicine.

Students interested in attending next year's conference are encouraged to visit the American College of Physicians' website and enroll as student members (<http://www.acponline.org/membership/join/>). In addition to free registration to Internal Medicine 2011, (April 7 – 9, 2011 in San Diego, California!), student members can take advantage of numerous benefits including clerkship preparation materials, physician mentors and free access to ACP publications. Students interested in becoming ACP student representatives are encouraged to request additional information via e-mail (abhijat.kitchlu@gmail.com).

Sincerely,
Abhijat Kitchlu