



Board of Governors:

Report from the Committee on Chapter Activities

by Lester Wayne Johnson, MD, FACS, Rayville, LA

The Governors' Committee on Chapter Activities (GCCA) is composed of four subcommittees. Each subcommittee addresses various issues and individual challenges. This report summarizes their most substantial activities during the last year.

Meetings and Organization

The Subcommittee on Meetings and Organization this year again sent a Chapter Performance Checklist to all domestic chapters. I am pleased to report an overall improvement from last year's results. More than one-half of the chapters are now using the online advocacy resource Web site to contact their members of Congress or members of their state legislatures.

With regard to another performance standard, many more chapters should consider participating in the Resident-Associate Society (RAS). Selection and appointment of resident representatives to the RAS governing council should be a high priority for all chapters, regardless of size.

In addition, it is imperative that chapter leaders

and executives participate in the annual Chapter Leadership Conference. As ACS Executive Director Thomas R. Russell, MD, FACS, said, well-prepared chapter leaders are assets to each chapter. We must take advantage of this opportunity offered by the College.

On a more somber note, a number of chapters, as evidenced by their checklist responses, are thought to be underachieving. It is the consensus of the GCCA that the Chair will contact the President of each such chapter by telephone to discuss this state of affairs in a supportive and collegial, rather than pejorative, fashion. We would also expect the appropriate Governor-at-Large to aid and abet his or her chapter council in an effort to show improvement.

Membership and Diversity

The Membership and Diversity Subcommittee, as you may recall, has issued and the College approved a statement to increase diversity throughout the College. Various initiatives aimed at achieving this goal are in process currently.

Governors' Committee on Chapter Activities

CHAIR: Richard A. Lynn, MD, FACS, *West Palm Beach, FL*

(Chair, Subcommittee on Advocacy & Coalitions)

VICE-CHAIR: Lester W. Johnson, MD, FACS, *Rayville, LA*

Erwin Thal, MD, FACS, *Dallas, TX*

(Chair, Subcommittee on Meetings & Organization)

James B. Atkinson, MD, FACS, *Los Angeles, CA*

Desmond Birkett, MD, FACS, *Burlington, MA*

(Chair, Subcommittee on International Activities)

Sally Carty, MD, FACS, *Pittsburgh, PA*

Alfred Chang, MD, FACS, *Ann Arbor, MI*

Saqib Chaudhry, MD, FACS, *Lake Success, NY*

Stephen Deane, MD, FACS, *Liverpool, BC, Australia*

Michael Florence, MD, FACS, *Seattle, WA*

Lenworth Jacobs, Jr., MD, FACS, *Hartford, CT*

Kathleen Kelly, MD, FACS, *Morristown, NJ*

Margaret Kemeny, MD, FACS, *Jamaica, NY*

(Liaison to Executive Committee, Board of Governors)

Stephen Mathes, MD, FACS, *San Francisco, CA*

R. Lor Randall, MD, FACS, *Salt Lake City, UT*

(Liaison from the Committee on Young Surgeons)

Anton Sidawy, MD, FACS, *Washington, DC*

Leopold Waldenberg, MD, FACS, *Raleigh, NC*

Tatsuo Yamakawa, MD, FACS, *Tokyo, Japan*

New members appointed in October 2004: Ross Blair, Hamilton, New Zealand; Kenneth Boffard, Johannesburg, South Africa; Gerald Jordan, Norfolk, VA; Maureen Kavanah, Jamaica Plain, MA; Jeanette Viney, Bismarck, ND; and Gary Williams, Ohio.

International Activities

The International Activities Subcommittee reports that a new chapter has been formed in Turkey and that a proposal is forthcoming for the possible formation of a Pan-Africa Chapter. International Governors continue to believe that this subcommittee is an appropriate vehicle to continue global communications and cooperation.

Advocacy and Coalitions

The Subcommittee on Advocacy and Coalitions has confronted a number of issues this year, including chapter involvement in state trauma sys-

tems development and continuing evaluation of the State Surgery Legislative Action Center. But, I must report, it is the perception of too many of our colleagues that the legal system and legislative process both nationally and in many of the states have failed our profession. All other advocacy issues at this point pale in significance when compared with this cancer. The most affected Fellows feel that they have the dubious honor of occupying the mythical "bearing point," whereto all weights from all directions bear. Many surgeons believe that this issue has been transformed from a political into a labor dispute and seem inclined and poised to force the issue in another venue and by other means. Such action of course holds once unimaginable negative implications for our profession.

The GCCA understands and appreciates the College leadership's past and continuing efforts to avert this calamity. We have no magic answer to suggest to the Fellows, but we do believe that this issue affects us all, and that it affects all of our patients across all state lines. The bond between surgeons is universal and timeless. Those of us who for now find ourselves in relatively more favorable circumstances should support in every reasonable form and fashion our colleagues who are not. The College should help identify those locales of greatest concern and bring the full weight of all surgeons to bear in a reasonable manner to protect our profession, which is of course composed of the sum of all its parts. The GCCA is pleased to report our belief that the future of our profession has not been and never should be entrusted to tort law-

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tegral part of the Clinical Congress. Assistance will be provided in arranging visits, following the Clinical Congress, to various clinics and universities of their choice.

In order to qualify for consideration by the selection committee, all of the above requirements must be fulfilled.

Formal American College of Surgeons International Guest Scholar application forms may be obtained from the College's Web site (*www.facs.org*) or by writing to the International Liaison Section, American College of Surgeons, 633 N. Saint Clair St., Chicago, IL 60611-3211, USA.

Completed application forms for the International Guest Scholarships for the year 2006 and all of the supporting documentation must be received at the office of the International Liaison Section prior to July 1, 2005, in order for an applicant to receive consideration by the selection committee. All applicants will be notified of the selection committee's decision in November 2005. Applicants are urged to submit their completed applications and supporting documents as early as possible in order to provide sufficient time for processing.

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yers and labor specialists. We believe that our faith and hope should rest within our own hands and within the inherent goodness and grace exhibited by so many of those who have preceded us.

Nobility

No finer example of the College's efforts to extol these virtues can be found than the initiation of the volunteerism award brought forth by the Governors' Committee on Socioeconomic Issues. No one better exemplifies the nobility of our profession than the recipient of this year's volunteerism award, Theodore Dubuque, Jr., MD, FACS, of St. Louis, MO, who has dedicated so much of his time and treasure to the people of Haiti. Surely, these gifts to humanity by so many Fellows do not go unnoticed.

Despite the uncertainty of these stormy times, Dr. Dubuque and so many like him have set a standard for all forms of human endeavor and behavior, professional or otherwise. During such a time of calamity in ancient Rome, the great stoic Emperor Marcus Aurelius chose the following words to honor those standard bearers who stood for and defended the institutions and customs of Rome that were most noble: "They stand as a promontory unto the sea, against which though the waves beat continually, yet they stand, and about them the swelling waves are stilled and quieted." Just as in the

days of the great Antonines, loyalty and allegiance to principle and purpose are still the most precious of virtues. With examples such as Dr. Dubuque—and countless others with him—the GCCA believes that our profession should face the future with confidence and assurance that a safe harbor may again be reached and that better weather in another season may yet be poised to begin.

Acknowledgments

Finally, I would like to thank the Governors and their Executive Committee for allowing me the privilege of serving as Chair of the GCCA for the last two years. Dr. Russell, Paul E. Collicott, MD, FACS, Director of the ACS Division of Member Services, and Courtney M. Townsend, Jr., MD, FACS, Chair of the Board of Governors, have been available at all times for consultation, and Rhonda Peebles, our ACS staff liaison, has been indispensable.

The College also owes a debt of gratitude to the committee's retiring Governors: Stephen Deane, MD, FACS, of Liverpool, Australia; Erwin Thal, MD, FACS, of Dallas, TX; and Desmond Birkett, MD, FACS, of Boston, MA. Each of these Fellows during the last six years, in his own way, has exemplified those qualities that a Governor of the American College of Surgeons should exhibit. □