The Leadership Program in Health Policy and Management conducted through the Heller School for Social Policy and Management at Brandeis University was an incredibly full and valuable week. Although I had every expectation that the program would provide me with knowledge and insight, the experience was much more diverse and enriching than I had imagined.

The Babson Executive Conference Center is a perfect setting for the program. Situated in a lovely suburban community, the accommodations are comfortable, and being able to stay on site facilitates maximum use of time in the classroom and workshops, reading and engagement with the faculty and other participants. The food was varied, plentiful and delicious. The fitness center and the surrounding grounds provide adequate equipment and scenery for those interested in trying to work off the calories and stay in shape.

The world class faculty was superb. Each speaker kept the room interested and involved. The discussion was lively. Despite an open format, the broad based curriculum provided adequate time during each session for questions and answers.

Dr. Jellinek's discussion over dinner on Sunday night was a perfect kick off for the week. His experience and insight were noteworthy, especially since he is a physician who has morphed into a proven organizational and Health Care leader.

Stuart Altman is clearly as knowledgable and experienced in Health Care economics, policy and reform as anyone in the United States. He has been behind the scenes as part of the process in the beginning, during the term of LBJ and all the way through the enactment of the Affordable Care Act. His reminiscences and prognostication were both insightful and entertaining.

Frank Opelka's session was particularly helpful for the participants. His presentation and the discussion that he led to enlighten the Health Policy Scholars of the work of the College on behalf of its members was critical as a table setter for each of the attendees in anticipation of our future work on behalf of the American College of Surgeons.

Robert Mechanic and Christopher Tompkins elucidated the changing landscape of Medicare physician payment, especially the challenges ahead.

Jon Chilingerian served as the ballast for the program. His winning personality, sense of humor and broad based experience are sprinkled with humility and warmth. His sessions were packed with vital information; yet, the material was imparted clearly with adequate time for anecdotes and interchange of ideas with the audience.

Jody Hoffer Gittell's session was enlightening and extremely useful for those of us employed in hospitals or Health Care organizations. She had her own winning style of communication. Her passion for teaching was palpable.

Brenda Anderson had the most difficult material for many of us to comprehend and master. Financial literacy is ever important. Although I have previously sat through lectures on this topic, she was able to navigate the topic in a relatively short amount of time and make it clear and understandable.
Jeffrey Prottas's sessions on Conflict Negotiations were stimulating and an excellent way to end the week.

In addition to the faculty, there was much to be learned from the attendees. There was ample opportunity to hear from those in the lecture hall during class. In addition, having all of our meals together allowed us to take the discussions from the classroom to the dining room. All of us left with many new tools and skills which will help us become better physicians and leaders. We also left with many new friendships.

Personally, I previously have participated in several leadership training sessions and had a significant amount of knowledge and expertise in many of the topics covered. Regardless, there was so much useful information imparted over the week, and in such a stimulating manner, that the week was truly one of the best educational experiences I have ever had.

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ACS/ASPS Health Policy Scholar 2016