

22ND ANNUAL SCIENTIFIC ASSEMBLY22ND ANNUAL SCIENTIFIC ASSEMBLY

LAS VEGAS

Planet Hollywood Resort & Casino

Inaugural “Women in EM” Track was a Big Success

Megan Healy, MD FAAEM
AAEM Board of Directors

This year’s AAEM Scientific Assembly marked the first time a track on Women in Emergency Medicine was offered. The track brought experts on women’s issues together with both academic and community-based emergency physicians of both sexes, to talk about challenges and opportunities for change in our specialty. Other sessions at the Scientific Assembly highlighted important gender issues,

from sociolinguistics and its impact on trainee evaluations to gender-specific medical care in the ED.

The Women in EM track was sponsored by AAEM’s new Women in EM Committee and featured Dr. Stephanie Abbuhl, a leader in the field of physician professional development and Executive Director of FOCUS on Health & Leadership for Women at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania, as well as Dr. Theresa Rohr-Kirchgraber, President of the American Medical Women’s Association. Dr. Abbuhl defined the challenges for women in medicine, which include unconscious bias, promotion issues, and a paucity of models for leadership styles, among others.

Dr. Rohr-Kirchgraber provided a helpful overview of negotiation — an important skill to master for women in EM. Her tips include doing your homework in advance, practicing the conversation with a friend or colleague, and remembering that everything is a negotiation. She pointed out that women are less likely to start the conversation and more inclined to take the initial offer, and suffer financially as a result.

“The Women in EM committee plans to continue to bring great educational programming to our membership as we strive to recruit, retain and champion women in our specialty.”

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The track included a lively panel discussion with Dr. Lisa Moreno-Walton, Secretary-Treasurer of AAEM; Dr. Mimi Lu, winner of AAEM’s 2015 Young Educator Award; and Dr. Robin Naples, frequent lecturer on the emergency medicine circuit and Associate Program Director at Temple University. They discussed the skills which have served them well in their careers, identifying the delegation of tasks, self-reflection, and assertiveness as essential. The larger group discussed practical ideas to help men and women balance work and family — things like splitting shifts, having childcare at the hospital, finding mentors, and using outside services for things like house-cleaning and meal preparation. The group also highlighted the importance of thinking more broadly about the issues facing women, remembering that whether single or married, caring for children or parents, working in the community or academia, we will meet a variety of obstacles and must collaborate in creating solutions.

The Women in EM committee plans to continue to bring great educational programming to our membership as we strive to recruit, retain and champion women in our specialty. This year’s goals include designing awards to recognize female leaders in AAEM, building a password protected resource network for members to identify collaborators in their area of expertise, and collaborating with like-minded organizations like FeminEM (www.feminem.org). To be a part of these initiatives please sign up for the Women in EM committee (www.aaem.org/about-aaem/committees) or email megan.healy@tuhs.temple.edu. We would love your input and ideas! ■