

President's Message

How Do We Say Goodbye

David A. Farcy, MD FAAEM, Interim President/President-Elect
 Joshua Mugele, MD FAAEM, Indiana University Assistant Residency Program Director
 Mark Reiter, MD MBA FAAEM, Immediate Past President
 Robert Suter, DO MHA FAAEM, Previous Member AAEM Board of Directors

As emergency physicians we are not unfamiliar with death. But much of the death we see — the prehospital cardiac arrest or the trauma patient in extremis — are faces previously unknown to us. Dr. Kevin Rodgers was a face well-known to us. Kevin was not only part of our tribe of emergency physicians, but he was its leader. On November 20th, Kevin was taken in a tragic act of violence and we are at a loss as we try to make sense of his death.

"When he shall die, take him and cut him out in little stars, and he will make the face of heaven so fine that all the world will be in love with night, and pay no worship to the garish sun."

— William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*

If you speak with many of those whose lives were touched by Dr. Kevin Rodgers, they will tell you about his love of teaching, his love for cooking, and his love of life itself. Kevin was an educator — the educator that we all aspire to become. His legacy will live forever through the thousands of students, residents and junior faculty whom he influenced. He was recognized with several teaching awards including the AAEM/RSA Program Director of the Year Award and Joe Lex Educator of the Year Award (See table 1 for a full list of AAEM activities).

From Dr. Joshua Mugele, Indiana University Assistant Residency Program Director on Dr. Rodgers' legacy as an educator:

Kevin was a prolific and effective educator, known for exceeding all expectations related to the time and passion he put toward training the next generation of emergency medicine physicians. Kevin spearheaded the "teaching how to teach" efforts for emergency medicine residents to ensure they effectively engage adult learners.¹

These efforts to improve emergency care education began early in Dr. Rodgers' career, as an EMS provider and as a Physician Assistant. After medical school he served with distinction as an emergency medicine resident, Chief Resident, faculty member, and Assistant Program Director at the San Antonio Military Medical Centers EM residency program. Major Rodgers' tremendous impact on the Army's Emergency Medicine PA program, EMS program, and the EM residency were incalculable.

Kevin left the Army in 1998 to join a growing band of prior Army faculty at the Indiana University (IU) EM program as the Assistant Program Director. He served as APD, then Co-Program Director, and most recently as Program Director Emeritus, mentoring a new generation of program directors. Everyone who met Kevin, or KRodg as we affectionately called him, had a story about their first impression, mostly because he was loud and intimidating. But people quickly learned that he walked the talk. KRodg was such a fixture at IU that most of those who stayed around will tell you that they came to the program in large part because of him. He was a genuine father-figure. He was uncompromising in his



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principles and could be a strict disciplinarian, but this came from a deep love for his residents. He wanted all of them to be the best doctors and the best people that they could be.

This is what made him such an inspirational educator. Kevin won multiple teaching awards including the IU School of Medicine Inspirational Educator of the Year Award in 2015. Last year, the graduating IU emergency medicine residents renamed the annual faculty teaching award after him. Kevin will be remembered in the residency for his mnemonics, for his encyclopedic knowledge of everything, his oral board prep cases, his educating the educator series, his VizQuiz lectures, and his annual talk to the new interns on what it means to be an emergency physician. But more than that, Kevin will be remembered for including everyone at IU in his family, by cooking for them, by opening his home to them, by remembering details of their lives, and by opening his heart to them. At IU KRodg profoundly influenced a generation of emergency medicine clinicians and educators and by extension all of their patients, their families, and the future generations of physicians they will go on to train.

We have observed and been impacted by his educational expertise in venues ranging from national EM organizations, the large group classroom, small group leadership seminars, simulation lab, curriculum development, resident remediation planning, and mentoring at risk residents.¹

From Dr. David Farcy, AAEM Interim President and President Elect, on Dr. Kevin Rodgers' legacy with AAEM:

Dr. Kevin Rodgers and I first met when I was taking the AAEM Written Board Review Course in 2005. I had been involved with the Academy as a resident and Kevin's energy and passion to educate was obvious. Kevin offered guidance and influenced my decision to educate the next generation. From then on, our paths crossed on multiple occasions from the AAEM Oral Board Review Course, to the Scientific Assembly, and the MEMC in Marseille and Rome. Kevin knew how to talk to people. He helped you believe that the impossible was possible. When you were experiencing self-doubt, he would motivate you to regain the drive that you thought was lost. I know Kevin will be looking at us all with his big smile. I will dedicate my presidency to honor Kevin's passion to educate our next generation; to remind each of us why we went to medical school; why we wanted to help! Because that unfamiliar face is someone's loved one, and not giving them 100% is failing our patients. My own mentor, Dr. Thomas Scalea says "Some people need certainty, or they need time to think. They say, 'Now that I have been presented with these symptoms, I need to go sit in the corner and consider the possibilities.' That is great if you want to be a different kind of doctor — but not this kind. In order to perform well under stress, you need to be able to concentrate only on the task at hand, you need to forget that if you make a mistake then this person is going to die, or you will become paralyzed. You have to believe you are good enough to beat the odds. Every time someone comes in looking really bad you have to say 'I don't give a shit if this is a one in a thousand shot — this is that one in a thousand. Otherwise why even start.' We do what we do ... so others may live!"

From Dr. Mark Reiter, AAEM Past President, on Dr. Kevin Rodgers' legacy with AAEM:

Dr. Kevin Rodgers' legacy with the American Academy of Emergency has been tremendous. Kevin served on the AAEM board from 2002 to 2008,

and then returned to the board from 2011 to present. Kevin served in countless roles, including chair of the Education Committee, secretary-treasurer, and vice-president. In 2016, Kevin was elected president of AAEM, and served in this role until his death. Kevin played an impactful role in almost every one of the Academy's initiatives over the past decade. He was a staunch advocate of physician practice rights, and developed strong relationships on Capitol Hill advocating on topics such as due process rights, strengthening the prudent layperson standard, and combatting corporate practice of medicine abuses. He was a huge supporter of encroachments by alternative boards to the standard of ABEM/ ABOEM board certification, and recently worked closely with ABEM to help decrease the time and financial costs of maintenance of certification. Kevin led the re-organization of our AAEM committee structure, and spearheaded leadership development efforts within the Academy.

During my term as president of the AAEM Resident and Student Association and the RSA resident representative on the AAEM board, Kevin was AAEM's board liaison to AAEM/RSA, which allowed me the opportunity to work closely with him. During those formative years of my emergency medicine career, Kevin was one of my most influential mentors. He has remained very involved with AAEM residents and medical students during his time as AAEM president, attending many of their meetings, soliciting their input, and creating opportunities for them. I was lucky enough to serve alongside him during most of my time on the AAEM board, including our past six years together on the AAEM executive board. I have been in countless hours of board, committee, and organizational meetings with Kevin, and he has continued to inspire me and my colleagues. His leadership style was inclusive, organized, and empowering. He was a master at bringing out the best in those with whom he worked, which made him extremely effective as a leader within AAEM. He had an easy dialogue with leaders of other organizations, and was masterful at collaborating with others.

Over the years, I've been privileged to have built a great friendship with Kevin. We have shared hundreds of meals together and have shared many great experiences and good cheer. We've talked about our hopes and dreams and our frustrations and failures. I shared in Kevin's joy at the successes of his family — his adored wife Ruth and his four sons, Pat, Sean, Ryan, and Dan. I've seen firsthand the enormous impact that Kevin has had on the thousands of people whose lives he has touched. Kevin was among the very most exceptional persons I have ever known, and my life is much better for having him as a part of it.

From Dr. Bob Suter, Previous AAEM Board Member, Personal Reflections on Dr. Kevin Rodgers:

I first met Kevin briefly when I was a student rotating through Brooke Army Medical Center, but like most students I was overwhelmed by the totality of my surroundings, so it was not until 1989, working with him when he was an R2 and I was an Intern, that his force and impact became very clear.

Kevin had been a paramedic and physician assistant prior to medical school, and his fund of knowledge and confidence stood out even in a strong and experienced class. The faculty never worried when Kevin was the R2, and he knew it. Kevin's EM class of 1992 was the one that marked the transition from PGY2-3 to PGY2-4, so they were seniors for

two years, while those in my class were juniors for the same two years, albeit with a class under us the last one. Kevin continued to be a strong presence in his two years as a senior, a Chief during the second year, and then as faculty for my senior year. Kevin did not suffer fools. He expected excellent performance; to get any sort of praise at all required exceptional performance. It was obvious that he didn't appreciate it when anyone received unearned praise, and when Kevin called you "Doctor," which was typical, you knew that you were under his intense scrutiny.

Dr. Rodgers had a heightened sense of righteousness that valued hard earned success as the only legitimate means of advancement. It was the way he lived his life. No one ever gave him anything early. He truly earned every promotion and accomplishment years before they were awarded. Yet he never felt slighted, because he wanted it to be clear to everyone that he had earned them. And it was clear — crystal clear — that he more than deserved them. That included his accomplishments in AAEM that culminated in his presidency.

There was never any doubt that Kevin was incredibly devoted to his wife Ruth, his four boys, and their extended family. His personal life reflected his professional life: measured, sure-footed, and properly timed. His family grew at a time that he could best support them in every way.

Like everyone who knew him, I will miss Kevin for many reasons. But the one that is most unique is that he will not be here to make me and all those around him better, encouraging us in his gruff way to do so to earn his respect, and if we did especially well, to receive an actual compliment. Thank you, Kevin Rodgers.

Quotes from Past Presidents of the American Academy of Emergency Medicine:

Tom Scaletta, MD MAAEM FAAEM CPPS CPXP

"Kevin's ability to lead, teach, speak and write is amazing and measurable. What's also amazing yet immeasurable are that

- His smile was infectious (I'm smiling just thinking about him)
- He spoke frequently and lovingly about his family whenever I saw him
- He was a great listener and generously lent his ear to others
- He liberally sought advice from others and used it carefully the sign of a true leader"

Larry D. Weiss, MD JD MAAEM FAAEM

"Kevin was a great leader, speaker, educator, and advocate for our patients and the individual emergency physician."

Howard Blumstein, MD FAAEM

"Kevin's greatest accomplishment was to pull new faces into leadership roles and to develop existing talent. This grew the academy, solidified our base and ensured outstanding leadership into the foreseeable future."

Joe Wood, MD JD MAAEM FAAEM

"Kevin was a bright and energetic leader. He recognized the importance of some issues, but never took himself too seriously. He was a fun guy to be around!"

William T. Durkin, Jr., MD MBA CPE FAAEM

"Kevin was passionate about residents and teaching. The fact that he was so popular with them is testament to his dedication as a teacher.

While he may have disagreed with others at times, he did not allow that to get in the way of recognizing the passion and dedication that they also had to the Academy and the specialty."

Robert McNamara, MD MAAEM FAAEM

"Kevin will live on through those physicians who trained under him. His concern for their ongoing welfare led to his involvement in AAEM and as president he then vigorously worked on behalf of all EM physicians. A great man with a great legacy, he will be sorely missed."

Table 1:

AAEM Member 1999-2017
 AAEM President 2015-2017
 AAEM Vice-President 2014-2016
 AAEM Treasurer 2012-2014
 AAEM Board of Directors 2002-2008, 2011-2017
 AAEM Foundation Board of Directors 2011-2017
 AAEM/RSA-Board Liaison 2005-2008, 2013-2015
 Joe Lex Educator of the Year Award Recipient 2009
 AAEM/RSA Program Director of the Year Award Recipient 2005, 2015
 AAEM Written Board Review Course Best Speaker Award 2013
 Education Committee 2005-2017
 Education Committee Chair 2006-2010
 Scientific Assembly Subcommittee Co-Chair 2008-2014
 ACCME Subcommittee 2005-Present, ACCME Accreditation Review 2007, 2011, 2015
 AAEM Representative ABEM Board Eligibility Working Group 2015
 AAEM Representative ACGME/RRC EM Milestone Working Group 2012-2013
 Finance Committee Chair 2012-2013
 Academic Affairs Committee 2005-2008
 Tort Reform/Malpractice Committee 2007-2008
 Scientific Assembly Speaker 2005-2017
 Scientific Assembly Pre-Conference Course Speaker 2005-2006, 2010
 Scientific Assembly Photo Competition Judge 2007-2016
 Scientific Assembly Open Mic Judge 2006, 2009, 2012, 2014
 Scientific Assembly Morbidity & Mortality Judge 2010, 2012, 2015
 AAEM & AAEM/RSA Residency Visit Speaker 2012-2017
 MEMC Speaker 2005, 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013, 2015, 2017
 AAEM/RSA Midwest Medical Student Symposium, Speaker 2007-2010, 2013-2015
 CEMC Speaker 2009
 Oral Board Review Course Examiner 2001-2017
 Oral Board Review Course Director 2001-2014
 AAEM Midwest Medical Student Symposium Speaker 2007, 2008, 2010, 2011, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2017
 Written Board Review Course Speaker 2005-2017
 AAEM/RSA's *Emergency Medicine: A Focused Review of the Core Curriculum*, Author
Common Sense Author 2006-2008, 2015-2017

Reference

1. IU School of Medicine Press release on Dr. Kevin Rodgers' Death. <http://www.theindychannel.com/news/local-news/crime/killed-prominent-indianapolis-doctor-won-2015-educator-of-the-year-award>. ■