



EDITOR'S LETTER

"Participate or Perish"

by David Kramer, MD FAAEM

Well, it is that time of year again. Residency recruitment season is in high gear, and program directors across the country are working hard to recruit the best and the brightest to their residency programs. Every one of us in residency leadership positions is committed to training the highest quality emergency physicians in order to provide the best emergency care for our patients. Part and parcel of this is our concern for our residents' career choices. We want them to have satisfying careers in situations where they are valued for the work they do. Many of the longstanding initiatives of AAEM help ensure that these goals are met. Still, all of us have had residents who have taken less than ideal positions due to geographic or other needs.

In other words, there is much more to be done. I know that I am preaching to the choir here, but emergency medicine needs you more than ever. We need more than your membership; we need your participation. There are growing opportunities within our organization for you to participate and contribute. I'm not here to minimize the importance of your membership dollars. Supporting the individual emergency physician does cost money. But we also need your time and energy. While many of you do contribute in various ways, others do not. I'm reminded of a hackneyed but applicable quote: "If you're not part of the solution, you're part of the problem." While I certainly don't want you to take this quote literally, I do believe that one can accomplish much more by doing than by observing. Although I respect those that come to me with problems, I value much more those that also come with proposed solutions. The success of an organization is dependent on the activity and productivity of its members.

So, what options are there for contributing to our organization? Three opportunities come immediately to mind. First, AAEM has more committees than you can shake a stick at. Certainly one or more would tweak your interest. Second, many of you are eligible for membership in the new Young Physicians Section (YPS). The YPS developed from Dr. David Vega's desire for AAEM to do more for those starting out in practice while simultaneously providing an opportunity for the development of leadership skills. You can get in on the ground floor and help develop and grow this section. Finally, leadership positions will be voted on at the next Scientific Assembly. Remember that self nominations are welcome. Some of you might have new and innovative ideas. Feel free to e-mail them to me at CSeditor@aaem.org. I will be sure to pass them on to the AAEM board of directors.

This brings me to Las Vegas. Our annual Scientific Assembly will be here before you know it. My wife and I just returned from a vacation in Vegas (it was a true vacation-no kids) where we had a great time. I am confident that all attendees at our Scientific Assembly will return home with great memories and stories to tell (or not to tell). I encourage you to not only plan to attend, but also check out the entertainment options early as popular shows, concerts and artists tend to sell out quickly. It's our 13th Annual Scientific Assembly, March 12-14, 2007. See you in Vegas!



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