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President's Message February 2007

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President's Message

As my term of office as president of CalAAEM comes to an end, I am both sad and pleased. Sad that I will no longer be president of this fine organization. I really enjoyed it. Sad that the amount of close contact with all of my colleagues working at the upper levels of CalAAEM will decrease. The people with whom I spoke and communicated on a regular basis about issues important to emergency medicine earned my respect and admiration for all the fine work they do, both in their daily activities and by participating in CalAAEM.

As president, I felt gratified to devote the time I had available to organizing our agenda and monitoring and guiding the progress we made on the various issues we tackled. While we did not get it all done, we had a very successful year and my thanks go out to those who contributed to that success.

We were able to change the entire look and feel of *CalJEM* and set in motion a process that will result in *CalJEM* entering the upper tier of EM journals. Our thanks to Rob Rodriguez for a long and dedicated run as editor and as one of the thought leaders in moving *CalJEM* forward. Now Rob will take over as president of CalAAEM and bring his talents to bear on a broader range of issues. During this year we have started a process that will lead to the indexing of *CalJEM* by the National Library of Medicine. We are fortunate to have Dr. Mark Langdorf, chair of the Department of EM at the University of California, Irvine, step up to become editor-in-chief, and Dr. Sean Henderson of USC to assume the role of associate editor. This transition has been both elegant and constructive, and we look forward to CalAAEM assuming a more focused role as the academic voice of EM in California and the western United States.

We have had a chance to develop a clearer vision for the future of CalAAEM. Our focus on academic leadership has merged with our role as advocate for physician rights.

During this year our relationship to Cal/ACEP has improved greatly. My thanks to Myles Riner, president of Cal/ACEP. We were able to participate in Cal/ACEP legislative activities through the Legislative Leadership Conference and subsequent struggles regarding the balance-billing issues. For the first time it seemed that the two organizations were working together rather than against each other. Early steps in the right direction.

We have continued our efforts to increase membership by eliminating dues for residents and medical students. We felt that this approach would allow our organization to introduce itself to the future EPs in California and promote a new kind of thinking in which membership in both CalAAEM and Cal/ACEP would be both desirable and important components in creating the proper working environment for EPs of the future. We continue to see CalAAEM as the primary voice of EPs in meeting the challenges of corporate medicine within our work environments and as an ongoing resource for practice support for individual physicians.

Our efforts to inform the EPs of California were greatly

augmented through our resident board member and CalAAEM News Service Editor Dr. Brian Potts and Assistant Editor Cyrus Shahpar, MPH, MSIV. Thanks for your continuous hard work.

To the rest of the current board I say thank you. Obviously there is more to do but time just keeps clipping along at what appears to be an ever-increasing pace. There were many times I wish I had another year to keep doing what I was enjoying so much. To the future leaders, I extend my best wishes and implore all EPs to think of ways to help as we move forward. We are a powerful group of people who collectively control one of the more important parts of health care. It is an awesome power that for the most part is under-utilized. We do so much to support every other aspect of health care and have earned the right to participate at the highest levels in virtually any health care debate. To exercise that right we must unite and work together to achieve the goals we define. The primary vehicles to participate are our professional organizations. Through these groups we can shape the future of the health care system which, if you think about it, would collapse within hours without us.

Personally it has been a very gratifying year and something I am quite pleased to have had a chance to do. I encourage others to seek out such leadership roles. It will broaden your perspective and add a new dimension to your career.

Thanks to all who work to promote emergency medicine and stand on the front lines of health care as both providers, innovators and contributors to the wellbeing of society.

Steven C. Gabaeff, M.D, FAAEM