

International Committee

# International Scholarship Winner

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*AAEM has a long history of involvement in international emergency medicine through conferences, committees and the operation of the AAEM Scientific Assembly. In recent years, AAEM had partially or fully funded multiple international EM physicians for participation in AAEM Scientific Assembly through an international scholarship program. The objective of this program is to aid development of liaisons and fostering of opportunities for exchange of information, education, and ideas with international EM societies and organizations.*

*The program is administered by the International Committee and participants are invited to apply. Applications are reviewed by committee members and applicants are ranked by several factors including the strength of their resume and potential to promote emergency medicine in their country of origin.*

— Ashely Bean, MD FAAEM, Chair, International Committee

I recently attended AAEM's 24th Annual Scientific Assembly in sunny San Diego, California. I was one of this year's International Scholarship recipients, and words truly cannot describe how grateful I am with the International Committee and AAEM's Board of Directors for this unique opportunity.

I found particularly interesting that this year's theme was "Breaking Down Barriers" because it is my perception that many barriers are being broken down in my country, and slowly, but surely, progress is being made in the medical field in Honduras.

Emergency medicine as a recognized field and specialty is not established in Honduras yet, though many changes in the past years are creating the momentum to make it happen. In August 2017, the Medical Emergency Unit (UME) was created to become the first responders for medical emergencies of the Honduran population. Their mission is to provide cost-free, prompt, quality pre-hospital care and transportation to a hospital setting to patients with a trauma or medical emergency. In October 2017, the Honduran Toxicology Information Center (CENTOX) was inaugurated, providing telephone assistance both to medical providers and the Honduran population in general that contacts them through a "9-1-1" phone call. Our public hospitals assisting approximately 90-94% of the population in medical emergencies, formally implemented in the past 5 years a color-coded triage system that would help reduce patient wait time in severe cases, improving patient medical care.

These developments are the sum of the efforts and struggles of generations and generations of physicians noticing a need in our health system and pointing it out, and a government who prioritized a budget to fund these expansions in the benefit of the Honduran population. Many barriers were broken to make this happen, and I'm aware that there are many more barriers to break, these steps have encouraged me to challenge myself into becoming the best emergency medicine physician I can be, in the service of this profession.

My pursuit and continual search for learning opportunities in emergency medicine led to my application to this Assembly.

The organization and level of detail of the Assembly was impressive. The lectures were all enticing, making it very difficult to pick one over another; the app was particularly useful for keeping track of the times, location of lectures, and events going on. I enjoy running, so I was excited to see the "Fun Run and Walk" as part of the program, and it was wonderful to see how AAEM sees an EM physician as more than just a physician, but as a person, taking into consideration the importance of having a healthy body, mind and soul. This observation also extends as to how AAEM sees a patient as more than just a patient, but as a person by including as part of their program and small group clinics the topic of "Cultural Sensitivity is a Must for Optimal Patient Care." It is my belief that having a holistic approach helps us as physicians understand and connect with each patient, aiding us to provide them the best we have to offer. I am very grateful to have been part of this group clinic.

Overall, what I take with me, which is probably the biggest barrier broken to date, is the fact that even though everyone attending the Assembly were from different backgrounds, schools of medicine, programs, levels of training and even countries, **we were all united by an invisible thread** of wanting to learn more of emergency medicine, and taking back with us what we learned at this point in time to our workplaces, in the benefit our patients.



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I look forward to the opportunity of being an instrument in this field to break down more barriers. As I mentioned before, many steps and progress has been made, but there is still work to be done. A Honduran Society for emergency medicine and the specialty as a primary residency in the country has not been established yet. Schools of Medicine have not yet formally included in their academic programs, a course in emergency medicine. These are some of the academic barriers that need to be addressed, along with everyday barriers that include, but are not limited to, shortage of physical and human resources in emergency rooms, and a standardized, unified approach of quality emergency care nationwide.

As much as I would like all of this to be already in motion, I acknowledge it takes a step-by-step approach that usually does not go in a linear fashion, time, and the sum of multiple efforts. I am truly grateful to have met so many leaders in this field at the Assembly who have inspired and fueled the fire in me to be part of this ongoing movement in my country. I

am thankful for AAEM's commitment in the development and quality assurance of emergency medicine at an International level, because they become and are active parts of the movement of establishing this field worldwide.

I would like to take this opportunity to formally thank Dr. Judith Tintinalli for nominating me for this scholarship, Dr. Wes Wallace and Dr. Justin G. Myers for working alongside and encouraging me to challenge the established limits, because my presence at this Assembly would not have been possible without them. I'd also like to thank Dr. Ashley Bean, Dr. Terrence Mulligan, Dr. Ashika Jain, and Dr. Lisa Moreno-Walton for being so welcoming, and for giving me the opportunity to be a part of this year's Scientific Assembly — I am humbled and honored to have met you and I can only hope to reach one person someday, the way you have all reached me and so many nationally and worldwide.

Thank you. ●

## Robert L. Muelleman, MD, Elected ABEM President

Robert L. Muelleman, MD, has been elected President of the American Board of Emergency Medicine (ABEM). Dr. Muelleman has been a member of the Board of Directors since July 2011, and was elected to the Executive Committee in 2015. He has served ABEM in a number of capacities, including as an examiner for the Oral Certification Examination since 2005, an item writer for the ConCert™ Examination. He also has served as Chair of the Academic Affairs and Finance committees, as well as the Board Eligibility and Single Accreditation System task forces. He is also a member of the Executive, MOC, Research, Test Administration, and Test Development committees, and the KSA Task Force.

Dr. Muelleman received a medical degree from the University of Nebraska School of Medicine, and completed residency training and a research fellowship at the University of Missouri-Kansas City and Truman Medical Center in Kansas City, MO. He is currently Professor and Past-Chair of the Department of Emergency Medicine at the University of Nebraska Medical Center.

At its July 2018 meeting, ABEM also elected the following directors to the 2018-2019 Executive Committee:

Terry Kowalenko, MD, Immediate-Past President; Jill M. Baren, MD, President-Elect; and O. John Ma, MD, Secretary-Treasurer. Newly elected members of the Committee are Michael S. Beeson MD, Member at Large; and Robert P. Wahl, MD, Senior Member-at-Large. Dr. Beeson is Program Director of the Emergency Medicine Residency Program under ACGME application at Summa Health in Akron, Ohio; he was elected to the Board in 2013. Dr. Wahl is Associate Professor (Clinician-Educator) in the Department of Emergency Medicine at Wayne State University School of Medicine, and an attending physician at Detroit Receiving Hospital. He was elected to the Board in 2012. ●

