

*when minutes count*

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# **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

## **May 2010**

In my last president message, I would like to express my gratitude to the membership and the CAL-AAEM Board for the amazing opportunity to serve as your president this past year.

We have had an eventful year, not only in CAL-AAEM, but also on the political front. Health care reform was finally brought to the forefront of the nation's political agenda and was the center of much heated debate. There was no doubt that we needed an overhaul of our health care system. Despite the fact that the U.S. spends more per person on health care in comparison to any other nation, according to a 2008 Commonwealth Fund report, the U.S. ranks last in the quality of health care among developed countries. In 2000, the World Health Organization ranked the US health care system 37<sup>th</sup> in overall performance and 72<sup>nd</sup> by overall level of health (out of 191 member nations in the study). After a year of bitter partisan combat, President Obama signed into law the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act and the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010 in March, and it remains to be seen what this landmark bill will really cost, and whether it will fulfill its promise to guarantee insurance for those who cannot afford it.

This past year, CAL-AAEM has accomplished a lot! We partnered with CAL-ACEP in a landmark agreement to cosponsor the *Western Journal of Emergency Medicine*, which has now become the official journal for both

organizations. Through historic funding from CAL-AAEM and the recent addition of CAL-ACEP, *WestJEM* has thrived and expanded its readership and circulation,

and the number of submissions has increased exponentially. This important collaboration between CAL-AAEM and CAL-ACEP serves as an example of how our two organizations can work together and support each other. In February, Dr. Joanne Williams, CAL-AAEM Education Chair, put on another awesome pediatric emergency pre-conference workshop at the AAEM Scientific Assembly, with a star-studded lineup of leading pediatric emergency medicine experts. The CAL-AAEM News Service now serves over 900 emergency physicians nationwide, and provides news articles on health care, public policy, governmental issues, and legal cases and court decisions that might have a direct impact on the practicing emergency physician. CAL-AAEM beefed up membership recruitment efforts. We expanded our membership to the largest number of members in our organization's history, with many new resident memberships. We remain the most active AAEM state chapter, serving as a



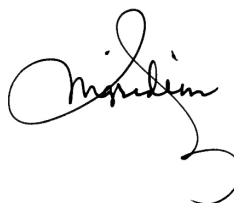
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model to younger and smaller state chapters. We updated our website to be more user-friendly and continue to provide services to our members – comprehensive reviews of the LLSA articles, free legal consultative services. You will be soon receiving a membership survey to help us define what our members want and how we can better serve you!

CAL-AAEM is still very much a fledgling organization. And we need your involvement. I encourage you to get involved in our organization! Get others to join! Help spread the word about what AAEM stands for – fair and equitable practice environments with provisions for due process and absence of restrictive covenants, the importance of board certification, affordable, high-quality medical education in emergency medicine. Let your voice be heard – we want to know what matters to YOU, the individual emergency physician - what do you want this organization to do for you? You do have a say in your organization and please help us shape it!

At the time of this publication, I will have passed the baton to the very capable hands of Dr. Brian Potts. He has a proven track record of leadership. He is the newly

elected President of the AAEM Young Physicians Section. He has served on the CAL-AAEM Board of Directors for the past 3 years and is the current CAL-AAEM Secretary. Since 2001, he has served as the Managing Editor for the CAL-AAEM News Service. He works for the Berkeley Emergency Medical Group in Berkeley, CA, and is Director of Emergency Ultrasound at Alta Bates Summit Medical Center. I am confident that under his leadership, CAL-AAEM will continue to grow and flourish!



Ingrid Lim, MD, FAAEM  
 Kaiser Permanente, San Francisco Medical Center  
 CAL-AAEM President, 2009-2010

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**CAL/AAEM Contact**

AAEM Liason: Kate Filipiak, 555 East Wells St., Suite 1100, Milwaukee, WI 53202, www.calaaem.org, (800) 884-2236

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