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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Paul Windham, MD, FAAEM
CAL/AAEM President

Dear Colleagues,

In my last message, I asked for input from you, and today I am asking again. Your board of directors is working hard for you, but we need your help to keep fresh ideas before us. Cal/AAEM has come a long way in just a few years. Let us review what we have accomplished.

Our greatest achievement is the development of the California Journal of Emergency Medicine. This journal meets the highest standards for academic research. Its articles aim at those actually practicing emergency medicine. The goal is to put state of the art information in the hands of practitioners who make clinical decisions at the bedside. Dr. Robert Rodriguez, our current editor, continues to do an outstanding job with this journal. It would be impossible to publish the journal without the support and contribution of a number of EM faculty from various institutions in California. Many outstanding emergency physicians (EPs) work hard to make the journal as professional and as useful as possible. We are soon approaching the beginning of our 4th year as a statewide distribution and continuing to witness an increasing number of submissions. CaJEM is a wonderful asset for all (EPs).

Those of us who were involved in the CHW/Meridian fiasco understand very well why the Academy is vital to EM and to EPs. Thanks to AAEM and our California members, the courts forced CHW to divest itself of the practices of emergency physicians it had acquired illegally. Other EM organizations chose

to remain silent and not to act in that situation because of a number of reasons, mainly due to a culture of non-interference with "business practices" and "internal business matters." This philosophy and the various factors behind it do not serve EM, the patients we serve or the individual EP whose well-being we are supposed to protect. Only AAEM could speak, and the message rang out loud and clear. Emergency physicians should own their practices, and never be indentured servants of greedy non-practicing physicians or group executives or hospital administrators.

We must continue to nurture and support our journal. We must continue to stand up for and support practicing emergency physicians, both at the bedside and in the business arena. In order to do that, we must grow in membership and involve more of our members in our activities. To that end, the board has recently formed a recruitment committee composed of Drs. Lotfipour, Gabaeff, and Vogler. Their task goes far beyond recruitment. For example, they will be developing an informatics system that will include an e-mail system for action alerts. The board wants to explore developing new committees, such as practice management or ultrasound. The board as a whole will be refining a mission statement that makes clear our goals and vision.

The board's vision will mean nothing, however, if you do not share it. That is why I am asking again for your input and your help. Volunteer to help, write articles, participate in our News Service, in the Annual Legislative Conference in Sacramento, and most importantly support your EMPAC.

I would like to know what your ideas are, where your interests lay, and what the board can do to serve you: the membership.