



National and Chapter News

Minutes of the 2009 meeting of the board of directors of Alpha Omega Alpha

The meeting in Denver, Colorado, was convened at 7:48 AM by President Rae-Ellen Kavey. Present were:

President Rae-Ellen Kavey, MD, MPH
Secretary-Treasurer C. Bruce Alexander, MD

Members at large Robert G. Atnip, MD; N. Joseph Epat, MD; Ruth-Marie Fincher, MD; Douglas S. Paauw, MD; Don W. Powell, MD; Joseph Stubbs, MD

Councilor members Eric P. Gall, MD; Anne T. Mancino, MD

Student members Natalia Berry, MD; Kara M. Cavuoto, MD; Cason Pierce, MD

Medical organization member John Tooker, MD

National office staff: Executive Secretary Edward D. Harris, Jr., MD; Assistant Treasurer William F. Nichols; Records Administrator Mara Celebi; Managing Editor Debbie Lancaster; and Administrative Assistant Carol Wong.

Absent and excused were: Vice President Donald E. Wilson, MD; councilor member Amy Goldberg, MD.

The minutes of the 2009 meeting of the board of directors were reviewed and approved.

Recognition of retiring members

The board acknowledged retiring directors Eric P. Gall, MD, and Kara M. Cavuoto, MD.

New board and honorary members

Nominations for the 2009/2010 board of directors slate were reviewed and voted upon. Re-elected to a three-year term as member at large: Ruth Marie Fincher, MD, Medical College of Georgia; Don W. Powell, MD, University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston. Elected to a three-year term as councilor member: Sheryl A. Pfeil, MD, Ohio State University College of Medicine. Elected to a three-year term as student member: William C. Bynum IV, University of South Carolina School of Medicine.

Honorary member nominations were reviewed and voted upon. Elected to honorary membership were: Martha N. Hill, BSN, MSN, PhD, dean of the Johns Hopkins University School of Nursing; Albert R. Jonsen, PhD, emeritus professor of Ethics in Medicine at the University of Washington School of Medicine; Prof. Dr. med. Dr. h.c. Gerd Plewig, professor and chairman emeritus of Dermatology at Ludwig-Maximilians University in

Munich, Germany. See the announcement and brief biographies of honorary members on page 38.

Reports of officers

Reports of the president, executive secretary, and managing editor were presented. Of note:

- *The Pharos* will now be available on AΩA's web site in its entirety six months after publication. As usual, the table of contents and excerpts from each new issue are available immediately. PDFs of back issues of *The Pharos* will be added to the web site gradually.

- In the Autumn 2009 issue, *The Pharos* initiated a new Health Policy section, to which we solicit contributions. Contact us at info@alphaomegaalpha.org for more information. The kick-off article by Dr. Robert Moser is available in the excerpts PDF for the Autumn issue, noted below.

Reports of programs

Programs funded during the 2008/2009 year are listed in the Autumn 2009 *Pharos*, which is available on our web site at: alphaomegaalpha.org/pharos/AOA-ThePharos-Autumn2009.pdf.

- The Carolyn L. Kuckein Student Research Fellowship: This program, designed to support a minimum of eight to ten weeks of research for students and providing \$5000 for the student and an additional \$1000 for presentation of a paper based on the research at a national scientific meeting, continues to be underutilized. It was agreed that, to facilitate use of the program by students in other than the first year, carrying out the research throughout the school year would be acceptable.

- The Professionalism Fellowship: Three fellowships were awarded this year. Further discussion for refinement of the program is detailed later in these minutes.

- Visiting Professorships: This program is often linked to the annual AΩA banquet. Fifty-one chapters used this program in the 2008/2009 year.

- Medical Student Service Project Awards: Twenty projects were funded this year.

- The Robert J. Glaser Distinguished Teacher Award: The board voted to disallow nominations for three years from any school whose nominee wins an award in a given year. The name of the award was changed to the Alpha Omega Alpha Robert J. Glaser Distinguished Teacher Award. The announcement of the awards was made in the



Winter 2010 issue (pp. 30–31), and is available at alphaomegalpha.org/pharos/AOA-ThePharos-Winter2010.pdf.

- The Helen H. Glaser Student Essay Award: Six prizes were awarded in 2009. Winning essays began appearing in the Winter 2010 issue.
- The *Pharos* Poetry Competition: Ten poems won prizes. Winning poems can be found beginning in the Autumn 2009 issue.
- The Volunteer Clinical Faculty Award: Fifteen chapters presented this award to community physicians contributing to the education and training of medical students.
- Administrative Recognition Award: Eight chapters recognized their chapter administrators with this award.

Enhancing the visibility of Alpha Omega Alpha

Based in part on recommendations by the Stanford Alumni Consulting Team made to the board in 2008 (see the minutes of the meeting of the board of directors in the Spring 2009 issue), a consulting group was retained to present suggestions for enhancing recognition of the society and its programs to medical schools and the general public. Ms. Marilyn Saltzman of Schoolhouse Communications gave a presentation that emphasized the importance of clearly defining the goals and objectives for increasing awareness of the society. Target audiences were defined and common strategies used by nonprofit organizations were also enumerated.

Following discussion, negotiation for a working contract with Schoolhouse Communications was approved. A Public Relations committee was established to interact with Schoolhouse and make recommendations for moving forward.

Residency initiative

Responding to the suggestions by the board at the 2008 annual meeting, Dr. Suzann Pershing presented background and proposals for developing programs for residents to help them to continue their interest and commitment to AOA, and to improve AOA's visibility at schools.

The board elected her to a newly-created position, Coordinator, Residency Initiatives, for a three-year term. A committee on Resident Initiatives was formed to work with her.

The Professionalism Project

Dr. Harris presented the recommendations of the reviewers of applications for the Professionalism Fellowship, now renamed the Professionalism Project:

- To continue the funding of \$50,000 for the 2010 year
- To request applications for research projects, not sabbatical use
- To target faculty in the context of creating the appropriate learning environment for professionalism as well as applications for developing projects for teaching residents and students.

The board voted to accept the recommendations.

The new AOA web site

The new web site was launched earlier in September for a total cost of \$15,000. It includes a searchable member database. Nominations and many program applications can now be submitted on-line. Members who have not paid dues in the current year will be labeled "inactive"; non-members of the society can access the membership list and see whether the individual is listed as "active" (current on annual dues) or "inactive."

Data on registration, after the difficult transition to the online process in 2007, has been very encouraging. Very few students and a smattering of faculty/alumni nominees have failed to register and thus become elected members of the society. The new procedure has resulted in initial increases in dues paid and in those choosing to pay lifetime dues.



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Financial report

Treasurer C. Bruce Alexander, MD, and Assistant Treasurer William F. Nichols presented the summary of the Investment Committee meeting and the financial report for the 2008/2009 and 2009/2010 years. A dues increase was proposed, and approved. The new dues structure may be seen at: alphaomegalpha.org/dues_contributions.html#paydues.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:05 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Edward D. Harris, Jr., MD, Executive Secretary