



# National and Chapter News

## The 2003 *Pharos* Editor's Prize Winners

I am pleased to announce the winners of the 2003 *Pharos* Editor's Prize. The award was set up in 1998 to encourage younger authors to submit manuscripts to *The Pharos*. In 2003, 10 authors were eligible for the prize; each of them contributed very effectively to the content and appearance of our quarterly. The 2003 winners, each of whom will receive \$1000, are:

**Farhood Farjah, M.D.**, for his paper written with Donald Trunkey, M.D., titled "The Medical and Surgical Care of Our Four Assassinated Presidents" (Spring 2003, pp. 4–12), a well-referenced and detailed essay, presented in a sequential and interesting manner. Those four unfortunate chief executives were, of course, Lincoln (1865), Garfield (1881), McKinley (1901), and Kennedy (1963). The authors ably support the thesis that Presidents Garfield and McKinley received less than optimum care because of (1) inadequate access to resources such as instruments, lighting, and nursing staff; (2) poorly sterilized surgical equipment and failure of sterile technique; and (3) physicians with inadequate training and experience in management of traumatic injury.



**Prashant Vaishnava** for "Journey through Illness: A Perspective on the Patient-Physician Relationship" (Summer 2003, pp. 24–26). This creative essay posited that Virgil would have been the ideal physician, given the model of him guiding Dante through the nine circles of Hell toward God in the *Inferno*. Virgil provided support, hope, and information, and he encouraged "shared decision making," all of which are components of what physicians in the twenty-first century should be bringing to care of their patients. Deserving some credit for the ideas expressed are Janet Osuch, M.D., and Yasmin Richmond, M.A., teachers of a Patient-Physician-Relationship course at Michigan State University for first-year medical students. This paper was not submitted to the Student Essay Contest held annually by *The Pharos*.



**Richard B. Gunderman, Ph.D., M.D.**, for his paper titled "Images of Our Professional Endowment: A Credo for Doctors in 2003." In articulate and flowing style, Dr. Gunderman uses "professional endowment" as a base for forming images that are useful, including: (1) the consideration of ourselves as malleable and adaptable lumps of clay throughout our professional lives, (2) looking at the sequence of learning as the multiple strands of a thread that are woven together into a strong whole, and (3) thinking of our professional lives as a blank sheet of paper on which we draw "to help something meaningful take shape in the lives of our patients. . . . we must be artists, not mere observers waiting for something to happen." His last paragraph includes the important sentence: "For those who approach medicine with the eye of an artist—who develop their curiosity, hone their capacities for creativity, and deepen their passion for coherence—great rewards are in store." We must hope that this can be true for us all.

Edward D. Harris, Jr., M.D.  
*Editor*

### Announcing the 2004 *Pharos* Editor's Prize Competition

For the seventh year, Alpha Omega Alpha is pleased to offer up to three prizes of \$1000 each to the author(s) of original nonfiction manuscripts published in *The Pharos*. Authors need not be members of AΩA, but must be 45 years old or younger as of December of the calendar year in which the paper is submitted. To be competitive for a prize, the paper submitted must be in the standard format of *The Pharos* (see "Instructions for *Pharos* Authors" elsewhere in this issue), and not published previously in any form. Content should be in the areas emphasized by *The Pharos*—medical history and biography, ethics, professional issues, and personal essays. Essays submitted to the AΩA Helen H. Glaser Student Essay competition are not eligible for this prize, nor are previous winners of the Editor's Prize eligible to compete. All manuscripts are subject to review of *Pharos* editorial board members. Judging will be on the basis of style and composition, originality, scholarship, and interest and relevance to medicine.



### New to *The Pharos* editorial board

I am pleased to report that Dr. David Hellmann, the Mary Betty Stevens Professor of Medicine at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine and chairman of the Department of Medicine at Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center, has been appointed to the editorial board of *The Pharos*. Dr. Hellmann's research interests are in the pathophysiology and management of systemic vasculitis.

Dr. Hellmann's recent paper for *The Pharos*, "Eurekopenia: A Disease of Medical Residency Training Programs?" (Spring 2003, pp. 24-26) produced unprecedented numbers of letters to both Dr. Hellmann and the editor. Many of them were published in the Autumn 2003 issue; a few are included in this issue.

Edward D. Harris, Jr., M.D.

Editor

### Leaders in American Medicine

In 1967, as a result of a generous gift from Drs. David E. and Beatrice C. Seegal, Alpha Omega Alpha initiated a program of one-hour videotapes featuring interviews with distinguished American physicians and medical scientists.

The collection has been donated to the National Library of Medicine, which will maintain it for permanent use by scholars visiting the library. Videotapes continue to be available for loan from AOA. A listing of available tapes can be found on our web site: [www.alphaomegalpha.org](http://www.alphaomegalpha.org), or by contacting Ms. Debbie Lancaster at [d.lancaster@alphaomegalpha.org](mailto:d.lancaster@alphaomegalpha.org) or (650) 329-0291. Please also contact Ms. Lancaster to borrow tapes. Those wishing to purchase copies may do so by contacting Ms. Nancy Dosch, manager, Historical Audiovisuals, History of Medicine, Building 38, Room 1E-21, 8600 Rockville Pike, Bethesda, Maryland 20891. Telephone (301) 402-8818, e-mail [nancy\\_dosch@nlm.nih.gov](mailto:nancy_dosch@nlm.nih.gov).

### Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Directors

The board of directors of AOA held its annual meeting on September 20, 2003, in Chicago, Illinois, at the Searle Conference Center on the campus of Rush Medical University. Thanks are due to Dr. Richard I. Abrams, councillor of the Rush Medical College AOA chapter, for making the arrangements.

Board members present were:

C. Bruce Alexander, M.D., councillor member, University of Alabama School of Medicine

President Michael V. Drake, M.D., University of California

N. Joseph Espot, M.D., councillor member, University of Illinois at Chicago College of Medicine

Benjamin Eyer, student member, Medical University of

Wisconsin

Aaron N Hata, student member, Vanderbilt University School of Medicine

Executive Secretary Edward D. Harris, Jr., M.D.

Rae-Ellen Kavey, M.D., member at large, Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine

Don W. Powell, M.D., councillor member, University of Texas Medical School at Galveston

Vice-President Martha G. Regan-Smith, M.D., Dartmouth Medical School

Donald B. Russell, M.D., member at large, University of Alberta Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry

Troy L. Thompson, M.D., member at large, Jefferson Medical College of Thomas Jefferson University

Donald W. Wilson, M.D., member at large, University of Maryland School of Medicine.

Representatives of the national office attending were:

Ann R. Hill, administrator

Debbie Lancaster, managing editor, *The Pharos*

Bill Nichols, assistant treasurer.

Members absent were: Ruth-Marie Fincher, M.D., member at large, Medical College of Georgia; Secretary-Treasurer David Robertson, M.D., Vanderbilt University School of Medicine; Steven Robert Anderson, M.D., student member representing Wake Forest University School of Medicine, now at Duke University School of Medicine; Trisha Clarke, M.D., student member representing the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences.

The nominating committee presented the roster for new board members:

- Don W. Powell of University of Texas Medical School at Galveston for a three-year term as member at large;
- William Frishman of New York Medical College for a three-year term as councillor member;
- Benjamin Eyer of Medical College of Wisconsin for a three-year term as student member.

The slate was approved unanimously.

Dr. Harris, on behalf of Dr. Robert J. Glaser, the honorary member committee chairman, presented the proposed honorary members for 2003:

- Carol M. Black, CBE, London, United Kingdom
- James Burrows Edwards, D.M.D., Charleston, South Carolina
- Peter J. Ell, M.D., London, United Kingdom
- Shigeaki Hinohara, M.D., Tokyo, Japan
- James Orbinski, M.D., Toronto, Canada
- H. Momir Polenakovic, M.D., Skopje, Republic of Macedonia
- Heonir Rocha, M.D., Bahia, Brazil
- Faith Wallis, M.D., Montreal, Canada.

Each was elected to honorary membership by unanimous vote. Honorary membership may be conferred on



outstanding contributors to professionalism, scholarship, leadership, and service in medicine who are not eligible for AΩA membership by any other means. Brief biographies of new honorary members will be published in a future issue of *The Pharos*.

Mr. William Nichols, treasurer, presented the financial data for the year. Investments turned around to end with a positive balance. It is unlikely that, without a surge in dues payers, new programs will be funded in the year ahead, but current programs for the chapters will be intact.

The board plans to have a retreat in March 2004 to evaluate the programs that AΩA provides to chapters for effectiveness and for benefits versus costs. Dues-paying members of the society are encouraged to forward to the executive secretary (e.harris@alphaomegaalpha.org) ideas about how the national office can better serve chapters and members.

In addition, the major problem of members who do not pay dues (about 60 percent of those elected) was discussed, and will be continued at the retreat. The agenda will include new strategies for encouraging lapsed members to pay either annual or lifetime dues, and the alternative of changing the constitution to make it possible for those who have not paid dues for a certain number of years to have AΩA membership and recognition as such terminated.

The Centennial Society was initially formed as the 2002 Society in honor of AΩA's centennial and aimed at lifetime dues payers. In 2002, \$33,940 was raised, and \$5,250 has been received this year. There was general discussion about using new brochures as means of informing members about the society, as well as to persuade non-dues-paying members to become active. Dr. Wilson recommended that when solicitations were distributed for Centennial Society gifts, the requests be made for specific programs, not general operating expenses, and this will be adopted as policy. A new brochure is being prepared.

The proposed anthology of *The Pharos*, introduced by Dr. Harris, was received with enthusiasm. Discussions followed about cost, number of copies, and whether to self-publish or have it out-sourced. The leading proposal, one that would assure that AΩA could retain the copyright, is from Ovid Bell Press, the printer of *The Pharos*. Printing of 5000 standard cloth-bound and leather-bound copies is planned. The anthology will cover the years from 1938, when *The Pharos* was first published, through 1998, and contains many brilliant essays.

Discussion was enthusiastic on the topic of AΩA Associations, allowed by the constitution and formed by members living where no chapter exists. These could be in rural areas far from any medical center, or in one of the U.S. and Canadian medical schools that has no chapter of AΩA. The associations, in addition to providing venues for

professional and social interaction among members, would have access to all AΩA national programs, but could not elect students.

Through his work with the University of California, President Drake observed strong interest in Mexico in an honor medical society in some of the medical colleges there. The board encouraged the concept of providing the qualified Mexican schools of medicine with assistance in developing structures for an AΩA-like organization in Mexico.

Joining the board for lunch were Todd Novak and Matteo Jursek of the University of Illinois at Chicago AΩA chapter.

The board renewed its enthusiasm for the mission and goals of Alpha Omega Alpha, and is focused on professionalism, scholarship, leadership, and service as the society enters its second century.

Edward D. Harris, Jr., M.D.  
*Executive Secretary*

### Councillor meeting

On September 19, 2003, in conjunction with the AΩA board of directors meeting in Chicago, a special meeting for new councillors was held, with Dr. Edward D. Harris, Jr. (executive secretary of AΩA and editor of *The Pharos*), and Dr. Troy L. Thompson II (councillor of the Jefferson Medical College chapter of AΩA and member at large of the board of directors) directing the discussion. Ann Hill, administrator, and Debbie Lancaster, managing editor of *The Pharos*, represented the national office. Councillors present were:

Richard I. Abrams, M.D., Rush Medical College of Rush University

Robert G. Atnip, M.D., Pennsylvania State University College of Medicine

Billy R. Ballard, D.D.S., M.D., Meharry Medical College School of Medicine

Lyman Bilhartz, M.D., University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas, Southwestern Medical School

Charles Bryan, M.D., M.A.C.P., University of South Carolina School of Medicine

Peter DeBlieux, M.D., Louisiana State University School of Medicine in New Orleans

Larry Dial, M.D., Joan G. Edwards School of Medicine at Marshall University

Mark Fergeson, M.D., University of Oklahoma College of Medicine

Jack Fuhrer, M.D., Stony Brook University Health Sciences Center

Carl Fuhrman, M.D., University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine





2003 Councillor's Meeting in Chicago. Left to right: Ted Harris (executive secretary of AQA), Jack Fuhrer, Alex Mechaber, Carl Fuhrman, Larry Dial, Peter Deblieux, Mark Fergeson, Greg Strayhorn, Richard Abrams, Eric Gall, Kate Heilpern, Jim Sebastian, Charles Bryan, John Unterborn, Rodney Parry, Ann Hill, Andy Varney, Adrian Jones, Michele Mass, Robert Atnip, Lyman Bilhartz, and Billy Ballard.

Eric P. Gall, M.D., Finch University of Health Sciences/  
Chicago Medical School

Katherine L. Heilpern, M.D., Emory University School  
of Medicine

Adrian B. Jones, M.D., University of Alberta Faculty of  
Medicine and Dentistry

Michele Mass, M.D., Oregon Health & Science  
University School of Medicine

Alex J. Mechaber, M.D., University of Miami School of  
Medicine

Rodney R. Parry, M.D., University of South Dakota  
School of Medicine

James L. Sebastian, M.D., Medical College of  
Wisconsin

Greg Strayhorn, M.D., secretary-treasurer at Morehouse  
School of Medicine

John Unterborn, M.D., Tufts University School of  
Medicine

Andrew Varney, M.D., Southern Illinois University  
School of Medicine.

## **Vital Lines, Vital Signs: A Conference on Poetry and Medicine**

The Duke Center for the Study of Medical Ethics and Humanities is sponsoring a two-day conference, *Vital Lines, Vital Signs: A Conference on Poetry and Medicine*, on April 23 to 25, 2004, in Durham, North Carolina. The conference will gather poets, scholars, and health care professionals from across the country to discuss various aspects of the relationship between poetry and medicine.

Speakers and readers include Rafael Campo, Lucille Clifton, Jack Coulehan, Mark Doty, Li-Young Lee, Kathryn Montgomery, Sharon Olds, Suzanne Poirier, Reynolds Price, Alan Shapiro, and John Stone.

For more information about the conference, please go to <http://poetryandmedicineconference.mc.duke.edu> Questions should be directed to [poetryandmedicine@mc.duke.edu](mailto:poetryandmedicine@mc.duke.edu).