

Dear Colleagues,

Consider the frustration of not knowing what road to take or where you are going. If you don't know where you are going, any road will do. Although carefree Sunday afternoon drives can be pleasant and enjoyable, a growing organization cannot afford the luxury of an aimless jaunt. Any organization without a commitment to direction will ultimately fail. There is anticipation when you know where you are going and why and excitement when you reach your destination. Your officers and Board of Governors have known their destination and what direction to travel.

One area of focus is turned to the promotion of our annual session in Houston, February 29 – March 2, 2008. Chairman Darren Mareiniss has done a spectacular job arranging an awesome meeting for you all to attend. A new twist this year, in addition to our traditional two and a half day medico-legal sessions, will be a day and a half concurrent session for dental-legal matters. The meeting will have an international flare with some speakers from England, Canada and Norway. We will also have an excellent comedian entertaining us at our annual banquet. The preannouncement brochures and registration information will be in the mail within days. I encourage all of you to begin to make plans to attend and to register early. This year, for the first time, we have announcements in national and international publications and websites promoting the meeting. We also have an increased number of vendors who will be present their products in the exhibit hall. Global Surgical Corp, Dentsply Tulsa Dental Specialties, Treloar and Heisel (our insurance administrator who will be sponsoring the Friday evening Welcome Reception) and Discus Dental (who will be sponsoring the Saturday evening President's Reception and the banquet entertainment), Nobel Biocare, Collamet and Elsevier are a few our sponsoring exhibitors. Please respond to Karen Zucker, our Poster Session Chair if you are interested in presenting a poster clinic at the meeting (see our website for information).

Our ACLM - ABLM – FOUNDATION venture is moving along quite successfully. The BOG has unanimously passed a resolution to go forward with an American Board of Medical Malpractice, under the guidance of ABLM President Sandy Sanbar. The ABLM Board examination will continue as is. The ABMM will allow all other scientific members to become certified as our MD/JD members are. Why Become Board Certified in Medical Malpractice? Educating physicians, dentists, nurses and other health care providers in medical malpractice is fundamentally and critically important to those professionals and is a primary goal of ACLM. The American Board of Medical Malpractice (ABMM) will provide healthcare professionals a means of recognition for their exceptional knowledge and expertise in medical malpractice, by becoming certified. Certification indicates

practice competency, from an interdisciplinary approach, in medical malpractice proceedings. The benefits of becoming Board Certified in Medical Malpractice are many. Among other benefits: Board Certified physicians and other medical healthcare professionals will have pride knowing that they have successfully completed the comprehensive and rigorous criteria and guidelines required by the ABMM to be recognized as possessing exceptional knowledge and expertise in the medical and legal aspects of Medical Malpractice; and Board Certified Members may reference this fact in their written materials and web pages, lending credibility and prominence to their individual practices. By qualifying under the Board objective criteria for knowledge of Medical Malpractice, the Board certified professionals would prove themselves to be highly educated in this field. Review courses will be held at the annual and midyear meetings and there will be the ABLM exam in Houston. The first ABMM exam is being scheduled.

The President of the ACLM Foundation, Bob Buckman, supports all of our educational programs, including Moot Court and the Student Writing Competitions. He is in the process of developing additional avenues for you to contribute to the Foundation and help secure our educational future and supported programs. Soon you will receive a letter describing more about the Foundation, but in the mean time, do not hesitate to contribute. In November, I had the pleasure, as your president, to sit with federal judges for the final judging round of the Moot Court competition sponsored by ACLM, the ACLM Foundation and the Southern Illinois University Law and Medical Schools. Gene Basanta and Marshall Kapp, editor of *JLM* (both professors at the law school and active ACLM members) worked hard with their respective staffs and students to make this year's competition very attractive. This year 100 students representing 30 teams and 22 law schools participated. In addition, 138 attorneys and judges volunteered their time to judge the event. We are quite proud of all the students who participated; they were all awarded a year's membership in ACLM.

The competition was won by one of the teams representing the South Texas College of Law consisting of Kaylyn Betts, Natalie Barletta, and Ben Williams. They will receive a scholarship from the American College of Legal Medicine for their first place finish. The team of Nicole Gerritsen and Jonathan Henry representing Seton Hall School of Law placed second. They will receive a scholarship grant for their second place finish. The third place finishing team, included Mary Katherine Gunn, Sara Patterson, and Stephen E. Randall from South Texas College of Law. The Best Overall Oralist Award was won by William Godfrey of the University of Pittsburgh School of Law. The Best Preliminary Round Oralist was Sara Siegall from Chicago Kent College of Law. She will receive a scholarship from the SIU Center for Health Law and Policy. The team recognized for writing the Best Brief submitted by the participating schools included Nicole Gerritsen and Jonathan Henry

from Seton Hall School of Law. They will receive a scholarship grant for their work from the ACLM Foundation. The runner-up Best Brief by South Texas College of Law .

Our student writing competition brochures were recently revised and sent to all law, medical and dental schools. Under Chairman Kent Harshbarger and co-chairs Alan Hoffman, Tom McLean and Bob Buckman, the messages to the schools and students were improved and each category clarified. We look forward to an increase in submissions this year. All of the members of the student writing committee should commence reviewing the papers as they become assigned to you. Our student writing competition and the moot court programs are valuable assets for the College and we cannot afford to diminish the importance of either of those programs. Students are the backbone of our future existence and we must do what ever we can to sustain programs for them to participate in.

The mid-year educational meeting "Medical Imaging and the Law", chaired by President-Elect Michael Raskin, was the best attended midyear meeting we have ever held. We had more vendors and more attendees than previous years and more non-members attendees apply for membership. Some of the most distinguished radiologists in the country participated. The educational mission was met with superb content.

We had a delightful ceremony welcoming a Chinese delegation representing the China Society of Law and Health to Chicago. After a courteous exchange of gifts with Professor Wu (see photos on our website), ACLM was invited to participate in the forthcoming World Association of Legal Medicine sponsored by the China Society of Law and Health to be held in China, October 2008. BOG member Tom Noguchi will be organizing our ACLM delegation and travel. More information will be available in Houston.

Board member Victoria Green and Past President John Anderson have been working on developing a five-year strategic plan for ACLM. We have a five-year plan in effect for meetings, but we want to further include all of our activities and make sure that we plan appropriately for the future. We always want to know what road to take and where it will lead us.

I have reported about our committee structure through several of my previous President's Notes and the many activities they are involved in. Committee chairs are all busy accomplishing their charges and summations of their hard work will be reported at the Fellows Meeting. Past President Dick Wilbur is accumulating all of the committee reports that have a policy implication and making sure that we determine the right direction for policies to fulfill our mission. Secretary Dale Cowan not only edits all of the meeting documents, but he is busy overseeing many of the basic activities of the College. Marshall Kapp, Judith Gic and Chris White must be acknowledged for their continued efforts to keep our three publications in the spotlight and meeting the publication deadlines. Sandy Sanbar is relentless with the publishers of our textbook and malpractice survival handbook; both used as guides to the ABLM and ABMM exams. Marty Stillman is keeping our membership rolls high, adding new members monthly and Treasurer

Mel Shiffman is making sure we stay afloat in the black. Alan Hoffman has been appointed to the Board of Governors to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Ila Rothschild. The BOG and I would like to thank Ila for all the time and effort she has contributed to ACLM, in particular, her dedication to the student writing competitions.

Here are a few additional activities some of our members are involved in: Gary Birnbaum is now certified in clinical lipidology by the American Board of Clinical Lipidology (Diplomate, American Board of Clinical Lipidology, Ross Silverman was promoted to Chairman of the Department of Medical Humanities at SIU School of Medicine, Bruce Seidberg has written a chapter in Ingle's Endodontics, a premier endodontic text book, and was also elected treasurer of his local dental society. Max Mehlman is the principle investigator receiving a NIH grant to research "Protecting Human Subjects in Genetic Enhancement Research". He has also given recent talks about that subject at the AAAS meeting and the Health Law Teachers meeting of the ASLME. Max spoke about "Dishonest Medical Mistakes" to the Cleveland Bar Association; he is ACLM Chair of the Amicus Brief Committee. "Successful Day with the Judges" in Oklahoma City was chaired by Sandy Sanbar this past October and will be repeated in May 2008 and chaired by Matt Okoye in Lincoln NE. Gene Basanta organized the best Moot Court we have had to date. BOG member Marty Stillman is the proud father, again, this time to a son Zachary Elijah (born in October).

The Nominating Committee has met and developed the slate for the 2008 Officers and Governors. Members can view this slate on the ACLM website [www.aclm.org](http://www.aclm.org).

Leadership in this college is a privilege, being President is an honor. This College has a wealth of individuals who have dedicated time and expertise for the good and welfare of ACLM, and I am grateful to all those who have stepped up to the plate to be involved. This special time of the year, between Thanksgiving and the December Holiday season, allows us an opportunity to pause and reflect and give thanks for all we have individually, collectively, and for ACLM. Of course, we could not proceed without the expertise of our Executive Administrator, Sue O'Sullivan and the WJ Weiser organization directed by Wendy Weiser. The past has been bright but the future will be brighter.

True to our ACLM name, we are an All inclusive health related educational organization that is has Collegiality as a foundation and intersects Legal aspects of Medical and health related issues for all health related professionals interested in the law.

Until my next message, God bless you all, our country and professions and the American College of Legal Medicine. Our prayers continue for the health of our Colleagues and family members who may be ill.

Judy and I wish you and your families the very happiest and healthy holidays to be filled with joy and success in all your endeavors and a very Happy New Year.

Bruce H. Seidberg, DDS, MScD, JD, FCLM  
ACLM President