



The Latino Informant

Volume 1

Fall Issue, 2012



From the Editor

Greetings fellow LMSA members! My name is Rob Fernandez, and I am serving as the Regional Vice President for Academic Affairs and Health Policy this year for the Midwest Region of LMSA. I am a fourth year Osteopathic medical student at Des Moines University in Iowa, and I am happy to serve on the Executive Board to help increase awareness of Latino(a) health issues as well as to provide a perspective from Osteopathic medicine. I have a background in public health and global health, and I am planning to pursue a career in Internal Medicine. The idea for publishing this tri-annual newsletter developed out of several interests of mine that are shared with our Regional Executive Board and our membership. We hope the information contained in the newsletter will further stimulate these shared interests and generate quality discussion, advocacy, and leadership within our LMSA chapters.

One of my passions as a medical student has been following health policy. In my view, physicians today must become more actively involved in the legislative process. We must advocate for our patients and educate ourselves and our colleagues regarding critical policy initiatives affecting the U.S. Health care system. A second passion of mine, also shared by many of my like-minded colleagues, is academic medicine. The training of future generations of physicians in the U.S. hinges on an assurance of the delivery of high quality medical and graduate medical education. However, this assurance cannot adequately be met without a supply of enthusiastic physician-educators. For this reason, more physicians in training ought to consider academic medicine career pathways. Finally, I believe that physicians-in-training ought to strive towards cultivating and maintaining a

commitment to humanism, professionalism, and leadership. These qualities will empower future generations of physicians to rise to the challenges of modern-day medicine in ways that often require us to go beyond seeing patients in the exam room. We must become active participants within our communities and become involved at the local, state, national and international levels. Above all, we must become the role models and mentors for other Latino(a)s who wish to pursue health professions education.

As such, this issue of *The Latino Informant* will highlight some of the inspirational pearls of wisdom shared at our LMSA Regional House of Delegates meeting at the University Of Cincinnati College Of Medicine this past August. Most who were present would agree that our guest speakers were all “keynote” quality, each offering insightful commentary that we felt should be shared with all of our regional LMSA chapters. We will wrap up this issue with information and a “call to action” for our members to submit research and plan to attend our next Regional LMSA meeting at Loyola University as well as to encourage all of our members to educate themselves on health policy and politics and of course...to VOTE!

Pearls of Wisdom from an Accomplished Latino Physician and Health Care Leader

At our Regional HOD meeting in August in Cincinnati, we were all grateful to have Dr. Javier Gonzalez del Ray as a keynote speaker. Dr. Gonzalez del Ray is currently the Director of the Pediatric Residency Training Programs at Cincinnati Children’s Hospital, Associate Director for the Division of Emergency Medicine, and Professor of Pediatrics at the University of Cincinnati College of Medicine. Originally from Puerto Rico, Dr. Gonzalez



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del Ray shared with us his journey to a career in medicine and described many of the pearls he has learned along the way. It was a very inspirational presentation, and below are his pearls (paraphrased) that he teaches all of his students. After each pearl, we have added an editorial reflection for our readers' further consideration. Enjoy!

1. On leadership: "It's not all about *you*; it's about developing future generations of leaders *around you*." Reflection: Leadership is about building the infrastructure and foundation for the future.
2. "If you have a goal, go for it! Don't give up on it; it's not just 3 strikes and you're out." Reflection: Life's barriers are simply challenges that we must meet, overcome, and learn from.
3. "You must work to help EVERYBODY, not select groups of people around you." Reflection: To move forward as a society, we must be willing to work together and support our communities by empowering individuals around us.
4. "When you get something good in life, enjoy it but be thankful." Reflection: Take time to reflect on your accomplishments with an awareness of how fortunate you have been and how thankful you ought to be.
5. "Be humble and be grateful to those around you who help you along your way." Reflection: Don't forget your roots and the struggles you had to overcome to get to your current position.
6. "Those who you think are the farthest away from helping you will in fact pull you forward towards success."
7. "Do NOT fight destiny." Reflection: Follow life's detours with an open mind and optimistic attitude.
8. "Be careful what you say, you will regret it if you do not honor your word." Reflection: Being true to your word establishes trust.
9. "Find help among those who love you." Reflection: A support system is the core of your success.
10. "A lot of us who are first-generation often do not move forward as leaders because we believe that home is home and home is where the family is; and so we think we must stay local." Reflection: We must be willing to make a new home for ourselves if we wish to take advantage of leadership opportunities and maximize our potential.
11. "It's not your job, it is your FAMILY who will help you succeed." Reflection: See pearl number 9. The focus of your support network must be your family and close friends.
12. "To make an influence, you must prepare yourself and you must be patient." Reflection: Always strive for continued education and personal and professional development, and do not rush the process.
13. "You have to love what you do to enjoy what you do; money alone will not make you happy." Reflection: Pursue your passions and dreams each and every day. Celebrate the intrinsic rewards as opposed to simply the monetary or extrinsic rewards.
14. "When you cease to make a contribution, you begin to die" NOTE: This pearl's author is actually Eleanor Roosevelt. But the insight highly relevant here.



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15. "There are a lot of people out there who can be role models for you." Reflection: Seek out mentors everywhere, even in places you'd least expect to find one.

We thank Dr. Gonzalez del Ray for his inspiring lecture and for sharing with us his pearls of wisdom on leadership. In the same spirit, here is one more quote on leadership that is especially uplifting: "If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more, and become more, you are a leader" (John Quincy Adams).

Call for Research Abstracts!

The Midwest Regional LMSA wants to hear about the research you are doing! The next Regional LMSA conference will be held at Loyola University on January 19th, 2013. This year's research theme is "Translational Research," which emphasizes basic and population-based research that has clinical applications. However, submissions of all types of research will be accepted for review. This conference will again feature our annual research poster competition, with 1st, 2nd, and 3rd prize winners provided with a financial aid and award recognition at the conference and in our regional newsletter publications. Presenting a research poster at a national conference is an excellent way to share your hard work and innovative research findings with other health professionals and looks great on your CV. **The deadline for submissions has been extended to December 20th, 2012.** Award winning posters will be judged at the conference in January. Prizes include 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place financial awards of \$250, \$150, and \$100 respectively. Please email your submissions to our Regional Vice President for Academic Affairs & Health Policy at: roberto.j.fernandez@dmu.edu

We look forward to your participation!

Stay Informed on Health Policy Issues

Being a medical student is challenging! With so many competing demands and priorities always in the shuffle, it's hard to make time for much else. However, we ought to be reminded that becoming a physician means that we are okay with the added demands. We have signed up to strive for excellence. And it is our responsibility to remain active and informed citizens so that we may best serve our patients and society. With all of the political rhetoric, it's hard to get unbiased information these days. All the same, we ought to know where to find information and how to learn about the policy positions of our elected officials.

For up-to-date free health policy information daily or weekly, check out:

www.americanhealthline.com

And for an academic view, check out regularly published Perspective articles in: *The New England Journal of Medicine or Health Affairs*. The following website also helps to narrow your journal article preferences based on your interests and what you usually read. Check it out: www.docphin.com

As for our elected officials, it goes without saying that you should know who your national officials within your state are and know how to contact them. Here's a link to find this information quickly; just click on your state:

<http://www.congress.org/congressorg/dbq/officials>

LMSA Announces Student Scholarship!

The LMSA has long been an organization that emphasizes the importance of academic excellence and continued education of health care providers



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beyond the four short years of medical school. Yet education must be shared with our patients, our families, and our communities. As medical professionals, we have a broader social responsibility that calls upon us to utilize our advanced training and knowledge in creative ways that goes beyond the classroom and hospital. We are in a position to share our expertise, volunteer our time and counsel, and promote critical health information within our communities. We can make an impact on the public's health through service in numerous civic organizations and through advocating for our patients. And it begins during medical school.

In an effort to recognize the significant contributions, achievements, and future goals of our Regional members, LMSA-MW is now accepting applications for our annual scholarship for current medical students (M.D.s or D.O.s) who are members of an LMSA-MW chapter and who have demonstrated an ongoing commitment to Latino(a) health issues through participation in community service, research (especially regarding health disparities), service in leadership positions, involvement in projects that serve underserved populations, volunteering time to mentoring pre-health professions students, and striving for academic excellence. Additional eligibility criteria can be found at www.lmsa.net/midwest/

Applicants must submit the following:

- Applicant Information Sheet
- A Personal Statement
- Curriculum Vitae
- Proof of Acceptance and Enrollment and/or Letter of Good Standing from Medical School

The scholarship recipient will receive **\$1,500** and be recognized formally at our Regional Conference in

January. Students must be present to accept scholarship and will be notified one week prior to the conference. **Deadline for submission is January 1st, 2013 at Midnight** and can be sent to roberto.j.fernandez@dmu.edu

Next Issue...

The next issue of *The Latino Informant* will be published in the spring after our next Regional Conference in Chicago. We are looking for new ideas and additional ways to enhance the resources LMSA provides. In addition, we would like to hear from you specifically what health policy issues you would like to see coverage on. The National LMSA is currently working on official position statements for various health policy issues, and we could definitely use your input in drafting these statements. Furthermore, if you would like to write an opinion article or editorial piece for the next issue, please feel free to submit it for possible inclusion! We love to hear from our regional chapters, so if you have recently had a service project that you would like to share with our members let us know and send us your write-up and pictures and we'll feature it in the next issue. Again, thanks for reading and please spread the word!

*Contact *The Latino Informant* with your questions, comments, or concerns:

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