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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

### September 2010

Summer is upon us, and with it our transition to a new Cal/AAEM board, whose members are now in place. I am excited about the opportunity to lead this chapter for the next year. In addition to thanking the 2009-2010 Board of Directors, I specifically want to express my gratitude to Ingrid Lim who did a fantastic job as president this past year. I hope to build upon the foundation she has established. We continue to have membership growth and fantastic educational conferences at AAEM Scientific Assembly, while *WestJem* has become an amazing journal (both hardcopy and electronic) with an ever-increasing number of article submissions. We've also improved outreach to California's residencies. With all that has already been done, I guess my job will be pretty easy.

For some background about myself, I'm a community emergency physician who works for a two-hospital private democratic group in Berkeley and Oakland. I've been an active member on the Cal/AAEM Board for the last five years, which gives me an understanding of the programs and issues in which Cal/AAEM has been involved historically as well as recently. I do hope that this familiarity will provide good context for my leadership efforts and plans for the year ahead.

Since 2001, I have been Managing Editor of the *CAL/AAEM News Service*, a free electronic mail subscription service currently serving over 1,200 emergency

physicians. Starting last year, we have all Cal/AAEM chapter members on our subscriber lists. Keeping California's emergency physicians informed of developments



in local, state, and national healthcare news and public policy will make us all more effective advocates for our colleagues, as well as for our patients. With the many challenges that we face practicing emergency medicine in California, we would like to have everyone as informed as possible about developing issues locally, nationally, and in Sacramento.

In Ingrid's last two articles in this newsletter, she outlined the chapter's achievements for the past year. My focus in this letter will be to briefly describe my upcoming plans for the coming year. Concurrent with national AAEM's drive to increase membership growth, my primary goal will be similarly focused on membership development, membership growth and membership retainment. There are many different strategies to achieve this. One of the main things I plan to do is to increase our frequency of communications with our membership, so people are more

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aware of activities and developments within our chapter. I think the more that people are aware, the more likely members will become active and engaged in the chapter.

Second, we will continue to pursue recruitment of medical student and emergency medicine residents as members, which will provide a foundation for future chapter membership growth. We have resident liaisons who have helped us tremendously this last year, and I plan to continue to use them.

Third, I intend to pursue more aggressive outreach to our AAEM members who live in California but who are not current members of the chapter. Personally, I think every member of AAEM should be a member of and support their state chapter. AAEM allows members to have a choice to join or not to join their respective state chapters. Other emergency medicine organizations make it a requirement to join the state chapter. I'm not advocating for that, but I want to stress that membership dues for our chapter are a very reasonable amount (\$120 full, \$60 associate, and FREE for resident/student), so this should not be an impediment to joining.

One way to retain current members, as well as recruit new members, is to find out what emergency physicians want from their state chapter. An early target of my presidency is to develop and send out a membership survey

this fall to help guide our board's efforts and chapter activities. I want to know what benefits or activities you would like us to pursue. How we can better provide services and best represent you, our membership?

Lastly, we would like to further develop our chapter website, [www.CalAAEM.org](http://www.CalAAEM.org). Currently, we have membership information, the Newsletter, Cal/AAEM News Service information, and links to *WestJem's* homepage. We are interested in posting online video/podcasts where current members of the chapter could submit a short video sharing a personal story about why he or she joined AAEM, or other reflections on being an AAEM member. If you are interested in submitting your story, please contact us at [info@CalAAEM.org](mailto:info@CalAAEM.org).



Brian Potts, MD, MBA FAAEM  
CAL/AAEM President, 2010-2011

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