

THE GREEN MOUNTAIN PHYSICIAN

A PUBLICATION OF THE VERMONT MEDICAL SOCIETY

"Not for ourselves do we labor"

Nov./Dec.

VERMONT MEDICAL SOCIETY CELEBRATES 200TH ANNUAL MEETING

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2013

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The Vermont Medical Society celebrated a milestone Oct. 19th; its 200th annual meeting. The meeting took place just two weeks prior to another landmark date in the Society's history, the 200th anniversary since its incorporation by the Vermont Legislature.

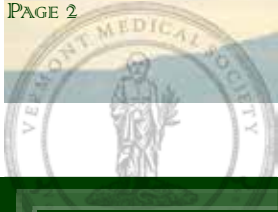
Taking place at the Basin Harbor Club, that annual meeting's weekend of events and festivities kicked off Friday, Oct. 18th, with a well-attended CME organized by the Vermont Medical Society Education and Research Foundation titled "Policy, Politics, Advocacy & Public Service: Can Physician Leaders Make a Difference." The session featured Vermont, regional and national physician leaders discussing why physicians need to be involved in the current health policy debates and what skills they will need to be effective leaders.

The following day Joshua Plavin, M.D., of Gifford Medical Center and Michael Rouse, M.D., of Northeastern Regional Hospital presented research findings that outlined physician opinion on key issues for the Green Mountain Care Board to consider when developing a statewide Health Resource Allocation Plan for Vermont. That session was followed by an inspirational session, titled "Steps to Creating a Healthcare System, Rather than a Sickcare System," given by Rebecca Onie, J.D., co-founder of Health Leads.

The day's final CME session focused on reforming Vermont's health care delivery and payment systems while lowering costs, improving quality and reducing administrative burdens.

Following lunch was the annual membership meeting, in which VMS' new officers were tapped by membership [see page 3 for story] and six public policy resolutions were adopted [page 3].

Saturday wrapped up in a style that was appropriate for a 200th anniversary, with a fireworks show and an awards ceremony [see page 4 and 5] that recognized five physicians and policy makers for their outstanding efforts to improve the health of Vermonters.



FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

By Daniel B. Walsh, M.D.



Dear Friends:

As the Vermont Medical Society begins a new year fresh with the resolutions from our 200th annual meeting, I would first like to thank the staff for organizing such an interesting and productive gathering. If you were unable to attend, you were missed.

It is shaping up to be another challenging year. The changes in Vermont's health care system will dominate our patients' lives and our practice. Finance, reimbursement, quality measures, narcotic use, vaccinations, and the electronic medical record top a very long list. The care of patients with psychiatric issues has taken on even greater urgency due to issues surrounding patients' rights, provider safety and the funding of the Vermont State Hospital. As critical advocates for our patients, we will have to effectively respond to these questions in much the same way as we provide direct, daily care.

I very much appreciate the honor and trust you have given me as your president. Please, feel free to contact me with any issues or questions. We will do our best to represent your patients' interests and keep you informed of our activities.

Best wishes,

Daniel B. Walsh, M.D.
President





SOCIETY TAPS NEW OFFICERS

Daniel B. Walsh, M.D., a Norwich, Vt., resident and vascular surgeon at Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center, was named president of the Vermont Medical Society during its 200th annual meeting.

A professor of surgery at the Geisel School of Medicine at Dartmouth, Dr. Walsh earned his B.A. from Harvard College, his M.D. at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine and completed his residency at the University of Michigan Medical Center. He joined the DHMC staff in 1987. He also serves as a consulting surgeon at Brattleboro Memorial Hospital.

As president of VMS, Dr. Walsh will take a lead role in the Society's public policy efforts in Montpelier and Washington, D.C. Priorities during the upcoming year will include efforts to ensure continued access to quality health care during Vermont's possible transition to a single-payer system as well as integrating public health and primary care.

Also during the meeting, VMS members elected **David Coddaira, M.D.**, and **James Hebert, M.D.**, president-elect and vice president, respectively.

Dr. Coddaira is a family physician at the Morrisville Family Health Center and a recipient of the 2009 Vermont Medical Society's Physician of the Year award. He earned his M.D. at the University of Vermont College of Medicine and completed his residency at Fletcher Allen.

Dr. Hebert is a general surgeon at Fletcher Allen Health Care and a Mackay-Page Professor of Surgery at the University of Vermont College of Medicine, where he earned his M.D. He was named to U.S. News and World Report's Top Doctors list for 2012-2013, placing in the top 1 percent for excellence in General Surgery with special expertise in Biliary Surgery and Colon & Rectal Surgery.

VERMONT MEDICAL SOCIETY ADOPTS NEW RESOLUTIONS, SETS HEALTH CARE PUBLIC POLICY PRIORITIES FOR 2014

The Vermont Medical Society adopted policy resolutions during its annual meeting that address a number of issues important to the state's physicians, including improving the transition of care, supporting physician leadership, alleviating the burden of quality reporting, and setting standards for investigations conducted by the Vermont Board of Medical Practice.

"There are a number of opportunities and challenges facing Vermont's health care system during this time of great transition," said Daniel Walsh, M.D., VMS' newly elected president. "By passing these resolutions our members seek to impact health care public policy in our state, with our priorities being improving access to quality health care as well as protecting and strengthening the patient/physician relationship."

The resolutions, which were formulated beginning with VMS' annual planning retreat in August, will form the basis of the organization's 2014 public policy efforts on behalf of its 2,000 physician members. The adopted resolutions were:

Improving Transition of Care – Recognizes that the U.S. health care system often fails to meet the needs of patients transitioning from one care setting to another (i.e., hospital, home or a long-term care facility), and that care is frequently rushed, responsibility is



Vermont Medical Society

LEADERSHIP

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President - Elect

James Hebert, M.D.
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Colleen Magne
Business Manager

Justin Campfield
Communications Director

Suzanne Parker, M.D.
VPHM Medical Director

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VMS HONORS OUTSTANDING SERVICE TO HEALTH CARE AND COMMUNITY

The 200th annual meeting concluded in celebration as VMS recognized five Vermonters for their outstanding contributions to the health and well-being.

The Physician of the Year award was presented to **Mark Nunlist, M.D.**, for the exemplary and respectful care that he has given patients over the last 30 years, and the role model he has provided to the physician community in the Upper Connecticut River Valley. Dr. Nunlist (*pictured on the left with Sean Uiterwyk, M.D.*), a primary care provider at White River Family Practice in Wilder, Vt., has been instrumental in the implementation of the Blueprint program, as well as in the forefront of integrating technology into excellent clinical care. He has worked with Vermont Information Technology Leaders in developing your practice as a model for clinical Microsystems incorporating technology into the process.



Senator Patrick Leahy received the Citizen of the Year Award for his efforts in the aftermath of the school shootings in Newtown, Conn. Senator Leahy (*pictured on the right with Louis DiNicola, M.D.*) voted to expand background checks for purchasing firearms, renew the assault weapons ban, prohibit future sales of high capacity magazines and improve mental health services. In correspondence with the state's physicians, he compared the fact that in Vermont it is "illegal to hunt wild animals with a firearm with a magazine capacity of over six cartridges...therefore it is only logical that we should extend similar protections to humans." Senator Leahy also was a strong supporter of the bipartisan amendment adopted by the Senate to improve suicide prevention and

intervention programs in schools and communities.

The Distinguished Service Award was presented to **John Bookwalter, M.D., FACS**, of Putney, Vt. Dr. Bookwalter (*pictured on the right with Daniel Walsh, M.D.*) was recognized for his well-known love of his patients and devotion to their needs and concerns, as well as his contributions to the science of medicine that include many internationally recognized surgical inventions. The surgical tool "Bookwalter Retractor System" is the most widely used fixed retractor in the world. While he recently retired from the practice of surgery, he has continued his surgical innovation career and is currently completing work on a new stapling device. As a general surgeon in private practice in Brattleboro from 1973 to 2012, Dr. Bookwalter helped countless



individuals in a selfless and dedicated fashion, while embodying the qualities of physician and healer.

Anya Rader Wallack, PhD, was presented with the Founders' Award, which is presented annually to an individual who has demonstrated outstanding leadership, vision, and achievement in improving the health of Vermonters and all Americans.



Dr. Wallack (*pictured on the left with Cy Jordan, M.D.*) was recognized for her many efforts to reform Vermont's health care system, including being the principle architect behind Act 48, Vermont's 2011 landmark health care reform legislation related to a universal and unified health. The legislation called for the creation of Green Mountain Care and the five-person Green Mountain Care Board, which Governor Peter Shumlin appointed Dr. Wallack

to head as chairwoman. While charged with implementing many of the Act's provisions, Dr. Wallack worked tirelessly to solicit ideas and recommendations from physicians and other health care providers. She is currently chair of the state's \$45 million SIM grant core team tasked with helping to achieve the "triple aim" of "improving quality of health care, improving patient experience and reducing the cost of care."

The Physician Award for Community Service was given to Randolph, Vt., pediatrician **Louis DiNicola, M.D.** Dr. DiNicola was recognized not only for his decades of service to Randolph's children and families, but also for his response to the impact of Tropical Storm Irene. In the immediate aftermath, he galvanized the pediatric community to identify and mitigate the physical and emotional threats to children's health that resulted from the storm. Dr. DiNicola garnered funding from the American Academy of Pediatrics Friends of Children Disaster Relief Fund to support these efforts, making small grants available to communities for a variety of projects (e.g., assuring access to mental health resources and restoring a children's playground that had been destroyed by the storm). And his crowning achievement was the creation and publication of a volume entitled *Children, Trauma and the Arts*. This book was created in hopes that it would encourage practitioners to call on the arts as powerful supports in liberating children from trauma.



VMS EDUCATION AND RESEARCH FOUNDATION AWARDS SCHOLARSHIP TO UVM COLLEGE OF MEDICINE STUDENTS

Practicing physicians and policy makers were not the only ones feted during the final event of the annual meeting, two medical students were also recognized for their commitment to the health of Vermonters.

The Vermont Medical Society's Education and Research Foundation awarded \$5,000 scholarships to University of Vermont College of Medicine students **Jen Makrides** and **Christian Crannell**.

A member of the class of 2015, Makrides (*pictured right with Rick Morin, Dean UVMCOM*) is currently the co-chair of the Vermont Human Trafficking Task Force's health subcommittee and has been engaged in several research projects relating to the topic of human trafficking in the state. She has also served as a sexual assault/violence intervention advocate at Mt. Sinai Hospital and a political science adjunct professor at Pace University.



A writer for numerous publications, including *Physicians for Human Rights*, *National Women's Law Center* and *Human Strategies/Human Rights*, Markrides holds an MA in international relations from Boston University and a BA in Italian language and literature from Smith College.

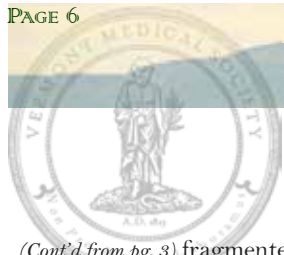
Crannell, also a member of the class of 2015, is currently engaged in a research project designing patient evaluation forms for medical students and in the past has investigated cellular uptake of hydrocarbon "stapled" peptides and the disruption of BCR signaling in diffuse large B-cell lymphoma at Dana Farber Institute.

He has published research in *Current Protocols in Chemical Biology and Macromolecules*, and has recently submitted an article to the *The Journal of Clinical Investigation* for consideration. A member of Phi Beta Kappa, Crannell received a BA in chemistry from Colby College and was awarded a merit scholarship by the UVM College of Medicine.

Each year the Vermont Medical Society Education and Research Foundation gives one or more scholarships to medical students who are committed to practicing medicine in Vermont and caring for Vermonters. The scholarship program was created to encourage young doctors to return to Vermont after completing their residency training.

"It is our hope and intention that by offering this annual scholarship we can successfully persuade medical students to practice medicine in Vermont, especially in its less-served areas, ensuring that Vermonters in all parts of the state continue to have access to excellent medical care," said Dr. Mildred Reardon, the award's namesake and a faculty member at the College of Medicine who was instrumental in forming the Vermont Medical Society Education and Research Foundation.

The scholarship is funded through generous contributions from Fletcher Allen Health Care, members of the Vermont Medical Society, and the Chittenden County Medical Society.



VMS PUBLIC POLICY RESOLUTIONS

(Cont'd from pg. 3) fragmented, and there is often little communication between care settings and multiple providers. The resolution calls for improved transition of care by resolving that VMS work the physician community and payors to educate on the use of the transition of care codes and improving care coordination, providing better incentives to ensure patients are seen in a physician's office, rather than be at risk for readmission, and encouraging precise and meaningful discharge summaries.

Advances in Primary Care and Public Health Integration through Population Health – Calls for increased integration of efforts between public health and primary care to better address the root causes of illness, prevent additional cases of disease, and to make the default choices of individuals healthy ones. Seeks to accomplish this by committing VMS to work with numerous organizations and government agencies to implement the set of principles developed by the Institute of Medicine that they deem essential for successful integration, such as:

- A shared goal of population health improvement;
- Community engagement in defining and addressing population health needs;
- Aligned leadership;
- Sustainability, including shared infrastructure; and
- Sharing and collaborative use of data and analysis.

Burden of Quality Reporting – Seeks to address the inordinate and inefficient amount of time physicians spend dealing with multiple quality reporting requirements by recommending the elimination of reporting requirements where there is a lack of evidence supporting their benefits and identifying ways to standardize the definitions and calculations for quality metrics used by the federal and state government entities, insurance payers, and others.

Electronic Health Records and the Medical Record – Encourages Vermont's Congressional delegation to support the efforts of the Health Story Project to ensure that health information exchange standards go beyond a narrow, common data set to encompass the common types of clinical records. The resolution also calls for Electronic Health Records and other communication applications to respect the clinical voice and emphasize the medical record as a critical element in providing high quality care to patients.

Support for Physician Policy Involvement and Physician Leadership Education – Seeks to capitalize on physicians' unique qualities that are critical for health care reform leadership to ensure that physicians have opportunities to be actively involved in forming policy in all arenas of health care reform. Additionally, the resolution calls for the portion of hospital budgets allocated by the Green Mountain Care Board for staff engagement in health care reform initiatives be used in part to support physician leadership, with special emphasis on Vermont Medical Society Education and Research Foundation efforts to have the training and education they need to function effectively as leaders in the health care reform environment.

Investigation Standards for the Vermont Board of Medical Practice – Citing physician concerns that investigators from the Vermont Board of Medical Practice (VBMP) sometimes arrive unannounced at practices and request copies of patients' records without a release or court order, the resolution calls for the VBMP to establish by rule procedures for investigations of alleged unprofessional conduct, as well as:

- Providing meaningful notice of unprofessional conduct charges to licensees and a meaningful opportunity to respond to complaints;
- Adopting clear and transparent standards for the use and disclosure of patients' medical records requested in the course of an investigation of a licensee; and,
- Amending the physician license profile law to require the VBMP and Department of Health to remove any charges, findings or orders if the licensing authority or a court has dismissed the charges.





200TH ANNUAL MEETING IN PICTURES



VMS "Moderator for Life", Dr. Jack Murray



VMS President-Elect David Coddair, M.D. and VMS Deputy Executive Vice President Madeleine Mongan listen to discussion intently.



Carolyn Taylor-Olson, M.D., (left), and Wendy Davis, M.D. enjoy the lively annual meeting conversations.



Past President, Dr. Richard Burtis (right) enjoys the President's Reception.



Past President, Hugh Hermann, M.D. and his wife Kerry Postler-Hermann enjoy the company of Massachusetts Medical Society President Ronald Dunlap, M.D. and his wife Bonneie Dunlap.



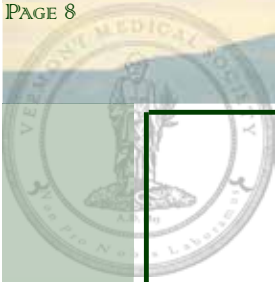
President-Elect David Coddair, M.D. (left) and Vice President James Hebert, M.D., bask in the election glow.



Medical Student Kelsey Preston (left) discusses the future with President of Medical Mutual Insurance Company of Maine, Dr. Terrance Sheehan.



Happy 200th Annual Meeting VMS!



SAVE THE DATE

Vermont Medical Society

201st Annual Meeting

October 24 & 25, 2014

Equinox Resort, Manchester, Vt.

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