

USAFP History 2002-2011

In April 2009, USAFP president, Dr. Mary Krueger requested an update to the history of the Academy. An initial history of the USAFP was completed in March 2002 by then Secretary-Treasurer, Dr. Ken Franklin. Subsequently, the intent of this document is to summarize significant events/highlights of the USAFP from 2002 until 2009. A combination of interviews, past newsletters and meeting minute reviews were utilized to research this project. The reader is encouraged to review Dr. Franklin's 2002 paper or past newsletters available on the USAFP website if additional information is desired.

March 2002- March 2003

On the heels of the first ever meeting with over 500 attendees in 2001 (San Diego -551), the 2002 USAFP Annual Meeting again broke that milestone with 512 registrants at the Rosen Centre Hotel in Orlando, Florida. Of those 512 in attendance, 126 were first time attendees and 66 were residents. This particular conference also featured the inaugural resident leadership workshop coordinated by Dr. Maureen Padden. AAFP President and Past USAFP President Dr. Warren A. Jones installed W. Robert Kiser MD as USAFP President.

Following Orlando, work quickly began on planning the 2003 Annual Meeting in Seattle, Washington under the direction of Dr. Anthony Viera. Unfortunately, Operation Iraqi Freedom compelled the USAFP leadership to cancel the meeting. Efforts were consequently focused on providing alternative methods for obtaining CME to include web-based or CD-ROM programs. Plans were also made to transfer the leadership to newly elected officers and board members without the formality of the traditional installation luncheon.

In retrospect, Dr. Kiser noted "my primary accomplishment was successfully NOT holding the meeting the year the war in Iraq started. Making that decision was also the most difficult thing I had to do as the USAFP President, as there was not a 'right' answer". Additionally, Dr. Kiser commented on the growth of the USAFP "from a relatively motley group of a few score into a vibrant cadre of many hundreds of souls, all dedicated to the mission of our country. That growth, in terms of numbers and in terms of services, is a real tribute to those pioneers like Past USAFP President and Past AAFP President RADM Bob Higgins who had the vision and energy to see where we needed to go and how we could get there."

March 2003 - March 2004

To ensure seamless transition of leadership and to avoid interruption of services following the cancellation of the spring 2003 Annual Meeting, the USAFP Executive Committee met telephonically and made several key decisions on behalf of the Board of Directors. Most significantly, the mantle of USAFP Presidency was unceremoniously passed to Philip Volpe DO in the spring of 2003. Additionally, Dr. Robert Marshall was installed as Vice President and Dr. Mark Tedesco was appointed to a full 3 year term as Secretary/Treasurer as a representative of the USPHS/CG. Finally, the Executive Committee instituted policy whereby the immediate Past President and Past Past President would serve as AAFP Delegates and the USAFP President and President-Elect would serve as AAFP Alternate Delegates. March 2003 also witnessed an overhaul of the USAFP webpage to include access to free CME on the Education page.

The next formal Board of Directors meeting was held in conjunction with the Fall 2003 AAFP Annual Meeting in New Orleans, LA. Acknowledging the need to effectively operate in the age of electrons, the Executive Committee approved the creation of the Information Technologies Committee. Additionally, Dr. Volpe tasked the Operational Medicine Committee to create and enhance the op med website link. With Dr. Autumn Caycedo at the helm, work continued to focus on planning the 2004 Annual Meeting to be held in San Diego.

March 2004- April 2005

In spite of high operational tempo, the 29th USAFP Annual Meeting themed “Family Medicine Leading the Way” attracted 513 attendees to the Town and Country Resort in San Diego, CA. This conference also featured the first CD ROM syllabus vice the traditional and cumbersome paper syllabus. Transitioning to a CD not only saved money, but also allowed deployed colleagues access to conference content.

The San Diego meeting also witnessed the installation of Dr. Lewis Hofmann as the next USAFP President. In accepting his charge as President, Dr. Hoffman challenged each member of the USAFP to “do one good thing” for the academy.

Of note, several good things did happen during Dr. Hoffman’s term. First, Dr. Lori Heim was formally endorsed in her campaign as candidate for the AAFP Board of Directors. Although this campaign ultimately did not result in Dr Heim’s election, her message was heard and the stage was set for future candidacies. Secondly, Dr. Hoffman and the BOD reported the USAFP to be financially sound, with adequate reserves to cover annual expenses for one year if need be. This milestone was an astonishing accomplishment given the fact that the USAFP was on the brink of financial catastrophe less than a decade earlier. Thirdly, the USAFP made significant progress in “going electronic” as elections went paperless and the journal began arriving electronically several weeks in advance of the traditional mailing.

March 2005-March 2006

Snowbird Resort in Salt Lake City, Utah served as the scenic location of the 2005 USAFP Annual Meeting appropriately titled “Scaling the Mountain of Evidence”. Organized under the direction of Dr. Leslie Knight, this meeting attracted 497 medical professionals. In part due to logistics, this meeting featured a record number of breakout session lecture choices. This meeting also witnessed the inaugural senior leadership workshop which has been a constant at subsequent conferences.

In Utah, Dr. Robert Marshall succeeded Dr. Hoffman as the next President of the USAFP. Acknowledging the “Future of Family Medicine” published by the AAFP, a major initiative for Dr. Marshall was to develop a “Future of Military Family Medicine” (FMFM) document. This document was successfully completed through extensive coordination, time and effort of many individuals. FMFM can be found on the USAFP website and still serves as the basis for the PCMH movement in the MHS. In considering the USAFP as a whole, Dr. Marshall comments “I think it is amazing what we are able to accomplish despite being stationed across 24 times zones, very busy with often with little or no support staff and deployed to austere/hostile environments at a rate approaching 10% at any time. Despite all that, we are able to conduct business as an organization that cares very deeply for its members, publishes a very robust Newsletter four times a year, have members who continue to produce and publish quality research and hold an annual meeting that provides a level of CME quality and breadth that is unrivaled throughout the AAFP every year. That is due to the Headquarters staff and our own member’s dedication and commitment to excellence in everything they do. It is also due to the selfless nature of our members. That is not something you can teach or buy.”

Of note, Dr. Lori Heim was successfully elected to the AAFP Board of Directors during this period. Also, a bylaws change regarding voting procedures for residency programs was instituted in order to facilitate parity between different sized programs for Resident BOD positions.

As Program Chair, Dr. Sandy Kimmer led preparations for the 2006 USAFP Annual Meeting and Exposition. Unfortunately, planning for this conference to be held in New Orleans took an unexpected turn. Due to the devastating effects of Hurricane Katrina, the city of New Orleans cancelled all conventions slated in the first quarter of 2006. In a Herculean effort, Dr. Kimmer and USAFP staff worked diligently to develop an alternative meeting sight. Plans were eventually made to hold the meeting in Chicago.

March 2006-March 2007

The meeting themed “Get Jazzed up about Family Medicine” was moved on account of Hurricane Katrina from New Orleans to Chicago. In spite of uncertainties and venue change, the Annual Meeting was still able to attract 435 attendees. In reminiscing on the Chicago meeting, Dr. Marshall recalls that “by and large, the meeting in Chicago was a huge victory....went off without a hitch.....the weather was excellent except for the snow the night before the ‘Fun Run’” which forced cancellation of this event. However, Dr. Volpe took the Army on their own memorable version of a “Fun Run” in the snow; fortunately without mishap.

In Chicago, Dr. Karen K. O’Brien was installed as USAFP President by Larry Fields MD, AAFP President. Dr. O’Brien accepted the mantle of USAFP leadership during a time when national interest in Family Medicine was flagging while operational demands on uniformed FPs were soaring with Global War On Terrorism. In response, the USAFP leadership launched an initiative allowing regional HPSP medical students to attend the Annual Meeting in hopes of cultivating interest in Family Medicine. Additionally, continued emphasis was placed on resident involvement with leadership workshops and dues free USAFP membership. Finally, the focus of the Spring 2007 Annual Meeting was firmly fixed on operational medicine. In the words of Dr. O’Brien, this last action “represented a significant shift in our priorities.” When queried about her most memorable moment, Dr. O’Brien responded “the all-member party at Hilton Head was a great get together that all of our members and their families really enjoyed.”

March 2007 – March 2008

The Marriot Oceanfront in Hilton Head, SC hosted the 2007 USAFP Annual Meeting with 475 professionals in attendance. Chaired by the dynamic duo of Drs. Dean Seehusen and Aaron Saguil, this conference required a significant amount of remote planning as both program chairs were deployed for much of the year and in fact Dr. Saguil was unable to attend the Annual Meeting. None the less, the meeting was a tremendous success and featured several “firsts” to include placing Operational Medicine on the main stage and providing a Self Assessment Module for Maintenance of Certification. Additionally, a Wilderness Medicine workshop was offered at the meeting with the “Father of Wilderness Medicine”, Dr. Paul Auerbach, providing the Keynote Address.

Installed by AAFP President Rick Kellerman MD, Dr. Brian Reamy relieved Dr. O’Brien of USAFP Presidential duties in Hilton Head. Borrowing from his predecessor Dr. Lew Hofmann who challenged all members to “do one good thing” for the USAFP, Dr. Reamy themed his year at the helm as “one good thing deserves another”. Dr. Reamy subsequently charged each committee to make one change in an effort to improve the USAFP. This direction served as catalyst for several important achievements. First and foremost, a bylaws proposal was developed and successfully passed through the AAFP Congress of Delegates which allowed retired military family physicians working in federal facilities to retain their membership with the USAFP. Secondly, the Education Committee also developed a longitudinal curriculum for the annual meeting bylaws. This effort was spearheaded by Dr. Aaron Saguil and ultimately served as template for future USAFP Annual Meetings and was incorporated into the AAFP’s longitudinal curriculum. Thirdly, the Health Promotions Committee created the concept of an annual focus with parallel CME and patient education. When questioned on greatest challenge during his tenure, Dr. Reamy responds “No great challenges – fantastic Headquarters Staff and a great Board of Directors made my job fulfilling and enjoyable.”

March 2008 – April 2009

Downtown Portland at the Marriott Waterfront served as the backdrop for the 480 attendees of the Spring 2008 USAFP meeting. Drawing her inspirations from the “many bridges spanning the Willamete River”, this conference chaired by Dr. Pam Williams was themed “Connections”. For the first time, the aforementioned longitudinal curriculum was utilized to ensure appropriate breadths of topics were presented to satisfy needs of

family practitioners. The Portland meeting also featured a welcome reception on opening night, establishing a new tradition that has continued to this date.

Dr. Mark Stephens succeeded Dr. Reamy as President of the USAFP following installation by AAFP President James King MD. Dr. Stephens was able to note several memorable events/successes during his tenure to include development of a Speakers Bureau for Care of Returning Veterans. This program provides education and resources for family physicians in the communities that are providing medical services to returning veterans. Additionally, former USAFP presidents Lori Heim and Ted Epperly assumed positions of President-Elect and President of the AAFP. 2nd Lt Brooke Sciuto became the first ever USUHS student to run for a student board position with the AAFP. In contemplating greatest challenges, Dr. Stephens notes the “year goes by quickly...staying connected with USAFP taskings and keeping up with the ‘day job’ are very difficult.”

April 2009 - Feb 2010

The Rosen Center Hotel in Orlando, FL was the site of the 2009 USAFP Annual Meeting. The attendance was tremendous at 511 healthcare professionals. Drs. Marlene Sanchez and Deb Manning served as Program Co-chairs. As in the past, both Drs. Sanchez and Manning juggled planning an outstanding meeting while being deployed. Dr. Mary Krueger was installed as USAFP President by the then AAFP President and Past USAFP President, Dr. Ted Epperly. Dr. Epperly’s message focused on the changes in health care reform and his meetings at the White House with President Obama. The USAFP Board of Directors adopted a budget reserve policy to continue the USAFP on its path of financial stability.

February 2010 – April 2011

The 2010 USAFP Annual Meeting was held in New Orleans, LA. As mentioned previously, the 2006 Annual Meeting was scheduled in New Orleans but had to be cancelled due to Hurricane Katrina. New Orleans was host to a great meeting with an attendance of 512 healthcare professionals. Dr Gary Means, Program Chair, did an excellent job planning an outstanding meeting. His theme titled, “A History to be Proud of, A Future Ours for the Making” placed great focus on the younger USAFP members. There were 86 residents and 16 students in attendance. This meeting was a first for a Committee Luncheon which took the place of the Special Constituencies in Medicine Luncheon and was very well attended and encouraged lots of committee involvement by USAFP members. Dr. Leslie Knight was installed as President by AAFP President and USAFP Past President Lori Heim, MD. Dr. Lori Heim provided a Keynote Address that focused on federal healthcare reform and the concept of the Patient Centered Medical Home. The USAFP Board of Directors engaged legal counsel in an effort to keep the current policy as it relates to malpractice and negligence for government employees status quo. The case of Hui vs Castaneda case was decided unanimously by the Supreme Court in favor of keeping the malpractice policies of the military medicine personnel status quo. The USAFP was joined by the AAFP and the AMA on an Amicus Brief.