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**Christopher A.
Swingle, DO**

SLMMS President 2018

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Honoring the Past, Creating the Future

Installation Address by 2018 SLMMS President Christopher A. Swingle, DO



*Medical Society President
Christopher A. Swingle, DO*

I am very excited for the future of medicine. We have many issues with which to contend if we are going to remain the drivers of medical progress.



I'd like to begin by expressing how profoundly honored and humbled I am to serve as the President of the St. Louis Metropolitan Medical Society at the beginning of its 182nd year. This society has a storied past, a committed present, and I truly believe a bright future.

I would like to express my gratitude first to my family. My wife, Kate, and children, Emma and Noah, are a constant source of joy; they have taught me so much more than I have taught them over the years. They have also made me a connoisseur of terrible jokes, but that is another speech entirely. I want to thank my parents, Jerrel and Judy, who worked and sacrificed to bring me the education and develop the character that has brought me through life. I love you all very much.

Thank you to Dr. Collins Corder, tonight's outgoing president. Your kind nature and good humor have made our work together a pleasure. To all the past presidents in attendance tonight: Your experience and insight are a resource that I will be frequently consulting. In other words, look out—you're on my speed dial list.

Thanks as well to all the SLMMS Council members as well as the efforts of David Nowak and Liz Webb; their behind-the-scenes work makes the vision of SLMMS a reality.

Lastly, I want to thank the families that support us all. Your patience when we need to give up our evenings and weekends for the Society is sincerely appreciated.

Tonight, I would like to share with you one of my prized possessions. This book was given to me soon after I joined SLMMS in 2005. It's the *Centennial Volume of the St. Louis Medical Society*, published in May 1939 to celebrate 100 years of organized medicine in our community. There are great stories in here about historical physicians like Dr.

William Beaumont, whose experiments in the 1820s pioneered our understanding of gastric physiology. There are profiles of each of the hospitals in St. Louis, many of which are still familiar to us, while others have passed into history. There are portraits of every Society member in this book, and a section on our then brand-new headquarters building on Lindell. What I found particularly interesting is the back part of the book. It's full of sponsorships and advertisements to the physicians of St. Louis. Westinghouse X-ray, The Borden Company and all kinds of pharmacies congratulate the physicians of St. Louis. The point about all this is that in the 1930s, there was no question whatsoever as to what organization represented the St. Louis physician. It was the St. Louis Metropolitan Medical Society.

Medicine in a Time of Great Change

Now in 2018, it's almost redundant to say that medicine is in a time of great change. What I think is different for us in the present day is the rate of that change. We are witnessing societal trends and advances in technology that would have been unimaginable to our 1939 colleagues.

We've all heard of personalized medicine in the media; the right treatment at the right time for the right patient is the basic elevator pitch. One can certainly argue that this is what physicians have always done anyway. What's new is that this personalization can now be done down to the genetic level. In other words, it's no longer simply a breast cancer getting treated, it's a specific genetic subset of breast cancer treated with matching therapy.

CRISPR Cas9 technology has the promise to allow us to cut and paste the human genome in the same way as a Microsoft Word document. The hope is to cure otherwise incurable genetic diseases with this technology.

Opinions on artificial intelligence range from naive optimism to irrational pessimism. IBM Watson's foray into cancer therapy made headlines a few years ago, but the reality is that it did no better than a competent human oncologist. On the other hand, artificial intelligence in medical imaging is constantly getting better at matching imaging patterns to specific histology. Biopsies aren't going away, but they may be fewer in number and have a higher yield of usable pathology than a generation ago.

Telemedicine is the exciting idea that while we can't bring every patient to the doctor, maybe we can leverage technology to bring the doctor to the patient. The past five years have seen the emergence of "virtual hospitals," centers that bring expert care to the sickest patients in medically underserved areas.

I am very excited for the future of medicine. We have many issues with which to contend if we are going to remain the drivers of medical progress.

There is no other place where the employed physician can talk with the entrepreneurial physician, or where the academic can interact with the private practitioner, or the retired doctor can mingle with the medical student except for the St. Louis Metropolitan Medical Society.



Issues Facing Local Organized Medicine

Much like our national and state counterparts, local organized medicine has to be a watchdog to make sure payers are maintaining an equitable relationship with physicians and our patients. As we did in 2016, the Society is again spearheading a survey of St. Louis physicians, evaluating how well insurance companies cooperate with doctors trying to diagnose and treat their patients.

Following the general trend in higher education, medical school tuition continues to rapidly outpace inflation, leaving many of our newest physicians burdened with hundreds of thousands of dollars of non-dischargeable student debt.

We are blessed to have six medical schools in the state of Missouri. My own alma mater (KCUMB) recently opened up a second campus in Joplin. The quality and number of medical school applicants continue to increase, and the competition for those seats is intense. What hasn't significantly changed in the past 20 years is the number of residency slots to train our new physicians. I am very concerned that we are going to have a cohort of doctors in limbo who have earned the title physician,

but do not have the training to practice—and all of this during a worsening national physician shortage!

Over the past several decades, there has been an increase in what I might call the "atomization" of our nation. There's a prevailing sense of disillusionment with formerly trusted institutions, and the feeling that community ties are fracturing. To me, this is the overarching challenge that we face as physicians in organized medicine.

It is extremely important to remember that there is only one forum in the community that speaks for every St. Louis physician. There is no other place where the employed physician can talk with the entrepreneurial physician, or where the academic can interact with the private practitioner, or the retired doctor can mingle with the medical student except for the St. Louis Metropolitan Medical Society.

Each one of us brings a unique set of talents in addition to the title of "physician." Some of us are skilled writers, artists, politicians, businesspeople or journalists. This is a strength that we need to rediscover and reclaim.

We can start pushing back against the trend of atomization by replacing an "either/or" mindset, with a "yes, and..." mindset. Instead of thinking of ourselves as a doctor by day or something else on the day off, we can reframe the conversation by saying, "Yes, I'm a physician, and also a writer." Or an artist. Or a political wonk. Or an expert on insurance. Or, and I hope you say this with a great deal of pride, a member of the St. Louis Metropolitan Medical Society.

SLMMS is a great society, and it can be an incredible network of talented physicians if we want it to be. But we have to be active. Come to a council meeting. Write a letter to the magazine. Be a mentor to a student like you had at one time, or wished you had had. Tell your colleagues what SLMMS is and does, and if they aren't members, let them know about our dynamic community of doctors.

Goals for 2018

A few final thoughts: I did not bring this *Centennial Volume* with me tonight as an indulgence in nostalgia. There are many things about the past that we can and should leave behind. But there are also ideals to strive for that have not changed over the years.

First, we have to raise the profile of SLMMS. This book tells us that the St. Louis community knew exactly what society represented its physicians 80 years ago. Today, we need to recommit ourselves to being the voice of all physicians in St. Louis. When local media, politicians and business leaders are looking for answers on medical issues, SLMMS must again be the authority they turn to first. I would ask that we rededicate ourselves to networking with these leaders, reaching out to the contacts we have, and expanding out to those we don't.

Continued on page 4

Honoring the Past... — continued from page 3

All of us have to be able to tell our non-member colleagues that membership has value and be able to explain exactly why.



Second, we have to recruit and retain new members. Going forward, all of us have to be able to tell our non-member colleagues that membership has value and be able to explain exactly why. It can be alarming to see the drop-off in organized medicine membership and conclude that this is simply the new way of things. I respectfully disagree. The American Medical

Association had a large exodus of members around the time of the Affordable Care Act debates of 2009 and 2010; I recall a lot of pessimism about the future of organized medicine at the time. But since then, AMA membership has increased steadily, even accelerating from 1% annual growth in 2015 to 2.5% in 2016. There is no reason why our membership numbers cannot have a similar turnaround if we are clear in our mission. Who could you reach out to in the next year and bring on board?

Tonight, we have honored our past and seen some of the challenges of the present. To create our future, the St. Louis Metropolitan Medical Society needs to again become the undisputed voice of medicine in our community. Tonight, I invite every one of you to join me on that mission. —

MSMA President Provides Update



MSMA President
Warren C. Lovinger, Jr., MD

Warren C. Lovinger, Jr., MD, 2017-18 president of the Missouri State Medical Association, served as the installing officer at the SLMMS Annual Meeting and Installation Dinner on Jan. 27. Dr. Lovinger reported that he and his wife, Marilyn, have visited all 114 counties in Missouri, plus the City of St. Louis, since he took office last spring.

Prior to installing the 2018 SLMMS officers and councilors, Dr. Lovinger provided a brief update on the MSMA, serving more than 20,000 physicians and physicians-in-training across the state. He introduced Patrick Mills, the new MSMA executive vice president replacing the recently retired Tom Holloway, and Stephen Foutes, the new MSMA director of marketing, who was also in attendance. Mills has been MSMA's director of health care finance since 1992.

Dr. Lovinger summarized many issues currently confronting the practice of medicine that MSMA was addressing, including: the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program, which thanks to its origins in St. Louis County now covers 70% of Missourians; scope of practice concerns; retrospective emergency room visit denials by insurers; the Missouri Physicians Health Program; and the SHINE program, a very successful model from Kansas addressing EHR interoperability. He commented that more than 60 medical scholarships are now available through the Missouri State Medical Foundation, and he encouraged SLMMS physicians to attend the upcoming annual MSMA convention, to be held in St. Louis March 23-25. —

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Unrelenting Advocates for the Patient

Address to the 2018 Annual Meeting by outgoing President J. Collins Corder, MD



*Medical Society 2017 President
J. Collins Corder, MD*

I believe in organized medicine as one of the only remaining links we have to advocate for each other, at a time when more physicians are employed and membership has therefore declined.



It has been an honor to serve the St. Louis Metropolitan Medical Society as president over the past year. I look forward to serving as the immediate past president under 2018 President Dr. Christopher Swingle.

I thank our membership as we are a diverse group who advocate for each other and stand up for our patients in delivering the best of care in this time of uncertainty. I am impressed with the dedication of our Council in sacrificing their time this past year; a physician's free time is limited. We struggle with the never-ending work brought home from the office, and the difficulty achieving the work-life balance we need.

The year 2017 began with uncertainties after a tumultuous election at both the state and national levels. The imperfect ACA was threatened with both repeal and amendment by the new administration. Organized medicine, including SLMMMS, took the strong position of being unrelenting advocates for the patient in standing against reducing what is best for patient care. This year we spoke up against a major insurance company's move to confuse the patient ER visit with denial of coverage deemed unnecessary after the fact. We responded quickly to the news media and the St. Louis community when a major insurance company ruling interfered with radiology coverage at hospital outpatient settings. We'll continue to stand up to these challenges going forward.

We supported the launch of the St. Louis County Prescription Drug Monitoring Program which went live in 2017, and recognize this to be a very strong safeguard to opiate prescribing, and applaud it for being physician-friendly. As it grows statewide, we are proud and thankful to SLMMMS member and County Councilman Dr. Sam Page for championing this.

We are excited to launch the upcoming "Physician Insurance Survey 2.0" as a follow-up to the great work of our own Dr. David Bean and his SLMMMS committee that was formed in 2016 for physician assessment of insurance company performance. It's another way SLMMMS is taking the lead to make the physician's voice heard.

The submission of SLMMMS resolutions to the state legislature is another voice for both the physician and patient.

The Medical Society has worked to improve the value of membership with both continuing and new partnerships with vendors to provide benefits and discounts. Many of those partners are represented here this evening as sponsors of this event, and we thank them.

I became a member of SLMMMS in May 1980 as a third-year resident and was sponsored by senior membership. This is my 38th year of membership, and I aspire for my 50th year recognition ... Lord willing.

I believe in organized medicine as one of the only remaining links we have to advocate for each other, at a time when more physicians are employed and membership has therefore declined. We continue to work with medical students to introduce them to organized medicine and meet with them in support of their innovation efforts. We must grow together and demonstrate the importance of being involved for our patients. More than once, a smile has come across my face when a patient has thanked me with the remark, "We appreciate SLMMMS caring about us," in reference to the Medical Society's media responses and our efforts the past few years.

Again, I thank SLMMMS for the support you give to our patients and fellow physicians. —

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Edmond B. Cabbabe, MD, Receives Robert Schlueter Leadership Award

Edmond B. Cabbabe, MD, a past SLMMS president, past MSMA president and current AMA delegate, received the Society's highest honor, the Robert E. Schlueter Leadership Award, at the Annual Meeting and Installation Dinner on Jan. 27. Dr. Cabbabe joins an elite group of physicians who have been honored with this award and is only the 20th recipient. Physicians receive this honor based on very specific criteria of leadership, scientific attitude, advocacy and community service, and for long-standing contributions to medicine that are above and beyond the norm.

A member of the St. Louis medical community for 40 years, Dr. Cabbabe came to Saint Louis University Medical Center for a plastic surgery residency in 1978. Since 1980, he has held numerous academic appointments at SLU, most recently as an adjunct professor of surgery in the Division of Plastic & Reconstructive Surgery. In private practice since 1986, he holds staff appointments at eight St. Louis-area hospitals and has served in leadership roles at four of them.

He joined SLMMS in 1979, and served as editor of the SLMMS journal, receiving two Sandoz journalism awards during his tenure. He served as SLMMS president in 1995, and as president of the Missouri State Medical Association in 2004-2005. After five years as an alternate delegate, Dr. Cabbabe became a Missouri delegate to the American Medical Association in 2009, and has been Missouri delegation chair since 2011. He is past chair of the Heart of America four-state caucus at the AMA House of Delegates. Almost simultaneously, he served nine years as a board member of the AMA Foundation including one year as president. He was recently elected to the AMA Council on Long-Range Planning and Development.



Edmond B. Cabbabe, MD, left, receives the Schlueter Leadership Award from his son, 2016 SLMMS President Samer W. Cabbabe, MD.

In addition, Dr. Cabbabe is a past president of the Missouri Association of Plastic Surgeons, the National Arab American Medical Association, and the MSMA Insurance Agency, and board member and chair of The Center for Patient Safety. He continues on the board of the Missouri State Medical Foundation. He currently serves on the editorial boards of three medical journals, and as a reviewer for several others, and has contributed more than 130 articles to scientific and general publications.

Dr. Cabbabe has distinguished himself as a practicing physician who not only advocates for organized medicine, but makes significant contributions to his community. He has worked with many civic and charitable organizations, the Caring Program for Children, and the "Stop Violence Before It Starts" campaign by initiating, during his year as SLMMS president, a gratis program for the laser removal of gang tattoos. He has also led several fundraising campaigns for the AMA Foundation, including the support of a physician-led free clinic in Missouri. ◀

Congratulations 50-Year Members

50-year member William F. Sasser, MD, right, with SLMMS 2017 President J. Collins Corder, MD.



The following SLMMS members achieved 50 years of continuous membership in 2017 and were recognized at the Jan. 27 Annual Meeting & Installation Banquet:

- | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| ★ Richard H. Butsch, MD | ★ William J. Phillips, MD |
| ★ James S. Criscione, MD | ★ William F. Sasser, MD |
| ★ Godofredo M. Herzog, MD | ★ Robert H. Sueper, MD |
| ★ Norton S. Kronemer, MD | ★ Argyrios A. Tsifutis, MD |
| ★ Arturo C. Montes, MD | |

David K. Bean, DO, Honored with SLMMS President's Award

The Medical Society presented its 2017 President's Award to longtime member David K. Bean, DO. This award, given by action of the SLMMS Council, recognizes outstanding service to the medical profession by a member of the society. Dr. Bean was recognized most notably for his leadership in creating and leading the SLMMS Physician Insurance Survey over the past 18 months.

Dr. Bean is a family medicine physician with the SSM Health Medical Group. A Missouri native, he completed his undergraduate degree at Truman State University and received his doctor of osteopathy degree from the Kirksville College of Osteopathic Medicine. He is board certified in family medicine by the American Osteopathic Board of Family Physicians.

A member of SLMMS for the past 20 years, Dr. Bean served as a SLMMS Councilor from 2006-2009, and again from 2015-2017. He is also a member of the Missouri and St. Louis Associations of Osteopathic Physicians and Surgeons, and the American Osteopathic Association. He was appointed to the Missouri State Board of Registration for the Healing Arts from 1992-96, serving as president in 1995-96.



David K. Bean, DO, left, accepts his award from J. Collins Corder, MD.

A believer in that there is “great strength in unity,” Dr. Bean initiated and chaired the first-ever SLMMS Physician Insurance Survey in 2016, providing area doctors with the opportunity to evaluate the performance of insurance companies in the care of their patients. The research secured responses from more than 300 practicing physicians in the St. Louis area, and will be repeated again in 2018. —



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Bruce R. Bacon, MD, Receives SLMMS Award of Merit

Bruce R. Bacon, MD, professor of internal medicine and the James F. King Endowed Chair in Gastroenterology at Saint Louis University, received the 2017 SLMMS Award of Merit, given to recognize distinguished and exceptional service to scientific medicine in the greater St. Louis community. Dr. Bacon is only the 36th recipient of this award, which was first presented by the Medical Society in 1927.

Dr. Bacon's career in academic medicine includes appointments at Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine in Cleveland and Louisiana State University School of Medicine in Shreveport. He joined the SLU faculty in 1990 as the director of the Division of Gastroenterology & Hepatology, and was co-director of the Abdominal Transplant Program from 2012 to 2017. He is presently the co-director of the Saint Louis University Liver Center.

A former president of the American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases (AASLD) in 2004, he received the organization's Distinguished Service Award in 2010, and has been chair of the AASLD Foundation since 2013. Dr. Bacon has been recognized across the U.S. and throughout the world



Bruce R. Bacon, MD, right, accepts his award from J. Collins Corder, MD.

for his extensive research in hepatic iron metabolism, and he was a member of the team which discovered the gene for hemochromatosis in 1996. He has extensive experience in research protocols involving experimental iron overload, iron-induced hepatotoxicity, iron-induced organelle damage, and the role of iron in fibrogenesis. His current research is in clinical hepatology in the field of hemochromatosis and iron overload, nonalcoholic steatohepatitis, and chronic hepatitis B and C. ▶

Samer W. Cabbabe, MD, Earns 2017 Arthur Gale Writer's Award

Samer W. Cabbabe, MD, 2016 SLMMS president, was recognized at the SLMMS Annual Meeting and Installation Dinner on Jan. 27 as the recipient of the Arthur Gale Writer's Award for authoring the best contributed article published in *St. Louis Metropolitan Medicine* during 2017. Arthur Gale, MD, the award's benefactor, presented the honor to Dr. Cabbabe.

Dr. Cabbabe's article, "The Exploitation and Abuse of Medical Students and Residents," appeared in the August/September issue, which was dedicated to exploring the challenges facing young physicians. It was selected from five 2017 award finalists by the physician members of the SLMMS Publications Committee. The well-written and researched piece touched upon the many difficult working conditions contributing to stress and depression among medical students and physicians in training, including physical and mental abuse, long hours, low wages, and the shortage of residency positions.

Dr. Cabbabe summarized potential solutions to these issues, and called upon organized medicine to advocate for these younger colleagues and set a positive example for them, as well as give them the respect they deserve, in order for the best and brightest to follow in today's practicing physicians' footsteps.



Samer W. Cabbabe, MD, right, is presented with the Arthur Gale Writer's Award, by Dr. Gale.

In recognition of his writing, he received a \$250 cash gift from the St. Louis Society for Medical and Scientific Education (SLSMSE), the society's foundation, in addition to a plaque. Dr. Gale, a SLMMS past president and longtime *St. Louis Metropolitan Medicine* contributor, funded this award in 2013 through a gift to SLSMSE, to encourage more physicians and allied professionals to express their opinions while advancing the practice of medicine through writing. ▶



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2018 Medical Society Leaders Welcomed

Over 200 SLMMS members and guests gathered at the Chase-Park Plaza Hotel on Jan. 27 to celebrate the installation of SLMMS 2018 leadership including President Christopher A. Swingle, DO, and the other officers and councilors. Missouri State Medical Association President Warren C. Lovinger, Jr., MD, of Nevada, Mo., was the installing officer.

See a full album of banquet photos on the SLMMS Facebook page.
www.facebook.com/saint.louis.metropolitan.medical.society



SLMMS past presidents in attendance: J. Collins Corder, MD; Edmond Cabbabe, MD; Arthur Gale, MD; Ravi Johar, MD; David Pohl, MD; Jay Meyer, MD; 2018 President Christopher Swingle, DO; Nathaniel Murdock, MD; Elie Azrak, MD; Jeffrey Thomasson, MD; Sam Hawatmeh, MD; Samer Cabbabe, MD; Joseph Craft, MD.



MSMA President Warren Lovinger, MD, left, delivers the oath of office to, from left, Christopher Swingle, DO, president; Alan Wild, MD, vice president; Robert Brennan, Jr., MD, secretary-treasurer; and Councilors Christopher Bowe, MD; Mark Gunby, DO; and David Pohl, MD. Not present for photo: Ramona Behshad, MD, president-elect; Mary Klix, MD, councilor; and Pearl Serota, MD, councilor.





Samer Al-Kaade, MD; Rafif Ghadban, MD,
Saint Louis University School of Medicine.



From MSMA, Stephen Foutes; Brenda Foutes; Warren Lovinger,
MD; Marilyn Lovinger; Marianne Mills; MSMA Executive Vice
President Pat Mills.



Aaron DeForest, DDS; SLU medical student
Shannon Tai.



Edmond Cabbabe, MD, front left, and Samer
Cabbabe, MD, front right, were joined by a
large group of friends, family and office staff
to celebrate their awards.



(Left) Rich and Julie Fitzer,
Triad Financial Group;
Sharon and David Bean,
DO.

(Right) Randa Hawatmeh,
DMD; Nicole Farage
Hawatmeh; Shady
Hawatmeh, MD;
Sam Hawatmeh, MD.





SLMMS Alliance members in attendance: Rima Cabbabe, Angela Zylka, Gill Waltman, Jill Nowak, Sandra Murdock, Sue Ann Greco, Gail Thomasson.



David Pohl, MD; Karen Goodhope, MD; Steve Bailey.



George Thampy, MD; Jerry Middleton, MD; Nancy Middleton; Elizabeth Thampy.



Dan Brown, Dave Moore, John Schulte, friends of Christopher Swingle, DO.



MSMA President Warren Lovinger, MD, presented Missouri gift packages to outgoing President J. Collins Corder, MD, left, and incoming President Christopher Swingle, DO.



Lisa Schulte, Kate Swingle, Ginny Moore, Judy Swingle, mother of Christopher Swingle, DO.

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Saint Louis University congratulates Dr. Bruce R. Bacon on receiving the SLMMS Award of Merit. Through patient care, basic and clinical research, medical and public education, and the founding of the internationally renowned Saint Louis University Liver Center, few have done more to advance the field of hepatology.



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Triad Financial Group

Rich Fitzer and his team at Triad Financial Group provide investment management, 401(k) support, and insurance planning services which are available to members of the St. Louis Metropolitan Medical Society at a discounted rate.



West County Radiology

West County Radiology provides radiological, radiation oncology, nuclear medicine and physics at Mercy Hospital St. Louis, Mercy Washington, St. Anthony's and Mercy Lincoln.

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Calendar for Continuing Medical Education

Feb. 21-24	Annual Refresher Course and Update in General Surgery
March 23	11th Annual Sports Medicine Update
March 24	Nephrology Update
April 7	Melanoma Update
April 13-14	Fetal Cardiac Symposium
April 14	Update on Osteoporosis and Fracture Prevention
April 21	Inflammatory Bowel Diseases Update
April 28	Care of the Hospitalized Patient
May 2	Smoking Cessation
May 10-12	Spine Masters Surgical Techniques
May 31-Jun. 1	9th Annual International Pediatric Antimicrobial Stewardship Conference



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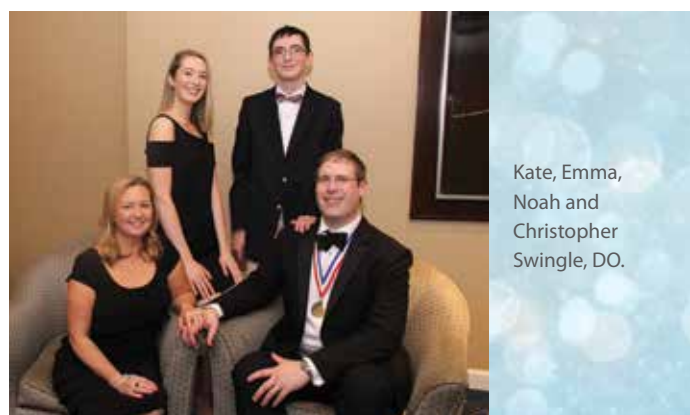
Q&A with SLMMS President Christopher A. Swingle, DO

Tell us about your practice.

I am a nuclear medicine physician with West County Radiology. We are a large group of physicians specializing in diagnostic radiology, radiation oncology and my specialty of nuclear medicine. My practice is based at Mercy Hospital in St Louis, but I also provide services for Mercy Hospital Washington and Mercy Hospital Springfield (Missouri). Approximately half my practice is diagnostic PET/CT imaging, with the other half in traditional diagnostic and therapeutic nuclear medicine. My interests are chiefly in oncologic imaging and the emerging field of theranostics.

Why did you choose to go into medicine? Why did you choose radiology? What do you find most satisfying?

I was always interested in science growing up, and very much took to physics in high school. As an undergraduate, I did enjoy the engineering prerequisites that I was taking, but I also felt that there was a human element that I was missing out on. I had a number of friends in the pre-med program, and their influence opened up the potential of medicine as a career to me. Nuclear medicine appeals to that hard science side that I've always been passionate about, but with patient interaction so that I'm not removed from those I serve. Much of my therapeutic work is with thyroid cancer patients; I'm always gratified when a patient who comes into my clinic feeling confused and scared, leaves feeling confident and secure about their treatment plan.



Kate, Emma,
Noah and
Christopher
Swingle, DO.

Tell us about your family.

My wife of almost 20 years is Kate. She was my best supporter throughout medical school, residency and fellowship. I was able to return the favor many years later when she took a radical change in career direction and went back to nursing school; she is currently a NICU nurse at Mercy St. Louis. My daughter, Emma, is a junior at Ursuline Academy. She inherited my

passion for science, but also for filmmaking. My son, Noah, is a freshman at Christian Brothers College High School. He has a love of history and has become the expert in 3D printing in our family.

What are your hobbies and interests?

Outside of the clinic, I spend time as an advisor for SLU's medical student-led incubator, MEDLaunch, and have been a medical science advisor for several local startups and venture capital firms. If there's a major startup event in town, I make a point to attend. I enjoy staying physically active with long-distance running, cycling, golf and have recently taken up the Russian martial art of Systema. I've always been an avid reader, with a preference for historical fiction and popular science. I dabble in astronomy, restoring vintage hi-fi and am currently learning Italian.

What accomplishment(s) (personal or professional) are you most proud of?

I am extremely proud of my family. They are a constant source of joy and have made me a better man. I am also both humbled and grateful for the opportunity to serve as SLMMS President for 2018. This office has been in existence since 1836, and to be the latest to serve is a profound honor.

What are your goals and priorities for SLMMS this year?

My first priority is to raise the profile of our society in the community. I want community leaders, the media, and the public to turn to SLMMS first for leadership on the issues that physicians and patients face. Additionally, our long-term strategic plan has provided a needed roadmap for the society. Now that the plan is reaching its final years, it's imperative that we address the areas that need improvement while continuing to refine successful aspects of the plan.

What is your biggest concern about the future of health care?

The devaluation of our calling as physicians. In other words, physicians reduced to faceless cogs supporting the existence of a fragile system called "health care." We see this happen when the title of "health care provider" supplants that of "physician" and patients are dehumanized to "consumers." Although the hype surrounding artificial intelligence replacing physicians has so far turned out to be just that, I feel that if we continue down this path society will see us as another commodity. Physicians will be highly educated interchangeable widgets too powerless and alienated to advocate for themselves in a sea of competing interests.

Dr. Swingle in his office at Mercy Hospital St. Louis. He is the first Doctor of Osteopathy to serve as SLMMS president in the Society's 181-year history.



Christopher A. Swingle, DO

PRACTICE

- ✦ Nuclear Medicine
- ✦ Attending Physician, West County Radiology at Mercy Hospital St. Louis
- ✦ Certified: American Board of Nuclear Medicine, Certification Board of Cardiac Computed Tomography, Certification Board of Nuclear Cardiology
- ✦ Hospitals: Mercy Hospital St. Louis, Mercy Hospital Washington, Mercy Hospital Springfield (Missouri)

EDUCATION

- ✦ B.A., University of Kansas
- ✦ D.O., Kansas City University of Medicine and Biosciences
- ✦ Internship, Kansas City University of Medicine and Biosciences
- ✦ Nuclear Medicine Residency, Emory University
- ✦ Positron Emission Tomography Fellowship, Emory University

SLMMS OFFICES

- ✦ President-Elect, 2017
- ✦ Vice President, 2016
- ✦ Councilor, 2014-15
- ✦ MSMA delegate, 2009-present
- ✦ Joined SLMMS 2005

PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

- ✦ Greater St. Louis Society of Radiologists, 2016 president
- ✦ Missouri State Medical Association
- ✦ Missouri Radiological Society
- ✦ Society of Nuclear Medicine and Molecular Imaging
- ✦ Radiological Society of North America
- ✦ American Roentgen Ray Society
- ✦ Chairman, Radiation Safety Committee, Mercy Hospital St. Louis
- ✦ Quality Improvement/Peer Review Committee, Mercy Hospital St. Louis

What is the role of the local Medical Society in supporting physicians and advocating for medicine?

To provide value for our members, we have to be the undisputed leaders in advocacy, communication and education for St. Louis medicine. By listening to the medical community at large, we can leverage our political experience to address concerns and create effective legislation. We have a unique legacy of excellent lectures and innovative new educational programs that are not offered elsewhere. Lastly, we are the voice of medicine for St. Louis. When issues arise with the legislators, payers and providers that make medicine run, we should be the first place the community turns to for answers.

What would you ask individual physicians to do this year to support the Medical Society?

Don't hide your light under a bushel! When we are talking with our colleagues, we have to bring up what SLMMS has done and is currently doing to make medicine in St. Louis a dynamic force for good. The worst we can do is simply talk to other SLMMS members without engaging non-member physicians who know little of our Society. We have to remember that the large hospitals, academic centers and multi-specialty groups have no incentive to promote our Society to their physicians. That's not an indictment, it's simply not their job. It's ours.

What does SLMMS need to do to attract and retain younger physicians?

We must ask ourselves what our value proposition is and understand our audience. If we don't have a ready and obvious answer to the question, "how would membership help me and my practice?" then we certainly can't blame younger physicians for not being interested. It has to be evident that membership has clear advantages to non-membership. While high-minded philosophical answers about organized medicine may be valid, abstractions do not compel physicians to action. We have to offer concrete value through every phase of a medical career; a retiring physician has much different concerns than a medical student. ➡

Legal Services and Identity Theft Protection Available to Members

LegalShield and IDShield Services Are Newest Exclusive Member Benefit

SLMMS is pleased to announce a new partnership to provide its physician members, as well as their families and employees, access to affordable legal services and identity theft protection packages. Medical society members can obtain discounts on the monthly subscription plans offered by LegalShield and its companion company, IDShield.

Founded in 1972, LegalShield has 1.7 million memberships protecting and empowering 4.5 million lives and serving 140,000 businesses across the United States and Canada. Members can talk to a lawyer (in St. Louis, services are provided through the local firm Dubail Judge) on any personal or business legal matter, no matter how trivial or traumatic, without worrying about high hourly costs. Since 2003, LegalShield has provided identity theft protection services through IDShield with Kroll, the world's leading company in ID theft consulting and restoration.

Also available are Small Business LegalShield plans to protect your practice. Packages are specially priced and available per the size of your practice (10 or fewer, 50 or fewer, or 100 or fewer employees). The St. Louis Metropolitan Medical Society is already a LegalShield client.

SLMMS members may enroll themselves, their families or their employees (as an employee benefit) in either Family or Individual LegalShield or IDShield plans at a discounted rate. The best rates are available when you purchase featured plans including both services.

Family, individual and small business packages are available through a monthly subscription (discounted for SLMMS

members). There is no long-term contract, and coverage may be canceled or modified at any time. You will never be billed for any services that are covered by your membership.

The LegalShield membership benefits include personal legal advice on unlimited issues; letters/calls made on your behalf; contract and document review; will, living will and health care power of attorney services; moving traffic violations; IRS audit assistance, trial defense, family and domestic services, and more.

The IDShield membership benefits include privacy monitoring; security monitoring; unlimited consultation regarding identity alerts, data breach notifications and lost wallet protection; and full service restoration if your identity is stolen.

The Small Business Owners benefits are numerous, including incorporation process; hiring/termination; workers compensation; small claims; collection services; equipment leases; joint ventures; document and contract review; and executed contract services. Legal services are also discounted for anything not covered by the membership.

LegalShield has developed a dedicated website for SLMMS members. To learn more about these services or to subscribe, visit www.Legalshield.com/info/slmms.

To learn more about local firm Dubail Judge, visit www.dubailjudge.com.

For questions or assistance with enrollment, contact Rick Shore, our local LegalShield/IDShield associate, at 636-299-6345 or rrshore@legalshieldassociate.com. ➔

SLMMS MEMBER RATES – LEGALSHIELD AND IDSHIELD

Product		Retail/Month	SLMMS/Month
Family LegalShield Plan <i>(One-time enrollment fee of \$10 for individuals.)</i>		\$24.95	\$18.95
Family IDShield Plan		\$24.95	\$18.95
Family Legal & IDShield Combo		\$49.90	\$33.90
Individual LegalShield Plan <i>(One-time enrollment fee of \$10 for individuals.)</i>		\$24.95	\$16.95
Individual IDShield Plan		\$9.95	\$8.95
Individual Legal & IDShield Combo		\$34.90	\$25.90
Small Business Plan based on number of employees:	10 or less - \$39	50 or less - \$89	100 or less - \$149

SLMMS Council Appoints Two Members to Fill Unexpired Terms

At the December 2017 meeting, the SLMMS Council approved the appointments of two members to fill the remaining two years (2018-2019) of two different councilors' terms.



Dr. David L. Pohl

David L. Pohl, MD, FACR, has been appointed to complete the balance of the term of Raja Ramaswamy, MD. Dr. Pohl is a diagnostic radiologist with Radiologic Imaging Consultants, LLC, and is the director of radiology at SSM Health St. Joseph Hospital West in Lake St. Louis. He is board certified by the American Board of Radiology and a clinical instructor at Saint Louis University School of Medicine. He earned his B.A. at Miami University of Ohio, and an M.A. at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill. He completed his medical degree at Washington University School of Medicine, and his internship and residency at Saint Louis University Hospitals. A member of SLMMS since 1986, he previously served on the Council from 2008-2014, and was SLMMS president in

2013. He currently holds the office of treasurer with the Missouri State Medical Association, and is president-elect of the Missouri Radiological Society.



Dr. Jason K. Skyles

Jason K. Skyles, MD, has been appointed to finish the Council term of Alan Wild, MD, following Dr. Wild's election as SLMMS vice president. Dr. Skyles is a diagnostic radiologist with West County Radiology practicing at Mercy Hospital St. Louis and Mercy Hospital Washington. He is board certified by the American Board of Radiology. He completed both his undergraduate and medical degrees at Saint Louis University, followed by an internship at Forest Park Hospital in St. Louis, and his residency and fellowship at Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem, N.C. Dr. Skyles joined SLMMS in 2011, and has served on the SLMMS Council since 2012, including the past two years as secretary-treasurer. ◀

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Physicians – Six Things to Know Before You Leave a Medical Practice

By Sarah J. Klebolt

If you are a physician thinking about leaving your current practice, I am sure you have a lot of concerns and questions. Will my patients follow me? How do I tell my patients I'm leaving? Can I take my staff with me? Can I go practice anywhere I want? How soon can I leave? If you are thinking about leaving, here are some things you should consider before you turn in your resignation.

1. **Know the requirements for terminating your employment.** If you signed an employment agreement, it likely states the basis upon which you can terminate your employment and may include a lengthy notice period.
2. **Know your non-solicitation and non-compete obligations.** Many physicians have employment agreements with non-compete and non-solicitation provisions. It is important to understand these provisions and what you can and cannot do when it comes to soliciting patients or staff. Violating these provisions may subject you to early termination or a potential lawsuit. You also want to make sure your future employer does not fall within the non-compete provision. If they do, you should ask an attorney about the enforceability



Sarah J. Klebolt

Sarah J. Klebolt is a principal attorney at Carmody MacDonald P.C. in the firm's litigation group. Sarah represents businesses and individuals in a wide array of business and personal disputes. She can be reached at 314-854-8713, sjk@carmodymacdonald.com.

The firm's website is www.carmodymacdonald.com.

of the non-compete. Some non-competes that are too long in term, or broad in geographic area, may be unenforceable.

3. **Understand you may not be able to take your patients with you.** Depending on the terms of your contract, patients may be considered patients of your employer, and you may be limited in your ability to persuade them to follow you.
4. **Understand the contracts and relationships with insurance companies.** You should understand what will happen once you turn in your notice of termination, which may include your employer canceling your contracts with insurance companies.
5. **Know what salary, compensation and other incentives to which you might be entitled.** Many companies have clear compensation plans that cover what physicians are entitled to when their employment is terminated. Make sure you are not missing out on potential income due to the timing of your termination.
6. **Understand who will be responsible for malpractice tail coverage after your departure.** Sometimes the employment agreement will address who will be responsible for acquiring and paying for the tail coverage, which may be contingent on you satisfying certain conditions set forth in your employment agreement. If your employment agreement does not address this issue, it is something that should be discussed early in your conversations with your employer. —

This column is for informational purposes only. Nothing herein should be treated as legal advice or as creating an attorney-client relationship. The choice of a lawyer is an important decision and should not be based solely upon advertisements.

SLSMSE Donates to Missouri Physicians Health Program

The St. Louis Society for Medical and Scientific Education, the charitable foundation of SLMMS, presented a \$10,000 donation to the Missouri Physicians Health Program in December.

The grant will help MPHP continue its work in coordinating assistance for physicians who suffer from practice-threatening impairments, particularly within the St. Louis metropolitan area. MPHP facilitates the physician's return to healthy personal and professional functioning through early identification, intervention and treatment. MPHP is an independent 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and relies on contributions to supplement participant fees and the support it receives from the Missouri State Medical Association.

For information about MPHP, visit www.themphp.org. —

Physician Burnout: A Contrarian's View

The December 2017-January 2018 issue of *St. Louis Metropolitan Medicine* was devoted to physician burnout. The articles were well thought-out and covered all aspects of burnout. But I do not believe the writers offered effective solutions.

I don't think either mindfulness or physical exercise will solve the problem of burnout, although I strongly believe in and practice both of these strategies myself. They are essential if one is to have a productive career in any field.

Physician burnout can be boiled down to two main causes: the dysfunctional electronic health record systems (EHRs) and the requirement that physicians (especially primary care physicians) see patients rapidly—virtually on an assembly-line basis every 10 or 15 minutes.

The solution to these two problems will fix burnout. EHRs should be eliminated or markedly modified until all of their wrinkles have been ironed out. And until primary care doctors gain more control of their time spent with patients, other solutions to burnout won't work.

There is an acute shortage of primary care physicians today because no physician wants to practice under the current conditions. And as the current crop of primary care physicians retire, the shortage will become more acute. The shortage is already so severe that one prominent local hospital is offering a \$10,000 finder's fee to anyone who can find a doctor to practice primary care.

Nurse practitioners aren't the answer either. Currently under Missouri collaborative practice law, they must practice under the direction of a physician. And nurse practitioners earn almost the same salary as primary care physicians, so there are no significant savings. They also will exhibit burnout if they are forced to practice on the same assembly line basis as physicians.

The strategies that produce physician burnout haven't lowered health care costs. Our present health care system is the most costly in the world. The so-called "savings" are directed as profits to the major managed care entities—the medical-industrial complex composed of hospitals, insurance companies and drug and device companies.

Can the two strategies proposed above to alleviate burnout be implemented? They can if the citizenry's and physicians' voices are heard in Washington, especially in the halls of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). That's unlikely to happen in the near future. The hospitals and all of the major players in managed care will fight hard to maintain the status quo from which they reap enormous profits.

Arthur H. Gale, MD

Saint Louis University's 7th Annual Primary Care Research Symposium

SLMMS is proud to be a sponsor of the Saint Louis University School of Medicine's upcoming 7th Annual Primary Care Research Symposium on Wednesday, April 4. SLMMS physician and medical student members are invited to participate.

The program takes place in the Pitlyck Auditorium in the Doisy Learning Resources Center on the SLU Medical Campus from noon to 4:00 p.m. The keynote speaker will be Richelle Koopman, MD, director of family medicine research

at the University of Missouri-Columbia. There will be research presentations from SLU faculty in family and community medicine, general internal medicine and general pediatrics, as well as a poster session featuring research projects from SLU medical students, residents and fellows.

CME credits will also be available. There is no fee for the program, and lunch will be provided to those who pre-register. Submit your RSVP online at <http://goo.gl/cH6FYr>. ◀

Charities Receive Holiday Gifts

By Gill Waltman

The Alliance held its annual Holiday Sharing luncheon on Dec. 8 at the home of Kelly O'Leary. Each year, the Alliance presents gifts and cash donations to three charities.

The program began with SLMMS Executive Vice President David Nowak presenting a generous check from the Medical Society to support Alliance programs throughout the year.

Charities benefiting this year from Alliance gifts included Loyola Academy of St. Louis, St. Martha's Hall and the St. Louis Area Foodbank.

Loyola Academy, a Jesuit middle school for socioeconomically disadvantaged boys, was represented by volunteer Dale Auffenberg. She gave an update on the school's activities and thanked the members who had devoted their time and effort to several Alliance-sponsored programs. These included Voices of Excellence and the new Alliance program for schools called *Drugs Are Not for Me*. This expands on the previous *Smoking Is Not for Me* to include content on the serious opioid epidemic.

Diana Camren, an advocate from the St. Martha's Hall women's shelter, received checks from the Alliance and from individual members along with donated toiletry items and paper goods. She talked about the renovations that have taken place at the shelter this year and described how the shelter provides support and training to help mothers and children transition into safer lives.

Checks for the St. Louis Area Food Bank were delivered to the charity the next day.

CABi associate Carrie Kreutz presented a check to the Alliance representing a percentage of the proceeds from two fashion show fundraisers she hosted with Angela Zylka and Kelly O'Leary in September. These two shows attracted the largest attendance since this collaboration began providing more funds for Alliance programs.



During the gift presentation at the Holiday Sharing luncheon, from left, Sue Ann Greco, David Nowak of SLMMS, Sandra Murdock, Diana Camren from St. Martha's, Kelly O'Leary, Angela Zylka and Dale Auffenberg from Loyola Academy.

The annual Holiday Sharing Card is another Alliance mechanism to raise funds for medical student scholarships. The Alliance thanks all the medical society and alliance members who sent donations to the AMA Foundation and the Missouri State Medical Foundation. Donors were recognized in the last issue of this magazine. An electronic sharing card listing the donors was distributed in late December in the SLMMS *Member Update* email. The names were also included in the MSMA e-news and were displayed on the respective websites. —

Coming Event

Alliance Day at the Legislature

Wednesday Feb. 22

State Capitol, Jefferson City

Information: Sandra Murdock, sesandra@aol.com

CALENDAR

MARCH

- 13** SLMMS Council and Leadership Meeting, 6 p.m., Spazio Westport
- 23-25** MSMA Annual Convention, Renaissance St. Louis Airport Hotel
- 30** Good Friday, SLMMS office closed

APRIL

- 4** SLU Primary Care Symposium, noon to 4 p.m.
SLU Medical Campus
- 10** SLMMS Council, 7 p.m.

Carol F. Williams, MD, First Woman to Serve as SLMMS President



Carol F. Williams, MD, who was the first female president of the St. Louis Metropolitan Medical Society, died Jan. 22, 2018, at the age of 86. She was a board-certified obstetrician-gynecologist with a subspecialty in gynecologic oncology.

Born in Chattanooga, Tenn., Dr. Williams received her undergraduate degree from the University of Tennessee, and her medical degree from

the University of Tennessee College of Medicine. She interned at Baptist Hospital in Memphis and then completed her residency in obstetrics and gynecology at Barnes-Jewish Hospital and a fellowship in gynecologic oncology at Washington University.

Dr. Williams held faculty appointments in ob-gyn at Washington University for 20 years, and was the chief of obstetrics and gynecology at St. Luke's Hospital for 10 years. In 1973, she was awarded a sabbatical year to study gynecologic oncology at Mallinkrodt Institute of Radiology and the University of Kansas Medical Center. She later was a faculty member at Saint Louis University. She entered private practice in 1976, and in 1988 became the full-time director of the Family Care Center of Carondelet.

Dr. Williams joined the St. Louis Metropolitan Medical Society in 1962, and became a Life Member in 2000. After serving as SLMMS president in 1986, she was elected Missouri State Medical Association president in 1992-93. Following her retirement, she earned her Master of Arts in theology and was awarded an honorary Ph.D. of theology from the Aquinas Institute.

SLMMS extends its condolences to her brother, Daniel Williams and her three nephews. —

James E. Edwards, MD



James E. Edwards, MD, a board-certified child and adolescent psychiatrist, died Jan. 1, 2018, at the age of 81.

Born in Edwardsville, Ala., Dr. Edwards received his undergraduate and medical degrees from the University of Tennessee. He completed an internship in pediatrics and a fellowship in pediatric neurology at the University of Tennessee and City of Memphis Hospital. At Washington University School of Medicine and the former Malcolm Bliss Mental Health Center, he completed his residency in psychiatry and a fellowship in child psychiatry.

Dr. Edwards served in the U.S. Navy Reserve from 1953 through 1961. He was clinical director of children's services at the former Malcolm Bliss Mental Health Center. He also served as a consultant to numerous child-serving agencies, school districts and the St. Louis City and County juvenile courts.

Dr. Edwards joined the St. Louis Metropolitan Medical Society in 1968, and became a Life Member in 2015. He served as a SLMMS Councilor in 1981 as well as on several committees.

SLMMS extends its condolences to his wife, Catherine Edwards; his children, Gregory Edwards and Laura Edwards; his six grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his son Scott Edwards. —

Kenneth D. Corwin, Jr., MD



Kenneth D. Corwin, Jr., MD, a board-certified plastic surgeon, died Jan. 22, 2018, at the age of 79.

Born in St. Louis, Dr. Corwin received his undergraduate degree from Central Methodist College in Fayette, Mo. and his medical degree from the University of Missouri-Columbia School of Medicine. He completed an internship at Hillcrest Medical Center in Tulsa, Okla., a residency in general surgery at the Cleveland Clinic and a residency in plastic surgery at Saint Louis University.

Dr. Corwin served three years in the U.S. Army Medical Corps. He was in private practice and served on staff at SSM Health DePaul Hospital, where he was chief of staff from 1983-1984. He is credited with inventing a scalpel handle and wire twisters that are still used by surgeons today. He served on mission trips to Haiti and Kosovo where he performed countless surgeries on children.

Dr. Corwin joined the St. Louis Metropolitan Medical Society in 1975, and became a Life Member in 2009.

Dr. Corwin was predeceased by his daughter, Katherine Corwin and the mother of his children, Patricia Corwin. SLMMS extends its condolences to his children, Angela Redovian and Ruth Burst; and his eight grandchildren. —

Maintenance of Certification: Is the End Near?

By Richard J. Gimpelson, MD

Several issues ago, I wrote a critique of the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) Maintenance of Certification (MOC) program (*St. Louis Metropolitan Medicine* April 2017). Since that time, I have asked many physicians regarding MOC. Nearly all felt that the MOC was of little value in their ability to practice high-quality medicine. I find it most interesting that those who make money from the MOC program report that most physicians find MOC valuable. It is unfortunate that the ABMS has not produced any evidence-based studies to support their claim of benefit.

A study by researchers at the Mayo Clinic published in the January 2015 *JAMA Internal Medicine* found that physicians felt MOC requirements were cumbersome and provided little to no professional gain.¹ The study suggested that more work be done to increase the perception (brain washing) of value to physicians. There have not been any significant changes in the MOC since 2014.

MedPage Today reported in May that bills were passed or filed in 17 states to limit MOC and allow physicians to practice without MOC testing.² It is good to know that Missouri is one of those states. It is not surprising that the ABMS is working hard to defeat these new laws. The ABMS claims without MOC, patients are put at increased risk (Note: not evidence-based). The ABMS has the arrogance to imply that physicians will not seek any learning other than that required by states once they have passed their initial board exams, often many years earlier. I must keep repeating myself that the knowledge gained from the ABMS MOC has not produced any evidence-based proof that the individual physician has benefited. However, the specialty boards benefit greatly with a nice inflow of cash.

There may be a future that is free from the onerous MOC (Note: no evidence-based study). The Association of American Physicians and Surgeons (AAPS) has challenged the ABMS MOC as well as other over-regulation of medicine. On Jan. 16, the AAPS filed an amended complaint with class action in *AAPS v. ABMS* in federal court to expose how improper MOC is. The AAPS claims to have proof that the ABMS has worked to arrange for insurance companies and hospitals to require MOC. The complaint states in part, “Specifically, Defendant ABMS has conspired with specialty board organizations, health insurers, and hospitals to compel physicians to purchase and spend unjustified time and money on Defendant’s proprietary ABMS Maintenance of Certification.”³

There was a hint from the AAPS that MOC was shutting down, however this is premature.⁴ The blog “Dr. Wes,” representing SERMO (the number one social network for doctors in the U.S. and globally), reported on an invitation-only meeting held in Chicago on Dec. 4, 2017. Those attending represented state and specialty societies as well as the president and CEO of the ABMS MOC, Lois Nora, MD. Although she did agree that the MOC was problematic, she still wanted the ABMS to be in control of certification, possibly under another name. On the other hand, physicians at the meeting wanted an overhaul and more control by practicing physicians regarding certification that is fair, functional and with reasonable costs. —

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Richard J. Gimpelson, MD, recently retired from his gynecological surgery practice and is a past SLMMS president. He shares his opinions here to stimulate thought and discussion, but these do not necessarily represent the opinion of the Medical Society. Your comments on this column are most welcome and may be sent to editor@slmms.org.

Thank you for your investment in advocacy, education, networking and community service for medicine.

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**HARRY'S
HOMILIES[©]**

Harry L.S. Knopf, MD

**ON
CRITICISM**

"How much easier it is to be
critical than to be correct."

Benjamin Disraeli

We have all said it: "I think I could have done it better." And, perhaps, we were accurate. But how many times have we been quick to criticize, only to discover that we were too hasty or too sharp? We would be better served, I think, by being slow to criticize and generous with praise (when it is due). Criticism in hindsight is much easier than accurate foresight. It is a special talent to administer "constructive" criticism without being hurtful. So the next time you are tempted to give your opinion about someone else's attempts, delay your comments until you have assessed the problem and thought about whether you could have done it better. The next time YOU try something, you may be on the other end of the spear.

Dr. Knopf is editor of Harry's Homilies.® He is an ophthalmologist retired from private practice and a part-time clinical professor at Washington University School of Medicine.

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