



College Advantage

A Publication of the American College of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology

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Allergy-specific revenue and cost data is here at last!

How does your practice stack up?

TABLE OF CONTENTS:

A year in the life of the President	2	College is taking action	9	Register for hybrid joint board certification course	14
Will we see you in Boston?	3	Allergy-specific revenue and cost data is here!	10	Honoring our award winners	14
Can't make it in person?	3	Gold headed cane winner	12	Meet your 2017-2018 candidates	15
Greetings from the "firehouse"	4	Submit 2018 Meeting proposals	13	When "tech support" means more	16
Go Ahead, Take Advantage!	6			What does the Alliance do?	18
The College encourages...	7				



American College of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology

A year in the life of the President

When Bryan Martin, DO, FAAAAI handed me the gavel in San Francisco last November, I remember thinking to myself “Do not get in the way of progress!”. The implementation of the Vision 2020 strategic initiative was going well and the Advocacy Council had established itself as a force in both practice management and advocating for the specialty. Relations with the AAAAI were good, and the new Executive Medical Director, Michael Blaiss, MD, FAAAAI started his term. We were in the process of handing over the reins of the *Annals of Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology* Editor-in-Chief position from the beloved and longest-ever tenured Gailen Marshall, MD, FAAAAI, PhD to the extremely well-qualified Rohit Katial, MD, FAAAAI. Things were going so well that in my acceptance speech I naively referred to myself as a “game manager”. I was referring to a football quarterback who perhaps lacks unique talents to carry a team on his own, but is savvy enough to effectively lead by avoiding mistakes and trusting the talents of his teammates.

The College team’s foundation starts with staff. Led by Executive Director, Rick Slawny, and Associate Executive Director, Nancy Ryan, the College staff is second to none when it comes to proactive action to keep things running smoothly, adapting to change, diplomatic interactions with volunteer physicians, and staying on budget. Rounding out the team are the Executive Committee and Advocacy Council, whose members I have found to be exceptionally wise, skillful, and collegial.

The College encountered a variety of unexpected challenges this past year, and I will share two examples. The first is a slowly evolving, yet unresolved crisis caused by the combination of proposed changes in USP 797 and the FDA’s guidance document on Insanitary Conditions at Compounding Facilities. The particularly challenging – and now, satisfying – part about this crisis for me has been the process of sorting out and executing the best plan to benefit members. This included first and foremost the Advocacy Council team’s deft approach to its work, followed by messaging to USP and the FDA that was carefully and cooperatively coordinated with input from the AAAAI. We still do not know the outcome of this crisis, but I am certain the College is functioning optimally in serving the interests of its members.

Another unexpected challenge arose in April 2017 when the *Annals’* planned one-year orderly transition of editors was interrupted due to the luring away of Dr. Katial by an opportunity he could not refuse. With just eight months left in Dr. Marshall’s term, the College team leaped into action, including reinvigorating the Publications Committee led by Dr. Martin. In five short months, we completely re-vamped the vision of the *Annals*, convinced Dr. Marshall to stay on for another term as Editor-in-Chief, hired Donald Leung, MD, FAAAAI, as Executive Editor, and assembled an impressive editorial team poised to ensure the *Annals* realizes its ambitious goals. This challenge had not been anticipated, but I am proud of the way the College team rose to the occasion, and I am excited about what is in store for the *Annals* in the future.

As the above examples illustrate, the College’s infrastructure is battle tested and ready to take on whatever challenges the future holds. It has been my privilege to serve as President this past year, and working with such talented staff and volunteer physicians has been immensely satisfying.



Stephen A. Tilles, MD, FAAAAI
President, American College of
Allergy, Asthma and Immunology

Connect with us at acaai.org or through:



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Will we see you in Boston?

We have a great program lined up for the Annual Meeting, and we don't want you to miss one moment. Here are some key details you'll want to know so you can experience it all.

- **New session formats.** Current Controversies examines Alternative Therapies in Asthma & Allergy Management: Vitamin D, Fish Oil and Prebiotics/Probiotics. The Special Seminar: What's New in Health Care includes a session that will describe the emerging roles of transparency and patient-centered medical decisions in health care, and an update from the Center for Drugs at the FDA.
- **Check out the late-breaking abstracts!** For the first time ever, the meeting will feature late-breaking abstracts with high quality, emerging data discovered in the last six months.
- **Catch a debate.** Our pro/con debate will be back for a second year. This year's topic is Should FeNO be Used in All Asthma Patients?
- **Come on Thursday!** The morning will focus on atopic dermatitis and the afternoon will cover new guidelines and much more surrounding food allergies.
- **Keep on track with the Annual Meeting app.** Got the meeting app? Great. You don't need to carry your program book. Use the app to set your schedule and access handouts. Locate friends and colleagues who are at the meeting while you search for speakers and exhibitors. You can also use the app to plan your social activities, book restaurants and more. If you don't have the app, search "ACAAI" in the app store to download.
- **Join the meeting conversation.** Tag your meeting posts with #ACAAI17 and chat with fellow attendees. Follow Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest and YouTube for breaking Annual Meeting news.
- **Visit us at the College Resource Center.** We'll be located outside the Exhibit Hall. See what's new at the College, check out the new online Practice Management Center, get answers to all your questions, and record an interview for a Hometown Radio segment.



Can't make it in person?

If you're unable to get to Boston, you can still participate.

- **Be part of the Virtual Meeting.** There's still time to register for the virtual meeting. Sign up at education.acaai.org/VirtualMeeting. You can enjoy the live broadcast of Saturday's and Sunday's general sessions, submit questions for discussion during the Q&A, and chat with other attendees from all over the world. Plus, you can earn CME!
- **Purchase the Meeting On Demand.** Once the Annual Meeting is over, visit education.acaai.org/OnDemand - to access the entire meeting online, as well as different topic packages of interest to you. The sessions are available from a desktop, tablet or mobile device for you to earn credit.
- **Follow along on social media.** #ACAAI17. Lots of attendees will be tweeting all the news that's fit to tweet and you can join right in. Also check out Facebook and LinkedIn. Help the meeting "trend" as you post updates!





ADVOCACY ADVANTAGE

By J. Allen Meadows MD, FAAAAI, Advocacy Council chair

Greetings from the Advocacy Council “firehouse”

A running joke among your Advocacy Council leadership is that many days we feel like we’re “drinking from a firehose” as we deal with the challenges faced by our specialty and practicing allergists on a day-to-day basis. We would like to summarize some of the Advocacy Council’s work as we continue to put-out “fires” that challenge our membership. Three of the “hottest” topics are:

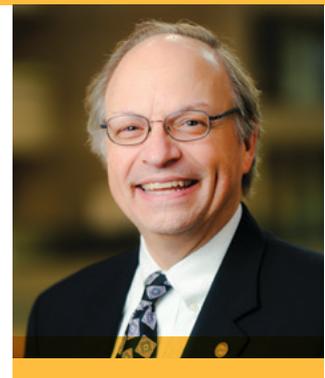
USP 797, FDA guidance and state regulations on compounding

While the next revision of USP Chapter 797 is still on the drawing board of the USP Compounding Expert Committee, the Advocacy Council (AC), working in cooperation with the AAAAAI and AAOA, has continued to bring the voices of practicing allergists to the table. There was an important USP 797 teleconference on June 2nd, followed by a FDA “listening session” on compounding at FDA’s Bethesda offices. The AC represented our membership at both sessions. Discussions included appropriate standards for training of compounding personnel and processes for ensuring sterility in the office setting. The specialty societies reiterated there is insufficient data to indicate that additional safety equipment or procedures are necessary beyond the current USP Chapter 797 standards. We also continue to monitor and help local

and state societies respond to state regulatory changes that could affect the ability for allergists to provide patient specific allergen immunotherapy through their offices.

Limits on skin testing and allergen immunotherapy dosing

We continue to frequently hear from membership about random, and seemingly unreasonable, limits on billing for both skin testing and doses of allergen immunotherapy. In recent months, the AC staff have received numerous requests for assistance as a result of unit dosing limitations for immunotherapy. Many private payers and state



Medicaid programs are imposing coverage limits on allergy immunotherapy. The AC has taken the position that any limits on coverage should be not less than 150 doses during the build-up year and not less than 90 doses thereafter for maintenance.

The ups and downs of RVUs

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) is required, by law, to review and, if deemed appropriate, cut payment for “potentially mis-valued codes.” Every year CMS publishes a list of codes it believes should be reviewed using a number of screens including high volume. The past year CMS has (and is) evaluating three codes identified as high volume that are very important to allergists. The good news is that when 95165 for allergen immunotherapy was reviewed by CMS, our efforts resulted in no loss of value – in fact we got a 2% increase. On the downside, CMS’ review of

percutaneous (prick) skin testing code 95004 is resulting in a proposed 20% decrease over two years - beginning in 2018. The code for intracutaneous (intradermal) tests – 95024 – is up for review this fall. For a more detailed review of the process, read the July 24th College Insider article What’s all the RUCkus? Why do Medicare payments go up and down? (college.acaaai.org/publications/advocacy-insider).

This represents just a sampling of the day-to-day work of your Advocacy Council.

We welcome your feedback and support.

Help us continue the fight! Support our **Defend Allergy SHots (DASH) campaign by donating today...for the future of our patients...and the specialty! Donate at college.acaaai.org/SupportDASH.**



We need your support to continue to fight on behalf of practicing allergists. Donate to support the fight at college.acaaai.org/DASH.



EDUCATION ADVANTAGE

Go Ahead, Take Advantage – We Want You To!

If you haven't connected yet, then you aren't taking advantage of a very important member benefit. The College Learning Connection (CLC) offers a lot of quality content and convenience.

- Could you benefit from an *interactive* practice parameter?
- Would you like to sharpen your skills at safe steroid use?
- No time for the live Literature Review at Annual Meeting?
- Want to attend the Annual Meeting virtually?
- Looking for a certificate from a course you took long ago?
- Need more MOC credits?

You can find all of this and more on the CLC. Many are free for members. Those with a charge are at a reduced member rate.



What's coming next?

Later this month we will launch the Allergy Office Essentials educational series. This suite of modules will cover a range of topics, beginning with Reducing Patient No Shows and Patient Financial Counseling. The series is specifically targeted for practice management staff to help them learn the ins and outs of establishing and maintaining a smoothly functioning practice.

We've got everything you need to meet your MOC requirements too. Look for the PI CME Atopic Dermatitis (free to members!) or the On-Demand sessions marked MOC in the catalog.

After the Annual Meeting, you will find recorded sessions available On Demand – in case you missed something or are looking for additional CME opportunities.

Regardless of what you're looking for, you'll find the answers to all your continuing education needs at education.acaai.org.

COMMUNITY ADVANTAGE

By Tammy Peng, MD, Senior FIT Representative

The College encourages growth, patient advocacy and involvement

My first experience at the College Annual Meeting was as a second year pediatric resident. I delved into a wealth of knowledge by attending symposiums about asthma, rhinitis, food and drug allergies. I recall strolling the conference hall and learning from presenters and researchers about their innovative work and discoveries. By the close of the meeting, I was determined to join the field and was invigorated to contribute in any way that I could.

As a Fellow-in-Training, my love for the field continued to be fostered, at least in part by my experiences with the College. Attending workshops and lectures at our Annual Meeting have continued to deepen my understanding of the many conditions we encounter in practice. One of my favorite sessions has been the Great Raft Debate. Whether the topic was eosinophilic esophagitis, food allergy or the allergy epidemic, the debate has served as a great reminder of the art of medicine, how much we know now and how much we still have to discover. During the Annual Meeting, I have encountered other allergists and immunologists who have inspired potential collaborations in research or who have challenged me to expand the way I practice. Beyond encouraging growth as a clinician or as a scientist, the College has shown me the vast opportunities

we have to evolve the practice of medicine in our field. The College offers me the chance to advocate for my patients, to play an active role in the making and implementation of policies and laws and to determine how to encourage future allergists and immunologists.

I have had the tremendous honor to serve as Senior FIT Representative in the last year and have had the chance to participate in many initiatives, projects and committees. My involvement has nurtured a constantly growing enthusiasm for allergy and immunology.

My hope for all who attend the Annual Meeting is that you are able to not only immerse yourselves in all the latest advancements in understanding and treatment of allergic and immunologic diseases, but moreover, that you seize the opportunity to get involved in something you feel passionate about—policy making, particular diseases, education or beyond. I look forward to celebrating our rich history and to collaborating on efforts to build a robust future together at the Annual Meeting.



Thank you to the 2017 ACAAI Corporate Council Members

BENEFACTOR MEMBERSHIP



PATRON MEMBERSHIP



When it comes to your well-being, the College is taking action



As we celebrate our 75th anniversary, it's interesting to note that the topic of preventing physician burnout has been around for a long time. In fact, in his 1966 presidential address at the Annual Scientific Meeting, Lowell Henderson, MD, FACAAI offered advice on how to prevent burnout. His message was that practicing allergists need to be scientists and should be continually investigating and asking questions. This, he said, will give freshness and interest to life, keep your intellect active and enrich your profession.

Fifty years later, Mark O'Hollaren MD, FACAAI and Abraham Verghese MD, MACP captivated audiences at the 2016 Annual Scientific Meeting with their keynote presentations, *Why Reinvention of the Doctor-Patient Relationship is Key to Physician Led Health Reform*, and *The Care in Caring: Finding what is Timeless in an Era of Change*, respectively. These presentations hit a nerve with allergists, and the College responded by creating the Physician Well-Being Task Force to focus on how to help members address and prevent burnout.

What has the task force been up to?

First, we are in the final stages of conducting a confidential burnout survey of practicing allergist members in the U.S. and Canada. We're using the gold standard of burnout surveys for the medical profession: the Maslach Burnout Inventory Human Services Survey. As a bonus, every member who completes the survey has the option of receiving an individualized report of their personal well-being.

The preliminary group survey results are fascinating. Allergists are more emotionally exhausted than the general medical population, but experience less depersonalization (an unfeeling and impersonal response toward patients). They also feel a stronger sense of personal accomplishment than other medical professionals.

Gailen Marshall, Jr., MD, PhD, FACAAI, chair of the Physician Well-Being Task Force, explains, "The task force on physician wellness is composed of College members who have a vital interest in the health and well-being of our members. The concerns about the possibility of burnout among our

colleagues has triggered a concerted effort to determine the extent of the risk."

Second, we are conducting focus groups to get more in-depth information about allergists' individual experiences related to

burnout and well-being. "As these data are gathered and analyzed, the members of the task force are committed to finding and implementing strategies that will allow the College to assist those at risk and develop actions aimed at preventing future risk," said Dr. Marshall.

Finally, the task force has established a Facebook group to establish lines of communication with members to share information and perspectives about obstacles to allergist well-being. Search "ACAAI physician well-being group" on Facebook today and request to join the group!

"Allergists are more emotionally exhausted than the general medical population, but experience less depersonalization. They also feel a stronger sense of personal accomplishment than other medical professionals."



PRACTICE MANAGEMENT ADVANTAGE

Allergy-specific revenue and cost data is here!

How does your practice stack up? The College partnered with the Medical Group Management Association to collect allergy-specific practice cost and revenue data – which, up to now, has been sorely lacking for our specialty.

Thanks to your participation, we now have current allergy-specific data in everything from charges and revenue, to accounts receivable and payer mix, to staffing and expenses.

This is a great opportunity to benchmark your practice performance against other allergy practices – as well as against your own historical practice performance. Look for potential areas of improvement, and start by focusing on one or two categories.

Seventeen allergy and immunology (A/I) practices with three or more full-time equivalent (FTE) physicians reported data to MGMA in the 2017 Cost and Revenue Survey (based on 2016 data). All practices did not report all data.

The median gross charges per FTE physician in 2016 was \$1.59 million, although it ranged substantially among practices. The bottom 10% of practices reported gross charges per FTE physician of \$880,972, vs. \$3.54 million for the top 90% of practices. The median net fee for service (FFS) revenue per FTE physician was \$927,273, although again the range of reported values was wide.

A/I CHARGES AND REVENUE PER FTE PHYSICIAN BY PERCENTILE

Benchmark	10th Percentile	Median	90th Percentile
Total gross charges	\$880,972	\$1,590,129	\$3,538,902
Total medical revenue (FFS collections + Medicare/Medicaid collections + capitation payments + research)	\$570,772	\$980,656	\$1,695,383
Total medical revenue after operating cost	\$158,631	\$397,974	\$843,362
Net FFS revenue	\$570,661	\$927,273	\$1,550,746

The median accounts receivable (A/R) per physician was \$113,325. 61.6% of practice A/R was in the 0-30 days bucket, and another 11.7% was in the 31-60 days bucket. The days in A/R figures for A/I practices were comparable to those for multispecialty practices with primary care.

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Commercial payers were the largest component of A/I payer mix at 75%, followed by Medicaid at 12% and Medicare at 9%.

A/I, COLLECTIONS, PAYER MIX PRACTICE DATA

Benchmark	Median
Total Accounts Receivable (A/R) per physician	\$ 113,325
0-30 days in A/R	61.6 %
31-60 days in A/R	11.7 %
61-90 days in A/R	6.1 %
91-120 days in A/R	4.6 %
120+ days in A/R	12.2 %
Months adjusted FFS charges in A/R	1.3
Adjusted FFS collection percent	97.7 %
Payer Mix	
Medicare	8.9 %
Medicaid	12.3 %
Commercial	75.0%
Workers' compensation	–
Charity care	–
Self-pay	1.9 %
Other government payers	0.5 %

Median allergy support staff per FTE physician (including clinical, front office and business operations staff) was at 6.36. However, this ranged considerably among practices, with the lowest 10% of practices at 3.23 and the highest 90% at 10.67. The median clinical support staff for allergists was 3.1 per FTE physician, which was higher than the median 2.0 per FTE physician for family medicine and 1.7 for pediatrics.

“MGMA has consistently reported that the most profitable practices were those that focused on maximizing revenue with more support staff rather than reducing operating costs,” said Michael Blaiss, MD, FACA, executive medical director of the College. “This should be eye opening to all allergists in trying to improve profitability of their practices.” Indeed, more clinical support per FTE physician may mean clinical staff are freeing up physicians to see more patients.

A/I STAFFING PER FTE PHYSICIAN

Benchmark	10th Percentile	Median	90th Percentile
Total support staff	3.23	6.36	10.67
Total business operations support staff (admin, accounting, IT)	0.19	1.17	1.65
Total front office support staff (includes medical records staff)	0.97	1.73	3.60
Total clinical support staff	1.46	3.07	5.10

A/I practices' largest expense as a percentage of total medical revenue, after physician cost at 38.6%, is the cost of support staff at 28%. Building and occupancy cost is next at 7.3%. Note, however, that individual expenses as a percentage of medical revenue range considerably from the bottom 10 percentile to the top 90 percentile.

A/I EXPENSES AS A PERCENT OF TOTAL MEDICAL REVENUE

Benchmark	10th Percentile	Median	90th Percentile
Total physician cost	17.11 %	38.61 %	66.98 %
Total physician compensation	29.59	34.92	60.38
Total physician benefit cost	1.87	5.92	10.39
Total support staff	17.90	28.04	37.61
Total business operations support staff	1.63	6.02	9.76
Total front office support staff	3.69	6.26	10.22
Total clinical support staff	6.99	11.38	17.07
Total general operating cost	20.39	26.83	40.28
Information technology operating cost	0.52	1.82	4.57
Medical and surgical supply	1.64	3.55	17.05
Building and occupancy	4.29	7.30	10.16
Administrative supplies and services	0.41	1.18	4.31
Professional liability insurance	0.23	0.55	1.79
Other insurance premiums	0.09	0.85	2.75
Legal fees	0.01	0.17	0.61
Outside professional fees	0.04	0.40	2.24
Promotion and marketing	0.07	0.93	3.20
Miscellaneous operating cost	0.23	0.94	6.64
Total operating cost (total support staff + total general operating cost)	40.28	56.33	67.00
Total cost	85.71	98.30	114.88

Take this opportunity to measure your practice performance against other allergy practices, which can identify opportunities for improvement. If certain categories look out of line, investigate. You may find opportunities to improve practice profitability and efficiency!

Source: Allergy & Immunology specific data for practices with 3 or more FTE physicians. MGMA DataDive™ Cost and Revenue 2017. Copyright 2017.



Who's the gold headed cane winner?

The Gold Headed Cane Award is annually given to a College Fellow who has demonstrated the highest standards of scientific excellence and integrity. College Fellows selected Gailen Marshall Jr., MD, PhD, FACAAl, who will be presented with the award at the Annual Meeting on Oct. 28.



In Dr. Marshall's words... It is an extreme honor to receive the Gold Headed Cane Award from the College. I joined the ACAAl in 1988 and became a Fellow in 1993. I have served on multiple committees, have been an *ex officio* member of the Board of Regents since 2005 and have been nominated to serve as a Regent.

ACAAl engagement

I have been involved in teaching for the College in a variety of settings at our Annual Scientific Meetings. I have been privileged to present lectureships honoring Jean Chapman, Daniel Goodman and memorializing Stanislou Jaros and Bernard Berman. I have also been honored with the Distinguished Service award and recognized as a Distinguished Fellow of the College in 2009. I have also been privileged to serve in the publication mission for the College for the past 16 years. I was appointed associated editor of the *Annals* in 2005 and became editor-in-chief (EIC) in 2006. I was looking forward to retiring and placing the journal in the hands of young giants at the end of this year but, due to some unique circumstances, I have been provided the opportunity to continue as EIC for another term through 2021. The experience of developing *Annals* to meet the needs of our membership as well as others around the world has been and remains one of the great highlights of my professional career.

Career path

My pathway to allergy/immunology as a career choice was anything but certain when I first began as a graduate student in 1973. I started out to be a basic scientist who aspired to have a career in bench research. As I was finishing pre-doctoral studies at George Washington University and the NIH, several individuals encouraged me to go to medical school to make my research (which had a decidedly clinical flavor in its potential applications) more useful to people. I discovered that I could do medical school in three years then go back to the lab. That was my initial intent when I started at University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston but in my first year, someone put a stethoscope in my hand and changed my life forever. It was fairly clear that I would do internal medicine and go through the clinical investigator pathway. Halfway through postgraduate training, I had the opportunity to move to the University of Tennessee at Memphis to do tumor immunology intervention with what was then a new recombinant IL2 solution. Shortly after that, I was introduced to the chief of adult allergy at UT Memphis – Phil Lieberman, MD, FACAAl – who convinced me in a very short time that if I wanted to do meaningful research in human immunology that would have lasting benefit, the field for me was allergy/immunology. I agreed, and over the last 30 years have never looked back – clearly, I was born to do this.





Research interests

My major research interests remain focused on the effects of psychological stress and environmental factors on immunoregulatory pathways involved in various diseases including allergic rhinitis, asthma, cancer and diabetes, the immunomodulatory effects of stress management and the effectiveness of the integrative approach to clinical care, particularly in patients with allergy, asthma or immune-based diseases.

Family

I have been married for 39 years to the former Elizabeth Marek, RN. We are blessed with three children – Sarah E. Rylie, MD (Scott), Jonathan D. Marshall, JD (Brienne), Rebecca M. Marshall, MA – and one grandson, Caleb John Rylie. I am active locally in our community including church, efforts with the homeless, and neighborhood beautification projects. My hobbies include fly fishing, amateur radio, and woodworking.

In conclusion, to even be nominated for the Gold Headed Cane award is an honor for which I am so very humbled and grateful. It has been an ongoing joy for me to be able to contribute to our specialty in teaching, research and service – and I cannot imagine a better venue than the College to invest whatever talent and time I have for the practicing allergist/immunologist community, and the patients we all serve.



#ACAAI18
SEATTLE



Submit 2018 Annual Scientific Meeting proposals

The 2018 Annual Scientific Meeting theme is "Practice Empowerment. Patients. Community. Partners." The College is accepting session and presentation proposals that echo that theme, stimulate discussion and challenge mindsets.

Find out more and submit your ideas at college.acaa.org/18/proposals.

The submission deadline is Jan. 8, 2018.

**PRACTICE
EMPOWERMENT**
PATIENTS ● COMMUNITY ● PARTNERS

American College of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology
2018 Annual Scientific Meeting

SEATTLE | NOV 15-19

Washington State Convention Center

EDUCATION ADVANTAGE

Register for hybrid joint board certification course

Join us in Nashville for the 2018 ACAAI and AAAAI Joint Board Certification Course, May 18-20, at the Nashville Marriott at Vanderbilt University.

This two and a half day course offers:

- An intensive review of established knowledge as outlined by the American Board of Allergy and Immunology.
- A “flipped classroom approach” that will provide select content online prior to the course.
- The opportunity to interact with leading experts in the field of allergy and immunology
- A valuable resource in preparation for the upcoming certification exams as well as for planning future strategies in practice.

Registration will open Oct. 27 at education.accai.org/boardrev2018. Don't wait – enrollment is limited!



COMMUNITY ADVANTAGE

Honoring our award winners

Stephen Tilles, MD, FAAAAI, College president, takes a few moments to reflect on the contributions of this year's winners.



Distinguished Fellow Award

Gary Gross, MD, FAAAAI

“Dr. Gross has devoted several decades of service to the College, most notably with his diligent efforts on behalf of the former Joint Council of Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology and more recently the College’s Advocacy Council. His tireless work on behalf of practicing allergists on coding and reimbursement issues has produced invaluable resources for all of us. The College is proud to honor him with the Distinguished Fellow award.”



Distinguished Service Award

Stephen A. Imbeau, MD, FAAAAI

“Dr. Imbeau has served the College in critical ways over the years, particularly as a key member of the former Joint Council of Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology and now the Advocacy Council. He is a tireless supporter of the rights of practicing allergists, including as a member of the Board of Directors of the American Medical Association’s bipartisan political action committee. His efforts at the federal, state, and local levels on behalf of the specialty are unparalleled, and the College is pleased to recognize him with the Distinguished Service Award.”



International Distinguished Fellow Award

Tak Hong Lee, MD

“The College is very pleased to recognize Dr. Lee with the International Distinguished Fellow Award. Dr. Lee has had a distinguished academic career, first in London and more recently in Hong Kong. His research has helped answer many questions about what we now refer to as Aspirin Exacerbated Respiratory Disease. His contributions to our field have directly impacted practicing allergists around the world.”



Women in Allergy Award

Sandra M. Gawchik, DO, FAAAAI

“Dr. Gawchik has been a tireless supporter of the College for many years. Her service has included active contribution to multiple committees. She currently serves as a member of the Annual Meeting Program Committee and Science Council and as chair of the Dermatology Committee. The College is very pleased to recognize Dr. Gawchik with the Woman in Allergy Award.”

Meet your 2017-2018 candidates for election

During the Oct. 30 Annual Business Meeting, ACAAI Fellows will elect a president-elect, vice president and treasurer for one-year terms. They will also elect three regents for three-year terms to succeed Santiago E. Martinez, MD, FAAAAI; William S. Silvers, MD, FAAAAI; and Cherie Y. Zachary, MD, FAAAAI. We believe the nominees proposed by the Nominating Council embody the philosophy of their predecessors whose combined efforts have made the College the success it is today. The Board of Regents recommends your support for the following slate.



Todd A. Mahr, MD, FAAAAI

President-Elect

"I am excited to see the changes that have been in development through Vision 2020 continue to be implemented. We are already seeing dramatic enhancements in the program committee work for the Annual Meeting.

Through this ongoing work, I think the College will continue to be well-positioned to be a great partner for every allergist."



J. Allen Meadows, MD, FAAAAI

Vice President

"The College has a rich heritage, and, with Vision 2020, a very bright future. We live in an era of rapid changes in medicine that create both challenges and opportunities. I want even more members to have a meaningful voice

in shaping the future of our specialty and making the College the voice of allergists who provide direct patient care."



Luz Fonacier, MD, FAAAAI

Treasurer

"We are the allergists of the future, armed with new targeted therapies and equipped to manage new hypersensitivities. Together, College members will continue to give the best care to our patients, as well as address

education, research, advocacy and other challenges facing our specialty. Vision 2020 is well on its way to accomplishing all this and more."



Gailen D. Marshall, Jr., MD, PhD, FAAAAI

Regent

"The College remains the best possible venue to develop friendships between clinical and academic colleagues and learners whose common interest is providing optimal care for the patient with atopic or immune-based diseases.

This comradery manifests itself in lifelong friendships, high-quality scientific exchange of information and ideas and advocacy for our patients and one another. As we move further into the 21st century, the College will continue to expand and diversify to promote the sacred mission of doing everything necessary to ensure optimal care for our patients."



Mamta Reddy, MD, MBOE, FAAAAI

Regent

"While the current health care environment is flooded with uncertainty, this is also a time when we can choose to embrace change constructively and grow strong into the future. We can't be afraid of change;

in fact, we must be afraid of not changing. The College has a long history of creating, collaborating and innovating to develop cutting-edge programs, and I'm excited to have the opportunity to be a part of this future."



Gary C. Steven, MD, PhD, FAAAAI

Regent

"The recent expansion in biologics and the paradigm shift in reimbursement has the field of allergy at another crossroads. The College and its leadership are best poised to help the specialty navigate these

changes to ensure that the allergist maintains the lead in managing asthma, food allergy and the other major allergic/immunologic diseases, and to help ensure that those who will benefit from our expertise have access to it."

When “tech support” means more than telling you to re-boot your computer



When it comes to diagnosing and treating allergic disease, it’s hard to keep up with the latest technological developments. There’s always another “new and improved” tool or innovation that will supposedly enhance your practice and make you a better allergist. But where to begin?

Throughout its 75-year history, the College has worked to support practicing allergists in their efforts to stay current and use whatever the latest technology is in the most efficient ways possible. Over the last 25 years, with the advent of the computer and all that has come since then, the College has strived to keep allergists up to date on the latest best practices in technology. Our goal has been to expand access to electronic knowledge of allergic disease, while also assisting members in using technology to communicate with patients and treat them more effectively.

Were you a practicing allergist in 1981? If you were, you might remember the advent of personal computers, ones that didn’t take up an entire computer room and could be placed on a desk. In 1991, the College held 12 computer courses at the Annual Meeting. Among the courses offered were Intro to Medical Computing, AllerComm-2000, Desktop Publishing and Presentation on Graphics for your Allergy Practice, and Medical Informatics: Your Intro to the National Library of Medicine.

Those titles may seem quaint by today’s standards, but it was the dawn of a new technological era, and the College wanted allergists to know how to use computers to aid their practices. In 1998, the Annual Meeting included a Friday Computer Symposium, an entire day devoted to information on how to use computers.

Although it’s now possible to pull up the entire Annual Meeting on your mobile device, in 1994, the College was the first medical association to record its annual meeting on CD-ROM. Today we offer much more, including a virtual meeting (register at education.acaai.org/virtualmeeting), and the ability to download much of the educational program at education.acaai.org/OnDemand.

But virtual meetings are hardly the only ways the College keeps up with the fast pace of technology. Not only do member allergists have huge amounts of information at their fingertips online, but the way we communicate with our membership has almost completely evolved with





the digital age. While the College used to communicate primarily through newsletters delivered through the postal service, today, we communicate via email newsletters and announcements that let you know within hours (or minutes) if an important topic needs your attention. We also post information to our social media channels, including Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn, to alert members to important issues.

In terms of online learning, the College Learning Connection (CLC) is a hub of valuable information for members. The CLC has high quality, evidence-based programs that integrate professional practice management and MOC activities with CME to improve competence and performance. Check it out at education.acaai.org.

One featured educational tool in the CLC are the webinars offered by the College. In the past few years, the College has focused on providing an increasing number of topics through our webinar series, Perfecting Practice. Topics range from Best Practices in Office Collections, to Getting Started in Practice, to Empathic Communication: Yes, you can teach it! The webinars are free to members.

Did you know the College has a Telehealth Task Force? Their goal is to help members participate in the growing field of telehealth. The task force recently developed a Position Paper on the Use of Telemedicine for Allergists. This paper

serves to offer policy and position statements for the use of telemedicine pertinent to the allergy and immunology specialty. The paper has been accepted for publication in the *Annals of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology*, and is expected to be published before the end of the year.

And what about this year's Annual Meeting program? What will be offered in terms of advancing your knowledge of technology? Here are some of the titles in this year's program:

- To the Internet and Beyond: The Use of Technology to Advance Our Practice - will describe the use of telemedicine in practice; and discuss ways to use social media and apps to enhance patient education.
- The Changing World of Regulations and Payment: MIPS, APMs and Telehealth - find out how to participate in MIPS successfully, how APMs might be a solution and what telehealth might look like for allergists.
- Telehealth/Telemedicine - learn the appeal of on-demand visits and how you can participate.

Whether you consider yourself completely "tech savvy" or more of a novice, the College always has and will continue to support you in your efforts to make technology work for you. Whether your goal is to use technology in your practice to diagnose, to treat, or to communicate with your patients, the College is here to help.

COMMUNITY ADVANTAGE

By Charlotte Meadows, Alliance President

What does the Alliance do for the College?

Our primary role of supporting the College is upon us as we gather in Boston to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the College. In addition, it is the 63rd anniversary of the Alliance. Originally begun as a wives group, we have emerged in the 21st century as a helping hand to our physician spouses and partners who are engaged in the very vital mission of taking care of patients with serious illnesses. If you have not already made plans to join us at the Boston Sheraton for our activities, do so today!



All guests of attendees who come to Boston for our annual meeting will find something of interest. Not only will our Hospitality Suite be open Friday through Monday with a continental breakfast for Alliance members and guests of attendees, we will also have activities for children as well as programs for the rest of us.

On Friday morning we have Meagan Searl, PhD, a wellness expert who will speak on Mindfulness Meditation for Stress Relief and Relaxation, certainly a timely topic. Early Saturday we will hear Bill Finerfrock, the College's Washington DC lobbyist, update us on the most current happenings in our nation's capitol and how we can be involved. Bring your spouse/partner to this brief update!



Also on Saturday morning we will showcase two artists from the famed Copley Society of Artists with back-to-back presentations. Later on we offer the opportunity to take a walking field trip to their studios or perhaps a nearby market. Sunday will start off with a blind wine tasting. Then, we are off to the nearby Top of the Hub restaurant for our business meeting and brunch.



The Clemens Von Pirquet awards are given to three Fellows-in-Training whose abstracts are deemed the best papers on any aspect of allergy/immunology or related fields. The Alliance presents these awards. Please join us at the Awards Ceremony, 7:00 pm, Saturday to honor the recipients.

Finally, the Alliance sponsors the annual live auction held during the Fundraising Event on Sunday evening. We gather valued items from around the country and coordinate the auction. The Alliance has presented over \$50,000 to the Foundation in the last two years and expects to add to that amount this year during our auction, held prior to the not-to-be-missed performance by Landau Eugene Murphy Jr., 2011 winner of America's Got Talent. Purchase a ticket to the fundraiser and come prepared to bid for some of our wonderful auction items!

It has been a true honor to represent the Alliance this year, and I look forward to seeing all of you in Boston.



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