My decision to be a physician was influenced by the fact that my father is a physician. He arrived in this country after graduating from medical school in Tehran, Iran and continued his training at Cook County Hospital in Chicago. He then moved to Metro Detroit for residency and fellowship training and subsequently has been practicing medicine in the southeast Michigan area for the past 35 years. He has been very active in organized medicine and most recently served as president of the Michigan State Medical Society. It appears that today we need more physicians to follow in his footsteps coupled with a proactive and bold policy to encourage the finest physicians from around the world to assist in meeting our country’s expanding medical demands.

According to the American Medical Association, there is a shortage of physicians in the U.S. and the shortage is likely to increase in the future. One recent study predicted that by 2020 there will be a 25 percent shortage of physicians nationwide – a shortage that will cut across most specialties. This analysis reasoned that people between 65 and 80 require substantially more medical care than any other group and the demographics of the baby boomer generation will double, triple and quadruple the 60-80 year age group between 2011 and 2030.

Michigan currently has approximately 30,000 active patient-care physicians. Pursuant to a study recently commissioned by Wayne State University School of Medicine, Michigan will require 38,000 physicians by 2020 to meet the state’s projected healthcare demands. And while Michigan’s primary care physician shortage projections point to an adequate number of physicians to meet demand until 2018, a shortage in specialists is on the horizon. The Wayne State study also concluded that Michigan will be 900 physicians short by 2010; 2,400 short by 2015; and 4,500 doctors short by 2020. The study further characterized Michigan’s projected shortage as “severe” compared to the nation as a whole. According to projections, there will be a shortfall in the number of physicians in the United States of roughly 7.9 percent by 2020 but Michigan will experience a deficit of 11.9 percent. According to the Physicians News Digest, a national shortage of this magnitude would inflate the cost of healthcare with longer waiting times to see physicians, less physician face time, and reduced access to healthcare with consequent increases in mortality and morbidity.
CALENDAR OF EVENTS

2009

February
18 Wednesday  MSEPS Board of Directors Meeting via teleconference
18 Wednesday  New Lawmaker Reception, MSMS 5:00 - 7:00 p.m.
20-22 Friday - Sunday  MSEPS CME & Family Ski Meeting Crystal Mountain Resort

March
18 Wednesday  MSEPS Board of Directors Meeting Time and location TBD

April
15 Wednesday  MSEPS Board of Directors Meeting via teleconference
22-25 Wednesday – Saturday  AAO MidYear Forum Washington, DC
24 – 26 Friday - Sunday  MSMS House of Delegates Amway Grand Hotel, Grand Rapids

May
20 Wednesday  MSEPS Board of Directors Meeting Time and location TBD
30 Saturday  A Night for Sight International Wine Auction Ritz Carlton Dearborn

June
17 Wednesday  MSEPS Board of Directors Meeting via teleconference

August
13 Thursday  MSEPS Board Directors Meeting Grand Hotel, Mackinac Island, 2:00 p.m.
14 Friday  MSEPS Annual Business Meeting Grand Hotel, Mackinac Island
13-15 Thursday - Saturday  41st Annual Conference Grand Hotel, Mackinac Island

September
16 Wednesday  MSEPS Board of Directors Meeting via teleconference

October
21 Wednesday  MSEPS Board of Directors Meeting Time and location TBD
24-27 Saturday – Tuesday  AAO Annual Meeting, San Francisco

November
18 Wednesday  MSEPS Board of Directors Meeting via teleconference

2010

August
5-7 Thursday - Saturday  42nd Annual Conference Grand Hotel, Mackinac Island

If your organization has an event you would like listed, please contact the MSEPS office at 517-333-6739 or penglerth@msms.org.
PHYSICIAN SHORTAGE, continued from cover

In January 2005, the Council on Graduate Medical Education (COGME), a national U.S. healthcare policy advisory body, issued a report to Congress addressing physician shortages through 2020. The COGME report recommended, among other things, to increase physician residency training enrollments to add approximately 3 percent more resident physician positions by 2020 (approximately 30,000 physicians) and to increase U.S. medical school enrollment by 15 percent from 2002 levels, by 2015. This increased enrollment, however, would still leave the per capita ratio of medical students to the U.S. population well below the level experienced in 1980.

There are two major sources of new physicians in America: graduates of U.S. medical schools and International Medical School Graduates (IMGs). Although the U.S. could address the predicted future shortage by increasing the number of physicians from one or both of these sources, COGME did not recommend an increase in the number of IMGs entering residency training as a way to address future shortages. According to the National Center for Health Statistics, “compared to U.S.-trained physicians, IMGs provide more primary care and more [overall] medical care to populations living in primary care shortage areas” as well as to minorities, immigrants, patients in poor areas, and Medicaid recipients.

An essential function of our nation’s physicians is to efficiently deliver high-quality, affordable healthcare. We as physicians have an obligation to be role models and mentors to promote the interest of our students to the noble profession of medicine. The federal government must be responsible to offer incentives such as scholarships and low interest educational loans to attract potential candidates to medical school. Moreover, the government should design programs to pay back student loans after graduation in exchange for service in rural, underserved areas. While we currently face physician shortages, one would expect our lawmakers to adopt policies that attract highly qualified IMGs to train and practice in our country in order to meet our ever-expanding medical needs. Another consideration is to prevent the early retirement of talented physicians by improving reimbursement and maintaining the current tort reform in Michigan.

Quality healthcare must be accessible, affordable, and available for everyone. All statistical studies indicate that a physician shortage is imminent. It is imperative that we address this issue in the upcoming years so that a great nation such as ours can continue to be the world’s leader in providing the best health care to its citizens.

MONTHLY OBSERVANCE – GLAUCOMA AWARENESS

January is Glaucoma Awareness Month. Whether you treat glaucoma patients or not, you want to educate your patients about the causes, treatment, and diagnosis of this second leading cause of blindness in the United States. There are free patient materials available from the American Academy of Ophthalmology. A four-color broadsheet in pdf format is available. Just go to www.aao.org/aaoesite/eyemd/upload/January.pdf and print as many copies as you want.

Two eyeSmart patient education packages are available for your office at no charge. Each package includes a standing brochure holder with patient handouts and a poster. One package is about risk for age-related eye disease. The second deals with preventing eye injuries with protective eyewear. You can order these materials at www.GetEyeSmart.org.

Are you an EyeCare America volunteer? The Seniors Eye Care Program ensures that every senior has access to medical eye care and promotes annual, dilated eye exams. It raises awareness about age-related eye disease and facilitates access to eye care at no out-of-pocket expense to the patient.

For more information about this program and how to volunteer, go to the AAO web site, email pubserv@aao.org or call 877-887-6327.
2008 - Another Good Year for MSEPS!

by Penny Englerth, Executive Director

Happy New Year to all! MSEPS had a busy and productive year in 2008. Let's take a look at some of what we did.

MEMBERSHIP

In spite of growing economic troubles in the U.S. and the world, MSEPS had a great year in 2008. While other associations are experiencing declining membership, MSEPS maintained at 98 percent of the 2007 level. But, this still means that we’re down by 2 percent. We must work harder to attract new members.

Member benefits:
- contracted with a coding consultant to provide assistance with billing and coding questions at no charge to members
- distributed eyeSmart materials to all member practices
- sent out quarterly rebate checks from Essilor and Vision Craft

OPERATIONS

- The membership voted at the annual meeting to change the society’s tax status from a 501(c)(3) charitable organization to a 501(c)(6) professional organization. What this means in practical terms is that MSEPS now has two organizations – a professional society and a charitable foundation, through which all educational, community services, and charitable activities will operate. Contributions made to the foundation will be 100% tax deductible, as contributions to MSEPS have always been. This change in tax status was made in order to more closely comply with federal guidelines for professional associations.
- Ten board of directors meetings were held in 2008 as well as numerous committee meetings.

ADVOCACY

There was no onerous legislation introduced into the Michigan legislature during 2008 but grassroots efforts continue.

- Co-hosted Capitol Checkup Day with MSMS and several other physician organizations.
- Responded to complaints of false advertising by ophthalmologists or optometrists

CONTINUING MEDICAL EDUCATION

The 40th Annual Conference at the Grand Hotel, Mackinac Island, was a success. One hundred physicians attended from eleven states and three countries. In addition, five regional “On the Road” meetings were held where docs had opportunities for dialogue with their local legislators and to earn an ethics credit.

The annual ski meeting was held in February at Crystal Mountain Resort, co-sponsored by the Michigan Ophthalmic Personnel Society (MOPS) and underwritten by Alcon Laboratories.

In addition, MSEPS physicians presented a half-day seminar for non-ophthalmology physicians at the MSMS Annual Scientific Meeting.

Continued on pg. 7

What’s Up, Doc?

News and Announcements for and about our Members

The AAO Announces new life members, those who have members continuously for 35 years: Donald S. Beser, MD and Paul P. Fecko, MD, MBA FACS, both of Birmingham

Alan Sugar, MD of Ann Arbor was awarded a Best Original Paper Award at the 2008 AAO Joint Meeting in Atlanta for his paper, “Recipient Risk Factors for Graft Failure in the Cornea Donor Study.”

CONTINUING MEDICAL EDUCATION

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Continued on pg. 7

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Kevin A. Kelly

After a heroic year-long battle, Kevin A. Kelly, former executive director of the Michigan State Medical Society, passed away peacefully on December 15, 2008.

Mr. Kelly served the 16,000-member MSMS his entire career, beginning shortly after graduating from Michigan State University in 1978 in economics. He started as a legislative coordinator in 1979. In 1987, Mr. Kelly became managing director and in 2005 was named executive director, succeeding William E. Madigan.

“Kevin has been a mentor and an inspiration to many people, and his passion for life permeated everything that he did,” said MSMS acting executive director Julie L. Novak. “He lived by two mottos: ‘The world is run by those who show up’ and ‘Hard on issues, soft on people.’”

Mr. Kelly's seemingly limitless energy was shared with a variety of organizations, including Ele's Place, the Children's Trust Fund, Michigan's Children, Capitol National Bank board of directors, Michigan Hospice Organization, Michigan Health Council, Michigan Sudden Infant Death Syndrome Alliance, Michigan Transplant Policy Center, Michigan Public Health Association, American Cancer Society, Gilda's Club, Michigan Festival, Michigan Political History Society, People's Church, MSU's Wharton Center, the Sparrow Hospital Foundation, and various advisory councils for the city of East Lansing, Lansing Community College, and Sparrow Hospital.

In 2004, Mr. Kelly received one of his alma mater's highest honors, the MSU Distinguished Alumni Award. In 1999 he received one of the American Medical Association's highest awards, the Medical Executive Achievement Award. Other awards included the Strategic Association Leader Award from the Michigan Society of Association Executives and the Vernice Davis Anthony Ele's Place Award recognizing his leadership of that agency's efforts to counsel grieving children. Most recently, on Dec. 9, the advocacy group Michigan's Children, named him the first recipient of the annual Kevin A. Kelly Children's Advocate Award.

A memorial service was held on January 14 at People's Church in East Lansing. It was Kevin's wish that in lieu of flowers, donations be made to the Kevin A. Kelly Action Fund, c/o The Capital Region Community Foundation, 6035 Executive Drive, Suite 104, Lansing, MI 48911.

Franklin W. Sassaman III, M.D.

Franklin W. Sassaman, III, MD died Sunday, December 28, 2008, at his home. He began practicing ophthalmology in Kalamazoo in 1968 with Marshall & Sassaman, PC. He then established Sassaman Singer Eye Center, PC and after 40 devoted years of practice, retired in 2008. He was a former member of the Michigan Society of Eye Physicians and Surgeons. A memorial service to celebrate his life was held on January 3 at the Westside Chapel in Kalamazoo.

The family requests that in lieu of flowers, memorials in Doctor Sassaman’s memory be directed to the Kalamazoo Institute of Art, Hospice Care of SW Michigan, or W.K. Kellogg Eye Center.

MEMBER BENEFIT OF THE MONTH

Members of MSEPS can get discounts and preferred pricing on contact lenses through Soderberg, Inc. All members of the practice must be MSEPS members. Get 15% off gas permeable and 9+ column pricing on soft contacts. To join, visit www.miseps.org, scroll down to Member Benefit of the Month and print the application form. Then complete the form and fax it to 517-336-5797.

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As the year changes, so does your board of directors. Here’s the lineup for 2009.

President - Arezo Amirikia, MD
amirikia@hotmail.com
Doctor Amirikia is a retinal specialist with a solo practice in Pontiac.

President-elect – A. Luisa Di Lorenzo, MD
drluisa@comcast.net
Doctor DiLorenzo practices in Troy at Somerset Ophthalmology.

Treasurer – Lance C. Lemon, MD
llemon@rosenbaumeye.com
Doctor Lemon practices at Rosenbaum Eye & Laser Center in Lansing, specializing in glaucoma and cataract surgery

Secretary – Evan H. Black, MD
bleph@widenopenwest.com
Doctor Black is an oculo-plastics specialist with Consultants in Ophthalmic and Facial Plastic Surgery in Southfield and at Kresge Eye Institute.

Immediate Past President – W. Scott Wilkinson, MD
wilkinsonmd@wilkinsoneye.com
Doctor Wilkinson specializes in corneal and external disease at Wilkinson Eye Care in Pontiac and Clarkston.

Your regional directors are:

Region I – Daniel Thuente, MD
 Traverse City
thuente@gtoc.com

Region II – Ralph P. Crew, DO
 Big Rapids
ralphcrew@hotmail.com

Region III – David B. Krebs, MD
Saginaw
dkrebs@chartermi.net

Region IV – Stuart Landay, MD
East Lansing
slanday@loeye.com

Region V – Timothy P. Page, MD
Birmingham
tpagemd@yahoo.com

Region VI – Paul A. Edwards, MD
Detroit
pedwards@hfhs.org

Region VII – Robert Dell Angello, MD
Marquette
robertdellangello@hotmail.com
Please let your officers and regional directors know how you feel about the Society and the issues. This organization belongs to you!

**2009 New Lawmaker Reception**

Once again this year, MSEPS will co-sponsor a New Lawmakers Reception at MSMS headquarters in East Lansing on February 18 from 5:00 - 7:00 pm. This gathering is an opportunity to talk to new legislators about our issues. Several specialty societies are co-sponsors of this event and all physicians are welcome and encouraged to attend. For more information, see the MSEPS website at www.miseps.org or contact the office at 517-333-6739 or penglerth@msms.org.

**Sign Up for the Ski Meeting**

The 7th Annual MSEPS Family Ski Meeting will take place February 20-22, 2009 at Crystal Mountain Resort.

There is no charge for the meeting, thanks to our friends at Alcon Laboratories.

Saturday agenda:

family breakfast at 7:00 a.m. followed by lectures and case studies from 7:30 – 10:30 and then – family fun on your own.

Go to www.miseps.org for a printable registration form and information about lodging and ski package discounts. Or contact the MSEPS office at 517-333-6739 or penglerth@msms.org.
**MEDICAL STAFF EDUCATION**

Several opportunities were offered to medical administrative staff:
- three coding and billing sessions
- Administrative Staff Day
- two identify theft workshops

**COMMUNICATIONS**

Eleven issues of *Eye on Michigan* went out. MSEPS now offers the option of receiving a link to the newsletter by email. If you haven't already signed up for this service and would like to, please contact the MSEPS office at 517-333-6739 or penglerth@msms.org. In addition, numerous email blasts, faxes, and mailings went out to members and non-members alike.

**ORGANIZED MEDICINE**

- MSEPS was represented at the Michigan State Medical Society House of Delegates by Theresa Cooney, MD of Wixom. Several other MSEPS members were involved as delegates of county societies or as members of the hearing committees. Two resolutions submitted by MSEPS were passed.
- MSEPS participated in both sessions of the AAO’s Advisory Council and sponsored four residents to attend the Mid-Year Forum and Congressional Advocacy Day.

**COMMUNITY SERVICE**

Anne M. Nachazel, MD of Bloomfield Village organized the eighth annual Focus:HOPE Eye Evaluation Day at the Westside Food Distribution Center in Detroit. Volunteer physicians, technicians, and administrators worked to provide dilated eye exams to approximately 150 individuals.

**YOUNG OPHTHALMOLOGISTS SOCIETY (YOS)**

The YOS held two activities: a post-OKAP reception and an outing at Tiger Stadium.

**PUBLIC RELATIONS AND MARKETING**

The second annual Michigan Blindness Prevention and Services month was planned by Arezo Amirikia, MD of Bloomfield (and current MSEPS president). This observance is co-sponsored by the Michigan Commission for the Blind and Leader Dogs for the Blind. On April 23, Tom Sullivan, blind actor, writer, singer, and song writer, entertained at an event held in Lansing.

In addition, MSEPS put out several press releases about eye health and safety issues, launched a new web site, and contracted with a public relations firm to assist in giving MSEPS more visibility.

All in all, it was a busy and productive year as I know 2009 will be!
Michigan Society of Eye Physicians and Surgeons Mission Statement

It is the mission of the Michigan Society of Eye Physicians and Surgeons to encourage and promote high quality medical care for patients; to enhance the image of the practice of ophthalmology; to promote professional growth of Michigan ophthalmologists through continuing education; and to provide public policy leadership that ensures continuing high standards of medical eye care in Michigan.