



Oregon Leads Quality Improvement Efforts through Advocacy

After years of being relatively silent on advocacy issues, ACC's Oregon Chapter has increased its efforts to ensure the "cardiovascular voice" is heard across the state. In the past year, the Chapter has developed strong relationships with leaders in the Oregon Legislature and the Oregon Medical Association (OMA). These relationships have increased awareness of legislative issues important to the cardiovascular community and placed the Chapter at the forefront of quality improvements in medical care in the state.

Most notably, the Oregon Chapter's strengthened relationship with the OMA recently resulted in the defeat of an imaging bill (S.B. 144) that would have granted the Oregon Board of Radiologic Technology (OBRT) regulatory oversight over all radiology and ultrasound technicians. The Chapter opposed the bill because sufficient education, licensing and accreditation resources currently exist to ensure quality in echocardiography.

Working strategically with the OMA, the Chapter was able to help provide lawmakers with an alternative proposal to S.B. 144 that would create a new imaging board composed of members from multiple specialties. The success of the relationship has led to regular contact between the OMA and Chapter members and opened the door to opportunities for members to testify or provide comments on issues important to patients and the cardiovascular community.

The Chapter also launched a new program of quarterly "road shows" designed to energize members and better communicate the Chapter's mission, benefits and advocacy efforts across the entire state. "The time taken and the face-to-face discussions with our regional Councilors and members tell the members that their issues, concerns and voice are important,"

says Chapter President **Michael Widmer, M.D., F.A.C.C.** "The road shows also provide an opportunity to highlight the successes of the Chapter and the College and give timely updates on next steps and where help is most needed."

The Chapter faces exciting opportunities in 2008. First, the Chapter plans to use its unique position as a leader in quality to educate state lawmakers and the Oregon Health Fund Board as they develop a proposal for a comprehensive financing system for health care in the state. Second, this summer the Chapter will use a task force to examine ways to address the declining workforce and resulting access to care issues. Additionally, the Chapter plans to develop a state-wide heart disease prevention program to screen individuals and provide assistance in initiating lifestyle changes. Finally, the Chapter will continue its focus on educating members

The Oregon Chapter this January was awarded one of three chapter HERO awards for its Advocacy efforts. The Chapter's success can be attributed to its active slate of Councilors and other leaders, who have accepted the challenges of nonprofit leadership, and who continually look to the future for opportunities to grow the Chapter.

through the fifth annual Oregon Cardiovascular Symposium.

The Chapter has made great strides in advocacy during 2007 and will press forward with these efforts in 2008 while continuing to improve member service, benefits and involvement. "The Chapter's effective visible leadership, engaged committee Councilors, energetic outgoing staff will continue to lead to tangible meaningful benefits for members," Widmer says.

For more information on the Oregon Chapter, visit www.cardiologyinoregon.org.