I’ve always had a very slight interest in politics, meaning I try to keep up with the daily headlines and know enough about the leaders and their stances on the main issues to make educated decisions and have a casual conversations, but I’ve never put the television on CSPAN or listened to NPR by choice. When I was approached to attend the ASA Legislative Conference, I was certainly excited for the opportunity to go to DC but a little apprehensive about “representing our program and field” in our nation’s capital. Fortunately all that apprehension was quickly dispelled as I met fellow residents and anesthesiologists from across the country. These physicians were at varying levels of political involvement and all welcoming and friendly. I quickly realized there wasn’t a test portion of the trip, only the chance to learn about the issues and to share opinions and ideas to help ensure the future of our career and the safety of our patients.

First thing on the agenda was to brush up on political science basics at the Federal and State Advocacy 101 workshop, which I found incredibly helpful considering I hadn’t thought about the three branches of government and law making process since high school. Then, over the course of two days we covered updates on MACRA, the opioid crisis, Health Care Reform, Safe Care for Veterans and much more. I was able to see first hand how much the ASAPAC does for our profession by lobbying on our behalves on both sides of the aisle.

The third day was show time. After hours spent learning about the issues, we had the opportunity to “walk the hill” and meet with our state representatives and discuss our stances. One issue that the Tennessee Society of Anesthesiologists wanted to prioritize was the opioid crisis, as this epidemic has affected a staggering number of Tennessee residents. Although this is a grim subject and our group was met with some difficult questions on how to best approach this problem, we were also able to share with our representatives the changes we are making in our daily practice to help prevent further addiction and abuse.

We were also able to thank all of them for their support of the Safe VA Care Initiative that ensures physician-led anesthesia care for Veterans and ask for their continued support on this matter.

During residency I’ve found it’s easy to get caught up in working or studying and ignore the issues facing our profession. Excuses run through my head such as, “I’m still in training” or “someone more informed/educated/interested is lobbying for us” but what this meeting taught me is that you don’t have to be a political guru in order to advocate for your field. The best people to advocate for the field of anesthesiology, are obviously anesthesiologists.

I probably still won’t turn on CSPAN over Netflix, but I will stay involved in advocacy and I would encourage everyone to do the same.
AMA ASA Update Corner:

This past June, the AMA delegation was involved in discussions on several proposals in line with recent ASA policy priorities. One of these key issues was the support of reasonable out of network payment coverage and opposition to “surprise billing” of patients for unexpected coverage gaps due to shrinking health insurance networks. The ASA spoke on this issue and the AMA House of Delegates passed major new policy supporting these goals. The delegation was also a key voice on the issue of opioid abuse as a public health threat and supported policy for increased public education and safe disposal options. Along with our colleagues in pain medicine, the ASA also supported policy for improved interoperability and increased physician access to Prescription Drug Monitoring Programs. Particularly of interest to our Residents and Fellows, the ASA supported new AMA policy that would require all healthcare providers to fully disclose their credentials. As advanced practice nursing, nurse anesthetist, and other health professions fields move towards “Doctorate” level degrees, this policy would help reduce patient confusion and ensure that patients are aware of which member of their healthcare team is a physician.

Matt Mc Nelley, M.D
Alternate Delegate to the AMA (pictured above providing an airway workshop for medical student attendees) at the AMA Annual Meeting)
Write for the ASA Monitor

We are accepting submissions for the “Resident Review” section of the ASA Monitor. If you are interested in writing an article, please submit the following:
- Topic or possible title of article, and
- Sample paragraph

Potential authors do not need to submit the entire piece, although we will accept full articles as well. Editors of the ASA-RC are happy to help edit and develop ideas if needed. Please visit the ASA website to view the most recently published articles and get a sense of what is published.

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Anesthesia History Association
Deadline for submissions is December 31, 2017.

Open to all physicians or medical students who create the essay during residency, fellowship or medical school. Raymond C. Roy, M.D. and Cornelia G. Roy have provided a prize of $1000 for the winner.

The winner will be offered the opportunity to present a condensation of the winning essay orally at the Spring Meeting of AHA at Chico Hot Springs Resort, Paradise Valley, Montana, April 12 to 14, 2018. Travel funds are not available from AHA, but registration at the meeting and the annual banquet admission are gratis to the winner and one guest.

Entries can be on any topic related to the history of anesthesiology, pain medicine or critical care, and must be less than 2500 words in length. Formatting and submission information can be found below on this website. Entries must be received by Dr. Rosenbloom before 12:00PM 12/31/2017 at her email address below. Winning essays must be submitted to the Journal of Anesthesia History (JAH) and will be considered for, but are not guaranteed publication in JAH.

Direct all correspondence to Julia M. Rosenbloom, M.D.,
email: jmrosenbloom@mgh.harvard.edu
www.ahahq.org

Advocacy for our patients and our profession is one of the core responsibilities of anesthesiologists

1) Contribute to ASAPAC (www.asahq.org, click the “ASAPAC” box)
2) Once you have contributed, encourage your co-residents to do the same and get your program to 100%!

A unified, well-supported PAC can make a powerful impact in policy decisions. This is about our patients and your future. Together we can shatter the previous record of residency programs with 100% participation and send a powerful message that anesthesiology residents are engaged and serious about the future of our specialty. Let’s go
Exclusive Residents & Fellows Programming

- Take your knowledge to the next level by engaging with leaders in the specialty
- Discuss topics such as financial wellness and debt management
- Gain insights about the business side of anesthesiology such as practice management and the care team model/scope of practice
- Participate in an interactive oral board prep session
- Meet with colleagues from coast to coast to share successes and challenges!

Fun things to do in Boston

- Take a stroll through the Boston Public Garden
- Explore the four-story, 200,000-gallon giant ocean tank at the New England Aquarium
- Visit the extraordinary Museum of Fine Arts
- Walk or run the Freedom Trail – a 2.5-mile route that leads you to 16 historical sites
- Learn about the history of anesthesia by visiting the Ether Dome at Massachusetts General Hospital
- Explore MIT and Harvard University

Contact your ASA Resident Component Governing Council

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