

## ANNUAL MEETING UPDATE: PART I

**Toronto Revisited**

David C. Thomas, MD, MHPE, and Sharon E. Straus, MD, MSc

*Drs. Thomas and Straus are chair and co-chair of the Annual Meeting Program Committee.*

The 38th Annual Meeting of SGIM was an opportunity to advance our knowledge around patient care, education, and research focused on the generalists in teams and to celebrate the terrific achievements of many of our talented SGIM members. At final count, 1,939 members from nine countries were able to share in these activities in Toronto, Canada; this is the second largest attendance at an annual meeting, just below the total of 2,000 participants who attended the annual meeting in 2014. This reflects an increase in attendance of almost 20% since the last time we held the annual meeting in Toronto. We set a new record for the largest opening plenary session with 1,350 attendees. Thank you to the SGIM membership for your tremendous support and enthusiasm in attending this meeting!

Some of the meeting highlights for us were the keynote by Jeff Turnbull, MD, on the role of the generalist in meeting the needs of our vulnerable populations and the 2015 Malcolm Peterson lecturer Malcolm Cox, MD, on advancing the science of interprofessional education. Both speakers challenged us to think about gaps in patient care, education, and research that could be met by our membership. We are strongly positioned as individuals and an organi-

zation to meet these needs. Dr. Turnbull challenged us to think about how to address health disparities in our populations. His work in Ottawa, Canada, provides an excellent example of how a general internist can be a force for system change, leading to improved quality of care for homeless people and providing an opportunity for trainees to develop skills in this area. Dr. Cox highlighted the need for practice redesign and rigorous evaluation of interprofessional education with consideration of relevant patient and health system outcomes, including economic analyses. We look forward to future meetings to learn how SGIM members tackle these challenges!

A particular highlight for us was the chance to work with the Program Committee and the more than 400 members who volunteered their time to prepare for this meeting by reviewing abstracts, scheduling sessions, and serving on awards panels. Several new features were tried at the meeting, including the unknown clinical vignette abstract session led by chief residents. This session was “standing room only,” and we thank Sheira Schlair, MD, and Kerri Palamara, MD, for their creativity and leadership in developing this event. The student, resident, and fellow programs were

also more formally integrated with the planning of the annual meeting, and we thank Ryan Laponis, MD, and Meredith Niess, MD, for their inspired leadership in these sessions. Indeed, we are grateful to the Program Committee, SGIM volunteers, and SGIM staff who shared their time and enthusiasm with us.

We also enjoyed the opportunity to work with and learn from SGIM President Bill Moran, MD, over the past year. We appreciated his thoughtful advice and support. Bill, we look forward to seeing more of your sculptures now that you will have more time on your hands!

Finally, the annual meeting was our chance to celebrate the 18-year tenure of David Karlson as SGIM executive director. The reflections of past SGIM presidents on their experiences with David and lessons learned from him were meeting highlights. The affection and respect shown for David by SGIM members and staff was evident to all of us. David has mentored many on their pathways within SGIM, and his tremendous impact will be reflected in membership activities for many years to come. David, thank you for your inspirational guidance and leadership. You will be missed!