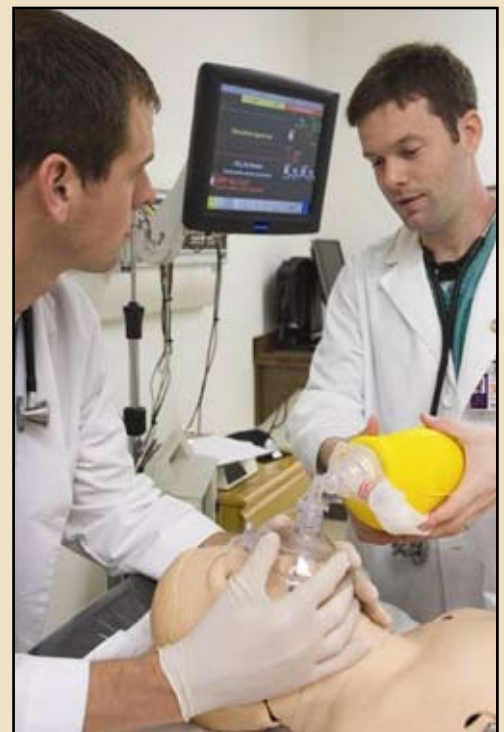


2008 Annual Report



ALABAMA MEDICAL EDUCATION CONSORTIUM





AMEC Students in Troy

The AMEC MISSION

To establish and maintain an osteopathic primary care physician pipeline for rural and underserved Alabama.

The AMEC VISION

To enhance the health and well-being of the people of Alabama.

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LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

2008 was a most productive and rewarding year for the Alabama Medical Education Consortium (AMEC). As of December 2008, we completed the 39th month of operation and are pleased to report many successful endeavors. The primary care physician crisis continues in the state as well as in the nation, and AMEC was chartered as a 501C 3 under the umbrella of the University of West Alabama as one solution to address this need in Alabama.

The mission of AMEC remains “to establish and maintain an osteopathic primary care physician pipeline for rural and underserved Alabama.” This pipeline (Recruiting – Education – Placement) is our model for planning and implementing all activities.

We have a collaborative partnership with Alabama colleges and universities and have also expanded our partnerships with 11 Osteopathic Medical Schools throughout the country. Medical education for years 3 & 4 is provided in a community setting at one of our seven Core Sites which is managed by a Core Site Director (physician) and a Core Site Coordinator (administrator). In 2008, we began a hybrid program in Troy that provides education for years 2-3-4 in Alabama. A Graduate Medical Education program is being developed in Birmingham and Dothan to strengthen the pipeline commitment to Alabama.

We implemented a Student Assistance Program (loan forgiveness) to cover tuition costs for four Alabama students .

This Annual Report will focus on key events and accomplishments during 2008 including the following activities in our three functional areas. The events in these areas will be expanded in the body of the report.

Recruitment:

- A Recruitment Strategic Plan was developed to increase our efficiency in recruiting qualified candidates.

Education:

- The clinical infrastructure has been expanded with Core Sites added in Alabaster, Dothan, Troy, Selma, Sylacauga and Mobile.
- The Contextual Learning Hub at Troy University was established.

Placement:

- Loan forgiveness packages were awarded to four Alabama students who were willing to commit to serve in a rural/underserved part of the state for fifteen months for each year of tuition awarded.

Thank you for your interest in and support of the mission and vision of AMEC.

Dr. Wil Baker
Executive Director



OVERVIEW

The Alabama Medical Education Consortium (AMEC) approach has its foundation in a community based osteopathic primary care model. This model provides extensive learning in a hands-on approach for students in all aspects of their education. It is AMEC's philosophy that this model best provides the optimum educational experience for a physician of the 21st century.



Montgomery Family Medicine Residency Program

ACCOMPLISHMENTS DURING 2008

- Legislative funding was obtained to enable operations to be sustained.
- 94 + Alabama students are in the pipeline attending one of the 10 AMEC partner medical schools.
- Core Sites were expanded from 5 sites to 9 sites. The new sites are Alabaster, Dothan, Troy, Selma, Sylacauga and Mobile.
- In June the Contextual Learning Hub was established at Troy University under the sponsorship of A.T. Still School of Osteopathic Medicine – Mesa, AZ (ATSU)
- Began the development of Graduate Medical Education programs in Birmingham with future plans for other locations
- Developed Student Assistance Program and awarded four tuition packages (three third year and one fourth year students).
- Focused on refining Recruitment activities with targeted goals and dedicated staff.
- Second financial audit reported no exceptions.
- Hospital network increased from 22 to 48 hospitals statewide.
- Entered dialog with the Community Hospital Systems (CHS) for them to provide student assistance funds for 10 students each year.
- Recognized as an educational affiliate of the American Osteopathic Association.

STUDENT DATA

- 94 students in AMEC pipeline
- 53 3rd and 4th year students currently in one of the Alabama core sites and nine 2nd year students in the contextual learning hub at Troy University.
- 37 students interviewed this year.
- 26 minority students interviewed with 21 recommended.
- 24 students completed medical school in 2007; 24 will complete in 2008
- 20 medical school graduates entered Primary Care residencies
- 7 Family Medicine
- 7 Internal Medicine
- 1 Neurosurgery
- 2 Radiology
- 1 Pediatrics
- 3 OB-GYN
- 1 Pathology
- 2 Surgery

RECRUITING ACTIVITIES

AMEC's recruiting efforts continue to expand and have a positive impact on the number and quality of students applying to the program. Two additional recruiters joined the staff this year to support our efforts in recruiting students from our 26 partner Alabama Colleges and Universities including the seven Historically Black Colleges and Universities and the Alabama Community College System.

In 2008, recruiting was emphasized as a critical success factor in the AMEC strategic plan. Outcome measures were identified including specific targets for applications, interviews, and enrollments resulting in positive trends for the numbers of AMEC students entering our partner colleges of medicine.

There were 37 students interviewed during the year which was an increase of 11 from the previous year. Additionally, there was an increase in the number of students meeting the eligibility requirements for the partner colleges of medicine. There was also an increase in the students recruited to the dental program in our two partner dental schools.

Our recruiters targeted the pre med and faculty advisors at our partner colleges and universities, coordinated their efforts in student orientations and job fairs, and were creative in finding ways to interact directly with potential applicants. This paid huge dividends in that students from 13 Alabama universities and 4 community colleges were successful applicants to AMEC's partner colleges of medicine. Geographically, they represented 19 counties located in the Alabama rural areas (north and south), the Black Belt and all designated Metropolitan Statistical Areas.



Recruiter promoting AMEC



AMEC students at LECOM

RECRUITING SITES

COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

Alabama A&M University
Alabama State University
Athens State University
Auburn University
Auburn University Montgomery
Birmingham Southern College
Faulkner University
Huntingdon College
Jacksonville State University
Judson College
Marion Institute
Miles College
Oakwood College
Samford University
Spring Hill College
Stillman College
Talladega College
Troy University
Tuskegee University
University of Alabama at Huntsville
University of Alabama Birmingham
University of Alabama
University of Mobile
University of Montevallo
University of North Alabama
University of South Alabama
University of West Alabama

**ALL ALABAMA
COMMUNITY COLLEGES**

MEDICAL EDUCATION ACTIVITIES

The Education process is comprised of three phases : undergraduate education , medical education and graduate medical education. The undergraduate phase occurs in one of our partner Alabama colleges or universities and is described in the Recruiting Activities section. The medical education occurs at one of our 10 partner Colleges of Medicine (COM), and is a collaborative relationship that provides Alabama with 100 + medical school slots annually. The graduate medical education phase is being developed and will strengthen the ties between our new doctors and the communities in which we want them to serve.

Students are admitted to one of the 10 out of state partner COM, and attend years 1 & 2 (basic science years) at the respective out of state campus. They return to Alabama for years 3 and 4 (clinical years) and are assigned to one of the 9 core teaching sites in Alabama.

At the heart of the success of AMEC is the community based education network. These “Core Sites” are a part of our community based education network and are strategically located throughout Alabama. Each core site is directed by a highly qualified physician and has a coordinator to manage the student clerkship education flow. Physician preceptors provide the hands-on education and experience for each of the clerkships. During 2008, five additional core sites were added to this network bringing the statewide total to nine.

The core site in Troy is also the site for the unique AMEC / A.T.Still University School of Osteopathic Medicine-Arizona (SOMA) program. This program is one of the major accomplishments for 2008 and will be described in the following section.

CORE SITES

AMEC - Alabaster	AMEC - Birmingham
AMEC - Dothan	AMEC - Foley
AMEC - Mobile	AMEC - Montgomery
AMEC - Selma	AMEC - Sylacauga
AMEC - Troy	

The final phase, graduate medical education, is in a developmental stage at the end of 2008. Currently, AMEC graduates may apply to existing allopathic residency programs. We believe that there is a need for osteopathic residency programs in Alabama and one application has been submitted for approval. Additional applications are being considered.

OSTEOPATHIC MEDICAL SCHOOL PARTNERS

- A. T. Still University, College of Osteopathic Medicine, Mesa, Arizona
- Kansas City University of Medicine and Biosciences, Kansas City, Missouri
- Kirkville College of Osteopathic Medicine, Kirkville, Missouri
- Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine, Bradenton, Florida
- Lincoln Memorial University DeBusk College of Osteopathic Medicine, Harrogate, Tennessee
- Midwestern University, Arizona College of Osteopathic Medicine, Glendale, Arizona
- Nova Southeastern University, College of Osteopathic Medicine, Fort Lauderdale, Florida
- Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine Georgia Campus, Suwanee, Georgia
- Pikeville College School of Osteopathic Medicine, Pikeville, Kentucky
- West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine, Lewisburg, West Virginia



Pikeville student at Sylacauga Core Site



A.T. Still Students at SOMA Program Troy

AMEC / SOMA Community Campus at Troy University

On September 2, 2008, the A.T.Still University School of Osteopathic Medicine – Arizona (SOMA) opened the AMEC/SOMA Community Campus for nine medical students. These nine students began their second year in what has been referred to, as the “most progressive medical school in the country.” This class of 2011 will be the first class to graduate from A.T. Still University’s newest osteopathic medical school.

AMEC/SOMA, based at Troy University, is one of 11 nationwide Community Campuses representing a new innovative school designed in collaboration with the National Association of Community Health Centers to address the growing healthcare shortage in underserved communities.

Critical to the uniqueness of the new medical school is “Contextual Learning.” Students have the opportunity to apply knowledge in the same environment in which they acquired it, enhancing their ability to connect theory and clinical application.

After completing the first year of medical school, on the ATSU campus in Mesa, Arizona, students move to the local Community Campus which then serves as the primary learning venue for the remaining years of medical school. Students learn in the classroom as well as in the surrounding healthcare safety net from the beginning of year two.

In the classroom, ATSU - SOMA Faculty Facilitators replace traditional classroom lectures with team problem solving, operating under a learning model that connects basic and clinical sciences. Incorporated into the student’s weekly routine are continuity based primary care clerkships, which occur from the begin-

ning of year two. This student - centered learning environment provides students with a solid framework for clinical decision-making throughout their career.

This first cohort of AMEC/SOMA students completed their first year of medical school in July 2008 and immediately began preparation for relocation to Troy, Alabama. Three days per week students are in the classroom where Dr. Wil-



AMEC students at Troy

liam Hamilton, ATSU’s Facilitator/ State Director of Medical Education; and Dr. Philip Reynolds, Troy University/ ATSU Facilitator, share responsibility. Classroom time features scheme presentations, case studies, small group discussions, videos, web-casts, and other on-line resources, as well as interaction with ATSU faculty.

AMEC recruits 10 qualified students per year to SOMA. AMEC screens applicants using traditional standards. However, there are other special characteristics looked for when considering an applicant to SOMA. “We look for community - minded students,” commented Dr. Philip Reynolds. “who have shown an attitude of service and have a history of community involvement, as

well as those with a specific interest in returning to Alabama to practice rural primary care”.

Two days per week are dedicated to primary care rotations locally and in other areas of Southeast Alabama within a 50-mile radius of Troy. Current rotation sites include Troy, Dothan, Luverne, Opp, Elba and Andalusia.

“The atmosphere is very learning-centered, said Dr. Hamilton.

The students have ongoing interaction with faculty and other students. They are active participants. We refer to them as “learners” rather than students. Faculty members are referred to as “facilitators” rather than teachers. The students are very happy with the campus. They are especially enthusiastic about their clerkships and impressed with the preceptors’ teaching methods. We all appreciate the time that each preceptor has dedicated to teaching the students as well.

We are also very grateful to the many others, throughout the community, whom have offered their support and assistance with development of the program!”

At the core of the Community Campus concept is the practice of immersing a student in a community of future practice to produce compassionate, competent physicians, acculturated to the rural and underserved community.

Information regarding long-term retention of these physicians within the rural and underserved areas will take some time to gather. What is certain is that what began as a response to the rural healthcare shortage has developed into a new model of medical education, specifically designed to enhance student learning.

PLACEMENT ACTIVITIES

Placement Activities Loan Forgiveness and Service Obligation Program 2008

In 2008, for the first time the Alabama Medical Education Consortium (AMEC) was able to offer Loan Forgiveness Service Obligation packages to 4 medical students – 3 third year students and 1 fourth year student.

Under the guidance of the Loan Forgiveness Placement Committee, a program was implemented to award, on a competitive basis, loan forgiveness packages to interested third and fourth year medical students as funds permitted. The selection guidelines are congruent with and driven by the mission of AMEC.

To ensure wide dissemination of this opportunity, the Student Loan Application and Service Obligation Contract was placed on the AMEC website in an effort to reach as many students as possible.

Individual loan forgiveness packages were for tuition costs up to \$30,000 and were paid directly to each student's medical school.

Students accepting the funds incur an obligation to serve 1.25 years in a rural or underserved area of Alabama for each year they participate in this program.



Dr. Tom Kincer with Kansas City Students

FUTURE PLANS

The growth of AMEC over the past year has been remarkable. The plans for the future include many opportunities for the program as well as for the people of Alabama. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Continue to mature the Core Teaching Sites to assure statewide coverage.
- Expand and mature the hospital network, making statewide coverage possible.
- Continue to identify up to 150 Alabama students each year for medical school.
- Continue to identify up to 20 Alabama students each year for dental school.
- Enroll 60+ qualified students from all areas of Alabama.
- Develop a marketing plan for all aspects of the program.
- Conduct a third financial audit.



Pikeville College of Osteopathic Medicine Students



AMEC recruiter at Alabama Connection Fair



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