



Sandra Osborn, MD

Wisconsin Medical Society Foundation purpose supports medical and health education

By Sandra Osborn, MD

The Wisconsin Medical Society Foundation (Foundation) Board of Directors, in response to the revision/reconfirmation of the Wisconsin Medical Society evaluation of its mission, evaluated and revised its own mission. Previously, the Foundation had tried to support a variety of diverse efforts. The restated mission, intended to reflect and parallel that of the Society, is now: "The Foundation shall advance the health of the people of Wisconsin by supporting medical and health education."

One of the most important areas that the Foundation regularly supports is funding students who plan to enter the medical workforce—both medical students and allied health professionals, such as nursing students. This is done through loans and scholarships. Some of these funds have specific criteria regarding the selection of the recipient and others are more related to the applicant's need. A second area is persons who have already finished their degree-based education and are now wanting to gain continuing medical education. Health education, a third aspect, encompasses the information that is intended for the non-professional medical citizens of our state.

Doctor Osborn is the president of the Wisconsin Medical Society Foundation and a past president of the Society. To donate to the Foundation, call 866.442.3800 or e-mail reneer@wismed.org.

The Foundation Board works through two of its committees to further these efforts: the Scholarship Committee and the Medical Health Education Grants Committee. One of the scholarships that the Scholarship Committee regularly awards is the Summer Fellowship. This past summer, the recipient was Daniel Sklansky, a second year medical student at the University of Wisconsin Medical School in Madison.

Sklansky worked with Murray Katcher, MD, at the Department of Health and Family Services on a pest management project that involved users of the WIC (Women, Infants, Children) program. His project was selected as one of five projects for oral presentation at the Second Annual Medical Student Summer Research Forum in October. This Forum was felt to be so important that medical school classes were not scheduled that afternoon so that the students could attend the Forum. Sklansky's project provides both medical and health information. One result of the efforts is a brochure titled "Pesticides and Your Children." A second is that his study is presented as a peer-reviewed article in this issue of *WMJ*. The study's results are useful to all of us. We congratulate Dan on a job well done and thank him for his efforts in furthering not only his own education, but ours as well.

The Foundation also awarded a portion of the funds that resulted from the 2003 Annual Roast event—\$10,000—to further Dr Wertsch's presidential theme. We are delighted to assist Dr Wertsch in his efforts to alleviate the workforce shortage.

The Foundation cannot continue its efforts without the generous donations and in-kind support of many persons and groups. There are a variety of opportunities to assist the Foundation. The Society's Annual Dues Statement contains a check-off box to donate. The Foundation has created a challenge for each Society member to contribute just \$100—a small personal amount, but since membership has now topped 10,000 this would create an endowment of \$1 million to help the Foundation carry out its mission. Finally, a campaign is underway to establish a Presidents Scholarship Fund, supported by all past presidents of the Society, with the hope that each past president will commit to donating \$1000 a year for five years.

Can you help? Absolutely! Participate in the Foundation events, which include the Foundation Roast, the annual golf outing, and Operation: Education or simply make a contribution. Please be generous to the Foundation in your support of the medical and health education that is so important to all of us in Wisconsin.



The mission of the *Wisconsin Medical Journal* is to provide a vehicle for professional communication and continuing education of Wisconsin physicians.

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