



Newsletter

Summer, 2020

From the President

Frederic Yeganeh MD

In this time of the COVID 19 pandemic, it is our hope that you, your family and colleagues are all healthy. It has been quite a turbulent year with the pandemic response necessitating an initial shutdown of the Maryland economy which had a large impact on radiology. Many radiology and radiation oncology practices experienced a greater than 50% drop in patient volumes due to the shutdown of outpatient medical services and a reduction in hospital volumes. As the dust settled, it became apparent that with proper procedures the risk of transmission of COVID 19 in the radiological setting can be kept to very low levels and that the risks of not performing the needed radiological procedures were too high. As such, the Maryland Radiological Society communicated with the Maryland government to let them know that the radiological community was prepared to reopen in a safe manner to ensure that people had access to the medical care that they needed. Thankfully, soon after, the Governor ordered the reopening of outpatient medical facilities.

With the potential of a resurgence of COVID 19 in the fall, MRS is again actively communicating the need to keep the medical services open and available for the health of our community so that we don't experience a similar shutdown in the medical field again. As such, needless to say, it is critical that we continue to practice sanitary procedures to ensure the safety of our patients, our personnel, ourselves and our community.

On other fronts, the MRS continues to monitor pending legislation and regulations that could impact the radiological community and provide input to the legislative and executive branches while also monitoring how legislation and regulations are being enforced. We continue to actively seek that legislation which is already on the books impacting the use of radiological procedures be enforced.

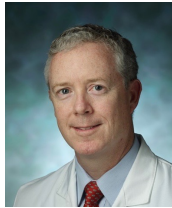
As can be seen in the rest of the newsletter, it has been quite an eventful year. I want to give my thanks to our Secretary, Dr. Stacey Keen, for putting the newsletter together to inform our society on all the efforts being made on their behalf.

Once again, I end with the hope that everyone stays safe and healthy!

MRS Officers 2020-2021



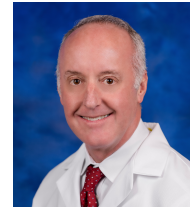
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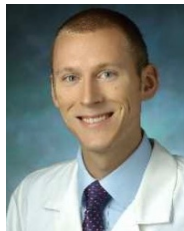
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ACR2020

Stacey Keen, MD, FACR

For the first time in the history of the American College of Radiology, the annual meeting ACR2020 was held virtually in May. The governance work of the meeting was completed/conducted/accomplished, with some of the resolutions highlighted by Dr. Ma in the Legislative Update below.

MRS members continue their valuable contributions to the College:

Mahadevappa Mahesh, PhD, MS, FACR, Professor of Radiology at Johns Hopkins Medicine currently serves on the ACR Board of Chancellors as Chair of the Commission on Medical Physics.

Katarzyna J. Macura, MD, PhD, FACR, Professor of Radiology at Johns Hopkins Medicine has just completed her term as ACR vice president.

The Gold Medal is the highest honor awarded by the American College of Radiology, This year one of the recipients was Maryland's Albert L. Blumberg, MD, FACR. Dr. Blumberg has been involved in organized medicine in many capacities, including the MRS and ACR, serving on the ACR Council Steering Committee, and Board of Chancellors. He is only the third radiation oncologist to serve as ACR President. Congratulations Dr. Blumberg on this well earned recognition/award/honor!

Albert L. Blumberg, MD, FACR
2020 ACR Gold Medal Recipient



Congratulations also to our new fellow from Maryland inducted at the ACR2020 Convocation: Thomas Ptak MD, PhD, MPH.

If you are Interested in becoming a fellow of the American College of Radiology, the criteria and requirements can be found on the ACR website www.acr.org.

Celebrating Resident Diversity on Twitter



RFS Update

Atheeth Hiremath, MD

Bryn Mawr STEM Career Fair

Bryn Mawr, a private all-girls' school in North Roland Park, Baltimore, held a STEM Career Fair on October 12, 2019. Drs. Cynthia Czawlytko (Secretary/Treasurer) and Henal Motiwala (Women-in-Radiology Representative) represented MRS at this fair, and spent the day teaching young women about the field of radiology. They showcased fully-scrollable CTs, MRIs, and PET scans for the students to view and explore, and also, gave away fun radiology-related take home gifts.



Fall Educational Symposium

Last year's Fall Educational Symposium was held on October 22, 2019 at the University of Maryland Medical Center. The Symposium began with a presentation by Atheeth Hiremath, MD (President), where he introduced the MRS Executive Board and the RFS leaders to the Maryland radiology community. Additionally, he advocated for increased participation in the MRS and ACR by showcasing the legislative and educational initiatives undertaken by these organizations. However, the keynote event of the symposium was a lecture by Dr. Dheeraj Gandhi, Professor of Neuroradiology at University of Maryland, on his ground-breaking research with Focused MR-Ultrasound and its clinical applications. The Symposium had a large turnout with faculty members and residents from Johns Hopkins and University of Maryland, and radiology attendings from nearby private practices.



Annual Lobby Day

Annual Lobby day was held on February 19, 2020. It was an extraordinary opportunity to interact with our state government and gain first-hand experience advocating for our profession. We showed our continued support for the self-referral law and explained its importance to our elected officials. We had a fantastic turnout of both senior residents and first-time attendees, who will soon be our future advocacy leaders.



Congratulations Atheeth Hiremath, MD, one of this year's recipients of the American College of Radiology-Radiology Leadership Institute Scholarship. Dr. Hiremath will have the opportunity to attend the 2021 RLI Summit at Babson College in Wellesley, MA. Since the inception of the scholarship, there have only been 10 awarded to residents and fellows awarded nationally. Well deserved, Dr. Hiremath!

Legislative Update

Loralie Ma, MD, PhD, FACR

Our legislative session was cut short by the coronavirus. This year no anti self referral bill was put forth and we had no legislation of our own.

As it was a quiet session pre-Covid, we were able to have a very productive radiology resident day in Annapolis. We spoke about our issues to the legislators, however without an “ask” this year. This made for a more relaxed and free talking session with legislators regarding our issues. Building bridges with our legislators, educating and getting feedback in a collegial manner is an important part of building trust and relationships in Annapolis.

On the National front, the American College of radiology was held virtually this May. The liveliest discussion was regarding RAs and other mid level providers. While an important part of the patient care team, it was reemphasized by resolution that their role is supportive and that the leader of the care team and the only physician interpreting imaging is the radiologist.

Otherwise, the biggest issue ahead of us nationally is the increase in reimbursement for Evaluation and Management codes scheduled to take place next year. This would greatly adversely affect radiology, which does not bill as heavily on E&M codes as some other specialties. Given the budget neutrality condition via MACRA this would then make radiology reimbursement decrease across the board by as much as 8 to 9 percent. The ACR has been active in asking Congress to either delay this implementation or to overall increase reimbursement to physicians. I was able to participate in a call with ACR leadership to Maryland Congressman Steny Hoyer and many other efforts are underway.

Given the big hits to medicine across-the-board with Covid, these kinds of decreases in reimbursement would hurt not only radiologists but many other physician groups.

We will keep you updated on our progress.

Thank you,
Loralie Ma

Radiologist Health and Well-Being

Stacey Keen, MD, FACR

Whether it's a blessing or a curse, we surely live in interesting times. In support of radiologists, the ACR has launched a Well-Being Support Guide to Self-Care. It includes a Well-Being Index, available to all ACR members for anonymous self-evaluation of their level of well-being. Radiology-specific resources are accessible, and additional resources related to the workplace environment are being developed. For additional information, go to the ACR website, www.acr.org.

Stay safe and well!

