

A Newsletter for the Members of the New Mexico Chapter - Summer 2024



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**President's Message**

Scott Mueller, DO, FACEP

President, NM ACEP

I am taking over the helm of NM ACEP from Tony Salazar, MD (Past-President). Under the guidance of Tony and David Cheever, MD (President 2022-2023) over the last few years, I have gained an understanding of the important issues emergency medicine physicians face in New Mexico. Additionally, I have gained experience serving as a Councilor and as a state representative for New Mexico at the Leadership and Advocacy Conferences since 2022.

With that being said, there are a lot of exciting changes in NM ACEP. We thank our outgoing Executive Director Jennifer Valenti for her hard work over the last several years. Maude Surprenant Hancock took over her role on July 1st and has been doing a fantastic job. She has been with ACEP for the last 14 years and served the last 7 years as the National Liaison to all 53 ACEP chapters.

Every four years our chapter updates their bylaws. This year was one of those years. We have worked with the ACEP Bylaws Committee to update these. One of

the biggest updates was to post meeting dates further in advance, so more members could earmark these dates ahead of their posted schedules. The updates were reviewed by the ACEP Bylaws Committee, and were posted to the [New Mexico ACEP website](#) for our members to review. We will vote on adoption of these at our next chapter meeting on September 4th.

Our chapter remains over 200 members strong and is represented by active members throughout the state including Gallup Indian Medical Center, Holy Cross Medical Center, Los Alamos Medical Center, Miners' Colfax Medical Center, Presbyterian, and the University of New Mexico.

This year, Tony Salazar, MD (Past-President), Aaron Snyder, MD (President-Elect) and myself will represent NM ACEP at the Council Meeting in Las Vegas, NV September 27-28, 2024. The chapter has supported a resolution this year regarding the national emergency department boarding crisis. Reach out to us if you will be attending the [Scientific Assembly](#) September 29-October 2, 2024.

My goal this year is to increase member involvement overall as well as chapter involvement in legislative and advocacy efforts. The Board's hope is to officially revive our NM ACEP Political Action Committee next year. Please contact Heather Marshall Vaskas or Eric Ketcham if you are interested.

Through past legislative meetings in Washington, DC the chapter has remained in touch with the US House of Representatives and Senators for New Mexico. Senator Heinrich's office asked us to support their bill proposing that buprenorphine be temporarily exempt from SORS tracking until the end of the public health emergency. The opioid epidemic remains one of the most harrowing public health issues. As a result, the Suspicion Order Report System (SORS) was developed by the DEA to track controlled substances at the point of dispensing. Unfortunately, this has negatively impacted prescribing of important drugs like buprenorphine. The World Health Organization's 2023 List of Essential Medications includes buprenorphine. NM ACEP is committed to providing patients access to important medications for opioid use disorder and has given their endorsement of this bill. We look forward to working with Heinrich's office on this important public health matter.

We are also looking to partner with the CDC National Syndromic Surveillance Program. The purpose of this program is to establish a communication system between local and state emergency departments when a pattern of illness is noticed by either the CDC or local health authorities. Stay tuned for more on this.

**Please join us at our next quarterly meeting on September 4th from 6-8 PM** at one of our member's homes located at 3426 Purdue Place NE, Albuquerque, NM

87106. We will provide a Zoom link for those who are interested in attending remotely. We have invited a local attorney, Andre Archuleta, to discuss the current medical malpractice environment in the state. **Please RSVP by August 21st** to our new Executive Director, Maude Surprenant Hancock.

Please reach out to me with any emergency medicine related issues or concerns. We are here to work on your behalf.

Best,  
Scott Mueller, DO, FACEP  
President, NM ACEP

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### **New Shoes**

by Seth Thomas, MD

I've never been much of a runner. The furthest I ran before college was maybe 5 miles, and I can count on one hand how many times I went for a jog in medical school. I grew up spending long days hiking through the Rockies in Colorado while I was a kid, and was happy to take it slow and stroll through shady forests and big green meadows. I've been decently fit but always found the long stretches of silence and repetitiveness of running monotonous compared to the other pursuits the mountains had to offer. Recently I've had quite a change of heart. During my last few months of residency, I have run further and more often than in any other period of my life.

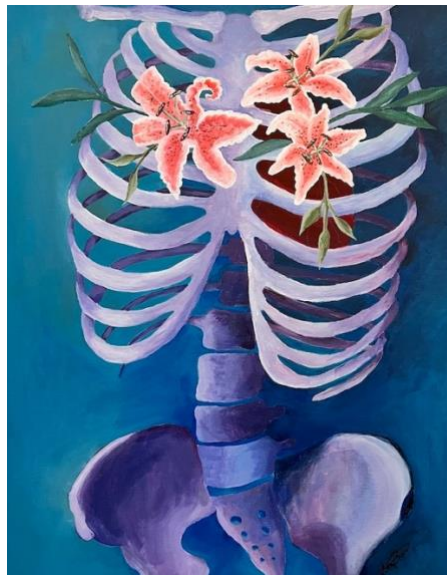
Late on a weeknight evening towards the end of my intern year I was working in our trauma bay with a senior resident. The day had been relatively quiet, the few sick patients that were brought to us by EMS were quickly admitted and shipped off to other parts of the hospital. It was an unusual and welcome reprieve. We relished the chance to chat during our shift, and the senior resident's excitement for his impending graduation and his new life outside of residency dominated much of the conversation. Where he was going to live, his new job and plans for vacations. Eventually, he became more reflective and we talked of residents who had long since graduated, and his first experiences as a scared intern in the trauma bay. [Continue reading](#).

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## **Beyond the Shift: Kinship and Advocacy in Healthcare**

by Lila Allyn Baca, MS

As a college student, I used to say that I wanted to practice medicine as a form of social justice — with radical compassion for those who look and think like me and those who don't, with careful consideration of the paradigms, traumas and strengths of each patient. To honor the humanity of each person, quietly without need for gratitude or praise. This idealism drew me strongly to emergency medicine. In his 2017 commencement address at the University of Notre Dame, Father Greg Boyle stated that “the measure of our compassion lies not in our service to those on the margins, but in our willingness to see ourselves in kinship with them.” When we see ourselves in our patients and understand their stories and how healthcare as a system and social determinants of health affect them as individuals, it is so easy to feel powerless. As a third year medical student seeing the same unhoused patient be admitted for the second time in my six week rotation for hepatic encephalopathy after not taking his lactulose as he has nowhere to use the bathroom during the day, I am more overwhelmed by what I feel like I cannot do (provide him with housing, take away the trauma that led to his alcohol use) than empowered by the clinical decisions I can make. This frustration and wanting to advocate for patients beyond the bedside is what interests me in policy work. [Continue reading.](#)



Lila's artwork featured on 'thank you' cards sent to our US House of Representatives and Senators following meetings at LAC. We received responses to our outreach which can at least in part be attributed to the cards' powerful imagery.

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## FROM NATIONAL ACEP



### ACEP Resources & Latest News

#### **ACEP Urges US Senate to Pass the SAVE Act, Prevent ED Violence**

ACEP and the American Hospital Association (AHA) co-hosted a Senate briefing in support of the bipartisan Safety from Violence for Healthcare Employees (SAVE) Act. ACEP polling, your firsthand accounts and more can be found [here](#). [Read more](#).

#### **It's Time to Call Out Insurance Companies — We Need Your Help**

We've all seen how insurers do all they can to delay, reduce or even outright deny payments. Enough is enough — ACEP is calling out their bad behavior and **you can help by [sharing your own story of bad insurance company behavior](#)** that put you, your group, or your patients at risk. **Sharing your firsthand experience through this [short, anonymous, online poll](#)** will help fuel state and federal efforts to push insurers toward transparency and better business practices.

#### **Urge Congress to Stop Medicare Cuts**

We need your help to urge Congress to swiftly identify policy solutions to provide long-term stability for Medicare beneficiaries and the physicians who manage and provide their health care. Without action, physicians and other providers will face yet another cut to Medicare reimbursements, further destabilizing our already fragile health care safety net. [Take action today!](#)

#### **A Big Win and Strong Step Toward Banning Non-Compete Agreements**

ACEP strongly applauds the Pennsylvania court decision clearing a way for the FTC ban on non-competes to go forward. ACEP fights for you — impacting these decisions from the start — by sharing your stories and fiercely defending your rights on the job. [Read more](#).

### **Defending You. Demanding Better. ACEP's 2023 Impact Report**

From advocating for \$25.8 million in vital funding for patient care, to confronting legislation that seeks to expand scope of practice, to influencing laws that protect your clinical authority and autonomy — ACEP is proud to share an incredible journey of advocacy and progress. [Read the report.](#)

### **Save on Fees With New Payment Option for ACEP Membership**

ACH transfers, or electronic checks, are now available for new and renewing ACEP members, allowing a secure bank-to-bank money transfer which eliminates processing fees for you and ACEP. Members on an installment plan or auto-renew can easily update their payment information any time by accessing the “Payment Methods” section of My Account on [ACEP's website.](#)

### **Register for ACEP24!**

Las Vegas is full of action, and this year, you'll have more flexibility than ever - course selection is not needed in advance. [Register before Aug. 30 and get FREE Virtual ACEP24](#) - all the courses available online for 18 months. It's your safest bet.

## **Upcoming ACEP Events and Deadlines**

**Aug 15, 4:00 PM CT:** [PEER Challenge Elite Eight](#). See who moves ahead to the Final Four in this residency program test of EM knowledge!

**Aug. 28, Noon-1 PM CT:** [Maximize Scoring in the 2024 MIPS Program](#) - CME - free, online

**Sept. 29-Oct. 2:** [ACEP24](#), Las Vegas, NV - the world's largest emergency medicine educational conference

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