



## President's Update

By Olga Gokova, MD, FACEP

Dear Emergency Medicine Physicians,

The winter in Arizona has been as beautiful as ever, hopefully you are able to get outside to absorb some vitamin D, much needed for serotonin activation (1). I, myself, rely on both pharmacological and natural supplementation to help me recharge my batteries, recently venturing out to the Catalina State Park for an hour-long walk/hike. I brought headphones with me planning to listen to an EM podcast, but the chirping of the birds worked better for my mind decompression.

Even if you didn't celebrate Thanksgiving, Hanukkah, Christmas, Kwanzaa, New Years, Lunar New Year, I hope you had a chance to self-reflect, sleep, exercise, eat well and hydrate. Holidays are ways for us to reconnect with ourselves, our families and friends at home and at work. Self-care is equally as important as altruism we deliver at our place of work.

AzCEP annual "ED DOC DAY" is coming up on March 13th at the State Capitol in Phoenix, AZ. It is an in-person event where we meet our state legislators (based on your home address), discuss important EM issues, current healthcare bills, attend committee meetings and develop connections with politicians, who vote on the bills that become a law. Such bills affect our practice of medicine, and we want to be proactive, "If you are not at the table, you're on the menu" (2). AzCEP has previously discussed with politicians the following bills: workplace violence, opioid crisis, EM GME funding, practicing medicine in AZ without any clinical rotations or residency in the USA and many more. Another bill example would be allowing pharmacists to prescribe antibiotics based on rapid strep test (without physical exam or culture). AzCEP members gave real live examples of why this bill would be dangerous and prevented it from passing.



This year ED boarding is on everyone's minds, given the deficiency of multidisciplinary staff and increase in patient visit volume. The fall and winter have had highest incidences of RSV, COVID and Influenza causing the CDC to issue an advisory letter encouraging physicians to promote vaccination (3). AzCEP issued a media statement on January 26th, 2024, in regard to Arizona ED Boarding. Our chapter statement for patients and media is posted on the front page of our website, along with other resources to help address this national crisis. Even though each hospital system has its own problems, you may be surprised how many similarities we have when it comes to bottlenecks at the level of the Emergency Department.

Our annual AzCEP membership meeting with elections is coming up on April 3rd at 5:30pm, and usually occurs in person in a restaurant in Phoenix area. On the agenda are updates about where we are headed and elections for new board members. All members are welcome!

My personal favorite ACEP meeting is the Leadership and Advocacy Conference (LAC#2024) and it is coming up from April 14th through April 16th, 2024, occurring in Washington, DC. This conference is on a much smaller scale and has a more intimate feel than the National ACEP Scientific Assembly conference in the fall. You will learn about solutions for current problems EM is facing and deliver a succinct message to your federal senators and representatives. Your work stories (HIPPA compliant) are encouraged and welcomed. This conference is a type of wellness retreat where you feel heard and valuable. LAC's cozy atmosphere makes it easy to connect with the national mentors and leaders.

Washington DC has the cleanest downtown area I have visited yet; it is a family-friendly city with a FREE entrance to all its Smithsonian Museums. ACEP has a hotel discount rate that is the best one downtown, that I have checked, so reserve your hotel early! Also, there is a \$100 off conference registration coupon "StrongerMemb" and \$50 OFF for fellows/residents/students "StrongerRes" that works for the first 100 members and 50 residents. Don't forget AzCEP will cover \$750 of the travel for the residency representatives if the program matches the amount!!! Please join our AZ Chapter delegation and come hang out with us for dinner. We are looking forward to meeting new and old friends.

- (1) Patrick RP, Ames BN. Vitamin D and the omega-3 fatty acids control serotonin synthesis and action, part 2: relevance for ADHD, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, and impulsive behavior. *FASEB J.* 2015 Jun;29(6):2207-22. doi: 10.1096/fj.14-268342. Epub 2015 Feb 24. PMID: 25713056.
- (2) <https://quoteinvestigator.com/2020/11/15/table-menu/>
- (3) <https://emergency.cdc.gov/han/2023/han00503.asp>

# ED Doc Day at the Legislature

*Wednesday, March 13, 2024*

***NEW Start Time!*** 8:55 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Arizona State Capitol - 1700 W. Washington Street, Phoenix



This has become a very successful event for AzCEP, but we need **more** participants!

Come for the whole day or as long as you can.

***Sign-up today!***

- Educate legislators on the critical service you provide every shift
- Learn about issues impacting emergency medicine
- Attend Committee meetings
- Network with fellow AzCEP members, EM residents, and medical students

We provide training and go over issues beforehand via Zoom

***We need your participation to make this event a success!***

Please **register** by ***Thursday, March 7!***

Contact Stephanie for details; 602-336-4599 or [stephanie@azcep.org](mailto:stephanie@azcep.org)



**ITLS**

Our final ITLS on the River was held at the Riverside Hotel and Resort in Laughlin, NV September 24-26th. It was a great last hurrah, including a great lineup of speakers on lecture day, two great courses (both Pediatric ITLS as well as our usual provider ITLS course), a Sono Olympics tournament, and a great bowling event! It has been a great run lasting over nearly three decades! Due to room and travel cost increases, as well as difficulty securing supporting vendors up in Laughlin, we are having to drop this course from our lineup and are working on smaller regional courses in southern/southeastern AZ, central AZ (Phoenix area), and northern/northeastern AZ. Our first course will be this March in Flagstaff under our new program. A Pediatric ITLS course will be held March 3, 2024, in Flagstaff as well as April 27, 2024, in Show Low. We are also supporting New Mexico into launching ITLS/PITLS in New Mexico as well.

Go to our website to look for upcoming courses:  
[www.itlsaz.org](http://www.itlsaz.org)

Brad Butler, MD, FACEP  
 CAPT MC (FMF), USN  
 Medical Director  
 Arizona ITLS

**U of A - Tucson Combined EM & Peds Residency Corner**  
*By Eric Kersjes, MD*

This time of year is always exciting for the combined residents in Tucson. The interns have finally made a few transitions between each specialty and are finding their groove. The second years are now officially done with their "intern" year. The third years survived their halfway party and roast. The fourth years just officially got announced as chiefs for next year. And last but not least, the fifth years have realized that they don't have to make another schedule for next year! They'll be getting ready for the next chapters of their lives while we will soon be discussing the future of the program at our rank list party this week. It's always fun to think about the next group of doctors we get to welcome to this niche family. This is always a time of year where we seem to find some fun trips to do with each other, whether that's ski trips to Flagstaff (or Mt. Lemmon now that it's open!), or an international elective to Costa Rica with your entire class for a month! We also appreciate the plans for mini office hours/journal club with the beloved Dr. Pacheco!

**Calendar of Events**

**Mark your Calendar and Get Active in AzCEP!**

- Mar 13 ED Doc Day, 9am-2pm**
- Apr 3 Annual Meeting & Elections, 5:30**
- June 6-7 Board/Membership Retreat, *Omni Tucson National***
- Aug 7 Board/Membership Mtg, 1pm**

**All AzCEP members are welcome and *encouraged* to attend the Board Meetings. Contact the Chapter office at 602-336-4599 for additional information.**

**Board Meetings, unless otherwise noted, are held at 1:00pm-*NEW!***

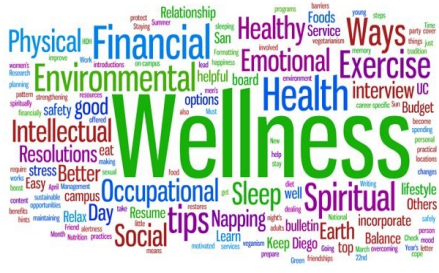
**Advanced Care of Older Adults Certificate**

Are you an EMS medical director in Arizona? Do your EMTs need high-quality, low-cost continuing education? Read below for an amazing opportunity!

A new certificate course "**Advanced Care of the Older Adult**" is now available online! Developed by faculty from the Center for Aging and the Department of Emergency Medicine at the University of Arizona, Tucson, this comprehensive program is tailored for Emergency Medical Technicians, Nurse Assistants, and Physical Therapy Assistants. The EMT curriculum was developed by AzCEPs very own board member Dr. Rachel Munn.

This course allows enrollees to gain valuable insights and expertise into the medical care of our older adult patients. It contains over 12 hours of curated material, with specialty-specific CE hours available for a low registration fee. The entire course is conducted online and asynchronously, with rolling start dates. Check out our course website for more information! <https://ce.arizona.edu/classes/advanced-care-older-adults-certificate>





### Why is it Important to Live Intentionally?

Mental health and wellness is an epidemic in our world.

- Depression and anxiety plagues adults, teenagers and even children. ○ Studies show that 1 in 3 adolescents will experience an anxiety disorder and 63% of college students feel overwhelming anxiety and childhood mental health is on the rise.
- The world is becoming aware of the fact that people, companies, and communities must start investing in EMOTIONAL WELLNESS to better the overall health and wellness of themselves, their families, their communities and the world.
- As always we want to remind you all that **HELP IS AVAILABLE!** 988 Suicide &

Crisis Lifeline: Call 988 or Send a Text to 988 24/7 Crisis hotline: 1-844-534-HOPE (4673) Text the word "HOME" to 741741 for crisis support via text

### 2023 EM Research Seed Grant Awarded!

AzCEP is pleased to announce that the 2023 EM Research Seed Grant of \$1000 was awarded to 4 medical students from the Mayo Clinic Alix School of Medicine: Ms. Catherine Williams, Mr. Robert Kelly, Ms. Bri Tomlinson, Mr. Matthew Van Ligten and Ms. Charis Wang. Their project was titled; Changing The Stressful Stress Test: Coronary CT Angiography Implementation and Outcomes



*AzCEP Board Member, Dr. Wayne Martini presents the award to Ms. Tomlinson.*

We also want to whole-heartedly thank our Seed Grant Committee for the time they put into reviewing the submitted applications!

- Abrazo; Dr. Jacob Gertsman
- COPA; Dr. Kara Geren
- Kingman Regional Medical Center; Dr. Derek Meeks
- UofA-South Campus; Dr. Larry DeLuca
- UofA-Tucson Campus; Dr. Joshua Gaither
- AzCEP Executive Members: Dr. Olga Gokova & Dr. Mara Winsor
- AzCEP Board Members: Dr. Matthew Douglas & Dr. Jack Palmer

### AzCEP Annual Meeting with Elections

Wed, April 3 @ 5:30pm

Site; TBD

...we're going digital!

Hello all,

Watch your email next month for information about the 2024-2025 AzCEP Elections. You will NOT be receiving a mailed ballot this year; instead you will be getting a link to vote electronically. We will still be taking nominations from the floor the night of April 3. The site is still to be confirmed, but it will have a dinner that will include a presentation from our sponsor, a AzCEP Board/membership meeting and the cumulation of our elections.

ALL AzCEP members are welcome and sign-ups will be available soon.

Questions? Please contact Stephanie; [stephanie@azcep.org](mailto:stephanie@azcep.org)



*COPA Resident's Column*  
*By Hunter Hoopes, DO and Ellen Dowling, MD*

Copa has had an eventful winter! We had a full holiday season and are getting ready for the new hospital (anticipated move-in date April 11th). We are excited to practice in the new space while also incorporating our traditional flair.



*New Valleywise Health Medical Center*

This is also the end of the residency interview season and with that comes having fun with visiting students for second look weekends. We can't wait to meet the next generation of Copa residents!



*Bringing plants to the doc box*



Additionally, one of our third year residents, Dr. William Shank (far left), and third year Emergency Medicine resident from U of A College of Medicine Tucson, Dr. Joseph Demirjian (center), play together in the band Her Name Echoes. They played a show together in January at the Rebel Lounge in Phoenix - several residents and attendings were able to attend and had a blast!

We are looking forward to the new changes coming, as well as finding new strategies for management of boarding in the Emergency Department. This has certainly affected Emergency Medicine across the county - despite this, Copa residents manage to have a good time and support each other, both in and out of work!



*Congrats to our newest FACEP members!*

- Scott A Bonnono, MD, FACEP**
- Abdullah Khan, MBBS, FACEP**
- Lindsey Marie Retterath, MD, FACEP, FAAP**

## ACEP Resources & Latest News

**ACEP President** spoke at a Congressional briefing Tuesday to discuss violence in the ED and advocate for legislative solutions to protect health care workers. Aisha Terry, MD, FACEP, detailed the urgent need for accountability and stronger protections, saying, “We can’t be the safety net without feeling safe ourselves.” [Read more.](#)

**Amplify your voice** at ACEP's Leadership & Advocacy Conference, April 14-16. Together, we will advocate in person to policymakers for a better environment for EM and your patients. [Register today!](#)

**Emergency medicine continues to move beyond traditional routes.** With multiple meetings in one location within the same week, ACEP Accelerate offers different tracks to forge ahead and rise to your career goals. Get some of the best features of a large conference experience while retaining the targeted education of a focused meeting - all at a brand new resort in the exciting entertainment capital of Texas! [Read more.](#)

**ACEP Advocacy:** Act now to reverse Medicare physician pay cuts. Beginning Jan. 1, Medicare physician reimbursements were cut 3.4%. Legislators need to hear directly from you to reverse these harmful cuts as soon as possible. [Read more.](#)

**Dive into Unionization:** ACEP invites you into the hard conversations about emergency physician unionization as we collectively wrestle with how to protect EPs now and in the future. [Take a quick survey about your interest level in physician unionization.](#) [Watch two courses from ACEP23](#) about unions and employer models. [Listen to a recent Frontline podcast](#) about physician unions. Then commit to more discussions about next steps for EM.

**ICYMI: PEER's gone mobile!** All PEERprep and PEERCert+ subscribers can download and log in to use the study tool with its new mobile app today. Available for both Apple and Android users. Also, don't miss out on the ACEP Mobile App, which provides easy, offline access to clinical policies, point of care tools, reimbursement FAQs, news, advocacy alerts and more! Download both today. [Read more.](#)

**ACEP Awards:** ACEP's Leadership Awards Program recognizes members in all career stages and environments for their professional contributions and service to the College. The nomination deadline is March 12. [Read more.](#)

### New Career Resources:

You asked for it. ACEP delivered. ACEP's **Open Book** addresses your need for employer transparency. Gain access to information about employer group structure, leadership and more | [openbook.acep.org](http://openbook.acep.org)

[Practice Essentials of Emergency Medicine](#) augments your knowledge of several critical business topics: Reimbursement, Contracts and Practice Models, Negotiations, Operations Management, Risk Management and More. It's **FREE** for ACEP members | [acep.org/practiceessentials](http://acep.org/practiceessentials)

**Find More Fulfillment in Your Career.** ACEP has published a new wellness guide, [From Self to System – Being Well in Emergency Medicine](#), which offers practical solutions to many of the systemic issues that plague emergency physicians today. Thank you to the countless authors and contributors who brought together these valuable resources.

**Member Benefit Spotlight:** Map out your spending and investment accounts, retirement projections, and goal projections in one secure online platform with My Financial Coach. [Read more.](#)

**Learn More about OUD Management With E-QUAL,** a free online, low-burden quality improvement program. E-QUAL is now accepting enrollment in its 2024 substance use disorder initiative where you can discover best practices for ED opioid prescribing, earn credit for CMS' MIPS program and get real-time benchmarking data. [Learn more and sign up today.](#)

### ACEP's ED Visit Program

As part of ACEP's federal advocacy efforts, we aim to have as many legislators as possible visit emergency departments in their communities to see first-hand the inner workings of an ED and those patients seeking care in the ED. Members of Congress rely heavily upon input from their constituents when considering issues and making policy decisions. As the front line of our nation's health care delivery system, emergency physicians are well-positioned to educate legislators on a wide range of issues including patient access, public health concerns, rural and inner-city health issues, and quality of care.

ACEP assists in the scheduling and preparation for these visits, including talking points and tips on coordinating the visit with your hospital staff and administration. For more information about hosting an ED visit for your federal legislator, please contact [Jeanne Slade](#) or [Liz Demorest](#) in the ACEP Washington, D.C. Office.

### Get the Support You Need

Stress is high right now, on so many levels. Everyone has unique needs depending on personal circumstances, but the following free support services are available:

- [Crisis counseling/wellness sessions](#) available 24/7 and strictly confidential
- [Peer support line](#) for physicians and medical students, available 24/7
- [Let's Talk forum](#) for ACEP members, our only forum to allow anonymous posts

<https://www.acep.org/support>

### UPCOMING ACEP EVENTS & DEADLINES

**Feb. 26:** [Introducing Emergency Medicine Residents to Democratic Group Practice](#)

**Feb. 28:** [Develop a Plan to Tackle Your Student Loans](#)

**Feb 29:** [Becoming a Forensic Medicine Expert Witness](#)

**Feb. 29:** [Ruptured Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm](#)

**March 7:** [Nuts and Bolts of Physician Reimbursement](#)

**March 9-15:** [ACEP Accelerate, Arlington, TX](#), Featuring -Advanced Pediatric EM Assembly – **March 11-13/ED Directors' Academy –**

**March 11-15/Reimbursement & Coding – March 11-13**

**Teaching Fellowship – March 9-14**

**March 11:** [Board of Directors Nominations Deadline](#)

**March 12:** [ACEP Award Nominations Deadline](#)

**April 14-16:** [ACEP Leadership & Advocacy Conference, Washington, DC](#)



### Abrazo West's Resident's Corner

By Brian Casillas, MD



Hello from the Abrazo program!

We had a great holiday season, including the holiday parties and our annual kickball game, and are now excited to start the new year. We are now preparing for our upcoming trip to AAEM in Austin and look forward to touring around the city together.

Our third year residents are nearing the end of their job search with many of us signing contracts and preparing to start

our new lives as attendings. We have had much appreciated assistance from our residency faculty in the job search. We have also had one of our residents, Elizabeth Joachim, match into a pediatric EM fellowship. This provided us with a 100% fellowship match rate for the year!



In addition, we have been impressed with the performance of our intern class and look forward to the opportunities to expand their capabilities further throughout their training. Lastly, comfort level of shoes have become the new topic of debate which has led to the cowboy boot/croc divide, more on this story to come.



I cannot believe it is already spring. We have exciting updates as all of our seniors have signed at our top choices! Dr. Geovar Agbayani will be going home to Hawaii and starting at Kaiser Moanalua in Honolulu, Dr. Lindsey Colling will be going home to Des Moines, Iowa, and starting at MercyOne health, Dr. Peter Touresian will be staying in AZ and going to Banner Desert in Mesa, Dr. Bailey Hasenbalg will be moving back home to the Pacific Northwest and signing at Providence hospital in Centralia, WA, as well as Harbor Regional Medical Center in Aberdeen, WA, Dr. Chris Burns will be signing in Fort Collins, CO, and I will also be staying in AZ and signed in Flagstaff! We are all excited to start our attending careers, however are sad to leave each other and are looking forward to these last few months of experiences together. The last few months have flown by with our sonOlympics and us defending our title with first place in SIM wars at the Southwestern Regional EM Conference by defeating residents from three other residencies in the Southwest. We are excited to see what the next few months have in store with an upcoming top golf wellness event, and all of the exciting day to day experiences residency has to offer. This will be my last post. It has been a great experience the last two and a half years being the Kingman rep, but I am passing the torch to Dr. Taylor Cornwell-Hinrichs, one of our first years. I'm excited to read the next updates.

### Kingman Regional Medical Center's Resident's Corner

By Codey Pedersen, DO, R3 Chief Resident



## Legislative Update

*By John Thomas, AzCEP Legislative Counsel*

It's February in Arizona and the legislature is running fast & furious. We just finished up week four of the 2024 legislative session with over 1,600 hundred bills, memorials & resolutions already introduced with another 200 more expected by the time the legislative session ends.

The big news is that State Representative (and AzCEP Board Member) Amish Shah has resigned from his position at the legislature so that he may focus all of his efforts on running for, and winning, the Arizona District 1 Congressional primary in August of 2024. The general election for that race will take place in November of 2024. Dr. Shah has been outstanding advocate for his constituents, the medical community AND the Emergency Doctors. He has relied on his background and experiences as an Emergency Department Doctor to educate legislators and successfully pass legislation in the state that benefits all of our health care. Although we will miss his insight and help at the state capitol, we may soon be seeing him in Washington, DC.

Representative Shah is only one of 4 House legislators who has left the House of Representatives over just the last 2 months. We are now near 10 (out of 90) legislators who have been appointed since 2023. That requires a lot of education on health care issues for those new members in a very short time frame. In addition, the next election for legislative seats is this fall so we will have even more new faces starting in 2025.

As for legislation, most is a repeat from last year with Scope of Practice issues and International Medical Graduates practice issues on the forefront along with a host other issues that can have a positive or negative affect on our medical groups. We already have over 225 bills that we are currently tracking that could have an impact on health care in Arizona if passed by the legislature and signed by the Governor.

I expect us to be in the 2024 legislative session until at least May, which would be an improvement from last year when the legislative session ran over until July 31st.

Finally, we will be holding the AzCEP ED Doc Day at the Capitol on Wednesday, March 13th. Please note that we have moved the starting time to 9 am. At this event, we will receive an update on important health-related legislation that is still moving through the legislative process and meeting with legislators to discuss these very issues and the impact that they could have on the health community.

See you in March at the Capitol!

John Thomas  
AzCEP Lobbyist

### AzCEP Mission Statement

***The Arizona College of Emergency Physicians (AzCEP) supports the highest quality emergency medical care and serves as an advocate for our patients, our members and our specialty. {readopted by the AzCEP board, 6/2019}***

#### **Spring Issue of the Arizona EPIC**

Submittal Deadline: May 1, 2024

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EPIC Editors: Stephanie A. Butler & Brad Butler

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***President-Elect: Anthony Wong, MD, FACEP***

***Secretary: Adam Dawson, DO, FACEP***

***Treasurer: Megan McElhinny, MD***

***Immediate Past President: Mara Windsor, DO, FACEP***

#### ***Executive Director:***

Stephanie A. Butler (Mobile 602-692-2376)

#### ***Legislative Counsel:***

John D. Thomas, Attorney at Law (Mobile 602-826-0678)

**Arizona Chapter, ACEP  
Phoenix, Arizona 85018  
(602) 336-4599 Office**