

## From President Greco Legislation and **Sausage Making**



The second session of the 113th Congress was called to order at Noon on Friday, January 3. Awaiting Congress was a lengthy menu of issues

to be addressed. Unfortunately, our Legislative Branch has been virtually deadlocked on most legislative issues of significance over the past few years. It calls to mind the saying attributed to John Godfrey Saxe that the making of laws, like sausages, is best left unseen. While this is a terrible affront to those like myself who have a time-honored family tradition of sausage making, there is new hope that the legislative process will yield satisfying results.

Congress began the year by reaching an early bipartisan agreement on funding a \$1.1 trillion spending package that ensures the Federal Government will remain open for business through the remainder of Fiscal Year 2014. In addition, for the first time, committees in the House and Senate have agreed on a framework to repeal and replace the untenable Medicare Sustainable Growth Rate (SGR) formulaagain, in a bipartisan agreement. While much work remains, the

## **Internal Medicine, Subspecialty Training Growth Continues**

The Annual ACOI Survey of Internal Medicine Residency Programs was completed by DMEs and program directors of all osteopathic internal medicine programs last fall. Information from all programs has been received. There are now 113 approved internal medicine programs, with 106 training residents. That is 10 more programs approved and eight more with trainees than last year. Approved and filled positions both increased significantly again this year. The total number of residents in internal medicine, including combined programs, is 1,624, a 15% increase over last year. There are now more than double the number of filled positions today than there were in 2008-09 (1624-805).

The number of funded internal medicine positions also increased substantially. More than 1850 of the 1981 approved positions are funded. This is up from 1611 last year. Approximately 87% of the funded positions are filled, which is the same as last year.

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## **Important Notice Regarding Osteopathic Continuous Certification**

The following is the text of a letter to be sent this month to all AOA-certified internists from the Brad L. Suprenant, DO, Chairman of the American Osteopathic Board of Internal Medicine, and ACOI President Rick A. Greco, DO. It provides important information regarding the requirements for Osteopathic Continuous Certification:

Dear Doctor:

We are writing with regard to the requirements for Osteopathic Continuous Certification (OCC) and how they will impact you as a board-certified internist. As you probably know, OCC replaced the existing method of recertification in 2013. It is being phased in between now and 2022.

The ACOI and AOBIM jointly have created a website to assist you in meeting the requirements of OCC. If you hold a time-limited certificate and your current certificate expires after 2015 you must register with the AOBIM via this website - the OCC Education Center for Internal Medicine (https://occecim.acoi.org/). If your certificate expires prior to 1/1/16 you may recertify under the old system on the AOBIM website www.aobim.org.

In addition to registration, the website provides information on the OCC requirements, a personal dashboard to track your progress in meeting the requirements, and access to ACOI's medical knowledge self-assessment modules, which were created as a means to comply with OCC.

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Funding in part for *ACOInformation* has been provided by Purdue Pharma, L.P.



#### American College of **Osteopathic Internists**

In Service to All Members; All Members in Service

#### MISSION

The mission of the ACOI is to advance the practice of osteopathic internal medicine. Through excellence in education, advocacy, research and the opportunity for service. the ACOI strives to enhance the professional and personal development of the family of osteopathic internists.

#### VISION

The ACOI seeks to be the organization that osteopathic internists think of first for education, information, representation and service to the profession.

#### VALUES

To accomplish its vision and mission, the ACOI will base its decisions and actions on the following core values: LEADERSHIP for the advancement of osteopathic medicine EXCELLENCE in programs and services INTEGRITY in decision-making and actions PROFESSIONALISM in all interactions SERVICE to meet member needs

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## Letter from the President

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messy process of lawmaking has become just a little more palatable over the past few months and additional progress is hoped for before the mid-term elections are upon us later this year.

Gridlock remains a constant threat in Washington, DC. The ACOI Government Affairs Committee, under the leadership of Joseph Giaimo, DO, FACOI, and with the assistance of Deputy Executive Director Tim McNichol, JD and our staff, is persistently monitoring legislation and regulations that will impact our members and their patients. You, too, can participate in the process by contacting your Senators and Representatives. Information on how to do so is contained in the government relations portion of this newsletter and it is particularly important that you do so now regarding the repeal of the SGR formula.

As always, I encourage you to contact me on any and all matters of importance to you, especially those who are interested in the true art of sausage making.

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The ACOI Coding Corner is a column written by Jill M. Young, CPC, CEDC, CIMC. Ms. Young is the Principal of Young Medical Consulting, LLC. She has over 30 years of experience in all areas of medical practice, including coding and billing. Additional information on these and other topics are available at www.acoi.org and by contacting Ms. Young at YoungMedConsult@ aol.com.

The information provided here applies to Medicare coding. Be sure to check with local insurance carriers to determine if private insurers follow Medicare's lead in all coding matters.

## The Importance of Compliance

Compliance is conformity in fulfilling official requirements. The "why" of compliance is a question frequently asked by physicians. Why do we have to do this? The simple answer is, because you have to. On several levels there are "rules" of compliance that include documentation issues and assignment of codes with specificity.

The 1995 and 1997 Evaluation and Management (E&M) guidelines that all insurance carriers utilize state, "the importance of consistent, complete documentation in the medical record cannot be overemphasized. Without such documentation accurate coding cannot be achieved." ICD-9 diagnostic coding guidelines state that, "adherence to these guidelines when assigning ICD-9-CM diagnosis and procedure codes is required under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)."

As a practicing physician you are inherently obligated to follow the rules of documentation, coding and billing. These are regulations that have been established by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), HIPAA (and other governmental acts) and insurance carriers.

Document all the work you do, code with specificity based on the documentation, submit a claim for that work and receive payment. Compliance has a role in each step. Future Coping with Coding segments will present more details.



## Act Now to Repeal the SGR!

The House and Senate committees of jurisdiction have reached agreement on legislation to repeal Medicare's flawed Sustainable Growth Rate (SGR) physician payment formula (H.R. 4015/S. 2000). It is essential that you contact your US representatives to urge them to approve this legislation. With yet another substantial cut in physician reimbursement looming, the timing has never been better for Congress to act. In order to prevent the cut and eliminate the SGR formula for good, final action is needed by the full House and Senate by March 31. Use this link to contact your representatives today and ask them to support this critical legislation http://capwiz.com/ aoa-aoia/issues/alert/?alertid=63084721.

The negotiated legislation would provide a guaranteed five-year positive update of .5 percent. In addition, beginning in 2018 a new incentive program called the Merit-Based Incentive Payment System (MIPS) would combine the existing Physician Quality Reporting System (PQRS), the Value-based Modifier Program and the electronic health record Meaningful Use programs into one system. Under MIPS payments would be moved from a fee-for-service model to one that promotes outcomes. Payments would be adjusted up or down based on guidelines set under the new program. Another payment incentive program of up to five percent would be established for physicians who receive more than 25 percent of their Medicare compensation from alternative payment models such as a medical home. Under the legislation, a physician would be able to participate in only one incentive program.

While agreement on reforming physician payment policies has been reached, H.R. 4015/S. 2000 does not establish a way to pay for the legislation nor does it include the extension of other expiring provisions under Medicare. It is estimated that the legislation as drafted would cost approximately \$128 billion over 10 years. As a result, additional negotiations are ongoing. Absent congressional action, physicians face a nearly 24 percent reduction in Medicare reimbursement when the current extension established under the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013 expires on March 31. The ACOI will continue to review this legislation and closely monitor the ongoing congressional negotiations to permanently repeal the SGR formula.

## CMS Announces Extension of EHR Meaningful Use Attestation for 2013

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services announced it has extended the deadline for physicians to attest to electronic health record (EHR) meaningful use under the Medicare program from February 28 to March 31. Under the Medicare meaningful use program, physicians can earn up to \$44,000 in Medicare incentive payments over five years. Additional information is available at https://www.cms.gov/ Regulations-and-Guidance/Legislation/EHRIncentivePrograms/index.html?redirect=/ ehrincentiveprograms/.

## House and Senate Approve Legislation with Funds for Physician Payment Reform

The House and Senate approved S. 25 to reverse cuts to pension benefits for veterans that were enacted through earlier legislation. S. 25 extends Medicare sequestration cuts for one year through 2024 to pay for the legislation. In addition to reversing cuts to veteran cost-of-living adjustments, the legislation sets aside \$2.3 billion to help fund future efforts to reform the current SGR formula under Medicare. More

than \$125 billion dollars must still be identified prior to the enactment of a comprehensive Medicare physician payment package. The legislation was approved by the House and Senate by margins of 326 -90 and 95-3, respectively. The legislation is expected to be signed into law by the President.

### Chair of Influential Senate Committee Receives Chinese Ambassadorship

After serving more than 35 years in the Senate, the Senate voted 96-0 in favor of Max Baucus' (D-MT) nomination to become US Ambassador to China. Ambassador Baucus served on the Senate Finance Committee and was instrumental in the advancement of far-reaching legislation. He helped shape healthcare legislation for more than three decades. His impact is certain to remain for years to come. Senator Ron Wyden (D-OR) will be the next Chairman of this influential committee.

### Washington Tidbits: Doing the Work of the People in the Light of Day....

If one wants to see what the Senate is doing when the deliberative body is in session, all one has to do is turn to C-SPAN. However, the work of the Senate was not always so visible to the public. In fact, it was the practice of the Senate to conduct its business behind closed doors until a sticky situation arose in Philadelphia.

On February 11, 1794 while meeting at Congress Hall in Philadelphia, the Senate was confronted with the question of whether an elected senator from Pennsylvania had been a US citizen for nine years as required by the Constitution. In order to avoid the appearance of impropriety, the case was conducted in public view. On February 28, 1794 a two-vote majority denied Swiss-born Albert Gallatin his seat in the Senate. Following this action, the Senate permanently opened its proceedings to the public following the construction of a gallery. You can learn more by visiting www.senate. gov.

## ACOI 2014 Clinical Challenges in Inpatient Care REGISTRATION FORM

The Westin Savannah Harbor Hotel, Savannah, GA • March 27-30, 2014 Registration available online at www.acoi.org/CMEHospitalMedicineUpdate14.html.

Full Na	ame						
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Payment Method Check to ACOI MasterCard Visa							
Name on Card							
Check here if billing address is same as mailing address listed above. If not, please provide below							
Billing S	Street						
Billing C	City				State	9	Zip
Credit Card Number Security Code							
Credit Card Exp. Date							
Signatu	re						

Send this form and payment to: ACOI Office, 11400 Rockville Pike, Suite 801, Rockville, MD 20852 or Fax to 301 231-6099 or register online at *www.acoi.org* 

NOTE: All registrations must be accompanied by a check for payment in full or appropriate credit card information. A processing fee of \$50 will be charged for cancellations received at any time. In order to obtain a refund, written cancellations must be received by March 5, 2014. No refunds will be made after that date, but registration fees (less \$50 cancellation fee) may be applied to a future ACOI meeting registration.

PLEASE NOTE: Check here if you plan to stay at the The Westin Savannah Harbor Hotel. Separate hotel registration is required. This does not register or guarantee a room at the hotel.

SPECIAL NEEDS: In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, every effort has been made to make this conference and activities accessible to people of all capabilities. Please list specific special assistance needed or any dietary restrictions or contact Susan Stacy at susan@acoi.org or by phone, 301 231-8877.

List special requirements here:\_

## **Training Programs**

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RESIDENCY POSITIONS					
APPROVED & FILLED	2013-14	2012-13	2011-12	2010-11	2009-10
Approved Positions					
IM	1981	1753	1667	1501	1310
EM/IM	135	130	130	138	135
IM/PEDS	18	18	18	18	18
IM/NMM	4	1	0	0	0
Total	2138	1902	1815	1657	1463
Filled Positions					
IM	1536	1326	1155	997	835
EM/IM	79	75	92	83	83
IM/PEDS	7	7	10	10	10
IM/NMM	2	1	0	0	0
Total	1624	1409	1257	1090	928

**DUAL PROGRAMS** – The survey captured data on whether the responding programs are also approved by the ACGME. Twenty-nine programs reported dual approval. They are training 281 residents (including combined EM/IM and IM/ PEDS). That is three more programs and 62 more residents than last year.

**SUBSPECIALTY TRAINING** – The number of osteopathic fellowship programs and position filled also continues to grow. Ninety-five programs are actively training fellows, up from 88 last year.

The number of available subspecialty programs has increased to 121 (eight more than 2012-13) with 527 approved positions, an increase of 60. There are now 311 fellows training, which is up from 273 fellows last year. There are now approved trainees in all specialties.

### LAST YEAR'S GRADUATES

The ACOI's online Resident Annual Reports require graduating residents to report their future plans. For June 30, 2013 graduates, here are the results. Comparisons are to 2011-2012 data:

Total Graduates:357		(+24%)
Entered Practice223	(62%)	(+7%)
* Office-Based IM58	(16%)	(-2%)
* Hospitalist154	(43%)	(+7%)
* Emergency Medicine/Peds11	(3%)	(No change)
Entered Subspecialty Training134	(38%)	(-4%)

# **Member Milestones**

Wayne Carlsen, DO, FACOI, senior associate dean and associate professor of geriatric medicine/gerontology at the Ohio University Heritage College of Osteopathic Medicine, was sworn in as board chair for the National Board of Osteopathic Medical Examiners at its annual meeting in December.

Dr. Carlsen, who is board-certified in internal medicine and geriatric medicine by the AOBIM, will lead the NBOME governing body in working with the organization's president and CEO, coordinating board committees, and planning and conducting two board meetings each year. In addition to his role as senior associate dean and associate professor, Dr. Carlsen serves as the medical director of the Heritage College's Community Health Programs and Area Health Education Center.

# In Memoriam

Word has been received of the death of **Melvin J. Anderson, DO, FACOI**, of Ludington, MI. Dr. Anderson was 83 at the time of his death on December 26, 2013. A graduate of the Chicago College of Osteopathic Medicine, Dr. Anderson practiced internal medicine and cardiology for 25 years in Saginaw, MI. He later became Director of Medical Policy for Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan. He joined the ACOI in 1972 and received the degree of Fellow in 1980. He became an Emeritus member in 1999.

## Have You Moved?

Keep us updated. If you have recently made any changes in your address, phone number or email, please notify the ACOI. www.acoi.org

## **2014 ACOI COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS**

The ACOI Board of Directors approved the committee and task force rosters for the this year during a January conference call. More than 175 members applied to fill approximately 35 openings. President Rick A. Greco, DO, and the Board express gratitude to all who volunteered. Members who were not selected will be considered for openings that occur next year.

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There's a simple reason you chose a career in medicine. We invite you to practice it.

We welcome your enthusiasm for compassionate medicine as you change lives with some of the most inspiring people you will ever meet.

We are seeking BC/BE Internal Medicine physicians to join our employed Hospitalist team at award winning Aspirus Wausau Hospital.

- · Hospitalist 7 am-7 pm, 7 on/7 off, flexible scheduling
- Nocturnist 7 pm-7 am, Tuesday to Monday. Days of the week are open for discussion

#### In return, we promise to treat you with the same dignity and respect you give to your patients.

Respecting your work/life balance is a big part of the Aspirus culture. We will surround you with a highly qualified nursing and support staff, an extensive network of outstanding specialists, and a medical culture that shares an unyielding commitment to excellence.

A practice model like this could only happen in a place like this. It's a place where kayakers and theatergoers live in harmony. A place of adventure through all four seasons.

Details at AspirusProviderOpps.org. Contact Karen Lindstrum at Karen.Lindstrum@aspirus.org or 800.792.8728.

Photos are actual Wausau Area events

PHYREC-084



# Professional Opportunities

As a service to its members, ACOI lists practice opportunities in internal medicine and its subspecialties both here and on the College's website. The service is available at no charge to ACOI members as a benefit of membership. Institutions and non-members may place listings for a fee. ACOI reserves the right to edit submitted copy for purposes of space and/or content. To place an ad or for further information, contact Ms. Susan B. Stacy, Susan@acoi.org.

#### **BC/BE CARDIOLOGIST-SE**

**Michigan.** SE Michigan Cardiology Practice seeking BCBE cardiologist, invasive or noninvasive, to start July of 2014. If interested please contact Kristi McMullen. 734-464-3251.

## INTERNISTS - Yakima & Toppenish Medical Dental Clinics.

#### We are recruiting for two internists to join our dedicated provider teams at the Yakima and Toppenish Medical Dental Clinics. These are outpatient Internal Medicine positions in multi-specialty clinics. All inpatient work is taken care of by hospitalists and there is only light phone call.

If you are looking for a position that provides you with an opportunity to give back to your community, then consider joining a community and migrant health center. We offer a good salary, beautiful, state-of-the-art facilities, and a well-balanced home life. We are looking for physicians that have a passion for providing high-quality healthcare in a multi-cultural environment.

Both positions are located in the beautiful Yakima Valley where we enjoy over 300 days of sun per year. We are located just a short drive from the beautiful Cascade Mountain range and in close proximity to countless outdoor activities. During the summer months we enjoy an extensive variety of locally grown fruit and vegetables from local farmers.

#### A few of our benefits include:

- \* A competitive productivity-based compensation program
- \* A comprehensive benefits package
- \* A great work/life balance
- \* Hiring bonus and relocation package
- \* Loan repayment options
- \* Visa sponsorship
- \* Monthly stipend for 3rd year residents

#### About Us

The Yakima Valley Farm Workers Clinic (YVFWC) is the largest community health center in the Pacific Northwest. We are dedicated to providing our patients with the highest quality care and offering them affordable healthcare options. YVFWC provide comprehensive medical, dental, and social services in over 17 Pacific Northwest communities. Our medical and dental services are complemented by behavioral health services, nutrition services, drug and alcohol treatment, an HIV/AIDS clinic, community health services, the Northwest Community Action Center (which provides employment, training, mentoring, and other case management and referral services), and a mobile medical and dental unit.

#### The Pacific Northwest

You will have the added benefit of living in the Pacific Northwest, where you can enjoy spectacular wilderness areas, scenic ocean beaches, and crystal-clear lakes and rivers. You can enjoy fresh seafood, fine Northwest wines, and a spectacular selection of fruits and vegetables.

You will also be within an easy drive to a thriving metropolitan area, offering fine dining and shopping, theatres, museums, and world-class universities.

If this sounds like the opportunity you have been looking for, please apply online or contact us to learn more about what we have to offer. Call us toll free at 877.983.9247 or email us at providerjobs@yvfwc.org. Our mission celebrates diversity. We are committed to equal opportunity employment. *Apply Here: http://www.Click2apply.net/sk9n88c* 

### MEDS/PEDS PHYSICIAN NEEDED - Yakima & Toppenish Medical Dental Clinics.

Are you ready for a change? Do you want a position that allows you to give back to your community? Join a community and migrant health center without giving up a good salary, beautiful, state-of-the-art facilities, and a well-balanced home life. We are currently looking for a Med-Peds physician to join our dedicated team of mission-driven providers. If you have a passion for providing high-quality healthcare in a multi-cultural environment, we would like you to consider becoming a member of our team!

#### A few of our benefits include:

- A competitive productivity-based compensation program with potential of \$170k+
- A comprehensive benefits package
- A great work/life balance
- Hiring bonus and relocation package
- \$50k guaranteed loan repayment and State and Federal Loan repayment options
- Visa sponsorship
- Monthly stipend for 3rd year residents

#### About Us

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#### The Pacific Northwest

You will have the added benefit of living in the Pacific Northwest, where you can enjoy spectacular wilderness areas, scenic ocean beaches, and crystal-clear lakes and rivers. You can enjoy fresh seafood, fine Northwest wines, and a spectacular selection of fruits and vegetables.

You will also be within an easy drive to a thriving metropolitan area, offering fine dining and shopping, theatres, museums, and world-class universities.

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Our mission celebrates diversity. We are committed to equal opportunity employment.

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## **Future ACOI Education Meeting Dates & Locations** NATIONAL MEETINGS

- 2014 Internal Medicine Board Review Course March 26-30 Westin Savannah Harbor Resort & Spa, Savannah, GA
- 2014 Challenges in Inpatient Care March 27-30 Westin Savannah Harbor Resort & Spa, Savannah, GA
- 2014 Congress on Medical Education for Residency Trainers May 2-4 Orlando World Center Marriott, Orlando, FL · 2014 Annual Convention & Scientific Sessions
- Oct 15-19 Baltimore Marriott Waterfront, Baltimore, MD · 2015 Internal Medicine Board Review Course
- March 18-22 The Cosmopolitan Hotel, Las Vegas, NV 2015 Challenges in Inpatient Care March 19-22 The Cosmopolitan Hotel, Las Vegas, NV
- 2015 Annual Convention & Scientific Sessions
- Oct 28-Nov 1 Marco Island Marriott Resort Golf Club and Spa, Marco Island, FL 2016 Annual Convention & Scientific Sessions Oct 12-16 San Francisco Marriott Marquis, San Francisco, CA
- · 2017 Annual Convention & Scientific Sessions Oct 4-8 Gaylord National Resort and Convention Center, Washington, DC
- 2018 Annual Convention & Scientific Sessions Oct 17-21 Orlando World Center Marriott, Orlando, FL
- · 2019 Annual Convention & Scientific Sessions Oct 30- Nov 3 JW Marriott Desert Ridge Resort & Spa, Phoenix, AZ
- Please note: It is an ACOI membership requirement that Active Members attend the Annual Convention or an ACOI-sponsored continuing education program at least once every three years Information on any meeting listed here may be obtained from ACOI Headquarters at 800 327-5183 or from our website at www.acoi.org.

## 2014 Certifying Examination Dates & Deadlines

Internal Medicine Certifying Examination Computerized Examination 200 Sites Nationwide September 11, 2014 - Application Deadline: Expired Late Registration Deadline: April 1, 2014

Subspecialty & Certification of Added Qualifications: Aug. 23, 2014 • Lombard, IL - Application Deadline: April 1, 2014 Late Registration Deadline: May 1, 2014 Cardiology • Critical Care Medicine • Endocrinology • Gastroenterology • Hematology • Infectious Disease Interventional Cardiology 
Nephrology 
Oncology 
Pulmonary Diseases 
Rheumatology

**Internal Medicine Recertifying Examination** Computerized Examination 200 Sites Nationwide September 12, 2014 - Application Deadline: April 1, 2014 Late Registration Deadline: May 1, 2014

**Focused Hospital Medicine Recertification** Computerized Examination 200 Sites Nationwide May 8, 2014 - Application Deadline: March 1, 2014

Subspecialty and Added Qualifications Recertifying Examinations: Aug. 23, 2014 • Lombard, IL - Application Deadline: April 1, 2014 Cardiology • Clinical Cardiac Electrophysiology • Critical Care Medicine • Endocrinology • Gastroenterology • Geriatrics • Hematology Infectious Disease 
Interventional Cardiology 
Nephrology 
Oncology 
Pulmonary Diseases 
Rheumatology Late Registration Deadline: May 1, 2014

Further information and application materials are available at www.aobim.org or by writing to: Gary L. Slick, DO, MACOI, Executive Director, American Osteopathic Board of Internal Medicine, 1111 W. 17th Street, Tulsa, OK 74107. admin@aobim.org.

## **Osteopathic Continuous** Certification

continued from page 1

The AOA has indicated that those who do not participate in OCC will be listed as "not in compliance" in the AOA database of certified physicians.

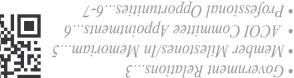
Because the requirements for OCC must be met throughout the certification period, we urge you to visit the Education Center for Internal Medicine today and complete the necessary registration. The OCC process is a new one that we all must become familiar with. The AOBIM and ACOI are ready to assist you with this process.

Sincerely,

Brad L. Suprenant, DO, FACOI Chairman, AOBIM

Rick A. Greco, DO, FACOI





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• CME Calendar...8

in The February 2014 Issue:

11400 Rockville Pike • Suite 801 • Rockville, MD 20852 American College of Osteopathic Internists



