

Southwest Chapter

News



2004–2005

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January 2005

Annual John P. McGovern Award Banquet Recognizing Alan Blum, MD

Wednesday, January 26, 2005, 5:30-8:00 pm
Houston Plaza Hilton

The AMWA Southwest Chapter is pleased to announce that the 2005 McGovern Award recipient is activist Alan Blum, MD, a family medicine physician who has campaigned against smoking throughout his medical career. A graduate of Amherst College and Emory University School of Medicine, Dr. Blum completed a medical internship at the Royal Victoria Hospital in Montreal and a family medicine residency and a teaching fellowship at the University of Miami. During his residency training, Dr. Blum became interested in the tobacco pandemic and founded Doctors Ought to Care, a national organization that focused on school-based and community-wide health promotion.

After completing his medical training, Dr. Blum was awarded a prestigious Morris Fishbein Fellowship in Medical Journalism (1979-1980) and went on to serve as editor-in-chief of *The Medical Journal of Australia* (1982-1983) and the *New York State Journal of Medicine* (1983-1986) and as deputy editor of *Southern Medical Journal* (1988-1990) and *Tobacco Control: An International Journal* (1991-1994). After serving on the family medicine faculty at Baylor College of Medicine for 13 years, he joined the faculty of the University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, in 1999 as professor and the first holder of the Gerald Leon Wallace Endowed Chair in Family Medicine. At the University of Alabama, he has established the Center for the Study of Tobacco and Society, which he currently directs. In addition to his work to counteract the tobacco pandemic, Dr. Blum is preparing a book of his sketches and stories of his patients.

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Dr. Alan Blum To Be Honored at Annual John P. McGovern Award Banquet

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Dr. Blum is the author of the book *The Cigarette Underworld* (Lyle Stuart, 1985) and several monographs on the tobacco pandemic. He also cowrote and coproduced the video, "Medicine vs. Madison Avenue: Fighting Smoke with Fire," which received a First Prize Award at the International Medical and Health Film Festival in 1994. Among his other prestigious awards are the Surgeon General's Medallion (1988), the first American Medical Association's Award for Distinguished Service on Behalf of America's Youth (1990), the American Lung Association's Humanitarian Award (1992), the first American Academy of Family Physicians' National Public Health Award (1993), the first Surgeon General's Smoke-Free American Award (1996), and the Gleitsman Foundation's Citizen Activist Award (1998).

Please join us for the annual John P. McGovern Award Banquet at the Houston Plaza Hilton to honor Dr. Blum, who will present a lecture entitled, "Memoirs of a Medical Activist." The banquet will begin with registration and a predinner reception at 5:30 pm on the eighth floor of the hotel. An assortment of cheeses and seasonal fruits will be served, and a cash bar will be available. Dinner will be served at 6:30 pm and will consist of a salad followed by your choice of entrée: sautéed chicken breast topped with wild mushrooms and artichokes in white wine cream sauce, grilled yellowfin tuna brushed with a cilantro and jalapeno purée and topped with a black bean and corn relish, or grilled vegetable enchiladas filled with grilled spinach, potatoes, shitake mushrooms, and ricotta topped with sun-dried tomato and roasted corn relish. Entrées will be served with vegetables and warm rolls. At about 7:15 pm, the lecture will begin while attendees enjoy dessert served with a choice of coffee or tea.

The registration fee for the banquet is \$28 for members and \$30 for nonmembers. A dessert-and-coffee option is available for those who are unable to attend the dinner but would like to arrive later (7:15 pm) to attend the lecture. The cost for dessert and coffee only is \$7 for members and \$9 for nonmembers. Please complete and mail the reservation form printed in this newsletter or email your registration to Penny Logan at plogan@amwasouthwest.org no later than Friday, January 21, 2005. Those registering by email will pay at the door.

The Houston Plaza Hilton (713.313.4000) is located at 6633 Travis Street in Houston near the Texas Medical Center. Travis Street runs north-south and is parallel to and one block west of Main Street. From West Holcombe Boulevard, turn north on Main Street to Dryden. Turn left on Dryden and left on Travis; the hotel will be on your left. You may park in the hotel garage (parking passes will be available at the event). Take the elevators to the eighth floor. For those who want to take public transportation, there is a MetroRail stop at Dryden and Fannin, a couple of blocks east of the Houston Plaza Hilton. For more information, contact either Penny Logan (281.863.3260 or plogan@amwasouthwest.org) or Natasha Calder (832.512.8932 or ncalder@amwasouthwest.org).

Nationally Recognized Infectious Disease Expert Lectures at AMWA Southwest December Meeting

On Wednesday, December 8, 2004, AMWA Southwest members and guests convened at Josephine's Ristorante in downtown Houston for dinner and a presentation by infectious disease expert Mohammad Madjid, MD, about influenza and its cardiovascular effects. Dr. Madjid, a nationally recognized authority in his field, is a research scientist at the Texas Heart Institute at St. Luke's Episcopal Hospital and associate professor of cardiology at The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston.

The 22 attendees and Dr. Madjid conversed over Italian cuisine and wine for about an hour before Dr. Madjid took the floor. Then, for the next 30 minutes, Dr. Madjid discussed his ongoing research into the association between influenza infection and cardiovascular morbidity and mortality, his work in the evolving area of "vulnerable plaque," and his current interest in gauging public attitudes toward flu vaccination.

As far back as the 1930s, Dr. Madjid said, researchers had noticed that the annual incidence of flu and heart attack seemed to coincide, but only recently have researchers begun to appreciate the possible links between the two. These possible links, he said, include an association between influenza infection and the sudden and potentially fatal rupture of coronary artery plaques made vulnerable by the accompanying inflammation and an association between flu vaccination and a drastically reduced rate of heart attack in the same flu season. Dr. Madjid also noted that this year's shortage of flu vaccine is offering a unique opportunity to gauge public attitudes toward vaccination and the protection it can afford against heart disease through surveys he is conducting in association with state and national health agencies.

Dr. Madjid concluded by pointing out that, despite the cost-effectiveness of flu vaccination and the real threat of a pandemic in years to come, research on influenza and cardiovascular disease remains relatively underfunded. He then fielded questions from the gathered editors and writers for about 10 minutes.

The evening's events were moderated by new chapter secretary, Jude Richard, filling in for the ailing chapter president, Natasha Calder.

Southwest Chapter Needs Development Chair

The position of Development Chair for the Southwest Chapter of AMWA is still vacant. We are looking for a volunteer who would be interested in finding sources for underwriting our current scholarship program or a new lectureship. The Development Chair position has the potential to further our chapter's status as an educational organization that promotes excellence in biomedical communications within the community. If anyone is interested in filling this important position on the board, please contact Natasha Calder at 281.228.7519 or by email at ncalder@amwasouthwest.org.

AMWA Southwest Chapter News

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Meeting Reservation Form

John P. McGovern Award Banquet
Wednesday, January 26, 2005

Please register by Friday, January 21, 2005
Members \$28 and Guests \$30

Name _____
Daytime Phone _____
Name(s) of Guest(s) _____

Entrée Preference(s)
Chicken _____
Tuna _____
Enchiladas _____

Please send your reservation form and check (payable to AMWA Southwest) to Penny Logan at 5006 Redstart Street, Houston, TX 77035.