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Welcome to the WOEMA WINDOW. This e-newsletter is sent to members by email on a monthly basis. The e-newsletter provides links to this page. Below are the items that appeared in the December 2020 issue.

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Latest News

Upcoming Events

No events

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Letter from the President - Erik Won DO, MPH, MBA, FACOEM

Dear WOEMA Members,

It's been a tremendous honor to serve WOEMA alongside all of you through 2020, a year marked by unprecedented public health challenges both locally and globally. As the year comes to a close, we can reflect upon what was, by all accounts and measures, a unique and historical year. The global COVID19 pandemic, the medical community's heroic effort to rally in the face of enormous adversity, biotechnology's unprecedented development of rapid diagnostics and vaccines, quarantines, mask controversies, social unrest, the rapid adoption of virtual meeting environments and workplaces, not to mention shortages of PPE, hand sanitizer, and toilet paper.

WOEMA has risen to the occasion and adapted to the unique circumstances by taking an active role in promoting public health policies, publishing white papers, and lobbying to protect front line providers with appropriate PPE. WOEMA was able to balance all of this while also managing its own transition in Association Management Company's (AMC) from Holland-Parlette (30-year business partner), conducting a robust Request for Proposal (RFP) process, and selecting Group Concepts and Executive Director, Michele Blair.

Additionally, WOEMA conducted its first-ever fully virtual Western Occupational Health Conference (WOHC), which was both well-attended and very well-received. Another proud development is the creation of the Task Force for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion; which was so well received the Board of Directors and Executive Committee moved to make this a standing Committee for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

In the midst of another COVID19 surge, enormous challenges and opportunities lay before us. The power of WOEMA resides within a community that will work together to get through these difficult times, learn, and come out of this stronger as a professional collective. As I hand-off the gavel to an incredibly gifted leader, Dr. Scott Krasner, I remain as committed as ever to serving WOEMA and being a part of the effort that gets us through these challenging times. Thank you for the privilege of serving this community, it's been a tremendous blessing and honor.

Best Regards,

Erik Won, DO, MPH, MBA, FACOEM
President

2020 WOEMA Education Committee, Year in Review

As we near the end of 2020, the WOEMA education committee has had an active year in providing high quality occupational and environmental medicine content to its membership. Early on, we recognized the need of virtual learning in the midst of a pandemic and this acknowledgment spurred great energy towards innovation and creativity to meet this challenge. In addition to our annual curriculum of 6 webinars, we piloted the "WOEMA Podcasts" as a way to bring the "top three things" the OEM physician would need to know on current emerging topics in a portable, accessible medium. Both webinars and podcasts have served to provide greater visibility for the work developed by all WOEMA committees to a larger audience.

This year's webinar curriculum started with Dr. Marc Schenker who provided a comprehensive overview of the worksite hazards and exposures from agriculture to retail in *Cannabis Worker Occupational Health and Safety*. In April, UCI Professors Dr. Luderer and Fedoruk discussed *Lead and Mercury Toxicity* clinical cases. Dr. John Balmes presented, *Where There's Fire, There's Smoke: Will Wildfires Rage Alongside the Pandemic in 2020*, in June to prepare us for the upcoming wildfire season. In the second half of 2020, Dr. Steven Feinberg discussed *Non-Opioid Pain Management*, providing information and encouragement to treat injured workers with chronic pain. In response to rapidly changing laws surrounding COVID presumption in California, Drs. Rupali Das, Robert Blink, and Robert Harrison participated in an "Ask the Expert" panel titled *COVID*

Presumption Laws – What you need to know. WOEMA concludes its 2020 webinar line-up with Dr. Douglas Martin, ACOEM Vice President, and AMA Guides Author, presenting *Evaluation of Disease and Injury Causation in OEM*.

Audience feedback on WOEMA webinars regularly rate “brushing up on current issues”, “receiving high-quality education on a topic of interest”, and CME as the top reasons for participating. WOEMA webinars are interactive and provide members access to subject matter experts. Recently we have moved to the zoom platform, which was the additional benefit of audience participants sharing their knowledge and questions on the topic through the chat function. We continue to explore formats that would lead to greater engagement among speakers and members.

In addition to webinars, the education committee began developing a podcast series. Taking inspiration from a “fireside chat”, WOEMA Podcasts are designed to be a 10-15 minute conversation with a subject matter expert on the main points of a topic of interest to the occupational medicine physician. Such editions have touched on *COVID-19 Serologic testing*, *PPE Prioritization*, *CAL/OSHA Guidance for Employers and Workplace Safety during COVID-19*, *Moral Injury*, and *Skin Eruptions Associated with COVID-19 Infection and Prevention* among others.

WOEMA Podcasts have branched out to develop “Residents Report” highlighting the work of residents and fellows at OEM training programs within WOEMA states. In this series, Dr. Robert Clapp (UCSF) shared his literature review the latest in sleep hygiene for employees and Dr. Sarah Johnson (UCSF) presented her research on *Determining Work Relatedness of COVID-19 Infections*. We also learned about *Space Radiation Effects: Comparison of Ovarian Toxicity of Low Dose Gamma Radiation vs High LET Charged Particle Radiation*, from Dr. Oluseyi Awodele (UCI). The education committee continues to explore various podcasts formats to bring the listener the latest on a current topic, stay tuned! To listen, subscribe to the **WOEMA Podcast Channel** at your preferred application for receiving podcasts or go to our library at <https://www.buzzsprout.com/1219490>

Offering a personal reflection on the year, serving as education committee co-chair has been a great exercise on being attuned to emerging strategy. We’ve capitalized on the need for virtual learning during a pandemic. I’d like to thank our committee members for bringing ideas for content and engaging in robust discussion on the practice gaps this content seeks to address. I also want to thank Dr. Alya Khan for her creativity and leadership as education committee co-chair, especially in her vision for the WOEMA Podcast Series. Dr. Khan has completed her tenure as education committee co-chair and will assume a seat on the WOEMA Board of Directors in 2021. She will continue to be active in the Education and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) committees. Lastly, I’d like to welcome Dr. Cody Jackson as the new education committee co-chair. Dr. Jackson is a graduate of the University of Utah OEM program, is active on ACOEM’s Council of Education Affairs, and has deep knowledge of OEM guidelines. Dr. Jackson and I look forward to charting course for 2021 education committee activities.

As we conclude this calendar year, the WOEMA education committee looks forward to continuing providing quality, evidence-based information to promote occupational and environmental medicine practice, while exploring new methods for members to provide suggestions for future webinar and podcast topics. Our committee relies on the strength of WOEMA membership and its diverse collection of experience, knowledge, and interests to inform our educational offerings. Please contact us at woema@woema.org with your ideas for content or if you’d like to join an upcoming education committee meeting.

New Committee Chairs

Nominating Committee Report

Committee Members: Sachin Kapoor, Bernyce Peplowski and C. Gean

Chairman of the Board, Erik Won, DO, MPH, MBA, FACOEM

President, Scott Krasner, MD, MPH, FACOEM

President-Elect, Rupali Das, MD, MPH, FACOEM

First Vice President, Ramon Terrazas MD, MPH, QME, FACOEM

Second Vice President – Akbar Sharip, MD, MPH, FACOEM

Newly elected Board members

Alya Khan, MD, MS

Re-elected for a second term

Amanpreet Dhillon, MD, MS, FACOEM,

New Board Appointment

Anthony Biascan, Secretary, MD, MSC, FACOEM

Terming off of the Board

Rosalie Banasiak, MD, FACOEM

Remaining on Board (those who were not up for election)

Heidi K. Roeber, MD, MPH

Rajiv Das, MD, MPH, MS, MRO, FACOEM

Steven Feinberg, MD, MPH

Matthew Hughes, MD, MPH

Minh Nguyen, DO, MPH, MHA, FACOEM



Legislative Advocacy Fund

WOEMA is active in its advocacy work to assure a healthy workforce and to follow and understand legislative and regulatory issues that affect physicians and public health. We contract with a legislative advocate in Sacramento who works with the Legislative Committee, one of the most active committees of WOEMA. This work is instrumental to WOEMA members and our patients to participate in policy debates that lead to improved outcomes for illness, injury and disability in the work environment.

Advocacy is one of the most important member values for WOEMA. We are working toward a more strategic approach for this work and hope to expand the scope to improve our knowledge of issues for all five of the WOEMA states. The dedication of the Legislative Committee is remarkable. While meeting weekly, the committee produces many position papers, actively follows bills going through the legislative process and works closely with CMA, ACOEM and other medical associations to review and understand how new laws may affect our work and patient health outcomes.

WOEMA annually requests donations from members to help offset its costs to fund our contract lobbyist, Don Schinske. We completely understand that these are unique times challenging us in many ways. We only ask that you give what you can without incurring undue hardship. Will you consider making a donation today?

You may go here to make a donation: woema.memberclicks.net/support

Thank you for your consideration,

Erik Won
President

Jill Rosenthal
Chair, Legislative Committee

Michele Blair
Executive Director



Member Spotlight - Dr. Chang Na

Since 2014, WOEMA gatherings have been uplifted by the energetic presence of Chang Na. Dr. Na came to us through a fascinating path that started when, as a grade-school girl, she emigrated with her family from South Korea. Chang was introduced to American culture as she grew up in Northridge, California. She still fondly maintains her "Valley Girl" roots.

She had an interest in science from a young age, which motivated her to earn an undergraduate degree in Neuroscience. But that was not enough for her so her pursuit of higher education took her from her Wellesley College beginnings to medical school at UCSD and then Internal Medicine training at Yale University. It's likely that another educational opportunity shaped her ultimate path. As a third-year medical student, she was able to do a rotation in Africa. The experience was impactful for her in that she saw the value of being a part of the people you serve in order to understand their needs at the ground level.

A funny thing happened on the way to her career as an internal medicine physician: she happened upon an occupational medicine elective. She was hooked. Though she went on to earn board certification in IM, her newfound interest led her to a fellowship in OEM at Yale. Preventive Medicine won a great asset.

Chang and her husband went on to settle into a city that quickly grew to be a home that she speaks very fondly of, Bakersfield. To her, it feels like the Northridge that she grew up in, and she has a passion for being a part of a community that still has a small-town feel. As the chief of service for the Southern California Permanente Medical Group, Dr. Na is able to impact the health of her community by providing care beyond her position, as she is involved in multiple community-based boards and councils.

As a member of WOEMA, Dr. Na quickly became a part of the family. She jumped at the opportunities to be involved and has served on the education committee, legislative committee, conference planning committee, and has represented us at the ACOEM HOD. Since that isn't enough, she also has been involved in ACOEM in multiple roles. The next time you participate in a WOEMA event strike up a conversation with Chang. You can't miss her. She has an infectious smile and will become your instant friend as you get to know her.

Topical News

There are many layers to pandemic prevention and health promotion.

[Diabetes Prevention Programs That Work](#)

A recent presentation of a diabetes prevention outcomes trial shows statistically significant and clinically meaningful improvement in Hemoglobin A1c reduction and weight loss over a 12-month period.

[The Vitamin D controversy](#)

Researchers continue to explore the association between COVID-19 and Vitamin D. This is a top trending clinical topic.

[Melatonin a promising candidate for prevention of COVID-19](#)

Analysis of patient data from Cleveland Clinic's COVID-19 registry revealed that melatonin usage was associated with a nearly 30% reduced likelihood of testing positive for

SARS-CoV-2.

WOEMA is a regional component of the American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine (ACOEM) and is dedicated to high-quality medical care and ethical principles governing the practice of occupational medicine.

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