



## Activity Report Fall Semester 2013

### Overview

As the implementation of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) continues, so do efforts to justify a massive government intrusion into the private medical decisions of Americans. ACA supporters promote the claim that average premiums are “lower than experts initially predicted.” While technically true, the statement implies that premiums are lower due to the ACA, which is undeniably false. This type of misleading claim is typical of the information provided to our nation’s future physicians. The Benjamin Rush Society (BRS) provides a healthy antidote.

Founded by Sally Pipes in 2008 as a Pacific Research Institute (PRI) sponsored project, BRS branched out from PRI on August 27, 2013. We are now a fully independent 501c3 non-profit organization, providing a much needed voice for liberty on medical school campuses and for medical professions in general. Due to a trademark challenge when we attempted to register the name Benjamin Rush Society, we will be transitioning this year to our new name, Benjamin Rush Institute (BRI). As soon as the final settlement agreement is signed (projected to be by year’s end), we will begin marketing our new name.

Last year was fabulous for the Benjamin Rush Society – and we are well on our way to exceeding last year’s successes. As reported to you in June, we ended the 2012-2013 academic year with double the number of chapters, and triple the number of events over the previous year. This year is off to a dynamic start with four debates and nearly two dozen events already held during the first semester –as many as we held altogether last school year.

Work proceeds in expanding our social media presence. As part of the transition to our new name, we have established a BRI Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/BenjaminRushInstitute](http://www.facebook.com/BenjaminRushInstitute)), and Twitter account (@BenRushInstitute) to complement our new Benjamin Rush Institute web page ([BenjaminRushInstitute.org](http://BenjaminRushInstitute.org)). Event summaries and health policy news are posted on our blog. Lectures and debates are announced and easily accessed through the event calendar. Chapter contacts are prominently displayed, and our resource section provides a growing library of book recommendations and articles on economics, medical ethics and health policy. Lecture and debate videos are posted both on the website and the BRI YouTube channel ([www.youtube.com/user/BenjaminRushInst](http://www.youtube.com/user/BenjaminRushInst)). We are now also set up to accept membership applications and donations directly through the webpage. Even though we have not yet begun actively to promote the new media, we already have an established following. We invite you to follow and support BRS through these platforms.

## Chapter Development

For the fall of the 2013-2014 academic year, fourteen chapters and three affiliate schools remain active BRS program participants. This is a tremendous improvement in chapter continuity over the nearly 50% attrition rate of previous years, attributable in great part to our successful National Student Leadership Training Conference last spring. We added three new chapters this fall, and are working on possibilities at four more schools.

### Current List of Active Chapters

1. Barry University School of Podiatric Med – Miami, FL
2. Duke University School of Medicine – Durham, NC
3. George Washington University School of Medicine – Washington, DC
4. Georgetown University School of Medicine – Washington, DC
5. Icahn School of Medicine at Mt. Sinai – NYC, NY
6. Mayo Medical School – Rochester, MN
7. Medical College of Wisconsin – Milwaukee, WI
8. Ohio State University Medical School – Columbus, OH
9. Ohio University College of Osteopathic Medicine – Athens, OH
10. SUNY Downstate College of Medicine – Brooklyn, NY
11. University of Cincinnati School of Medicine- Cincinnati, OH
12. University of Colorado – Denver, CO
13. University of Louisville School of Medicine – Louisville, KY
14. University of South Carolina School of Medicine – Greenville, SC
15. University of Texas – San Antonio, TX
16. University of Toledo College of Medicine – Toledo, OH
17. Texas A & M, College of Medicine – Temple, TX
18. Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Med – Philadelphia, PA\*
19. UMDNJ - School of Osteopathic Med – Stratford, NJ\*
20. Yale University School of Medicine – New Haven, CT\*

\*Denotes a medical school with which BRS has a collaborative relationship rather than an officially chartered chapter on campus.

## Debates, Lectures and Chapter Activities

Through our lecture and debates series, the Benjamin Rush Society promotes thoughtful, well-reasoned discourse on healthcare policy emphasizing solutions that support the principles of liberty. In order to preserve the free enterprise system responsible for worldwide progress and prosperity, it is imperative that we educate our future physicians on the principles of liberty and free market economics. There is a demand for these forums: the four debates held this fall all had audiences which approached or exceeded 100 attendees and left students clamoring for more.

## **Fall Debates:**

### **1. Rowan School of Osteopathic Medicine**

#### ***“U.S. Health Care: Do we need to reform the reform?”***

On October 22, BRS and the Synapse Club of the Rowan School of Osteopathic Medicine co-hosted a debate on health care reform. Five physician debaters formed the panel, each with a unique point of view. Rowan Associate Dean, Dr. Linda Boyd, DO, opened the debate with a brief history of U.S. health care. Each debater then gave a five minute opening statement, followed by vigorous audience participation. BRS Executive Director, Dr. Beth Haynes, MD, defended the morality and practicality of markets in medicine. Dr. Alieta Eck, MD, past president of the Association of American Physicians and Surgeons (AAPS), and recent candidate for U.S. Senate in New Jersey, presented her program for charity care to meet the needs of our country’s most vulnerable citizens in exchange for providing malpractice insurance to physicians. Dr. Martin Levine, DO, past president of the American Osteopathic Association (AOA), called for more time to allow the ACA to develop and achieve its intended goals of improved access and quality. Dr. William Thar, MD, of Physicians for a National Health Plan explained his rationale for a single-payer



*A packed auditorium at the Rowan debate*



*Drs. Haynes, Eck, Thar, Levine and Jha prepare their remarks.*

plan. Finally, Dr. Saurabh Jha, MD, Assistant Professor of Radiology at the University of Pennsylvania, presented his case for a different compromise between markets and government control.

The event was very well attended with slightly over 100 present in the auditorium, and another 48 participating via live-streaming video. The debate can currently be accessed online at <http://www.synapse-som.com/debate>.

### **2. George Washington University**

#### ***“The ACA is Constitutional – Now what?”***

Also on October 22nd, the George Washington University chapters of the Federalist Society and Benjamin Rush Society co-sponsored a debate on the legal aspects of the regulations, subsidies and mandates within the Affordable Care Act. Debaters were Michael Cannon, Director of Health Policy Studies at the Cato Institute and Professor Sara Rosenbaum, JD, Professor of Health Policy at GWU School of Public Health and Health Services. The debaters addressed some of the finer points of Obamacare’s regulations including the legality of expanding subsidies to federally run exchanges and the resulting expansion of the employer mandate.

### 3. Icahn School of Medicine at Mt. Sinai

#### *“Medical Malpractice and Quality: Where do we go from here?”*

Malpractice reform is one of the most difficult stumbling blocks to controlling costs and improving health care quality. On October 23<sup>rd</sup>, a panel of four debaters each presented their case for a remedy to our dysfunctional malpractice system, which relies so heavily on litigation and generates defensive medical practices. Michael Cannon, M.A., J.M., Director of Health Policy Studies at the Cato Institute, explained the advantages of contract liability. Dr. Ellen Carson, MD/JD, a private practice radiologist and consultant to plaintiffs’ firms, defended injured patients’ rights to a day in court. Dr. Jeff Segal, JD/MD, neurosurgeon, CEO and Founder of Medical Justice, a physician defense company, argued in favor of a no-fault patient compensation system. Dr. Shirley Svorny, PhD, Professor of Economics at California State University, supported the role of malpractice companies in promoting quality medical care and pointed out problems with traditional malpractice reforms that place caps on patient compensation. The moderator, Theresa Harris, RN/JD, a defense attorney for Mt. Sinai Hospital, brought another important view point to the night’s debate.



*Dr. Jeff Segal and Michael Cannon contemplate a point.*

The audience was an excellent mix of medical students from Icahn, SUNY Downstate, Columbia and NYU. Lawyers and NYU law students, as well as several local physicians and Icahn School of Medicine faculty, rounded out an audience which approached 100 in number. A video of the debate will be posted on the website by the end of the calendar year.

### 4. University of Texas Health Sciences Center – San Antonio

#### *“Be it Resolved: Healthcare markets are not unique and do not require extra government intervention in order to function.”*



*Debaters and medical student organizers cap off a successful event with a joint smile.*

On December 4<sup>th</sup>, four nationally recognized health policy experts gathered in San Antonio to pick up a debate which began fifty years ago. In 1963, Kenneth Arrow, later awarded a Nobel prize in economics, wrote an article subsequently touted as proof that healthcare is “different” and cannot be left to markets without significant government correction of intrinsic “market failures.” Half a century later these claims persist, in spite of dramatic advances in medicine, patient access to information, and economic evidence. It’s clearly time for another look at Arrow’s analysis and conclusions.

Arguing in support of the resolution were Avik Roy, Senior Fellow at the Manhattan Institute and author of “The Apothecary” column at *Forbes*, and Dr. Mark Pauly, Professor of Health Care Management and business Economics at Wharton School, and author of *Health Reform Without Side Effects*. In opposition were Dr. William Sage, MD/JD, Vice Provost for Health Affairs at the University of Texas – Austin, and Dr. Sam Richardson, PhD, Assistant Professor of Public Affairs at the LBJ School of Public Affairs. Moderating this prestigious group was Dr. Fred Campbell, MD, internist and Clinical Professor at UTHSCA.

This debate was the only one this fall which readily lent itself to voting. Although more than 90 attended the event, only 70 participants voted. The team that sways the most votes to their point of view is declared winner. By this rule, the defenders of free markets won the debate.

Pre-debate Vote: For: 19      Against: 38      Undecided: 15  
Post-debate Vote: For: 26 (+7)      Against: 38      Undecided: 8 (-7)

Comments below from the UTHSCSA medical students are typical of the feedback we receive following our debates:

*“I very much enjoyed the debate the other night. As students, I think it is important for us to understand the current medical healthcare system and hear different perspectives on how others think it should be. As future physicians...I believe that we can have a positive impact on the direction healthcare is moving. Promoting the healthcare discussion is great way to get people directly involved in improving the system in our nation today...I hope that there will be more debates on this topic, because it is an important issue that people — especially students and physicians — should be knowledgeable about... Overall, I enjoyed the debate very much and look forward to the next one. Thank you for setting it up.”*

-William, Medical Student

*“I liked the event. It was nice to hear different perspectives in a way that was clearly to relay ideas without attacking individuals who support those ideas. I thought the event was helpful to understand various perspectives in approaching the problem of healthcare reform. It helped broaden my perspective to hear how experts in different fields (economics, business, etc.) approach the issue from different angles.”*

-Esther, Medical Student

*“Thank you, Holly, and the rest of the BRI team, for putting this great debate on! Clearly this is a hugely important issue, and it’s great that your organization fosters the sort of dialogue that likely is lacking from most med school curricula. I hope y’all put on more of these debates! ... We’ve been talking about the debate all day... Great stuff!”*

-Dane

*“I thought the quality of the debaters/speakers was exceptional. Overall, very high quality event. It’s important to have things like this to expand students’ education beyond medical academics into other relevant areas like last night’s economics.”*

-Charles, Medical Student

## **Spring 2014 Debates**

Our goal is to hold a minimum of four more debates during spring semester. Planning is already underway for three:

Debate #5 – February 13, 2014, Medical College of Wisconsin (Milwaukee)

“Expanding Medicaid will not improve access, quality or affordability.”

Debate #6 – February or March, 2014, University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus

“Independent Payment Advisory Board – Necessary Good or Unnecessary Evil?”

Debate #7 – April, 2014, Yale University School of Medicine

“Be it Resolved: Attacks on Fee-for-Service as a driver of “volume not value” are misplaced.”

## **Fall Lecture Series**

This fall, BRS sponsored 19 lunch lectures with an average attendance of 40 to 50 students per event. This portion of our program is a favorite of students, requiring less organizational time, and typically a more intimate



experience. The largest event of the fall with roughly 200 attendees was with Sen. Rand Paul who spoke at the University of Louisville.

Another strategic success was BRS’s participation in American Medical Student Association’s (AMSA) national conference held at Rowen School of Osteopathic Medicine. AMSA is known for its vocal support of the ACA, and even for promoting the move to a single-payer system. BRS thus leaped at the opportunity to sponsor Dr. Lee Gross, MD to lecture on Epiphany Health, his free market direct primary care practice model. Dr. Gross was enthusiastically received by a packed auditorium as he explained how his plan offers affordable, transparent pricing, specifically targeted to the uninsured and under-insured – all achieved without any government mandates or subsidies. This type of encounter successfully challenges the anti-market bias held by the majority of medical students and their faculty.

Topics in the Fall Lecture Series varied from economics, to health policy, to free market practice models and much more. A complete listing follows.

- 8/13/13 University of South Carolina School of Medicine - Dr. Tom Kendall, MD, President-elect, AAPS, “A Conservative Approach to the Practice of Medicine”
- 8/ 22/13 University of Louisville School of Medicine - Dr. Rand Paul, MD, “Dr. Smith Goes to Washington”
- 9/11/13 Medical College of Wisconsin - Sally Pipes, Chair of BRS, “How to Achieve Affordable, Accessible, Quality Care for All Americans”

- 9/17/13 George Washington University School of Medicine - Prof. Josh Blackman, JD, “The Inside Story of the Constitutional Challenge to Obamacare” Co-hosted with GWU Federalist Society
- 9/26/13 Icahn School of Medicine at Mt. Sinai - Dr. Raymond Raad, MD, “The Libertarian Perspective on Health Policy”
- 10/7/13 George Washington University School of Medicine - Dr. Marty Makary, MD, “Physicians Leading the Charge: The Future of Quality in Healthcare”
- 10/11/13, Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine - Dr. Beth Haynes, MD, “Free Market Innovations in Health Care Delivery: Why Less Government Control is Better”
- 10/11/13 University of Louisville School of Medicine - Dr. Arnold Zeiderman, MD, “So now that I have my MD, what’s out there besides patient care?”
- 10/12/13 AMSA conference, ‘Empowering Future Physicians’ Rowan School of Osteopathic Medicine - Dr. Lee Gross, MD, “Direct Primary Care: How a Primary Care Revolution Can Save the US Health Care System”
- 10/17/13 Ohio University Heritage College of Osteopathic Medicine - Dr. Todd Fredricks, DO, “The Current Ramifications of Implementation of PPACA”
- 10/31/13 University of Texas – San Antonio Dr. Kathleen Brown, MD, “Medical Billing Codes (CPT): The Keys to Control of Physicians”
- 11/1/13, Ohio University Heritage College of Osteopathic Medicine - Dr. Neal Nesbitt, MD, President of the Ohio State Medical Association. Co-sponsored with SOMA (Student Osteopathic Medicine Association)
- 11/ 14/13 George Washington University School of Medicine - Dr. Marcy Zwelling, MD, “Healthcare 2013: How to make sure your patients come first”
- 11/15/13 Icahn School of Medicine at Mt. Sinai - Dr. Beth Haynes, MD, “The Positive Message of Free Market Medicine”
- 11/19/13 Ohio University Heritage College of Osteopathic Medicine - Dr. David Drozek, DO, “On ObamaCare”
- 11/ 21/13 Ohio State University College of Medicine - Cash Business: A Direct Pay Symposium
  - Dr. Tom Peponis, MD, “Experience of Operating a Direct Pay Practice”
  - Dr. Ryan Nash, MD, “Ethical Considerations of Opting Out”

- 12/10/13 University of Cincinnati College of Medicine - Dr. Will Sawyer, MD, “The Future Private Practice in Primary Care”
- 12/10/13 University of Toledo College of Medicine - Dr. Paul Kempen, MD, PhD., Anesthesiologist, Cleveland Clinic, “Ethics in Medicine”
- 12/12/13 University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus – Dr. Linda Gorman, PhD, Senior Fellow and Director of the Health Care Policy Institute at the Independence Institute, Golden, CO

## Other Fall Events

In addition to debates and lectures, BRS students participated in several other events. A number of chapters set up tables at their schools’ organizational fairs at the beginning of the school year. Several students attended the national AAPS conference in Denver, and three BRS chapter leaders were sponsored by BRS to attend the Physicians Summit Conference in Dallas, Texas. These conferences addressed the effects of government intervention on the practice of medicine, emphasizing free market practice models as demonstrably viable alternatives.

## Collaborations

This October, the leadership of several liberty-oriented organizations met for the second time in Washington, DC to discuss collaboration, and brainstorm on how to overcome mutual challenges such as chapter continuity. Hosted by the Alexander Hamilton Society, other attendees included Gene Meyer and Peter Redpath from the Federalist Society, and leaders from other campus-based organizations like the Adam Smith Society, Love and Fidelity, and the Intercollegiate Studies Institute.

BRS leaders also participated in several national healthcare conferences. At the September [Managed Markets Summit](#) in San Diego, BRS Board members Sally Pipes and Dr. Neil Minkoff, with Executive Director Dr. Beth Haynes, and PRI Board member Dr. George Savage, held two workshops on “Medical Innovation in the Era of the Affordable Care Act.” At the same conference, Dr. Minkoff also participated in two more workshops on “Healthcare Reform – The Great Debate.”

Dr. Haynes played a major role in organizing the first annual [Physicians Summit](#), a two-day conference in Dallas, aimed at providing physicians with practical information and guidance on maintaining control of their practices and preserving their personal wealth. Speakers included BRS Board member Dr. Richard Armstrong, as well as leaders from the two leading free market physician professional organizations, Docs4PatientCare and AAPS. By attending the conference, BRS students from Icahn School of Medicine, Ohio State University and our new chapter at Georgetown enjoyed personal interaction with conference speakers and took valuable information back to their student colleagues.



*Dr. Haynes and BRS students at The Physicians Summit 2013.*



While attending the Atlas Think Tank Leadership Training seminar, Dr. Haynes established connections with many potential collaborators from liberty promoting organizations from around the world. During the seminar, and immediately following at the Liberty Forum, an information packed, prominent table display introduced attendees to the Benjamin Rush Society.

## **Conclusion**

Even with the strong start this fall, there is plenty of improvement in the works. Processes are being developed for event planning and reporting, streamlining chapter communications, and membership development. Educational and recruiting materials such as a “Free Market Medicine Kit” will be collated and distributed to students. The Student Chapter Handbook, released this past summer, will be updated to reflect our growing experience. The Speakers Bureau has been established, and will benefit greatly from purposeful expansion. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Student Leadership Training Conference is slated for spring 2014. Physicians can establish professional chapters in areas without student chapters.

All this growth in reach and effectiveness is made possible by the very generous and much appreciated donor and volunteer support. With our donors’ sustained financial assistance, and the crucial contribution of our volunteer students and speakers, the Benjamin Rush Society will expose ever more students to the incredible potential for worldwide access to affordable, quality medical care when the creative power of markets and medical entrepreneurs dedicated to freedom of choice for patients and for doctors is fully unleashed. Thank you for helping make this dream achievable.