

TCEP Leadership and Advocacy Fellowship

By

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The Texas College of Emergency Physicians (TCEP) Leadership and Advocacy Fellowship began in 2008 as one of the four components of the *EM Futures* project. The *EM Futures* project, an initiative of the Texas College of Emergency Physicians, was designed to both drive increased membership and engagement of members. A secondary goal of the project was to foster future achievement and participation of young physicians within TCEP. The other components of the *EM Futures* project included a medical student leadership initiative, a residency visit program, and a mentors program.

The TCEP Leadership and Advocacy Fellowship (TLAF) however has had a tremendous impact on the development of future leaders for TCEP. It utilized the New Jersey ACEP Chapter's Leadership Development Program as a model. In this case study, we describe TLAF's six-year history, the current iteration of the TLAF, and details of its successes.

History of TLAF

The Texas College of Emergency Physicians Leadership and Advocacy Fellowship (TLAF) was created by the Texas College of Emergency Physicians (TCEP) as part of *EM Futures: Engaging Members, Developing Leaders* to mentor young leaders in emergency medicine. TLAF provides an orientation to organized emergency medicine and facilitates leadership development via guided experiences at state and national meetings, retreats, and conferences.

The program was created in 2008 and has trained approximately 60 fellows over the past six years. Leadership and Advocacy fellows have gone on to assume leadership roles in multiple aspects of emergency medicine. Even after the

conclusion of their fellowship year, these individuals continue to be valuable members of TCEP, ACEP, and EMRA.

Today's program operates with minimal funding as the fellows themselves are responsible for travel costs that are not necessarily reimbursed by their employers to and from various ACEP conferences and TCEP meetings.

TLAF Today

The Texas College of Emergency Physicians Leadership and Advocacy Fellowship program has three main goals: (1) to identify individuals with the potential to become leaders in emergency medicine, (2) to provide orientation and networking skills to ensure potential leaders promote emergency medicine locally and nationally, and (3) to facilitate the promotion of fellowship graduates into leadership positions both locally and nationally. The program is designed to engage emergency medicine residents in state training programs as well as young physicians recently entering clinical practice in the state of Texas.

TLAF fellows are expected to actively participate in many functions of the Texas College of Emergency Physicians by being ex-officio members of the TCEP Board of Directors, serving on TCEP committees, serving as an Ambassador during the TCEP Annual Meeting, and contributing on a bimonthly basis to the chapter newsletter *EMphasis*. Additionally, fellows are expected to participate in ACEP functions by joining an ACEP committee or section and serving as an Alternate Councilor for the Texas Chapter to ACEP Meetings.

TLAF fellows are expected to participate in residency visits and medical school visits conducted by the chapter to educate young physicians and medical students about the importance of organized medicine and other career development tools.

TCEP Board Members provide the fellows with instruction in the following critical topics and leadership principles throughout the yearlong program:

- Getting Politically Active
- Getting Your Team Together: Internal Team Building
- Getting Yourself Organized: Time Management
- Getting Your Message Across: Media Training and Presentation Skills
- Getting the Job Done: Effective Alliances
- Wellness: Finding a Balance between Work and Family
- Professionalism: Grooming Future Leaders

Additionally, TLAF serves as the basis for young emergency physicians to achieve Fellow designation within the American College of Emergency Physicians.

TLAF's Success Stories

The Texas College of Emergency Physicians Leadership and Advocacy Fellowship, as a component of the *EM Futures* project, has helped TCEP grow their membership from fewer than 800 active members prior to 2005 to over 1,000 active members and 500 candidate members as of 2012 (Figure 1).¹ Candidate membership – which applies to current medical students, interns, and physicians participating in an emergency medicine residency or fellowship - has grown by about 50% for TCEP since implementing the *EM Futures* project and the Leadership and Advocacy Fellowship.

¹ Smith, J and Fisher, A. TCEP Membership Update. TCEP Board of Directors Meeting. April 2013.



Figure 1.

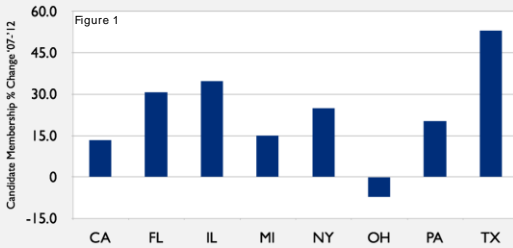
In fact, the success of this program is demonstrated by exceptional membership growth that has surpassed other large states such as Florida and Illinois (Figure 2).² The focus on recruiting young members appears to have also reaped benefits for recruiting regular Active Members for TCEP as well.

² Smith, J, Ren R., Andrabi, S, et al. EM Futures: A novel membership engagement program is key to increased membership recruitment and retention. 2013.

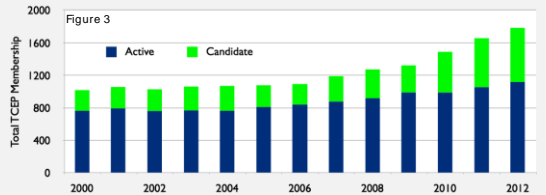
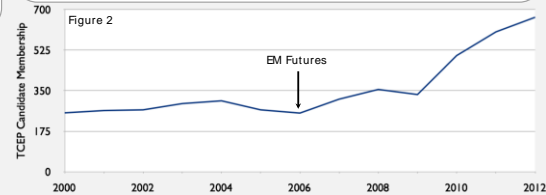
Background: To foster future success of a membership organization, a group must foster positive opinion of young prospective members. This will drive future achievement and participation leading to increased membership growth overall. The Texas College of Emergency Physicians (TCEP) implemented the EM Futures Program, a suite of four initiatives, to individualize membership engagement of medical students, residents, young physicians, and practicing physicians.

Objective: To evaluate the effect of the EM Futures Program on candidate membership in TCEP and to compare these findings with similar state chapters (> 1000 total members).

Methods: 2000-2012 data for candidate membership of the eight large state chapters (CA, FL, IL, MI, OH, NY, PA, TX) was obtained from the American College of Emergency Physicians. This data was analyzed to determine the percent change in candidate membership from 2000 to 2006, before EM Futures implementation, and from 2007 to 2012, after EM Futures implementation.



Results: After declining numbers (4% decrease in 2000-2006), the implementation of EM Futures led to a profound increase in TCEP candidate membership (53% increase in 2007-2012) [Figure 2]. Similar state chapters from 2007 to 2012 experienced less growth than TCEP, with candidate membership changes ranging from a maximum of 35% (IL) to a minimum of -7% (OH) [Figure 1].



Conclusion: Since its implementation in 2006, the EM Futures Program increased candidate membership in TCEP, exceeding the candidate membership growth of all other large state chapters. The EM Futures Program engages and promotes early involvement and participation of young members in an organization which leads to increased future membership growth.

Figure 2

Testimonials from Current TCEP Board Members

Texas' Leadership and Advocacy Fellowship serves as a pipeline for young, talented, and passionate leaders to attain leadership roles with TCEP. Many fellows have gone on to serve on the TCEP Board. Several current TCEP Board members are former TLAF fellows. Some of them have provided their feedback on the program³:

“The TLAF fellowship laid the foundation for my future success in TCEP/ACEP... it provided me with exposure to leadership within the state and nationally.”

“Being a fellow allows you exposure to both learn from leaders as well as show them your skill set in a safe environment. The most important aspect for TLAF

³ Harbir Singh and Gerad Troutman, personal communication.

folks who would like to become future leaders is to show up, network, and offer to contribute.”

“The TLAF program has been instrumental in establishing my organized medicine career foundation. I was able to quickly learn the ropes and ladders to leadership and find where my path starts. It is commonly said that 'showing up' is all you need to do; although I do believe 'showing up' is an important first step, but also setting yourself up to do tasks and then COMPLETING those tasks are what will set you apart from others.”

“The mentoring and fellowship process with other members has been instrumental in landing committee assignment or taskforce assignments.”

“Chapters have traditionally relied on word of mouth and occasional ground work from its leadership to engage other members into leadership tracks. I think a development a program allows the organization to cast a MUCH broader net and allows for the true best leaders of the organization to stand out and rise to the top. This helps create a funnel and allows for the younger physicians to 'test the waters' and make a well informed decision before jumping into further leadership roles.”

“I think the most important take home for me from TLAF is simply to ‘Go for it!’ ... Meet people, go to meetings, find your path, and go down it!!”

Concluding Thoughts

The Texas College of Emergency Physicians has built on past successes from other ACEP chapters to develop its own Leadership and Advocacy Fellowship as part of a four-pronged push to recruit and engage young members. The program has been wildly successful not only in expanding membership, but also in cultivating leaders. For emergency physician organizations - for that matter any

organization – to thrive new and vibrant leadership must remain in the pipeline, be adequately mentored, and collaborate with established leaders. Texas' Leadership and Advocacy Fellowship is one example of how an ACEP Chapter can accomplish that task.