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## Message from the President

Hello COMSEP!

I hope that you are finding time for yourselves in this busy time before our students have a break. This time of year makes me reflect on all we have and I begin to look to the future. Believe it or not, the winter solstice has a special place in my heart. Not because of pagan rituals, but because the days become longer (only by milli-seconds, but hey...I will take anything!).

I know that you all received your membership renewals and I hope you had a chance to read through the member benefits. COMSEP has really grown since my first meeting in 1997, thanks to all of your hard work. With your support, we have expanded the grant programs and other opportunities for scholarship, our national mentoring program, and are forging the way with national collaborations to enhance the well-being and education of our students. Most importantly, one of the intangible member benefits is the sense of community we have. When I attend other meetings and interact with other educational groups, my standard is always COMSEP. I feel so fortunate to be a part of what you all do.

Here are some quotes that I thought would carry through the rest of the month.

*The bond that links your true family is not one of blood, but of respect and joy in each other's life. -- Richard Bach*

*Sometimes your joy is the source of your smile, but sometimes your smile can be the source of your joy. --Nhat Hanh*

*Joy is the simplest form of gratitude. --Karl Barth*



Courtesy of Stephen Cobert, MD

Wishing you all the best,

Sherilyn Smith, MD

COMSEP President, 2015-2017

## COMSEP Members Hard at Work!

This is one of the busiest times of the year for COMSEP. The COMSEP volunteer spirit is manifest in hours of reviewing and providing feedback, like all good educators do! You all are so creative and I am looking forward to seeing more in the spring at our international meeting.

Our blinded peer review of all the **workshop submissions** this year once again revealed that the quality of submissions was amazing. I was so impressed with the thoughtful nature of the feedback and discuss about each workshop. It is rare to get focused feedback as a faculty member designed to make you a better teacher. KUDOS to you all!

COMSEP members, along with the leadership of the Research and Scholarship Taskforce also provided peer review of your **abstracts**. This blinded process applies Glassick's criteria for scholarship and creates in depth critique designed to improve your projects as well as your writing! No other meeting I have attended provides this type of thoughtful and well structured review.

COMSEP supports the scholarly work through our grant program in conjunction with our partner MedU. The members of the grant program will be reviewing the **grant proposals** in the next month, crafting feedback and discussing our findings with the COMSEP investigators who submitted proposals. Thank you to all the reviewers for your hard work and thoughtful critique.

## Annual Meeting Update

Inspired by Dr. First's talk last year about giving back to your community, COMSEP is partnering with the **Children's Community Clinic** in Portland, OR. The clinic began in 2005 and is part of the Coalition of Community Clinics. The clinic's mission is to provide high quality and compassionate healthcare to children, from birth to 21 years, of families who are underserved (uninsured and underinsured), regardless of ethnicity, geographic residency or ability to pay.

COMSEP members will have the opportunity to bring and donate their favorite book at the 2017 COMSEP meeting to enhance the clinic's Reach Out and Read Program (<http://www.reachoutandread.org>). I am already planning which book to donate (maybe more than one!). There will be a presentation on Saturday to the clinic director and I am looking forward to seeing what great books you all contribute!

Registration for the Annual Meeting will open on **Thursday, January 12, 2017**. At that time, we will also send out the link to reserve your hotel room.

The [schedule at a glance](#) has been posted on the COMSEP website! Members of the COMSEP Executive Committee and the Meeting Planning Committee worked together to revise the schedule slightly to allow more time for networking, insure that workshops occur every day and that the meeting maximizing active learning!

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