



The PALATUCCI Connection

Keeping You Current with AAN Palatucci Advocacy Leadership Forum Activities

Issue 1, Volume 1

Singh Brings Epilepsy Awareness to New Delhi



Mamta Bhushan Singh, MBBS, MD, DM, a 2008 Palatucci Advocacy Leadership Forum graduate, has been working to promote epilepsy awareness in New Delhi, India. During the past several months, Singh and a handful of volunteer supporters have been hosting a series of epilepsy camps in the suburbs and villages surrounding New Delhi. The goal of these camps is to examine and counsel patients with epilepsy, prescribe medications, and offer supplies when possible. Some patients are also referred to Singh for a follow

up visit at her main facility, the All India Institute of Medical Sciences. Singh's team has so far hosted 11 camps, visiting with approximately 250 patients.

In India, many people affected by epilepsy are reluctant to seek medical treatment. Singh attributes this to a lower literacy rate in poorer areas and cultural stigmas attached to the disease. In an attempt to educate the local population, she recently participated in a radio program to discuss epilepsy and answer questions from callers. Singh is also planning local school visits to provide basic information on epilepsy to students and teachers. To improve her own knowledge, she will be traveling to Pakistan this month to examine how telemedicine is being used to improve epilepsy care in remote areas. Singh attributes much of her success as an advocate to her attendance at the Palatucci Forum. "The Forum trains us for this, provides us the tools, encourages even humble efforts and reinforces our faith in ourselves and in other people."

Welcome to *The Palatucci Connection* e-newsletter, providing you with updates on recent advocacy successes by graduates of the AAN's Palatucci Advocacy Leadership Forum. As this is the first edition, we welcome your feedback. Forward your comments, suggestions, and story ideas to Derek Brandt at dbrandt@aan.com.

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The Donald M. Palatucci Advocacy Leadership Forum is supported in part by an educational grant from UCB, Inc.

Cardenas Advocates for TBI Care, Protection of EMG Studies for Neurologists

In an effort to improve patient outcomes following traumatic brain injury (TBI) in the state of Arizona, Javier Cardenas, MD, a 2008 graduate and 2009 advisor, has opened a multidisciplinary center for TBI treatment.

Cardenas helped to broker a partnership between the Barrow Neurological Institute, the Phoenix Children's Hospital, Arizona State University, and the Arizona Brain Injury Association. The partnership resulted in the creation of the Barrow Resource for Acquired Injury to the Nervous System (BRAINS) Clinic, which opened July 13, 2009.

The mission of the BRAINS Clinic is to improve outcomes for those who suffer from neurological injury through comprehensive patient centered care, collaboration, and translational research. The clinic aims to provide the most comprehensive program to treat brain and spinal cord injuries in the state.

Cardenas also recently lobbied the Arizona state legislature in opposition to House Bill 2160, which could have

potentially changed chiropractors' scope of practice and permitted them to perform EMGs. In an attempt to change the legislation, [Cardenas wrote a letter](#) to the bill's sponsor, Arizona Representative Nancy Barto, Chairperson of the state's Health and Human Services Committee, asking her to reconsider supporting the bill.

Cardenas met with Barto to outline the Arizona Neurological Society's position. Barto later discussed the bill with the Arizona Board of Chiropractic Examiners, and was able to come up with a resolution that satisfied all parties.



Javier Cardenas, MD

Become a 2010 Palatucci Forum Advisor!

[Online Application](#)



January 7-10, 2010

W Fort Lauderdale

Fort Lauderdale, FL

Application Deadline:
September 20, 2009

Two State Neurologic Societies Emerge in the Midwest

2009 Palatucci Forum graduate, Nancy Hammond, MD, is working to establish a neurological society in Kansas. Laurence J. Kinsella, MD, FAAN, a 2003 forum graduate, is working to revitalize the Missouri Neurologic Association after several years of inactivity.

Both Hammond and Kinsella have benefited from their advocacy leadership training which helped them learn how to advocate for their patients at the local and state level. The societies will focus on keeping members informed on

legislative issues regarding patient care and help them bolster support through connections with peers.

To join the Missouri Neurologic Association, contact Kinsella at laurence.kinsella@fphstl.com.

To join the Kansas Neurological Society, contact Hammond at nhammond@kumc.edu.

To learn more about establishing or supporting a neurologic society in your state, contact Dave Showers at dshowers@aan.com or (651) 332-8683.

Bedlack and Potts Earn Top Honors for Advocacy

2008 forum graduate [Richard S. Bedlack, MD, PhD, MSc](#) is the third recipient of the Kenneth M. Viste, Jr., MD, Patient Advocate of the Year Award. His effectiveness and enthusiasm on behalf of his patients led to him to be honored during the 2009 AAN Annual Meeting in Seattle. The award was created after Viste's death in 2005 to recognize neurologists who exemplify his leadership and commitment to advocating for the patient community. [Learn more about the Viste Award.](#)



Richard Bedlack, MD, PhD, MSc

Recipient of the 2009 Kenneth M. Viste, Jr., MD, Patient Advocate of the Year Award

[Daniel C. Potts, MD](#), was recognized as the 2008 Palatucci Advocate of the Year during the 2009 Palatucci Forum in San Diego. An example of Dr. Potts' advocacy efforts is the publication of his book, *The Broken Jar* which displays artwork samples from his father, who was diagnosed with Alzheimer's. All proceeds from the book go to [Caring Days](#) a day program for adults living with Alzheimer's and dementia. Most recently, Potts was recognized by his local news outlet, [The Tuscaloosa News](#), giving more public awareness to his cause and accomplishments.



Daniel Potts, MD

Recipient of the 2008 Palatucci Advocate of the Year Award

2009 Palatucci Advocacy Leadership Forum Graduates

The AAN is pleased to recognize this year's forum graduates.

Syed N. Ahmed, MD, FRCPC, Edmonton, AB
 Amza Ali, MD, FRCP, Kingston, Jamaica
 Samir Belagaje, MD, Cincinnati, OH
 Dan J. Capampangan, MD, Phoenix, AZ
 Salvador Cruz-Flores, MD, Saint Louis, MO
 Mill Etienne, MD, MPH, CPH, Bronxville, NY
 Jill Giordano, DO, Washington, DC
 Nancy Hammond, MD, Kansas City, KS
 John W. Henson, MD, FAAN, Seattle, WA
 Kevin A. Kerber, MD, Ann Arbor, MI
 Mark A. Kozinn, MD, FAAN, Atlanta, GA
 Jeffrey S. Kutcher, MD, MPH, Ann Arbor, MI
 Anil K. Nair, MD, Boston, MA
 Njide Okubadejo, FMCP, Lagos, Nigeria
 Bruce I. Ovbiagele, MD, Los Angeles, CA
 Eddie L. Patton, MD, MS, Pearland, TX
 Huned S. Patwa, MD, West Haven, CT
 Rikki Racela, MD, New York, NY
 Awais Riaz, MD, PhD, Salt Lake City, UT
 Leslie Rudzinski, MD, Rochester, MN
 Lawrence M. Samkoff, MD, FAAN, Rochester, NY
 Joseph Schindler, MD, New Haven, CT
 Elliott A. Schulman, MD, FAAN, Wynnewood, PA
 Jason J. Sico, MD, East Haven, CT
 Isaac E. Silverman, MD, Hartford, CT
 Sarah Song, MD, Washington, DC
 James C. Stevens, MD, FAAN, Fort Wayne, IN
 Walter Struhal, MD, Linz, Austria
 Jane Tavyev, MD, Houston, TX
 William B. Young, MD, FAAN, Philadelphia, PA

In Memoriam

We mourn the passing of two fellow Palatucci Forum graduates.



Nidhi K. Watson, MD
 2003 Graduate, 2004 Mentor
 1976–2007



[Lawrence Brass, MD](#)
 2005 Graduate
 1956–2006

Neurology Advocates in the News

An interview with the media or getting published offers advocates a prime opportunity to convey their message to the public. Below are recent examples of Palatucci graduates using print, television, and online media outlets to their advantage. If you have an example you would like included in the next edition of *The Palatucci Connection*, send it to Derek Brandt at dbrandt@aan.com.

Anthony G. Alessi, MD, FAAN, is the host of *NeuroFrontiers*, a new AAN radio program geared toward helping health care professionals better understand neurology. During the July 6 program, Alessi interviewed former forum graduate Jeffrey S. Kutcher MD, MPH, about sudden death in sports. *NeuroFrontiers* is produced in partnership with ReachMD on XM Satellite Radio Channel 160.

Richard S. Bedlack, MD, PhD, MSc, [published a study](#) examining patient enrollment in ALS clinical trials.

Javier Cardenas, MD, discussed the dangers of head injuries following the Natasha Richardson tragedy with a several local Phoenix news stations, including:

[Arizona Family, Channel 3](#)

[Fox affiliate Channel 10](#)

[ABC affiliate Channel 15](#)

Cardenas was also [interviewed recently](#) to comment on recent budget cuts to Arizona medical training programs.

Salvador Cruz-Flores, MD, MPH, talked with a local St. Louis television station about the [risk factors associated with stroke](#) and [how to prevent one](#).

Mill Etienne, MD, MPH, CPH, was interviewed about the importance of [serving as a mentor and role model](#) within his community.

Robert C. Griggs, MD, FAAN, [discussed the impact of recent advocacy efforts](#) by the Academy and encouraged members to get involved, published in the June edition of AANnews.

Anna D. Hohler, MD, and Elliott A. Schulman, MD, FAAN, [published an article](#) in *Neurology Today*, entitled, "Neurologists Need to Screen Patients for History of Abuse".

Michael J. Kitchell, MD, [testified before the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Health](#) regarding the challenges faced by physicians practicing in rural areas.

Awais Riaz, MD, PhD, [wrote a letter of appreciation](#) to Senator Edward Kennedy for his support of funding research for epilepsy.

Walter Struhal, MD, [published an article](#) in the European Journal of Neurology discussing The European Association of Young Neurologists and Trainees.