

CRAB: Chief Residents Association of Baltimore

Collaboration among Regional Residency Programs
by Establishing an Organization of Chief Residents

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Introduction

- There are 9 independent Internal Medicine residencies of varying sizes and organizational structures in Baltimore, all in close proximity
- Opportunities exist to share resources, collaborate on educational initiatives, and strengthen intermural relationships
- The responsibility of developing, organizing, and managing events and initiatives for all the residents in the region is delegated annually to chief residents

History of CRAB

- Founded in 1996, in response to interest in creating a local resident medical jeopardy competition
- Two local program directors became faculty mentors for CRAB
- Quarterly meetings were held to plan events that were of interest to all the internal medicine residents of Baltimore
- Focus was on fund-raising, so the winning medical jeopardy team could be sent to represent Maryland in the national American College of Physicians (ACP) Doctors' Dilemma Competition
- In 2003, CRAB was incorporated into the Maryland ACP Chapter
- Chair(s) of CRAB are standing members of the Council of the Maryland ACP Chapter
- Focus for CRAB shifted from fund-raising to program development
- Further details are available on the CRAB website: www.acponline.org/about_acp/chapters/md/crab_intronev.htm



Figure 1: Winners of 2017 CRAB soccer tournament

Objectives

- To annually galvanize the area's chief residents into a well-functioning productive organization, where membership changes 100% every year
- To nurture interest and participation from each program in intermural activities that serve the common good of all programs
- To promote leadership skills among our chief residents
- To foster communication, collegiality, and collaboration among programs
- To encourage responsibility and accountability among chief residents for creating and organizing programs on behalf of the region's residents

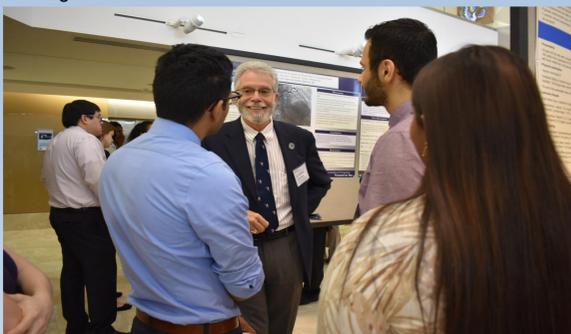


Figure 3 (left): Resident poster competition

Figure 4 (above): CRAB Workshop on how to create successful abstracts and posters

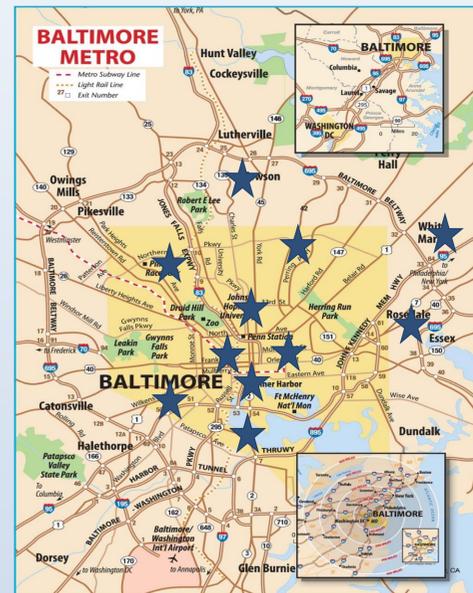


Figure 3: Map of Baltimore with locations of IM residencies

Methodology/Tactics

- CRAB members assume leadership roles in developing programs and events for area's 655 internal medicine residents
- The CRAB co-chairs sit on ACP Chapter Council during their term and update the Council regarding CRAB activities and plans, and provide resident perspectives on issues and proposed policies
- CRAB co-chairs decide how often to convene CRAB meetings depending on the nature of projects that are being pursued
- The CRAB faculty facilitators organizes an evening meeting each July for all area chief residents, in which CRAB members:
 - Nominate and appoint co-Chair(s) of CRAB
 - Select topics for the Doctors' Dilemma competition and discuss how to write high quality questions for the competition
 - Establish timeline for submission of questions
 - Divide into groups to brainstorm about potential CRAB projects or initiatives for the year
 - Regroup to review potential projects; feasibility and cost are reviewed with ACP Chapter leadership, who are in attendance
 - Discuss what challenges they are facing at their home institutions (Good & Welfare)
- CRAB also collaborates with other organizations on regional initiatives, such as Society of Hospitalist Medicine, and the Maryland ACP Chapter's other committees, which include Early Career Physicians Committee, Women in Medicine Committee, and International Medical Graduate Committee



CRAB Activities

- **Medical Jeopardy Competition:** Writing questions, organizing, and hosting the annual Medical Jeopardy Competition for area residencies
- **Crab Grand Rounds:** A quarterly lecture series on topics in Business of Medicine given Carey School of Business faculty. Topics include contract negotiation, payment models in medicine, personal financial management
- **Crab Olympics:** A day of sporting competitions between programs
- **Indoor Soccer Tournament:** Takes place annually among area residency programs
- **Crab Potluck Dinners**
- **Workshops:** Topic include – writing abstracts and posters, physician burn-out, visas/immigration, and panel discussion on applying for fellowships by local fellowship directors
- **Teaching Skills Workshop:** Annual workshop on teaching supervising residents how to teach. Faculty from multiple institutions participate as facilitators.
- **Volunteerism:** Project in health education to support a local elementary school
- **Awards:** CRAB nominates one faculty member annually in Maryland for the highly coveted C. Lockard Conley Teaching Award by the Maryland ACP Chapter.
- **Spouse Recognition/Advocacy Program**



Figure 5: CRAB workshop on visas and immigration

CRAB Initiatives

- **Profiles In Excellence:** Annual CRAB-produced video that highlights the competency of professionalism. Each program submits a short video of one resident, describing the behaviors and attitudes of that individual. All the videos are combined into a single composite video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xq6oaZP4u4A&feature=youtu.be>
- **CRAB Clinical Vignette Poster Awards:** In addition to the formal faculty judging at the annual resident meeting, CRAB members independently judge the same set of posters and award three winners
- **Student Dilemma Competition:** CRAB organizes an annual Medical Dilemma Competition for area medical students
- **CRAB website:** www.acponline.org/about_acp/chapters/md/crab_intronev.htm
- **Scholarship:** CRAB members have presented workshops and posters at APDIM:
 - "Clinical Communications Tools and Resident Coordination in the Smartphone/Tablet Era."
 - "An Innovative Approach to Resident Scheduling: Use of a Point-Based System to Account for Resident Preferences."
- **Advocacy:** promoting resident participation at ACP Leadership Day. Chief residents have promoted this event to their colleagues, and participation at Leadership Day by residents increased from 2, to 4 to 6 successively from 2011 to 2013
- **CRIME:** Consortium for Research In Medical Education. Effort to conduct research projects that involve multiple institutions
- **AM Report Open House:** Chief residents are invited to each other's AM Reports to gain exposure to different teaching methodologies and approaches

Results

At annual ACP-sponsored resident conferences, the number of abstracts submitted steadily increased from 2004 to 2012, due to the grassroots efforts of CRAB members. Nearly all abstracts were accepted in poster form for presentation.

The attendance at the annual Medical Jeopardy competition rose steadily from 120 in 2004 to 175 in 2012. This can be directly attributed to having the chief residents not only organize the event, but also recruit teams and attendees from their home institutions. By making this essentially a CRAB sponsored event, the chief residents took ownership of the program and promoted it actively among their residents at their home institutions.

Year	# of Abstracts
2004	137
2005	163
2006	146
2007	136
2008	187
2009	162
2010	173
2011	192
2012	236

Table 1: Number of abstracts submitted to the annual Maryland ACP Resident Conference by year

Challenges

- **Membership Turnover:** Creating cohesiveness without membership continuity.
- **Workload on CRAB Leadership:** During the first 4 years, one chair was elected; but due to workload, two co-chairs were subsequently elected. Over the past several years, 3 co-chairs have been elected.
- **Accountability and Follow-through:** Chairs must lead without frequent interaction and contact with membership. The co-chairs are responsible for holding meetings on a regular basis, communicating with other CRAB members, representing residents as sitting members of the ACP Chapter's Council, and encouraging all the residents in the chapter to participate actively in CRAB activities.
- **Cost:** Largely born by the Maryland Chapter of the ACP. Annual budget is \$1K to 2K per year

Discussion

In prior years, the ACP Maryland Chapter's approach to management of resident activities was a top-down one, in which senior experienced educators directed, created, and led all resident activities. Over the past decade, a well-orchestrated group of local chief residents now spearhead all resident activities.

This has resulted in innovative approaches to traditional tasks, such as judging of resident posters, creation of a website for communication among residents, sharing approaches to AM Report through an 'Open House' program, development of a lecture series on the Business of Medicine, and collaboration in research endeavors in medical education. The new management style can be viewed as a bottom-up approach, in which chief residents are delegated the responsibility to oversee all activities.

With gentle guidance and supportive oversight, the chief residents were not only able to improve highly popular events such as the annual Medical Jeopardy competition and Resident Conference, but develop new programs and initiatives.

Acknowledgements

- The support of the Maryland Chapter ACP
- All the chief residents of CRAB who have contributed to CRAB
- The Program Directors of Baltimore area programs

