



**Sunday, June 15**

# A message of hope

During an emotional speech at Saturday's Opening Session, AMA President Ronald M. Davis, MD, detailed his battle with pancreatic cancer and called on the nation's physicians to leave a legacy to the next generation. His message was one of hope, both for organized medicine and the future.

Brought to tears at times, Dr. Davis shared his experiences as a patient and thanked his family, friends and colleagues for their support. Following his remarks, Dr. Davis embraced his wife, Nadine, and three sons on stage as delegates gave him a lengthy standing ovation.

Dr. Davis touched upon the many issues affecting physicians today, including the political process surrounding Medicare physician payment cuts, which he compared to a hamster wheel that continuously goes around in circles. He said organized medicine could find inspiration in Daniel Tammet, an autistic savant with Asperger syndrome who set the European record for reciting Pi.

"If a person with autism can recite Pi to more than 22,000 digits," he said, "we ought to be able to ... figure out how to get off the [Medicare] hamster wheel."

Also at the Opening Session, AMA executive vice president/CEO Michael D. Maves, MD, MBA, shared with the audience new television and print ads that are part of the AMA's "Voice for the Uninsured" campaign and discussed the AMA's commitment to providing strong advocacy and valuable resources for physicians.



AMA President Ronald M. Davis, MD, delivers an inspirational speech to delegates and alternates during Saturday's Opening Session.

The House by acclamation elected J. James Rohack, MD, president-elect of the AMA. Dr. Rohack is a cardiologist from Temple, Texas, who has served as a member of the AMA Board of Trustees for the past seven years. Delegates also re-elected Denver psychiatrist Jeremy A. Lazarus, MD, to a second term as speaker and Andrew W. Gurman, MD, a hand surgeon in Altoona, Pa., to a second term as vice speaker.

## Sunday's highlights

- Reference Committees A, C, D and F, 8:30 a.m.
- Reference Committees B, E, G and Constitution and Bylaws, 1:30 p.m.

## Monday's highlights

- AMA Alliance and AMPAC Buffet Breakfast, 7:30–8:30 a.m., Drake Hotel, 140 East Walton Place
- WPC Liaisons Breakfast, 7:30–8:45 a.m., Water Tower

- IMG Section Delegates Caucus, 7:30–9 a.m., Skyway 280
- Litigation Center Open Meeting, 7:30–9:30 a.m., Regency A
- Building Patient Confidence and Reaching Better Outcomes (CME credit), 8–9:30 a.m., Columbus K–L
- CEJA Open Forum (CME credit), 8–9:30 a.m., Regency C
- Tobacco Task Force/Action Team on Alcohol Joint Meeting, 8:30–10 a.m., Soldier Field Room

- IMG Busharat Ahmad, MD, Leadership Development Program, 9–11 a.m., Buckingham
- State Medical Societies' Role in Advancing the Quality Agenda (CME credit), 9:30–11 a.m., Columbus E–F
- Diagnosis and Cure for the Broken Claims Process (CME credit), 9:30–11 a.m., Regency B
- House of Delegates Session, 2–5:30 p.m., Grand Ballroom

# Students knock one out of the park

Traditionally, baseball fans sing “Take Me Out to the Ballgame.” But at Friday’s Chicago White Sox-Colorado Rockies game at U.S. Cellular Field in Chicago, fans were singing a different tune.

Prior to the start of the game, as crowds filled the nearly packed stadium, volunteers from the AMA Medical Student (MSS) and Resident and Fellow Sections gathered outside the entrance of U.S. Cellular Field to alert Chicago-area baseball fans of the 2 million uninsured residents in Illinois, and the tens of millions more living across the United States, and to encourage them to vote in the November election with this issue in mind. The event was part of the AMA’s overall “Voice for the Uninsured” campaign—a three-year multimillion dollar effort to spur action to cover America’s 47 million uninsured—and the first of the AMA-MSS’ 2008–2010 National Service Project, “Covering the uninsured and protecting access to care.”

Leading up to the first pitch, students and residents distributed fliers explaining the AMA’s proposal on health care reform. And while final fans took their seats, all eyes were drawn to the new “Voice for the Uninsured” television ads that ran on the center-field scoreboard.



As part of the MSS National Service Project, AMA student member Meltem Zeytinoglu talked to baseball fan Albert Gonzalez about the uninsured and the AMA’s proposal for reform.

But Chicago hasn’t seen the last of the campaign. Two “Voice for the Uninsured” billboards will be displayed along major Chicago highways throughout this month, and the AMA launched a new “Voice for the Uninsured” Web site at [www.VoiceForTheUninsured.org](http://www.VoiceForTheUninsured.org) on Friday.



## Kidney screening

Do you display any kidney disease risk factors, such as diabetes, high blood pressure or family history? If you are a delegate or alternate, stop by the Kidney Early Evaluation Program booth, located in the meeting registration area, to pick up educational materials and make an appointment for a complimentary screening on Monday, 9–11 a.m., Truffles Room.

## Physician hospitals at risk

With Congress attempting to limit the number of physician-owned hospitals—or eliminate the concept altogether—doctors must fight to ensure they have a strong voice in patient care, said John Harvey, MD, president and chief executive officer of Oklahoma Heart Hospital in Oklahoma City. “This is a battle we cannot lose,” he said.

His comments came during “Physician-owned hospitals: Reclaiming quality patient care through physician leadership,” an educational session offered Thursday by the AMA Organized Medical Staff Section. Program speakers pointed out the many benefits these facilities provide and explained political endeavors to ban them. Dr. Harvey spoke of the positive clinical outcomes and patient satisfaction Oklahoma Heart Hospital generates. “You don’t fully appreciate how different it can be when doctors are in control,” he said.

## Help heal the claims process

Has a health insurer ever inappropriately delayed, denied or reduced your rightful claims payments? If you answered “yes,” then be sure to attend “Diagnosis and cure for the broken claims process,” an educational session about a new AMA campaign aimed at improving this process, from 9:30 to 11 a.m. Monday in Regency Ballroom B.