

ASCRS AND YES PRESENT



LEGISLATIVE FLY-IN SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Scholarship Opportunity: Meet Your Legislators and Make a Difference for Your Profession and Your Patients

ASCRS and the Young Eye Surgeons (YES) program are excited to announce a scholarship opportunity for U.S. resident and fellow members of ASCRS who want to effect positive change for their profession and patients.

Apply now for the ASCRS/YES Legislative Fly-In Scholarship for an all-expenses paid trip to Washington, D.C., July 17–19, 2017. Five scholarship recipients will join ASCRS leadership and members, as well as physicians representing other medical specialties, to attend the annual Alliance of Specialty Medicine Legislative Fly-In.

As one of the 13 medical specialty societies that form the Alliance of Specialty Medicine, ASCRS participates every year in the Fly-In, which brings members to Washington to meet directly with their Representatives and Senators and to lobby for our policy initiatives.

Participation from ASCRS members in this event has continued to grow, and we are striving to increase resident and fellow member attendance. The Fly-In will enhance younger members' understanding of public policy issues affecting ophthalmology, and provide networking opportunities with established ASCRS members, including society leadership. ASCRS YES members who are interested in attending are encouraged to apply for a scholarship, which will provide travel and accommodation expenses for five YES members. Winning submissions on "why you would like to attend the Fly-In" will be printed in *Eyeworld*. Entry details are below.



What is the Fly-In?

The Fly-In is an annual event organized by the Alliance of Specialty Medicine to bring specialty physicians to Washington, D.C., to meet with their legislators and advocate for policy issues affecting the specialty medical community. ASCRS is a member of the Alliance and works with the other member societies year-round to monitor legislative and regulatory activity and advocate for our members' policy initiatives. When members of the individual societies travel to Washington, they are able to demonstrate to lawmakers in person that the policies they make have a direct impact on physicians and patients in their districts and states. Younger members who are just beginning or still training for their careers often have an even greater impact on legislators, since they likely will be affected by new policies for a longer period of time.

What will I learn and whom will I meet?

Not only does the Fly-In seek to advance our advocacy goals, it provides invaluable information about public policy affecting ophthalmology. Frequently, ASCRS members at all levels of their careers are hesitant to participate in advocacy activities because they feel they do not have an adequate understanding of healthcare policy to be effective and so their efforts will not make a difference. However, the personal stories and experiences in practice are often the most powerful motivators for legislative action. Physicians who must comply with federal regulations are the best equipped to demonstrate the impacts of those policies and speak for the patients they ultimately affect.



In past years, we have seen the direct, positive impact of Fly-In attendees' advocacy. For example, in 2014, there was a proposal to repeal the Sustainable Growth Rate (SGR) and reform Medicare physician payment, which would have implemented a worse system than previously under the SGR. ASCRS and the Alliance were on record opposing the proposal, but it was not until physicians participating in the Fly-In were able to demonstrate the negative impacts of the proposal on their practices and patients in real terms, that Congressional committees began to make changes based on the medical community's recommendations. Your attendance and willingness to share your experiences make a tremendous difference in



achieving our policy goals. During the Fly-In, staff from ASCRS and other organizations will provide in-depth briefing on policy issues, and help attendees craft effective messages related to those issues based on their personal experiences.

Attendees will also hear from leaders in Congress, administration officials, and other subject matter experts before visiting with their own legislators on Capitol Hill. Speakers in recent years include: Sen. Rand Paul, MD (R-KY), a practicing ophthalmologist; Sen. Sherrod Brown (D-OH); Former Sen. Tom Coburn, MD (R-OK); House Energy and Commerce Committee Chairman Fred Upton (R-MI); Rep. Raul Ruiz, MD (D-CA); CMS Chief of Innovation and Chief Medical Officer Patrick Conway, MD; CMS officials overseeing the Physician Quality Reporting System (PQRS), EHR Meaningful Use, and the Value-Based Payment Modifier programs; and speakers from academia and other industries covering related healthcare topics and trends.

Finally, the Fly-In offers YES members an incredible opportunity to meet and network with other ASCRS members. ASCRS leaders are always well represented at the event, and they are eager to meet and provide mentorship to younger members.

Draft 2017 Fly-In agenda

The complete agenda is still being developed. We have provided a sample agenda based on previous years and expect to follow the same format in 2017.

Monday, July 17

- 3 – 5 p.m. Registration open at Liaison Hotel
- 7 p.m. Dinner with ASCRS leadership and attendees; overview of legislative issues

Tuesday, July 18

- 7 – 7:30 a.m. Breakfast, Liaison Hotel
- 7:30 a.m. – 1 p.m. Group orientation with all Fly-In attendees, issue briefing, speakers from Congress and administration, lunch with physicians from your state
- 1 :30 – 5 p.m. Capitol Hill visits with U.S. Representatives and Senators, escorted by professional staff from medical societies
- 5:30 – 6:30 p.m. Fundraising reception (tentative)
- 7 p.m. Informal dinner with ASCRS attendees

Wednesday, July 19

- 7 – 8 a.m. Breakfast
- 8 – 10:30 a.m. Additional speakers from Capitol Hill and the administration; additional Capitol Hill visits, if required
- 10:30 a.m. Adjourn (tentative)

This agenda is subject to change. Typically, attendees are asked to arrive in Washington by Monday afternoon and depart Wednesday afternoon.

How do I apply for the scholarship?

U.S. resident and fellow members* of ASCRS are encouraged to apply for a 2017 ASCRS/YES Legislative Fly-In Scholarship. A subcommittee composed of members of the ASCRS Government Relations Committee and the YES Committee will review the applications and award scholarships to five applicants who demonstrate an interest in public policy and desire to advocate on behalf of the profession.

Applicants must provide their home/voting address (required for Capitol Hill meetings), submit a current CV/résumé, and write a short essay in response to the question, “Why would you like to attend the 2017 Legislative Fly-In?”

To submit an application, please complete the attached form and email it to Tami O’Brien at tobrien@ascrs.org. If you are unable to return the form itself, please email your contact information, essay, and CV/résumé to tobrien@ascrs.org.

Entries from the scholarship recipients will be printed in *Eyeworld* magazine. Scholarship recipients also will be asked to share their experiences on Capitol Hill in a post-Fly-In article.

If you have questions or need assistance, please contact Tami O’Brien, manager of PAC and grassroots, at tobrien@ascrs.org or 703-591-2220.

*This scholarship is only available to ASCRS members who reside in the United States.

2017 ASCRS/YES Legislative Fly-In Scholarship Application

Please submit this application and a current CV by March 31, 2017, to Tami O’Brien at tobrien@ascrs.org.

Name: _____

Residency Program/Practice: _____

Home/Voting Address: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Please use the space below to write a brief essay (no more than 500 words) on why you would like to attend the 2017 Legislative Fly-In. Attach additional sheets if necessary.