



National Medical Association

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Reflections from the Chair
NMA Board of Trustees

Dear Colleague:

Aloha! I eagerly anticipate the 2007 Annual Convention in Honolulu, Hawaii and look forward with pleasure to seeing you in one of our most popular convention venues. As my second year as Board Chair comes to a conclusion, I want to share with you the challenges we have successfully faced and the bright future ahead for our beloved association.

As many of you are aware, the 2006 Annual Convention was affected by circumstances beyond our control with the devastating impact of Hurricane Katrina on the citizens of the Gulf coast, Louisiana and Texas. Many of our physicians were affected in their personal and professional lives. Their pain and loss were shared by NMA colleagues. Recovery has begun but is painfully slow and uneven, especially in New Orleans where thousands of citizens are unable to return. Many of our physicians are also impacted as they attempt to restore their practices and family life. The NMA is proud that we were able to offer modest assistance to our members through practice restoration grants. The grant awards were possible because of a grant from the Office of Minority Health to the NMA with Dr. Leonard Weathers as Principal Investigator.

In 2007, the membership will find the NMA in recovery fiscally and operationally from the adverse impact of 2006. Dr. Mohammad Akhter was chosen by unanimous vote of the Board of Trustees to lead the organization as Executive Director. He is a renowned clinician administrator with extensive organizational experience. His enthusiasm and positive impact are already apparent as he prepares the staff for the upcoming convention and the NMA to meet the challenges of the 21st century. With his able leadership, the NMA will focus on service to members, program excellence, staff development and accomplishing the Association mission.

Dr. Tracy Walton, past President of the NMA, served as Interim Executive Director during the transition. We are indebted to him for his capable leadership and commitment to the NMA. The staff of the central office deserves special recognition for their

dedication, diligence and professionalism. Their work with the Board and membership has assured that we will meet and/or exceed the goals of the Strategic plan for 2007.

The convention will showcase the accomplishments of the Section Chairs who prepare an outstanding Scientific Program, the W. Montague Cobb/NMA Health Institute progress under the leadership of Dr. Randall Morgan, the Auxiliary to the NMA programs under the leadership of Ms. Rose McCrae and culminate an outstanding, productive year for our President, Dr. Albert Morris.

In the past two years, the Association has made great progress in operations and programs. There is much more to accomplish. With the commitment of dedicated members, the exemplary service of members of the Board of Trustees and an active House of Delegates, the National Medical Association can achieve greatness and continue to serve the nation as "The Conscience of American medicine". I appreciate the opportunity to serve as Board Chair and wish to express my gratitude to the Board, Dr. Albert Morris, Dr. Michael LeNoir, Dr. Nelson Adams, Dr. Randall Morgan, Ms. Rose McCrae, Dr. Tracy Walton, Dr. Mohammad Akhter and the NMA staff and NMA members for great work throughout this year.

Carolyn Barley Britton, M.D., M.S.
Chair
NMA Board of Trustees