

## Scientist helping address international medical education leadership void

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Dr. Rebekah Gee, Assistant Professor at LSU Health Sciences Center New Orleans Schools of Public Health and Medicine, is the lead author of an article published in the January 28, 2012 issue of *The Lancet* regarding the initial effort to address a void in medical education worldwide – leadership. Dr. Gee is the only physician from the United States to serve on the inaugural Inter Academy Medical Panel (IAMP) Young Physician Leaders (YPL) program held during the third World Health Summit in Berlin, Germany whose charge was to begin to remedy this deficit. The IAMP sent out a global call for nominations for physicians aged 40 years or younger with demonstrated leadership skills in medicine or public health, and 22 participants were chosen, representing 18 countries.

"Future leaders will be critical to the success of our health systems," notes Dr. Gee. "Other professions, such as business, work on leadership and emotional intelligence skills with their young leaders so that they can be most competitive in their fields, and [medicine](#) needs to do the same."

The inaugural Young Physician Leadership group discussed personal and systemic leadership challenges as well as the necessary substrate for leadership development. The program consisted of an interactive brainstorming session aimed at helping participants to develop a strong leadership style. Mentoring and peer-learning relationships were developed through peer and senior faculty interactions.

Common challenges in the developing and developed world cited were

the difficulty of breaking down silos, and that politics, as well as preference or seniority over talent, can often get in the way of success. Participants from all countries shared difficulties in gaining credibility as young leaders and breaking into established hierarchies. Most important from this experience was the sense that the world is small; that the goals, aspirations, and challenges of our junior faculty remain similar despite vastly different cultures and access to resources. This program was an important step in engaging global young leaders and helping them to achieve success.

"We realized that the challenges and opportunities that we have as young leaders are similar across the globe," says Dr. Gee. "We are more alike than different." The IAMP has asked for its member academies to continue supporting these young leaders as they return to their countries and support an annual program and development of a growing network of young physician leaders.

"These efforts will help address the dearth of [leadership](#) training programs for young academicians and nurture them as they learn to shape global health policy for millions in need.," concludes Dr. Gee.

Provided by Louisiana State University

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