

Weekly Report: 7/5 – 7/8

Olivia Pham

Tuesday July 5, 2016

Karen Fisher, Tannaz Rasouli, Dave Moore, Courtney Summer – American Association of Medical Colleges

This was our first meeting with a very large trade association, and it was fascinating learning about how the AAMC operates. They do not donate to PACs, and do not rely on member dues for revenue. They are so large and reputable that both the government and the public look to them for guidance on many health issues. I am really interested in their work on workforce issues, specifically regarding physician shortages.

Dr. Georges Benjamin, Susan Polan, Regina Davis – American Public Health Association

Coming from a public health background, this was an excellent meeting for me. While we briefly talked about our placements, we mostly focused on the mission of APHA and their work. When asked about how they frame public health messages in a palatable way, we were basically told that they do not adjust their messages. It was refreshing to hear that they stick to their public health principles even when they are unpopular. So much of my education was about “framing”, but it is important to have stakeholder groups that will not budge.

Elizabeth Falcone, Marvin Figueroa – Office of Senator Mark Warner

Ms. Falcone and Mr. Figueroa were a dynamic duo. Both seemed extremely knowledgeable about health policy and enthusiastic about their work. While they describe the fellowship placement as many other offices have, I think what set this office apart was their dedication to Sen. Warner and Virginia.

Wednesday July 6, 2016

Tom Koutsoumpas, Andrew MacPherson – Healthsperien

After discussing both their careers and their work at Healthsperien, Mr. Koutsoumpas and Mr. MacPherson both provided us with suggestions for future meetings. It was very clear that both of these men approach healthcare consulting from a compassionate perspective and a real passion for helping the older population. Hearing their respective experiences with the elder population and their approach to health policy was very refreshing, and I am very interested in their non-medical interventions. A very poignant moment for me was learning that Mr. MacPherson’s mother, a hospice care nurse, wrote a book of poetry on her experiences in respite care.

Margaret Garikes, Todd Askew – American Medical Association

Ms. Garikes and Mr. Askew graciously treated us to lunch where we were able to learn about their careers in government. I really enjoyed hearing about Ms. Garike's time on the Bush-Quayle transition team, and am hoping that the information she imparted will apply to this year. It was fascinating to learn about the AMA and how such a large advocacy body works to identify and create positions on issues.

Thursday July 7, 2016

Katie Mahoney, Jennifer Lim – U.S. Chamber of Commerce

Ms. Mahoney and Ms. Lim met with us in the Library of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce where we all gave short introductions and described our previous experiences in healthcare. Both women shared a multitude of people to meet with and gave their suggestions as to our placement. What I think was most interesting about this meeting was learning about the history of the organization and the ACA..

Don May – AdvaMed

Since I have very little background in medical device policy, Don was a wealth of information on the topic. He discussed trade policy, patent law, and the nuanced nature of medical device policy with us. I originally thought that medical device companies would easily come to consensus on policy issues, but Don brought to light that each company really supports the policies that best benefit their company – there is enormous conflict on the specifics of certain policies. Working on the cutting edge of medical technology and health policy is a really fascinating area to me – I think I should look into this area further after the fellowship.

Sarah Dash, Marilyn Serafini – Alliance for Health Reform

Ms. Dash and Ms. Serafini briefly introduced themselves and explained the purpose of the Alliance as well their events. Having attended several Alliance briefings before, I had a general sense of the purpose of the organization in advance. I was surprised to learn that even though they strive for non-partisanship, they will tackle loaded subjects such as the social determinants of health. However, they avoid reproductive rights topics. They then proceeded to advise us on potential placements, but both strongly recommended against an agency.

Jennifer DeAngelis – Office of Senator Sheldon Whitehouse

Ms. DeAngelis, after giving us a short background, was wonderful in describing her work in Sen. Whitehouse's office. Since Rhode Island is so small, it has the unique strength of being able to meet with all of its stakeholders (ex: all 12 hospitals, both hospital systems, both major payers, etc.). I also found the topics of health IT, climate change, and antibiotic resistance to be areas of interest.

Friday July 8, 2016

Elizabeth Wroe, Mary-Sumpter Lapinski, Brett Meeks – Senate HELP Committee

Ms. Lapinski noted that the Committee spends quite a bit of time helping other member offices, with technical assistance from agencies. Being in the majority, there will also be plenty of work for a fellow.

LaTasha Lee – American Society of Hematology

Ms. Lee was introduced to us by Abigail Duggan of Sen. Sherrod's office. She was a good resource since she had both House and Senate experience.