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New face at Winter Board -

Angela Wisco (left) of Sioux City shares a smile with Tess Young, with whom she attended LDC "a million years ago."

Blue Book Reports due 2.28

IMSA Board members are asked to email their Blue Book reports to the Alliance office by February 28; timely submission of reports will greatly assist our new coordinator.

start: 120 . . . currently: 87  
goal: 60

Thirty-three members of the IMS Alliance have responded to President Debbie McCalla's request for email addresses. By providing a means of communicating via an electronic medium, members save precious time and resources that, given our modest budget, could be redirected toward health projects.

Some members do not have email - we understand that. If, however, you have email but have not gotten around to letting us know, we urge you to contact the coordinator today! Email IMS Alliance coordinator Deb Whitver at [dwhitver@iowamedical.org](mailto:dwhitver@iowamedical.org) or send her a note at Iowa Medical Society Alliance, 1001 Grand Avenue, West Des Moines, IA 50265.

Our goal is to trim the list of IMSA members receiving paper copies of *The FOCUS* to no more than 60. A few months ago 120 members received the paper copies. *Thirty-three down . . . twenty-seven to go!*

Call for Nominations

IMS Alliance Member of the Year

IMS Alliance Outstanding Achievement Award

For nomination requirements and official nomination forms, visit our Web site.

Deadline for submissions is March 1, 2009.

These prestigious awards will be presented at the Annual Meeting in April.

IMSA SILENT BASKET AUCTION TO BENEFIT THE AMAF

The AMAF committee is planning a silent basket auction for the Annual Meeting. We request that counties and/or individuals donate a themed basket from their county or a basket showcasing an individual's talent. The funds raised will benefit the AMA Foundation; donors can designate where their money will be sent.

Choosing medical education will provide scholarship assistance to students in Iowa and across the country. Today's medical student graduates with approximately \$140,000 in debt; your donation could help a future physician graduate with a lower debt load.

Choosing public health will provide support for public education campaigns and community service efforts that help improve the health of all Americans.

Choosing research will advance the AMAF's support of scientific discoveries and the professional development of young scholars involved in biomedical research.

Donate an exciting basket, in a theme of your choice, and have fun while supporting the AMAF!

Save the Date

April 18, 2009

80<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Iowa Medical Society Alliance

Coralville Marriott Hotel and Conference Center

Plan to arrive Friday evening in time to attend the Dutch-treat dinner we are hosting for our out-of-state guests.

A block of rooms is being held at the Marriott,

\$99 + tax per night;

for reservations:

888.236.2427 or 319.688.4000

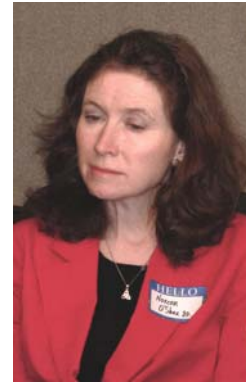
More detailed information for Annual Meeting will appear in the March issue of *The FOCUS*.

## O'Shea addresses teen substance abuse

Dr. Nonie O'Shea, a family physician in practice for 21 years and the mother of four, was a featured speaker at the IMS Alliance's Winter Board meeting. Dr. O'Shea has a special interest in the challenges facing youth, particularly teen pregnancy and substance abuse.

Dr. O'Shea noted that taking more risks is a normal part of an adolescent's developmental process; this risk taking "allows for exploration of new ways of thinking and new environs." Atrophy is a natural process of areas of the brain less used; conversely, the brain will preserve those connections of the brain that are most used. Atrophy is part of a normal pruning process the brain undergoes during adolescence to improve efficiency. One of the implications of this atrophy process is that, if teens are using mood-altering substances, this connects with the pleasure centers of the brain leading the teen to seek out activities that satisfy that. Hence her phrase: "what fires together wires together."

Dr. O'Shea recommends the following Web sites for further exploration:  
CDC: [www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/yrbs](http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/yrbs)  
AMA: [www.AlcoholPolicyMD.com](http://www.AlcoholPolicyMD.com)  
Center on Alcohol Marketing and Youth: [www.camy.org](http://www.camy.org) (from Georgetown)  
The Mentor Foundation: [www.mentorfoundation.org/](http://www.mentorfoundation.org/) (excerpt below)  
IDPH: [www.idph.state.is.us](http://www.idph.state.is.us)



Dr. Nonie O'Shea

*"What fires together wires together."*

### Teenage Brain Development and Vulnerability to Drug Use

There is significant new research concerning adolescent brain development and the effects of alcohol and other drug use on the developing brain. This emerging science is providing new insights about how teenagers make critical and life influencing decisions, including their decisions about drug use. Brain imaging studies suggest that the brain continues to develop through adolescence and into young adulthood (age 25 years). During adolescence, the parts of the brain that are responsible for expressing emotions and for seeking gratification tend to mature sooner than the regions of the brain that control impulses and that oversees careful decision making. As one expert puts it the teenage brain "has a well-developed accelerator but only a partly developed brake."

The maturing brain of the adolescent may also pose a particular risk toward drug abuse. There is some evidence that the developing brain is prone to the deleterious effects of alcohol. One study showed that memory ability may be negatively affected by about 10% as a result of alcohol abuse.

Mentor has prepared a more detailed summary of this emerging science about brain development and the vulnerability of adolescents to drug abuse. The pack includes a [booklet](#) and a [slideshow](#) (complete with [speaker's notes](#)).

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*Shape the future of medicine! By banding together and being involved, we can make health care reform a reality. Together we are stronger!*

**AMA Grassroots Network sign-up**

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The family of medicine needs your voice – Register for the Alliance Advocacy Network

As a member of the Alliance Advocacy Network, you will gain access to legislative alerts at the same time as the nation's physicians. You will also gain access to **Alliance Alerts**, providing options for your state or county. Become a member of the Alliance Advocacy Network by sending your e-mail address and home address to [amaa@ama-assn.org](mailto:amaa@ama-assn.org), or call 312.464.4470. Your privacy is guaranteed.

### IMS: What We Believe

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Register to receive legislative updates from the Iowa Medical Society

To receive **What We Believe**, updates specific to the IMS efforts and Iowa's state legislature, register with Karla Fultz McHenry, IMS Vice President for Public Policy & Advocacy at [kmchenry@iowamedical.org](mailto:kmchenry@iowamedical.org).

#### Links

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