

Annual Report From the Executive Director

2008 has been an exciting and innovative year for NECOEM. Thanks to the commitment of its members, NECOEM continues to shine in the forefront of ACOEM components.

Member appreciation is especially warranted for Dr. Scott Mirani, Medical Director of Occupational Health Services at Southcoast Hospitals Group. In addition to his role as Chair of the 2008 Annual Conference, Dr. Mirani has spent countless hours setting up and maintaining the NECOEM Podcast.

The NECOEM podcast, setup in February 2008, is the **first educational podcast of its kind in the world** to be offering lectures solely on the medical specialty of occupational and environmental medicine. These episodes are downloadable to a computer or to one's Ipod or any mp3 player. Anyone in the world can listen and learn from NECOEM speakers. In the first 6 months of the program, over 7000 visits were made to the Podcast site and over 1800 people downloaded lectures. There are currently over 400 subscribers to the NECOEM podcast and new subscribers are being added every day. Hits have originated from all over the USA and from 30 countries across Europe, Asia, Australia, North and South America. The podcast is readily accessible through the NECOEM website along with several popular podcast directories including iTunes. The hope is to have lectures from the NECOEM dinner meetings and annual conferences uploaded every few months. In addition, interviews and informal discussions may be included as episodes. NECOEM has attracted sponsors for these episodes and will continue to raise awareness in the OEM community.

You will also notice some innovation during the Annual Conference. Thanks to the generous support of the Harvard Educational and Research Center, participants now can carry their conference materials in their own tote bag. Speaker photos and biographies for their upcoming conference lectures can be viewed on a special LCD screen situated in the registration area and the conference books have speaker photos and tab dividers for each day.

Conference sponsors have been generous again this year and I would like to thank all sponsors and all the exhibitors for helping to make the 2008 Annual Conference a success. Without their support, NECOEM could not maintain the exceptional educational and venue excellence now appreciated in the entire northeast region of the United States.

In September of 2008, NECOEM and the Occupational and Environmental Medicine Association of Connecticut (OEMAC) worked together to produce an outreach event for clinicians and fire safety personnel across New England. Dr. Jonathon Mittelman, OEMAC Board member, chaired the half day event held at Old Sturbridge Village. Speakers discussed cardiovascular mortality risk among firefighters from state of the science to setting up and assessing fitness programs to the NFPA guidelines and were joined by a Fire Chief of a city with a successful fitness program and two members of the firefighter combat challenge course. The 76 attendees represented clinicians and fire safety officers from five New England states, New York and Canada.

NECOEM continues its role of providing administrative services to the Occupational and Environmental Medicine Association of Connecticut (OEMAC) and it has been a pleasure to serve in this capacity.

As Executive Director of NECOEM, I have been fortunate to be a part of all these innovative programs. Thank you to the entire membership for this opportunity and for your continued support.

Dianne Plantamura, MSW, CSS.