

ASCRS AND YES PRESENT



# LEGISLATIVE FLY-IN SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

## Scholarship Opportunity: Meet Your Legislators and Make a Difference for Your Profession and Your Patients

ASCRS and the Young Eye Surgeons (YES) program are excited to announce a scholarship opportunity for U.S. resident and fellow members of ASCRS who want to effect positive change for their profession and patients.

**Apply now for the ASCRS/YES Legislative Fly-In Scholarship for an all-expenses paid trip to Washington, D.C., July 16–18, 2018.** Five scholarship recipients will join ASCRS leadership and members, as well as physicians representing other medical specialties, to attend the annual Alliance of Specialty Medicine Legislative Fly-In.

As one of the 14 medical specialty societies that form the Alliance of Specialty Medicine, ASCRS participates every year in the Fly-In, which brings members to Washington to meet directly with their Representatives and Senators and to lobby for our policy initiatives.

Participation from ASCRS members in this event has continued to grow, and we are striving to increase resident and fellow member attendance. The Fly-In will enhance younger members' understanding of public policy issues affecting ophthalmology, and provide networking opportunities with established ASCRS members, including society leadership. ASCRS YES members who are interested in attending are encouraged to apply for a scholarship, which will provide travel and accommodation expenses for five YES members. Application details are below.



### What is the Fly-In?

The Fly-In is an annual event organized by the Alliance of Specialty Medicine to bring specialty physicians to Washington, D.C., to meet with their legislators and advocate for policy issues affecting the specialty medical community. ASCRS is a member of the Alliance and works with the other member societies year-round to monitor legislative and regulatory activity and advocate for our members' policy initiatives. When members of the individual societies travel to Washington, they are able to demonstrate to lawmakers in person that the policies they make have a direct impact on physicians and patients in their districts and states. Younger members who are just beginning or still training for their careers often have an even greater impact on legislators, since they likely will be affected by new policies for a longer period of time.

**What will I learn and whom will I meet?**

Not only does the Fly-In seek to advance our advocacy goals, it provides invaluable information about public policy affecting ophthalmology. Frequently, ASCRS members at all levels of their careers are hesitant to participate in advocacy activities because they feel they do not have an adequate understanding of healthcare policy to be effective and so their efforts will not make a difference. However, the personal stories and experiences in practice are often the most powerful motivators for legislative action. Physicians who must comply with federal regulations are the best equipped to demonstrate the impacts of those policies and speak for the patients they ultimately affect.



In past years, we have seen the direct, positive impact of Fly-In attendees' advocacy. For example, in 2014, there was a proposal to repeal the Sustainable Growth Rate (SGR) and reform Medicare physician payment, which would have implemented a worse system than previously under the SGR. ASCRS and the Alliance were on record opposing the proposal, but it was not until physicians participating in the Fly-In were able to demonstrate the negative impacts of the proposal on their practices and patients in real terms, that Congressional committees began to make changes based on the medical community's recommendations. Your attendance and willingness to share your experiences make a tremendous difference in achieving our policy goals. During the Fly-In, staff from ASCRS and other organizations will provide in-depth briefing on policy issues, and help attendees craft effective messages related to those issues based on their personal experiences.



Attendees will also hear from leaders in Congress, administration officials, and other subject matter experts before visiting with their own legislators on Capitol Hill. Speakers in recent years include: Sen. Rand Paul, MD (R-KY),

a practicing ophthalmologist; Former Health and Human Services Secretary Tom Price, MD; Sen. Sherrod Brown (D-OH); Former Sen. Tom Coburn, MD (R-OK); Rep. Raul Ruiz, MD (D-CA); House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Kevin Brady (R-TX); Rep. Phil Roe, MD (R-TN); officials from the FDA and the White House; political commentators and TV personalities; and speakers from academia and other industries covering related healthcare topics and trends.

Finally, the Fly-In offers YES members an incredible opportunity to meet and network with other ASCRS members. ASCRS leaders are always well represented at the event, and they are eager to meet and provide mentorship to younger members.

**Draft 2018 Fly-In agenda**

The complete agenda is still being developed. We have provided a sample agenda based on previous years and expect to follow the same format in 2018.

**Monday, July 16**

- 3 – 5 p.m. | Registration open at Liaison Capitol Hill Hotel
- 7 p.m. | Dinner with ASCRS leadership and attendees; overview of legislative issues for Hill visits

**Tuesday, July 17**

- 7 – 7:30 a.m. | Breakfast, Liaison Capitol Hill Hotel
- 7:30 a.m. – Noon | Review of issue briefs, speakers from Congress and administration
- Noon – 1 p.m. | Lunch with multi-specialty physicians from your state to prepare for Hill meetings
- 1 :30 – 5:30 p.m. | Capitol Hill visits with U.S. Representatives and Senators, escorted by professional staff from medical societies
- 6 – 7 p.m. | Fundraising reception (tentative)
- 7 p.m. | Informal dinner with ASCRS attendees

**Wednesday, July 18**

- 8 – 11 a.m. | Breakfast and advocacy conference

This agenda is subject to change. Attendees are asked to arrive in Washington by Monday afternoon and depart Wednesday afternoon.

**How do I apply for the scholarship?**

U.S. resident and fellow members\* of ASCRS are encouraged to apply for a 2018 ASCRS/YES Legislative Fly-In Scholarship. A subcommittee composed of members of the ASCRS Government Relations Committee and the YES Committee will review the applications and award scholarships to five applicants who demonstrate an interest in public policy and desire to advocate on behalf of the profession.

Applicants must provide their home/voting address (required for Capitol Hill meetings), submit a current CV/résumé, and write a short essay in response to the question, “Why would you like to attend the 2018 Legislative Fly-In?”

To submit an application, please complete the attached form and email it to Tami O’Brien at [tobrien@ascrs.org](mailto:tobrien@ascrs.org). If you are unable to return the form itself, please email your contact information, essay, and CV/résumé to [tobrien@ascrs.org](mailto:tobrien@ascrs.org).

Reflections on the Fly-In from the scholarship recipients will be printed in *Eyeworld* magazine. Scholarship recipients also will be asked to share their experiences on Capitol Hill in a post-Fly-In article.

If you have questions or need assistance, please contact Tami O’Brien, manager of PAC and grassroots, at [tobrien@ascrs.org](mailto:tobrien@ascrs.org) or 703-591-2220.

\*This scholarship is only available to ASCRS members who reside in the United States.

## 2018 ASCRS/YES Legislative Fly-In Scholarship Application

Please submit this application and a current CV by February 28, 2018, to Tami O'Brien at [tobrien@ascrs.org](mailto:tobrien@ascrs.org).

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Residency Program/Practice: \_\_\_\_\_

Home/Voting Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Please use the space below to write a brief essay (no more than 500 words) on why you would like to attend the 2018 Legislative Fly-In. Attach additional sheets if necessary.