

APSA Local Chapter Programming Guide

The local chapter (LC) of APSA at UAB has sponsored over 50 events since conception two years prior; hence, it will be used as an example herein for which other LCs may plan events at their respective institutions. The mission of the APSA LC at UAB has three basic tenets; Networking, Career Development, and Outreach; that guide event planning, such that each APSA sponsored event serves to promote one of these fundamental tenets. That is to say, when planning events, APSA National recommends that each event further your respective LC's mission in one or more aspects.

The following document provides a list of events that were previously organized by APSA LCs and suggestions of how to replicate each event at your own institution. The information herein will ideally serve as a template to help you branch out and plan other events as well.

1. Monthly membership meetings

Purpose: Networking, Career Development

Description: These meetings are intended to bring the LC membership together to discuss progress of the group and future directions.

Cost: \$0

Suggestions:

- President discusses state of affairs, current/upcoming projects, and any pertinent activities
- Other officers discuss matters relevant to their positions
- Opportunity for members to voice perspective on projects, ideas for improvements, future activities, etc.
- Research Presentation
 - Purpose
 - Provide opportunities for members to strengthen scientific presentation skills
 - Share research interests with members
 - Open the door for vertical mentoring
 - Structure
 - Short, 10 minutes maximum
 - 2-3 minutes for questions
 - Presentation should include Background, Results, Conclusion/Discussion
 - Each presenter should discuss his/her current research (or past research project if not actively working on research project)
 - Important: *This does NOT need to be a basic science talk or publishable work.* It can be raw data, preliminary data generated in a summer project, ideas for future work, etc. Care must be taken to include and not ostracize members who are not in a MD/PhD program (who might not have a lot of research data to present from an ongoing project) or members who conduct outcomes based or public health research.
- “This is Me” Presentation
 - Purpose
 - These presentations are meant to be an informal way of introducing members to each other.

- Structure
 - 2 - 3 minutes maximum (2 slides is ideal amount)
 - 1 slide with research and clinical interests
 - 1 slide with hobbies, family, interests, etc

2. Breakout sessions with physicians and residents of a certain specialty

Purpose: Career Development, Networking

Description: Pending the interests of your membership, or sub-groups therein, reach out to practicing physician-scientists and residents involved in research to discuss how to best prepare for that training path and any questions members may have. These events are also helpful to learn about how research fits into the clinical responsibilities for a given specialty and how work-life balance is achieved. By limiting the number of attendees, the intimate nature of events such as these have proven themselves excellent networking opportunities as well.

Cost: \$50 – *IF* a light breakfast/snack is provided

Suggestions:

- Ask LC member(s) to reach out/email various physician-scientists and residents
- Do not worry about “cold calling”, many physicians at academic centers are eager to work with students
- Consider panel format
- Limit physicians/residents to four
- Limit students to approximately three times the number of physicians/residents
- Encourage members to come with questions
- Identify a “moderator” that will have prepared a set list of questions to keep the conversation flowing as needed
- Select an informal environment (lounge, quiet lobby) to foster informal discussion

3. Roundtable Discussions with various physician-scientists

Purpose: Career Development

Description: Invite 2 – 4 faculty/physicians to discuss one central topic/question. This may range from future directions of a specific field or managing the life-style of a physician-scientist. Specifically, “Women in Science”, a panel featuring all female faculty/physicians to discuss the unique challenges faced by women in academia, and a corollary “Couples in Science”, to discuss life challenges when both individuals in the relationship hold demanding academic positions, have both proven to pique the interest of members.

Cost: \$50 – *IF* refreshments are served

Suggestions:

- Encourage a very informal atmosphere
- Consider holding in the evening and serving appetizers and wine/beer (as your institution allows) to lubricate conversation
- Do not put a numerical cap on attendance
- Encourage attendees to bring questions
- Name a moderator with premeditated questions to maintain the flow of conversation as needed
- Ask panel members to submit a brief training history with introductory information as well as their CV. Distribute this information to attendees prior to the Roundtable. Inform panelists that you have done this, and ask them to spend little to no time covering this information, thus maximizing the amount of time left for questions and discussion.

4. Panel discussion with more senior students addressing transitions

Purpose: Career Development

Description: This event is intended for students that have taken or will take time out of medical school to pursue a dual degree, or the like (i.e. MPH, HHMI, etc.). Inviting senior students to talk about the MS2 to PhD transition and PhD to MS3 transition serves as an excellent mode of vertical mentoring and helps to ease anxiety commonly felt by students prior to these times. Given that some MD/PhD or MD/DO programs structure themselves differently, feel free to format your seminar towards any transition(s) that presents itself in the training of physician-scientists at your institution.

Cost: \$0

Suggestions:

- Consider having each transition discussed at a separate event, as to maximize the utility for all attendees
- Encourage a very informal atmosphere
- Advertise to all members & relevant students, but keep open to all interested
- Invite 2 – 4 more senior students to depending on the anticipated attendance
- Discuss topics that will help to prepare aspiring physician-scientist for upcoming aspects of their training, particularly as they relate for being prepare to transition to and from clinical training.

5. Grant writing seminar

Purpose: Career Development

Description: All members of APSA should have some degree of interest in research and many will likely need to submit a grant at some point in their training or during their careers. Given the current state of funding, students should learn how to best prepare these grants early in their career.

Cost: \$0

Suggestions:

- Invite senior faculty, MD/PhD or graduate program directors, and or any members of writing resource groups at your institution (i.e. Institutional Clinical and Translation Science Award centers)
- Encourage speakers to prepare a presentation addressing specific funding opportunities available to physician-scientists in training (F30, etc) as well as what the speaker(s) believe to be the most pressing considerations for successful grant submission
- Approach this as a more formal/structured event
- Do not limit attendance
- Consider holding a similar event addressing mechanisms of funding prior to the R award (K awards, institutional awards, private foundation awards)
- Consider holding a similar event addressing how to turn highly-translatable projects/findings into an investigator initiated clinical trial

6. What is a Physician-Scientist?

Purpose: Networking

Description: This event is intended to be an annual recruiting event for incoming students. A few senior physician-scientists, each representing different training paths (e.g. MD/PhD, MD/MPH, clinicians with translational research, clinicians with outcomes research, clinicians with data analysis research, etc.), should speak to a large audience of potentially interested students about the merits of research relative to all health care

fields. The LC president should introduce each speaker. The goal is to appeal to as many various research interests as possible in an effort to diversify your LC. Moreover, this can serve to introduce the idea of the physician-scientist pathway to students who are at the beginning of their training and may not have had previous exposure to this unique career.

Cost: \$100 – Suggested to provide lunch, pizza, or other

Suggestions:

- Have MD/PhD director or ASPA sponsor speak in addition to one or two others
- Hold event in an auditorium
- Advertise meeting in first year lecture halls between classes, on boards, etc.
- Make sign-up sheets for interested students to leave name and email

7. Case presentations by practicing physician-scientists

Purpose: Career Development

Description: Provide members with real-life examples of how the most current research, either that conducted by the physician-scientist speaking or other PIs in his/her field, is integrated into case decisions for better patient outcomes.

Cost: \$0 to \$100 – *IF* you chose to provide lunch

Suggestions:

- Invite two practicing physician-scientists to give case presentations wherein current research, their own or otherwise, was incorporated and changed the outcome of a case
- Allocate 30min for each presenter
- Ask presenters to prepare a presentation but also provide a list of items/topics you would like them to address
- Consider such an event for various specialties
- The promise of lunch sometimes makes physicians more willing to give up their lunch hour

8. Health screening in a local community

Purpose: Outreach

Description: Coordinate with a local health care clinic to hold a full day, free health screening for the general public. Recruit from each health care program/school at your institution in an effort to provide as many different stations/screening tests as possible for each patient. This may include optometry students, dental students, physical therapy students, and medical students. Some stations to consider are blood pressure, blood glucose, STD testing (requires special training), cardiac exam, pulmonary exam, etc. Recruit practicing physicians to participate such that after patients have passed through each station that they wish to they can discuss the results of each test with a licensed physician. This will give the physician an opportunity to follow-up immediately, counsel, or refer the patient to other physicians. There are often significant numbers of underserved minorities in the community that such an event can benefit.

Cost: est. \$250

Suggestions:

- Contact multiple potential hosts to find a significant “in-need” population. This can include womens’ centers, fire departments, etc.
- Recruit at least 2 practicing physicians to help run the event and see patients after they have completed every exam and prior to the patient leaving
- If your institution has one, consider partnering with the Medical Spanish interest group, as some of the underserved may be more comfortable with Spanish

- Begin planning this event months in advance
- Begin advertising in the community weeks in advance and ask members of the community (outside your institution; this may include workers at the clinic) about the best ways to advertise
- Try to partner with as many relevant student or professional organizations as possible to delegate the large work load of such an event
- Partner more senior students with more junior students at each station so that the younger students can learn and gain more experience, while the senior students have a vertical mentorship opportunity

9. Outreach Education: Teaching high school physics/chemistry

Purpose: Outreach

Description: Partner with a local high school to run a science (physics, chemistry, etc.) lab during each period for a day. This will likely require multiple versions of the same lab to cater to the various skill levels of each period/class. First, perform a visually engaging (and safe) experiment in front of the class. Next, encourage the students, in groups, to repeat the same experiment, while changing certain aspects/variables and noting the different outcomes each group observes as a result. Finally, address the class again to discuss what they saw and use it as an opportunity to teach a larger principle/concept integral to the specific class.

Cost: est. \$50 per event/lab for supplies

Suggestions:

- Identify a school and specific teacher willing to partner with your LC for such a lab/event or series of labs/events
- Recruit 6 – 12 AP/SA members to help with this event and rotate throughout the day
- Ensure at least 2 students are with the class throughout the day
- Prepare a short presentation to give at the beginning of class discussing the experiment and another for the end of the class that details the principles/concepts involved in the lab
- Prepare handouts with instructions for completing the lab to give to each group of students
- Labs can include “elephant toothpaste”, “hydrogen balloons”, home-made batteries, physics of pendulums and catapults, etc.
- Also consider lecturing to and facilitating discussions with the high schoolers about common health-related topics such as STDs and diabetes, as much of the lay public is ill-informed on these matters

10. Membership potluck

Purpose: Networking

Description: Coordinate a potluck dinner amongst members of your LC. We suggest making this a communal-type event wherein everyone brings a dish/contributes. Also, holding it at a member’s residence (as available) has proven to foster an amicable environment and positive atmosphere.

Cost: \$50 to \$100 IF your LC is able/willing to fund the event

Suggestions:

- Inform members of a date weeks in advance
- Encourage everyone to bring an item