A FABULOUS welcome to the entire North Carolina Medical Society Alliance for our 2015-2016 program year! I so appreciate your membership and commitment to our organization. With your help, we will strengthen the voice and the impact of the Alliance across our state and the nation!!!

Critical to our success, is understanding our purpose! Without it, how can we thrive? How can we advocate for healthy communities and strengthening of the family of medicine? It was with this commitment to the Alliance that your State Board and I have come together to develop a long range plan for making a difference! Because….WITHOUT A PLAN, A GOAL IS JUST A WISH!

First, let’s review exactly why we are members of this organization:

• We ALL belong to the family of medicine. Alliance membership should and can offer a wealth of opportunities for developing lifelong friendships and building your network of like-minded individuals. We encourage you to take advantage of it! Each of us has the opportunity to experience firsthand a powerful support system that can help us face the unique challenges of life in a medical family. Know that we are here for you!

• We have the opportunity to make a difference in our State and in our Communities! Getting involved can be a challenge, but I prefer to look at it as an opportunity! Whether we are raising money for scholarships or research, staging public health projects in the community, or advocating for policy changes to assure a brighter future for medicine, your involvement WILL make a positive impact! Even if you cannot be active, we will ensure that your membership dues will work to greater awareness and better health in your county and in our state.

• The Alliance is committed to enriching your life. Through Alliance seminars and networking opportunities, you will build your professional skills in the areas of advocacy,
Meet the New Executive Director

In October of 2014, the North Carolina Medical Society signed a contract for Management services with FirstPoint Management Resources (FPMR). These services include but are not limited to financial, meeting planning services, membership retention & development services, newsletter publishing, and Board meeting organization. FPMR retains many people on its staff, one of them being Tracy Steadman. Tracy is the new Executive Director of the Alliance.

Tracy was born and raised in Florida before moving to North Carolina in 2008. Tracy has been with FPMR since July 2008 and has vast knowledge and experience in the Association Management field. She has worked in many different capacities including Meeting Planner, Director of Membership, and an Associate Account Manager. Tracy has three children ranging in age from 3 years to 22 years old. Outside of work, the kids keep her busy! She also enjoys reading, swimming, and spending time with family and friends.

Tracy is really looking forward to the next year and working with the Board and Membership to help the Alliance meet their goals and initiatives. If you have questions for Tracy or would like to welcome her to the Alliance family, she can be reached at tsteadman@ncmsalliance.org.

Membership News

By Wanda Smith, 2015-2016 Vice President of Membership Development

As I sit down to write this I am thinking about what the Alliance means to me and what my life would be like without the challenges and opportunities the Alliance has brought to me. Being an Alliance Member at the County, State and National level has enriched my life and blessed me in so many ways.

I flew to Chicago for the AMAA meeting in June of 2012. That was an amazing trip and I met some incredible people from all over the United States. Many who attended survived a tornado and spent an extra night in Chicago due to weather delays. I learned that Alliance friends are there for you in “all ways”, always! Carolyn Green, who is definitely not technically challenged like me, got the last two rooms for me, her and Rachel Kunesh at the Sheraton near the airport while we were still on the airplane, she knowing we were not going home to North Carolina that night!

On the State level, I am now serving my 6th year on the North Carolina State Alliance Board of Directors. What an incredible group of ladies and gentlemen I have met and grown to love and appreciate. We have all been challenged in many ways and the journey has been one of awesome growth, opportunities to give of time, talents and finances in such a way that still amazes me. Together, we can do so much for so many.

Last but not least, the Rowan County Medical Society Alliance and all the ladies who are members. This group is small compared to many counties, but so mighty in what we accomplish. Through our “Fashions for a Cause”, which will be held for the 17th year on April 6th, 2016 we have given over $150,000 to our local Community Care Clinic which serves the uninsured and underserved population of Rowan County.

There is so much more I could write, but you should go back and read the introductory letter from Deborah Meehan, 2015-2016 President of our NCMSA who said it all so well. Please renew your membership or join today! Together we can achieve great things!

Calendar of Events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>October 11</strong></td>
<td>NCMS Alliance Board of Directors Teleconference</td>
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<tr>
<td>2015 Walk for Hope Raleigh, NC</td>
<td><strong>March 15</strong> Spring Board Retreat</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>October 23-24</strong></td>
<td><strong>March 30</strong> Doctor’s Day</td>
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<tr>
<td>NCMS Annual Meeting Greensboro, NC</td>
<td><strong>October 23-24</strong> NAMI Annual Meeting Raleigh, NC</td>
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<td><strong>December 4</strong></td>
<td><strong>May TBD</strong> NCMS Alliance Annual Meeting Raleigh, NC</td>
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<tr>
<td>County Teleconference</td>
<td><strong>NCMS Alliance Board of Directors Teleconference</strong></td>
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2015 Walk for Hope: Let’s Fight Mental Illness Together!

Friends and Family are invited to participate with us for the 27th Annual Walk for Hope on Sunday, October 11th. We have partnered with the Walk for Hope as one of our NCMSA Fundraisers this year to fight mental illness. I hope you will consider walking with us...or running...or sending in your donation of support. The Thad and Alice Eure Walk for Hope is an annual event hosted by the Foundation of Hope for Research and Treatment of Mental Illness in Raleigh, held at the Angus Barn on Highway 70 near the RDU Airport. 100% of the money raised by participants directly funds local mental health research at the UNC Neurosciences Hospital in Chapel Hill.

Registration for the 27th Annual Thad & Alice Eure Walk for Hope is now open! Our team is the North Carolina Medical Society Alliance! Click here to DONATE TODAY!

The Walk for Hope features three different routes:

- **10K (6.2 miles)** begins at the Angus Barn on Hwy 70, loops through the Umstead State Park and returns to the Angus Barn.
- **5K (3.1 miles)** begins at the Angus Barn on Hwy 70, turns around at the Umstead Visitor Center, and returns to the Angus Barn.
- **1-mile Family Fun Nature Hike** around the Angus Barn Lake.

Click here for tips on how to assist the Alliance in meeting our goal. These are some great ideas!!!

Thanks so much for your support as we seek to make a far-reaching impact in mental health in North Carolina!

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2015 NCMA Alliance Board Retreat

By Shonette Charles

The North Carolina Medical Society Alliance Board Retreat was held on July 14, 2015 at the office of First Point Management in Raleigh. President Deborah Meehan kicked off the morning session with the quote, “A goal without a plan is just a wish.” Board members were asked to articulate things they appreciated about NCMS Alliance and then areas for improvement within the organization. Afterwards, everyone identified solutions for needed improvements.

One action that was voted on by the board was to put a multi-year health initiative in place that will transcend administration changes. The thought process was that this umbrella initiative is an issue in which the State Alliance is uniquely positioned to address but can easily be supported at the county level.

The initiative that was adopted was mental health. President Deb spoke about how resources to deal with mental health are lacking in North Carolina and that we will look for partnership opportunities so that the NCMS Alliance can have a greater impact in the community. One such partnership is NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness), and support and engagement can happen in various ways.

Finances, committees, technology, and communication were topics that were also examined during the day.

In addition to working hard, the board members enjoyed fellowshipping with each other over lunch. At the end of the day, everyone agreed, “It’s going to be a great year!”
**Cabarrus County**

The Cabarrus County Medical Society Alliance is currently without a President, Vice President or President-Elect. However, thanks to many dedicated volunteers, we in Cabarrus County continue to conduct vision screenings of second and fifth graders in the 20 elementary schools in the county. Screenings take place Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays involving 5-9 volunteers each morning. Romell Johnson and Jessica Weston coordinate the volunteers and schedule the screenings at each school. The screening process runs during September and October. We are grateful to Romell and Jessica for keeping this project running smoothly.

Our other yearly project takes place this year on October 12th. That is when our **11th Annual Swing for the Kids Golf Tournament** happens at the Cabarrus Country Club. This tournament supports the public school nurses in Cabarrus County and Kannapolis City Schools. It has raised over $275,000 for the public school nurse program over the last ten years. Cabarrus County remains one of the few counties in North Carolina with a nurse in every public school. Thank you to Lynn Takla, Racheal Kunesh, Lynn Hammers, MD, Carolyn Farris and Kirby Sheridan for coordinating the tournament this year.

Thank you, also, to Karen Byrd and Racheal Kunesh for their work as secretary and treasurer, respectively of the CMSA. We plan to hold a big celebration when these two projects are over and invite current and formerly active members of the Alliance. At that time we plan to form a committee to oversee the Alliance for the coming two years or until we re-organize our succession plan.

**Catawba County**

Join us for the First Medical Alliance’s Meeting! It will be Tuesday, October 27th at Youssef’s 242 in Hickory.

**Agenda:**

6:00pm-7:00pm  
A fun and lively book discussion  
*(book: All the Light We Cannot See by Doerr)*

7:00pm-8:00pm  
A celebration with cake to honor Jennifer Meredith, our final Alliance President

**Onslow County**

*By Paula Patselas*

Following a summer hiatus from formal activities the chapter has re-set for the upcoming academic calendar year 2015-2016. Officers, including President Lee Ann Thomas, Treasurer Carol Smith, Secretary Paula Patselas and adjunct support leaders Sheila Josilevich and Judy Frink met in late August to formulate prospective plans and goals for the months ahead. It was an opportunity to survey and consider past activities and experiences and take inventory of our many successes, legacies and impact within our medical community. A decision came forth to continue for a second year to focus fund raising efforts to support the Caring Community Clinic, which is a collaborative project by Onslow Memorial Hospital, Onslow Community Outreach, private donations and community volunteerism to provide free medical services to the uninsured or underinsured.

The Alliance has been involved in a number of ways over the past eight years to raise both awareness and funds to support this project. In addition, several physicians within the medical community have risen to the call to volunteer their services to this patient population. As part of the annual Onslow Oktoberfest scheduled for October 22-24, which benefits Onslow Community Outreach, including the Onslow Soup Kitchen, the Onslow Homeless Shelter and the Caring Community Clinic, the Alliance with host its 2nd Annual Wine & Beer Tasting on Thursday October 22 at 6pm with all proceeds to be donated to the Caring Community Clinic. The event was a huge success and well attended in 2014 and signals the beginning of yet another Alliance related tradition. Ultimately, through this clinic, many patients are being managed who might well otherwise present to the hospital emergency department.

*continued on page 6*
AMA Alliance Annual Meeting

By Pat Udekwu

On June 9th, 2015, our very own Julie Newman was installed as President of the AMA Alliance at the Annual Meeting held in Chicago. Even though Julie no longer resides in North Carolina, we still claim her as our very own; the heavy NC presence at the meeting proved just that. Not only was Julie installed as President, Beverly Wright, Greater Greensboro Society of Medicine Alliance, was installed as Secretary, Barb Savage, Wake County Medical Society Alliance, was instrumental in planning the Annual Meeting, Pat Udekwu, Wake County Medical Society Alliance, and Racheal Kunesh, Cabarrus County Medical Society Alliance, are continuing as co-editors of the LINK.

We are also pleased to announce Mecklenburg Medical Alliance and Endowment, NC received a 1st place Health Awareness Promotion Award (HAP). This award was in the category of Ongoing Community Projects and was for their “Community Health Classroom” project.

At the Night of Infinite Celebrations, Julie was honored by the NC contingent with a special slideshow showcasing our good times with Julie and our gratitude for her service at both the state and county level over the years. Thanks to all who contributed funds for the gifts that NC gave to all of the attendees that night. It was a fun night for all in attendance.

Julie gave an inspiring inauguration speech where she presented her vision for the AMA Alliance for the coming year. She is carrying forward the theme used by a few North Carolina Medical Society Alliance presidents, by focusing on F-words. For those who remember, these are all good F-words, including Fun and Flexible. While we can all think of different F-words, Fabulous is the word that comes to mind for what we wish for Julie’s year as President of the AMA Alliance.
health promotion and leadership. All in all…The Alliance will help you grow!

There’s no doubt that the people of the Alliance are those who know and understand the challenges and issues faced by us as physician spouses. Whether you have a professional career, you’re a stay-at-home mom or dad…or perhaps a medical student who just wants to learn more about coping in a medical family, the Alliance can make your journey so much easier and definitely more FUN.

In addition to medical family support, our statewide long range goal is specifically focusing on Mental Health Awareness and greater access to Mental Health Resources for everyone in North Carolina. I firmly believe that mental illness can be traced to be the root cause of many of the illnesses and unhealthy behaviors across out state. Truthfully, North Carolina is woefully lacking in this arena! Your board has committed to partnering with the National Alliance for Mental Illness (NAMI) at the state and local levels, as well as Governor McCrory’s new task force on Mental HealthCare and committing resources to make a difference! I encourage you to seek out these and other local mental health programs in your area with which to partner and provide support.

It’s important to me that you know that you are not required to volunteer, attend any planned events or even join in any regular group meetings; just know that you are ALWAYS welcome! Our hope is that you will love this organization so much that you will WANT to be an integral part of the State Alliance! And you’re always welcome to invite potential new members to join us!

I and your State Alliance Board are committed to building our organization by reaching out to each and every County Alliance across the state, introducing ourselves and our wonderful organization and creating new and lasting friendships wherever we go. Please let us know when you are planning local events and we will do our best to be there for you!

We thank those of you who have paid your 2015-2016 County and State membership dues and appreciate so very much your lasting support! We hope you will encourage others to share in the joys of being an Alliance member!

This is going to be a fabulous year…ONE FOR THE BOOKS!!! I look forward to many months ahead of cherished friendships, support, great times… and memories that will last forever!

With Love and Cheers to All!!!!

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Our agenda is chock full of many other service and fun activities. Later in September we have the opportunity to enlist more funding for the Caring Community Clinic by attending the final dress rehearsal of a murder mystery comedy at an up and coming local theatre, with all proceeds from ticket sales for the rehearsal to be committed to the Alliance.

The Alliance supports and participates annually with Onslow County Festival of Trees which this year will be held November 21-23. The event is sponsored by Onslow Caregivers, a non-profit which works tirelessly to raise funds for Onslow County Home Health and Hospice and most recently has begun with its mission to raise the funds to build a NC Hospice House in Onslow County. The Alliance takes initiative to align, support and collaborate with other organizations whose goals are to continue to elevate the level of health related services in our county.

In December, The Alliance will bear tidings of great joy as we prepare for our annual Onslow Memorial Hospital Emergency Department Santa Box. Each year Alliance families donate gifts for children of all ages, including teens; young adults and the elderly. Alliance family teens gather on a Saturday just before Christmas to wrap and label to designate age group and gender. The gifts are assembled into two to three very large decorated boxes and delivered with greatest fanfare to an expectant ER staff, which by now have come to anticipate the holiday arrival. The ER staff plays Santa by discreetly selecting and handing out the gifts to patients who are identified to be in particular need, pain, grief or otherwise difficult circumstances during the remainder of the holiday. This project is an Alliance favorite and receives rave reviews every year as it allows the ER staff to offer a little extra holiday TLC.

This year we will add another dimension to our holiday ER gift wrap session by offering a “You Shop, We Wrap” opportunity. Alliance families, medical staff, hospital staff, friends and neighbors can bring their gifts to be wrapped by our Alliance family teens, for donations, which will be committed to the Caring Community Clinic. We expect a lively day of wrapping, drinking hot chocolate, listening to Christmas music and jingling our bells.

We have many more activities on the calendar for the 2016 part of our calendar year and look forward to sharing more on these in the next Tandem issue.