FASPE Medical

“The FASPE experience has changed my trajectory in a way that I did not expect. It scares me to think about the lack of awareness with which I would be entering the next chapter in my medical education if I had not been part of such a meaningful experience. Every physician should be exposed and challenged in similar ways before they begin residency.”

“It would be an understatement to say that the FASPE trip was thought-provoking, innovative, and inspirational. To say the least, it was personally essential.”

FASPE Medical Fellows, 2010

FASPE is an innovative program for students in professional schools designed to address contemporary ethical issues through a unique historical context. The Fellowships provide law, medical, business, journalism, and seminary students a structured program of study that initially focuses on the role of their chosen professions in Nazi Germany and the Holocaust and uses that historic focus as a framework for the consideration of contemporary ethical issues. FASPE is under the auspices of the Museum of Jewish Heritage.

Twelve to fifteen Fellows from each profession are chosen to participate in FASPE each year through a competitive process that draws applicants from professional schools across the country. Following an introductory session in New York, the Fellows travel to Berlin, Krakow, and Oświęcim (Auschwitz). In Germany and Poland, the in situ program looks at the role of the profession in the development and implementation of policies and programs that led to the Holocaust. FASPE is predicated upon both the potent symbolism of Auschwitz and the Fellows’ personal experience while in Germany and Poland to help the Fellows explore the power and potential of their professions along with the potential challenges they will face as professionals.

FASPE programs will be offered in 2011 to students attending medical, law, seminary, and journalism schools. The FASPE business program will be offered in 2012. All program costs, including international and European travel, lodging, and food, are covered. The tentative program dates for FASPE Medical are June 26 – July 7, 2011.

The FASPE program for medical students is an intensive two-week program that examines the roles played by physicians in Nazi Germany and during the Holocaust, underscoring how the moral codes that govern the medical profession can break down or be distorted. The program’s integrated approach includes historical, medical, philosophical, and literary sources; survivor testimony; and on-site workshops in Berlin and Auschwitz.

The FASPE Medical Program examines the following topics, among others:

- The complicity of medical professionals in Nazi policies and the Holocaust;
- The relationship between state authority and medicine;
- The role and limits of contemporary bioethics (including euthanasia/physician-assisted suicide);
- The legacy of prejudice in the medical profession;
- Ethical challenges of political issues facing the health care profession today.

The FASPE curriculum for Medical Fellows was designed by faculty and students at Yale Medical School. Past programs were led by Drs. Thomas Duffy and Mark Mercurio of Yale Medical School. Please check www.mjhnyc.org/faspe for updates on 2011 faculty.

The two-week program has the following structure:

- The group gathers at the Museum of Jewish Heritage in New York for a brief orientation that includes visiting the Museum’s exhibits, meeting with Holocaust survivors, and working with FASPE staff and guest scholars.
The Fellows travel to Berlin, where they will have the opportunity to study the city’s historical and cultural sites, and also enjoy Berlin’s vibrant social life. Educational workshops will take place at the House of the Wannsee Conference, where, in 1942, representatives of State and Nazi Party agencies convened to discuss and coordinate plans for the “Final Solution.”

The Fellows will then travel to Oświęcim, Poland, the town the Germans called Auschwitz, where they will tour Auschwitz-Birkenau and work with the distinguished educational staff at the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum.

The Fellows will travel to Krakow, Poland where they will explore the city’s rich Jewish, Catholic, and Polish history. They will meet with Righteous among the Nations (rescuers) and Polish scholars. During the final days of the trip, the Fellows will focus exclusively on contemporary ethical issues facing the medical profession. Sessions will take place at Jagiellonian University, one of Europe’s oldest and most prestigious universities.

Fellows are expected to complete a Final Project following their return from the program. These projects are intended to be a substantive exploration of a theme, question, and issue that challenged or engaged the Fellow during the program and can be written or artistic. Fellows are expected to meet with facilitators during the trip to discuss their ideas. Fellows will be invited to present their final projects at the Museum; projects of the highest merit will be selected for publication.

To Apply:

To apply or to learn more about FASPE, please visit: www.mjhnc.org/faspe. Applicants will be required to submit academic transcripts, references, and a letter of recommendation, in addition to two essays. The committee will inform all candidates of their decisions by February 4, 2011. The tentative program dates for FASPE Medical are June 26 – July 7, 2011. Completed applications must be received by December 15, 2010. The Committee will inform all candidates of its decision by February 4, 2011.

Candidates of all religious, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds are encouraged to apply.