

**Archival & Historical Committee
October 2, 2013
Mandalay Bay Hotel
Las Vegas, Nevada**

**Interview with
M. Jay Porcelli, DO, FACOFP *dist.*
(ACOFP President – 2003-2004)**

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12 Committee Chair: Dr. Porcelli, thank you for being here today. Please give us an idea on how did
13 you begin your tenure with the ACOFP?

14 Dr. Porcelli: It started when I was a student, actually college, thinking that I would go into
15 family medicine and I applied to the college in 1974. I served as a student
16 liaison in Chicago. I went to the Chicago College of Osteopathic Medicine.
17 From there, I moved into the state. I did ACGP for many years in the '80s and
18 then we turned it into ACFP, as you know, and then I learned to start it in my
19 state in April 1950. I love history as you know. Then they asked me to do a
20 convention in San Francisco in 1994 and after that somebody nominated me
21 for the Board and I had a great 10-year ride.

22 Committee Member: Who were some of the people along the way who were positive influences on
23 you to direct you in a better path?

24 Dr. Porcelli: The big one in my state would be Ethan Allen, my godfather, if you would, and
25 who I thought would be a natural to serve on national, but Ethan said, "You
26 should serve." I said, "Really?" So I applied for a new thing that came about.
27 At this level, at the national level was Mike Avallone. I filter toward the Italian
28 boys and Frank McDevitt, the blue eyes from Michigan, the powers. Marcie
29 Oliva because I liked his cigars in the room and great ideas developed through
30 smoke.

31 Committee Member: That and alcohol I'm sure.

32 Dr. Porcelli: It was just a nice ride. It was a great time serving.

33 Committee Chair: What were some of the toughest issues that you had to deal with?

34 Dr. Porcelli: The toughest things I think were dealing with the non-FPs. Our allopathic
35 brethren were great. They took us in and we had good times. We ate at the best
36 restaurants in Louisiana when I was a boss in New Orleans, but the surgeons
37 we had to deal with, DO surgeons and DO internists and how we chewed our
38 young and sometimes don't get along as a family, but those are the issues. And
39 then our people crying because they weren't getting paid and the SGR issue
40 and problems in their practice and that's when I enjoyed going to all the
41 meetings. I used to go to all the meetings. I hit like 25 states. It was great. Just
42 listened to the soldiers and the soldierettes [*sic*] and people that were in the salt
43 mines. So my year in 2003 I gave back to the common GP because that's how I
44 think of it. I know you young people FP, but I'm a good old fashioned GP from
45 Pomona, the armpit of America, cornucopia California.

46 Committee Chair: So you said you listened to people and sometimes they say people are all talk,
47 no action or doctors, they're not trained to be doctors, but they're not trained to
48 be necessarily leaders or people that will put their words into action. Did you
49 have anything to do with the formation of state societies and the formation of
50 the ACOFP as it grew?

51 Dr. Porcelli: Not my state. It was there in California, that's where I'm from. It got
52 disseminated in 1962, as you know, about 2,600 DOs bought the MD degree. It
53 was a weekend course. It must've been a good college time, right, for getting
54 the MD degree. We call them little MDs, little allopaths. But it was already
55 going and then Ethan said, "Well should we restart this?" I said, "Yeah, let's
56 restart this. Let's get going. We could have some political power and we could

57 maybe help people that had hospital issues and maybe we could fight Blue
58 Shield in California and maybe help people in a platform communication." I
59 mean he's more of a broker than I. I just had vernix behind my ears, if you
60 would. I was tall, dark and handsome and had hair and the dog disappeared.
61 Horizontally disadvantaged now, but it's okay. But throughout those 10 years,
62 and not my idea totally, but incentives to get the ACFP societies going, like
63 calling Alicia Wagner in Nevada get it going. Even calling, is he cardiologist
64 out in Nevada, talking to Dee Selek*, just getting some of the local states
65 involved. I think we had up to 37 societies in mid 2005 and 2006 and I don't
66 know what it is now. But I wasn't instrumental. I just put the carrot and the
67 stick kind of thing - we'll do this for you. We have a constitution of bylaws
68 boilerplate. Oh, you're interested. You're the president, so go. North Carolina,
69 Don Jablonski left Florida, he went the Carolinas. He said, "Hey, we need a
70 society down there. Do it." As a governor, they used to listen. It was great.
71 Now nobody even says anything. Weren't you somebody someday or...

72 Committee Member: Somewhere.

73 Dr. Porcelli: Who are you?

74 Committee Member: The California stuff, the merger issues, were you around, were you pre
75 practicing in college or... I don't want to date you obviously, but I just...

76 Dr. Porcelli: Not aware. Go ahead, it's okay. Civil War Days were good. I was just a boy.
77 That was 1962, so I was born in 1950 and the cool thing of the '50s, let me get
78 my glasses on, is ACFP 1950s and I'm born in 1950. I got to be the 50th
79 President and it's been 50 years since I had a DO man or woman from
80 California be national president, so I was running at 200 percent. I used to have
81 a lot of energy in the good old days. But anyway, no, I wasn't. It was 1962, so
82 I'd be, what, seventh grade or whatever I'd be.

83 Committee Chair: 12ish.

84 Dr. Porcelli: Would it? Okay. And so I didn't find out about osteopathy till I moved to
85 Chicago. I graduated from UC Irvine. I'm an Anteater. I moved in 1972
86 because Italians were there and they had Chicago pizza and I knew there was a
87 preponderance of medical schools, so I applied to all of them and the year 1972
88 I got to be an ORT operator and technician because I went to the Catholic
89 hospital and said, "Yeah, I know how to do that." So I read a book that
90 weekend and got to see Sears Tower grow up. It was Oak Park Hospital, so it
91 was good. This second year, Gary Stabler is DO two years ahead of me
92 because he was a sophomore and they said, "What about DO?" I said, "What?"
93 And went down to the school, reviewed it and then I started working in the lab
94 there because I wanted to get through the back door then and only had 3.2 GP
95 and M-Cats were... We used to do 600s then or whatever. Now it's 40 to be a
96 genius. So got in that way in 1974. Trick-a-dick Nixon resigned and I got in.
97 Oh, and Melvin Popular* didn't show up, MP. Melvin Pop for some, Martin
98 Porcelli. That was kind of cool. I got to his cadaver, abracadaver. I had my
99 check because I had worked and I had \$10,000 saved and it was only like \$800
100 a year, so I said, "Dean, I'm here." Dean Crass*. I'm here. I got my... "All
101 right, Porcelli, get in." So that's how I got started in this thing. I think that's
102 why I served because it was such a... I would've been a nobody. I would've
103 been a pissologist [*sic*] or... I was great with a needle, phlebotomy. I was
104 sucking blood out. Here come the vampire. I said, "Yeah, here I is again. Let's
105 just get that blood out." I bring in the lab and pretend to look through the
106 microscope and all. It was great. So what do you out of college? Biological
107 sciences. What do you do with it? I was lucky. Magna Cum Fortunato I
108 graduated. I was lucky to get in, lucky to get out.

109 Committee Member: Great. Editing this is going to be fun.

110 Committee Chair: Oh my gosh. You do this one. I'll do Burt's.

111 Committee Member: There's a newbie here.

112 Dr. Porcelli: Ain't it cool?

113 Committee Member: So during your...

114 Dr. Porcelli: During my tender.

115 Committee Member: ...tender moments.

116 Dr. Porcelli: I put salt on it, tenderizer. I put Adolph's on it.

117 Committee Member: During your presidency, what were some of the highlights? I was fortunate to

118 be with you during that time we were able to get 50th anniversary.

119 Dr. Porcelli: Yeah, that was cool.

120 Committee Member: What other big...

121 Dr. Porcelli: My dream was to give back. I'm just a big guy. The big Harleys like to give

122 back, like to serve, so I wanted to give back the FP in the ground, smell with

123 salt and putting sulfur on them. I knew they didn't pay us for this, pointing to

124 me head, radio there, but they pay us for this - procedures, so I wanted to get

125 involved with that. Tom Told and I took that by the bull. Lewis Radnothy let us

126 do that and get that procedures institute going. We wanted something that we

127 couldn't get sued over but help and keep things in the office, EKG, Spiros and

128 little ditzels on the skin and joint injections, so we did that, and MOT. Hello,

129 (inaudible) therapy. The other thing I knew was electronic medical records, so

130 I turned Paul Martin onto that. Paul out of Ohio said, "Paul, get us an EMR.

131 Everybody's going to need one." President says it's coming." Before the big O,

132 the Affordable Care Act, which is unaffordable. I knew I loved conventions, so

133 I was always wanted to be on that committee till Willy Martin* kicked me off,

134 but I'll get over it later. The rhythm and the flow of conventions, I always

135 loved that, and I always loved all the committees. I went to every committee
136 and I just - - I had perfect attendance in school, college, and med school, never
137 missed a day, or work really. So I think when they smell the body rotting in the
138 office, then they'll know I missed a day. So other than that, that's my exit plan.
139 Plop right over, kiss the floor. Other things, let's see, did I anything else on
140 there? Sometimes I make these little notes on the plane. I think those are the
141 big ones. Just serving. It's just an honor to do it. You guys will find out. You'll
142 percolate. It's fun, really is fun. Practice will go to H-E-L-L, but you'll be okay.
143 That's the negative. You go and you're gone and you're gone and when you're
144 not there, you're not there. Patients want you, well they want you now. It's like
145 us men, when we want it, we want it now - dinner.

146 Committee Member: Any regrets?

147 Dr. Porcelli: Haven't had this much fun since the horse got out of the barn, really.

148 Committee Member: At 4:00 in the afternoon.

149 Dr. Porcelli: Everybody's serious about it. Get out of these superstars and you got an old
150 cavalry man. Regrets, mostly miss family because I'm gone. But great people
151 at home. I've had two wives. It's great.

152 Committee Member: Hopefully not at the same time.

153 Dr. Porcelli: Seven kids. Well it was okay. Different plays. Long Beach and (Inaudible) was
154 okay. I think just time away from the family is the big one. It's a real calling
155 and you really got to have some understanding people, as you know. Doctor,
156 your husband and the kids, it's tough. It's tough to serve and it's a calling.

157 Committee Member: Any good stories?

158 Dr. Porcelli: Yeah, a lot of cool stuff. You know that stuff in the conventions and in the
159 rooms when you get the guys and gals and smoke filled and you just kind of let
160 your hair down. I used to have some hair I let it down, and just talk about the

161 thing that happen or don't happen and the DOs are just the best people in the
162 world wherever you go. They're just fantastic folks. You're with family no
163 matter where you go and this hug thing is true from whenever. It was 1902,
164 who knows. Yeah, it's a cool ride and a cool thing to do. Rad thing, as Ben
165 says, gnarly. That was California stuff.

166 Committee Member: What do you envision as the future of family medicine and ACOFP?

167 Dr. Porcelli: It's bright. You've got a great Board now. The young people are being brought
168 on and I see the difference. I was young once and I see the difference what
169 you guys want or need and all the new tech-y things that are out there and, for
170 example, I still got my \$19 phone from Sprint for four years. You always want
171 updates, but I said, "I can call and text. I don't need anything else. I get colored
172 pictures. I'm okay." I think it's in the right hands. I think the vision is there, and
173 you're taller and taller. We use that shoulder thing. We're on taller shoulders.
174 We can see further. I think it's true, and we do advocate. We do advocate in
175 Washington, all the things we do at the state level. We do have good vision.
176 We educate the next generation and it is passed on. A lot of that is
177 apprenticeship. I know there's four years and at least three years now, we did
178 one year and then another year come later, but it's a long process, but they do
179 that because it's tough out there. You got to love it. I think we're way ahead of
180 the other, whatever the term is, the ones that aren't physicians. When you have
181 lesser, if you would, or less educated, they always want to see the doc. They
182 don't seem to want to see other people when you're there, so I think we're
183 trusted. Maybe not as much as pediatricians, but I think we're second in line.

184 Committee Member: Physician extenders, that's the word you were looking for.

185 Dr. Porcelli: I hate me PCP. That's been circulating, elephant tranquilizers. I am not a PCP. I
186 am an osteopathic family physician. That's what I am. I am not a

187 hallucinogenic. I am mind altering, but that's different. Those are just my one-
188 liners. But it's in the right hands. It's out of our hands. If you want advice, we'll
189 give it. We give you advice and you do what you want to anyway. It's in the
190 right hands.

191 Committee Member: So what advice do you have for young ones?

192 Dr. Porcelli: It's in your hands.

193 Committee Member: Other than it's in your hands.

194 Dr. Porcelli: Listen to everybody and then do what you want. Listen to the membership of
195 course. Listen to the interns and residents. They certainly are the next ones and
196 they have the right information. They have all the right words and scientific
197 background, but we've got the wisdom and which way to go. I don't miss a
198 step. I exactly where I'm going to go. I don't go in circles. I don't have much
199 time left, so my pulse is weakening. It's already weakening.

200 Committee Member: What have you seen as either positive or negative changes of continuing
201 medical education with ACOFP?

202 Dr. Porcelli: It's so much better. I've done five programs, so that's why I love (inaudible). I
203 can't remember all, but I know I got my break in San Francisco, in California
204 in that fall program, '94 AOA and ACGP then. Other spots, again I forgot, but
205 the thing was: Here's the money and here's the program. Here's 10 grand, so fit
206 something in there from the company, whether it be immunizations or new
207 drugs or new pain things or new blood pressure. And now it's great because
208 they have the planning and they have objectives now and that's wonderful and
209 then they fit a program in. They fit into what the feedback is too because we
210 ask the members what they really want and what they want to hear. More
211 derm, more peds (inaudible) things they didn't see maybe or have a good
212 handle on in school, so I think better. Gooder [*sic*] is better. I think Burt

213 Routman's done a great job there. Katie was on that committee in those days,
214 yourself. It was a good. The Educational Committee and they were distinct but
215 separate. This and going to the convention, committee and say, "This is what
216 we see." (Inaudible) is more the sites where they want to go, like this, how
217 nice, or Puerto Rico in a couple of years would be good and Seattle. We can go
218 to the Great Northwest and have cloud covers, but go see all the islands. That's
219 fun over there. The only advice - Live it, do it, and have fun doing it. Don't
220 take yourself too serious, you'll all get replaced. They're replacing us soon. Just
221 like a light bulb, sometimes we turn off, the switch will work.

222 Committee Member: :Well thank you so much.

223 Committee Member: Any other stories, tales?

224 Dr. Porcelli: Just when I was the boss, it was a tough Broad just before that. You got on.
225 You had to shut up. Avallone's would kick me. Even Pogo and McNerney
226 would kick me. They turned out to be the best advisors and best teachers and
227 Louis and Kieren Knapp. At that level, it's fantastic what you learn and what
228 you can do and you get so much better. I mean you're average and by the time
229 you get done, you're above average because they really pull your boot strings
230 up. It was a great time. I enjoyed it. Don't regret anything except, again, that
231 time out of the office. But to get to see yourself and how you treat and how you
232 do things and do the different states and how they apply things and how well
233 they do their programs. I modeled California after Pennsylvania. I'll model it
234 after Florida and Texas, how they did things and how they treated people and
235 the fun things they did and then how they treat the dignitaries and then hook up
236 president-elect just to pick him up, show him around, so I learned a lot of that
237 courtesy stuff, that political courtesy, yeah.

238 Committee Member: Well thank you so much.

239 Dr. Porcelli: All right, we did it within the timeframe.

240