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Junior Member Transforms *NewsPath*® into Experience for Residents to Get Involved Immediately

*“As chair of the *NewsPath*® Editorial Board (NEB) and a current Junior Member myself, I know that Residents want to get involved immediately in the CAP. *NewsPath* is one vehicle. You will author a by-lined article and podcast published on www.cap.org/newspath. You will also work with a NEB mentor and a Scientific Advisor from a CAP Resource Committee. *NewsPath* is a bridge for Junior Members and Fellows to work together.”*

The re-engineering of *NewsPath* is in full swing and it’s more than writing an article—it’s an experience.

In the beginning, *NewsPath* was published as a printed newsletter by the CAP Public Affairs Committee and provided to CAP Fellows as a marketing tool. Features provided insight into laboratory medicine and pathologists distributed *NewsPath* to other clinicians to promote a better understanding of services that they could provide. Marketing was pretty much a one-way street, back then; it was all about telling your story.

Today, news items compete within a culture whose summer blockbuster comes with its own line of toys and interactive video games. There is new science about how people learn and what engages their interest. When the Transformers DVD hit the retail racks later this year, people will expect to find minifigures packaged along with the film to tell the backstory. They’ll want to know how the costumes were constructed.

This is the backstory on the re-engineering of *NewsPath*.

C. Leilani Valdes, MD, spent a few years in marketing and public relations before deciding to round out her math and science credits and apply to medical school. By the start of 2008, close to completing her pathology residency and about to embark on a dermatopathology fellowship, Dr. Valdes was much involved with the CAP Residents Forum and served as a Junior Member on both the Strategic Planning and Public Affairs Committees. Physicians on the Public Affairs Committee offered her the opportunity

to put her marketing background to work for the College by taking on the editorship of *NewsPath* and the *NewsPath* Editorial Board. Editorial policy developed over time. Any resident could submit a story idea. The editorial board would mentor new writers (mentoring *down*) and work with senior members of CAP scientific committees on content review (mentoring *up*).

Dr. Valdes knows that telling your story is good but having your story developed into a podcast is better. The portable text and audio would bring the media up to speed with the message. And, just as those who recruited her had hoped, she focused on message with a certain ferocity.

“Medical writing must be accurate, but it doesn’t have to be boring,” Dr. Valdes says. “In goal-setting for *NewsPath*, we knew that if we were to meet expectations, the writing would have to be captivating.”

The first podcasts are on the CAP website, and the *NewsPath* Editorial Board is working with the CAP Technology Assessment Committee to develop stories based upon POET (Perspectives on Emerging Technology) reports, which concern emerging technologies that are expected to impact practice. When the CAP Quality Center begins to publish best practices, those will be featured as well.

“We’re all clinicians,” Dr. Valdes says. “We need to communicate what nonpathologist clinicians need to know in language that they understand and in a format that is accessible.”

Mentor up, mentor down. *NewsPath* is an extraordinary bridge for Junior Members and Fellows to work together on common ground.