

July/Sept 2026

Bulletin

MEMBER MAGAZINE FOR THE POLK COUNTY MEDICAL SOCIETY



2026
Washington DC
Fly-in:
Federal Advocacy



Growing Iowa's
Physician Workforce
Starts with
Residency Training



Polk County
as a Hub that
Strengthens the
Entire State



2026 Physician Day
at the Iowa
State Fair



Dollars In Action:
*The Julie Evans
Memorial Children's
Healthcare Fund*



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Medical Society

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July/September 2026

2026

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Bulletin

JULY/SEPT 2026

MEMBER MAGAZINE FOR THE POLK COUNTY MEDICAL SOCIETY

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When the Seasons Change . . . So Do We



By: Jeffrey Farber, M.D.

It is interesting how the world begins again based on the school calendar. Summer gives way to autumn. Preschoolers head off with shiny new backpacks, elementary school kids reluctantly enter middle school, and parents drop their last child at college—with perhaps a few tears. The leaves begin to fall, and somehow Christmas candy appears alongside the Halloween candy.

In the medical world, interns become more comfortable treating patients, and attendings become more comfortable being responsible for other people's lives.

Football has replaced baseball as the national pastime. This is my 50th year of season tickets at Kinnick Stadium—my wife still thinks it is a ridiculous waste of money. At the opening game this year, the temperature reached 106 degrees on the field and nearly that in the stands. I drank six bottles of water and survived, barely.

The University did many things right. Fans were encouraged to seek shade, there was no limit on bringing water into the stadium, ice was readily available, and medical personnel were everywhere. Even the halftime activities were shortened because of the heat.

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But tragically, a 20-year-old member of the band did not survive the heat.

I recently had the opportunity to discuss the situation with Iowa Athletic Director Beth Goetz. My thought was simple: perhaps it is time to learn from our southern neighbors and play more games at night when temperatures are safer. Television may have something to say about that, of course.

We have also learned much about football-related brain injuries. Helmets and rules have improved, but football remains a collision sport. The question is not whether we love the game—it is how we make it safer.

Perhaps that is the larger lesson.

As physicians, we are constantly balancing tradition with new information. We respect what has worked in the past, but we also have a responsibility to recognize when circumstances change and act accordingly.

That same responsibility applies to how we care for our patients, support one another, and serve our community.

After 50 years, I still plan to walk across campus, have my favorite hamburger, and head to Kinnick.

I'll enjoy every minute of it—unless it gets too hot.



**What keeps you up
at night shouldn't
wait until morning.**

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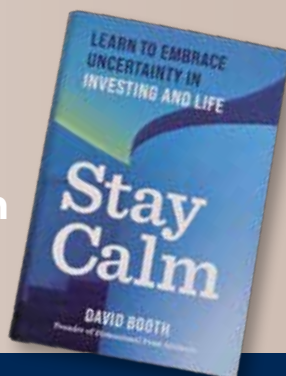
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The Changing Practice of Medicine:

Why Physician Advocacy Matters More Than Ever



By: Paula A. Noonan, C.E.O.

Medicine remains a calling, but the realities of practicing it have changed dramatically. Physicians face growing administrative burdens, prior authorization delays, reimbursement pressures, staffing shortages, and increasing regulatory demands. These challenges extend beyond the examination room, affecting physicians' time with their spouses and children, financial security, professional autonomy, and ability to sustain a lifelong commitment to patient care.

When physicians spend more time navigating bureaucracy than caring for patients, everyone feels the impact—including their families and the communities that depend on them. Protecting

the future of medicine requires more than recognizing these challenges; it requires action.

Central Iowa Physicians, the doing-business-as name of Polk County Medical Society, remains committed to being the voice of physicians and protecting the practice of medicine. Our advocacy addresses the policies shaping healthcare today and the future our physicians and their families deserve.

Recently, we presented Iowa's congressional delegation with a proposal for a federal specialty-care access demonstration, exploring the Volunteer Physician Network as a potential pilot site through HRSA.

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In collaboration with Senator Chuck Grassley's office, we are continuing to develop the concept to help uninsured and underinsured Iowans access donated specialty care by supporting the infrastructure that turns referrals into treatment.

We are also advancing Medicare payment reform. Our proposal seeks a permanent 1.0 Practice Expense Geographic Practice Cost Index floor for Iowa physicians, while developing more meaningful criteria for recognizing healthcare access challenges beyond the current frontier-state framework. The goal is to strengthen physician practices, support recruitment and retention, and sustain hospital services without creating unintended negative consequences for hospitals.

Equally important, we advocate for clear guardrails that preserve

physician-led medical teams, protect scope of practice, and ensure patients understand the training, credentials, and responsibilities of the professionals caring for them. Physicians holding MD, DO, or DPM degrees bring distinct medical education and qualifications that must be clearly distinguished in healthcare communications. Transparency strengthens trust, accountability, and patient safety.

These efforts share one purpose: protecting the physician-patient relationship and preserving access to quality care. Central Iowa Physicians / Polk County Medical Society will continue working with physicians, policymakers, and community partners to ensure that those who care for Iowa's patients have a meaningful voice in shaping medicine's future.



**Central Iowa
Physicians**

A d/b/a of Polk County Medical Society

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We work on the issues that matter most to physicians — scope of practice, fair payment, workforce, telehealth, and truth in advertising — to protect the practice of medicine and the patients we serve.

Why Your Membership Matters

- ✓ Keeps a strong, unified urban physician voice in Des Moines and surrounding communities.
- ✓ Allows us to maintain and expand services and advocacy.
- ✓ Without your membership, we cannot sustain these essential services — and urban physicians risk losing their local strength and influence.

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Or return the
enclosed membership form.



PHYSICIANS TOGETHER — PROTECTING OUR PROFESSION, OUR PATIENTS AND OUR COMMUNITY.

PCMS Washington DC FLY-IN

From Iowa to Washington: Turning Healthcare Challenges Into Federal Solutions

This September, leaders from **Central Iowa Physicians, the d/b/a of Polk County Medical Society**, returned to Washington, D.C., September 14–18, to continue an increasingly collaborative conversation with Iowa's Congressional delegation about the future of healthcare in our state.

This year's fly-in was about more than identifying problems. It was about developing **federal solutions to Iowa's physician workforce, reimbursement and specialty-care access challenges.**

A major priority remains Iowa's Medicare reimbursement disparity.



L-R Senators Joni Ernst and Charles Grassley with Paula Noonan, Central Iowa Physicians CEO and Kathie Lyman.

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Central Iowa Physicians continues working with the delegation on a **permanent 1.0 GPCI floor for Iowa**, while also examining frontier-state criteria and data from states such as North Dakota, South Dakota, Wyoming and Nevada. The objective is to improve physician reimbursement, recruitment and access **without negatively affecting Iowa hospitals or their bottom lines**.

At the same time, new federal Medicare and Medicaid/CHIP policies taking effect October 1 create an important opportunity to address a growing specialty-care gap. Federal investment in rural healthcare is increasingly focused on access, innovative delivery models and connections between patients and specialists. **Iowa already has a solution: the Volunteer Physician Network (VPN).**

VPN has connected Iowans with donated specialty care through a network of more than 500 volunteer physicians and healthcare partners, facilitating thousands of specialty-care referrals across all 99 counties. Yet, unlike traditional healthcare services, the specialty care itself

is **donated**. What is missing is sustainable federal support for the infrastructure that connects patients to that donated expertise.

Central Iowa Physicians is therefore proposing an **HRSA specialty-care pilot and targeted federal carve-out** to support navigation, referral coordination, language access, technology and other infrastructure surrounding donated specialty care. The concept is simple: **Washington would not be paying twice for care—it would be leveraging physician philanthropy.**

Our time with Senators Chuck Grassley and Joni Ernst reinforced the importance of relationships in moving these ideas forward. We are continuing to collaborate with Iowa's delegation to build federal traction around these priorities.

Iowa does not simply have healthcare challenges. **Iowa has physicians, hospitals and proven programs already working on solutions. Our goal is to connect those solutions with federal resources so they can be sustained, strengthened and expanded.**

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We believe in working together to provide the best outcome possible for each patient.



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GROWING IOWA'S PHYSICIAN WORKFORCE



Starts with Residency Training

By: Jennifer Beaty, M.D.

Iowa's physician recruitment challenge begins before a job opening is posted. Many medical students want to practice in Iowa, but residency opportunities are limited. In obstetrics and gynecology, for example, just six new residency positions are available statewide each year. When graduates leave Iowa for training, we lose a valuable chance to connect them with the patients, communities, and physicians they might one day serve alongside.

That is why recent graduate medical education (GME) investments matter. In June, Iowa received federal approval for approximately \$49.5 million in additional funding to expand residency training across the state's teaching hospitals. Once fully implemented, the expansion is expected to support more than 128 additional physicians in training statewide. Iowa has also announced up to \$10.5 million to help establish as many as 14 new residency

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programs in internal medicine, obstetrics and gynecology, general surgery, and psychiatry, with an emphasis on rural and underserved communities.

For Des Moines University, this creates an opportunity and a responsibility. We can prepare students to serve the state, but medical school alone cannot complete the physician workforce pipeline. Residency programs need committed clinical faculty, patients and clinical experiences, administrative support, and dependable funding. Building those programs requires medical schools, hospitals, practices, and communities to work together.

The connection to recruitment is practical: residency gives physicians several years to build

relationships with local teams and see what practicing in Iowa could look like.

Nationally, 55.7% of physicians who completed residency from 2015 through 2024 were practicing in the state where they trained. That does not guarantee every new Iowa resident will stay, but it makes training capacity a meaningful part of a long-term recruitment strategy.

These investments will take time to become accredited programs and, eventually, practicing physicians. The work now is to develop training opportunities that meet community needs and give the next generation of physicians a compelling reason to build their careers in Iowa.

PHYSICIAN DAY *at the Iowa State Fair*



WHERE MEDICINE MEETS THE MIDWAY - A LITTLE FUN, A LOT OF FELLOWSHIP, AND MAYBE A FEW THINGS ON A STICK

There are some things you can count on at the Iowa State Fair: the smell of something being deep-fried, the sound of the midway, a little too much walking, and at least one person in your group saying, “I’ve never seen that before!”

For Central Iowa Physicians/Polk County Medical Society (PCMS), there’s another tradition worth counting on—**Physician Day at the Iowa State Fair!**

What began as a way to celebrate our physicians has become something even more special: a day for physicians, colleagues, families and friends to put down the phones, step away from the office and enjoy being together.

Because let’s face it—physicians spend a lot of time taking care of everyone else. Physician Day is our chance to take care of something else that matters: **our friendships and our medical community.**

The fair provides the perfect setting. There is plenty to eat, plenty to see and plenty of opportunity to discover just how many different foods can successfully be served on a stick. But somewhere between the food stands, midway rides and wandering

through the crowds, the best part of the day is often the simplest—running into a colleague and having time to actually talk.

Not about the schedule.

Not about the next patient.

Not about who is on call.

Just talking.

Physician Day is a chance to catch up with colleagues we may not see often enough, introduce our families to the people we work alongside, and enjoy the friendships that make the practice of medicine a little more rewarding.

And the families are an important part of the celebration. Behind every physician is a family that understands the early mornings, late nights, weekend calls, holidays interrupted by work and all the other demands that come with a career in medicine. **Physician Day gives those families a chance to celebrate, too.**

There is something wonderful about seeing physicians outside of their usual environment. The white coats are gone. The conference rooms are replaced by picnic tables and fairgrounds. And for at least one afternoon, nobody has to worry about getting back to the clinic on time.

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Some came for the food.
Some came for the rides.
Some came for the people.
And some probably came because someone promised them a free ticket.
Whatever the reason, we were glad to have them!

For those who couldn't join us on the designated Physician Day, PCMS tickets could also be used on another day of the fair, giving members an opportunity to make their own family memories.

That is really what Physician Day is about.

Celebrating our physicians. Celebrating their families. Celebrating our colleagues. And celebrating the friendships and sense of community that make Central Iowa's medical community special.

Medicine can be demanding work. It can also be deeply meaningful work—and it is

made better when we have people around us who understand the journey.

So if you missed Physician Day this year, consider this your early reminder for next year:

Put it on the calendar. Bring your family. Invite a colleague. Come hungry. Wear comfortable shoes. And be prepared to laugh.

The Iowa State Fair will provide the food, the fun and the occasional questionable food choice. We'll provide the camaraderie. **We hope to see you there!** Because medicine is serious work. **Celebrating the people who do it should be fun.**

Now, sit back and ENJOY THE PICS! Maybe we will catch you and your family in one of them next year!



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DMU-COMS: Polk County as a Hub

THAT STRENGTHENS THE ENTIRE STATE



By: David A. Connett, D.O.

Iowa's physician workforce challenge will not be solved by medical schools alone. We can recruit talented students, educate them well, and encourage them to serve Iowa, but the physician pipeline remains incomplete unless graduates have opportunities to continue their training in residency programs within our state.

That creates a particular opportunity for Polk County.

As the state's largest population center and home to major hospitals, health systems, physician groups,

and medical education resources, and Central Iowa Physicians/Polk County Medical Society, Polk County is positioned to help lead the next phase of graduate medical education in Iowa. Our goal should not simply be to create more residency positions, but to develop training in specialties and communities where physician shortages are most consequential.

Iowa's recent investment in graduate medical education provides an important catalyst. These funds can help hospitals and health systems overcome start-up

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Practice Where Your Expertise — Truly Matters —

At Broadlawns Medical Center, our providers deliver high-acuity, high-impact care supported by expanding service lines, advanced technology, and a collaborative clinical environment. Your work directly improves access to exceptional care and advances the health of Polk County or our communities.

Explore
opportunities



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costs associated with developing or expanding residency programs and navigating accreditation. Des Moines University's recent achievement of ACGME Institutional Sponsorship accreditation also creates opportunities to partner with healthcare organizations seeking to establish high-quality training programs.

The value of residency training extends beyond the years a physician spends in the program. Residents provide care, strengthen clinical teams, and contribute to the communities in which they train. Just as importantly, physicians frequently establish their careers near the places where they complete residency. Creating more Iowa-based training positions therefore becomes one of our strongest physician recruitment strategies.

Polk County can serve as a hub for this work while supporting

residency development in rural and underserved areas throughout Iowa. Strong programs in central Iowa can create partnerships, rotations, faculty development, and clinical experiences that extend beyond the metro and strengthen the statewide workforce.

Individual physicians are essential to this effort. Every physician who teaches, precepts, mentors, or supports a resident contributes to the future of our profession.

Polk County has the clinical resources, educational infrastructure, and physician leadership to make a difference. If we intentionally build graduate medical education where Iowa needs physicians most, our community can help lead a statewide solution—one that strengthens access to care for generations to come.

Dollars in Action:

The Julie Evans Memorial Children's Healthcare Fund

1st quarter FY 2026-2027

Keeping the Promise of Specialty Care

The Enduring Legacy of Julie Evans and the Evans Family Charitable Foundation

As the Volunteer Physician Network (VPN) begins fiscal year 2026/27, the need for private philanthropy has never been more urgent.

In just the **first quarter of FY 2026/27, the VPN served 631 children and families** in need of specialty medical care. At the same time, declining funding, inflation, rising costs, and increasing demand are placing unprecedented pressure on programs serving Iowa's most vulnerable residents. This is the first year in which these financial challenges are having a significant impact on the ability to sustain services.

The VPN connects uninsured and underinsured Iowans living at or below 200% of the federal poverty level with volunteer physicians and healthcare partners who donate specialty medical services. For many of these families, the VPN represents their only pathway to specialty care.

Volunteer physicians generously donate their expertise, but delivering that care requires an infrastructure to identify patients, coordinate referrals, navigate complex healthcare systems, provide interpretation, and connect families with specialists. **Without continued private philanthropic support, the continuation of this critical program would be in jeopardy.**

This is why the continued commitment of the **Evans Family Charitable Foundation** is so important.

Through the **Julie Evans Memorial Children's Healthcare Fund**, the Evans Family Charitable Foundation is helping ensure that the VPN can continue saying "yes" to children and families who need specialty care but cannot afford it.

Their support is more than a financial contribution. It is an investment



**CENTRAL IOWA
— PHYSICIANS —**

CONNECTING PHYSICIANS. STRENGTHENING CARE.



**DO YOU HAVE
THE TIME**
*to help just
one person?*



WE NEED YOU.

Your specialty care can change—
and even save—lives across Iowa.



**1–4 PATIENTS
A YEAR CAN MAKE
A LIFELONG
IMPACT.**

The Volunteer Physician Network (VPN) is Iowa's only program providing **free specialty care** to uninsured and underinsured Iowans at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level who are ineligible for other assistance programs.

REAL PATIENTS. REAL IMPACT.



A 6-YEAR-OLD GIRL
diagnosed with a heart
condition received life-saving
cardiology care and surgery
through VPN—over
\$250,000 in care provided
by volunteer specialists.



A 15-YEAR-OLD BOY
with lupus and serious
complications received
specialty care from
Rheumatology and GI
specialists—restoring his
health and his **future**.



These are just two of thousands of lives you can help change.



**5,000–7,000
IOWANS SERVED
EACH YEAR**



**99
COUNTIES
SERVED**



**500+
VOLUNTEER
PHYSICIAN
SPECIALISTS**



**64
MEDICAL & SURGICAL
SPECIALTIES**



**\$12 MILLION
IN DONATED CARE
PROVIDED ANNUALLY**

WHY VOLUNTEER?

- ✓ Change lives in a meaningful way
- ✓ Use your expertise to heal and restore
- ✓ Give back to your community and your profession
- ✓ Flexible commitment: 1–4 patients a year
- ✓ We handle the rest



*Your time.
Their second
chance.*

WE PROVIDE ALL SUPPORT

- ✓ Patient referrals & coordination
- ✓ Eligibility verification & navigation
- ✓ Interpretation in 29 languages
- ✓ Follow-up & care coordination
- ✓ Gratitude & impact updates

ANSWER THE CALL. 515-288-0172 JOIN THE VPN TODAY.

— <https://www.centraliowaphysicians.org/volunteer-physician-network/> —

Continued from page 22

in the belief that a child's access to healthcare should not be determined by a family's ability to pay.

The Evans Family Charitable Foundation's generosity carries forward the extraordinary legacy of **Julie Evans**. Her compassion for children and commitment to helping families continues through every patient who receives care and every physician who volunteers to provide it.

In a year when economic pressures are threatening the sustainability of charitable healthcare programs, the **Evans Family Charitable Foundation** remains a vital partner in keeping this promise to Iowa families.

Because of its continued generosity, the Volunteer Physician Network can remain a lifeline for those who have nowhere else to turn.

Central Iowa Physicians/Polk County Medical Society Volunteer Physician Network - Connecting Iowa families in need with physicians willing to help through donated specialty care.

If you are a physician specialist and do not participate now, please consider donate some of your time and services to lowans at risk and in need.

*“Julie Evans’ legacy is not simply
remembered —
it is actively changing lives.”*



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A NAME THAT BETTER REFLECTS OUR WORK.

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CENTRAL IOWA — PHYSICIANS —

CONNECTING PHYSICIANS. STRENGTHENING CARE.

For more than 175 years, Polk County Medical Society has been dedicated to supporting physicians and improving the health of our communities.

As our Foundation, Volunteer Physician Network, educational initiatives, advocacy efforts, and community outreach programs have grown, we've found that a public-facing name that reflects these programs more clearly will help us communicate with physicians, patients, partners, and donors.

That's why you'll begin seeing us use the name
Central Iowa Physicians
in our public communications.



This new public-facing brand reflects our programs and outreach—it **does not change** our organization, governance, membership, or longstanding role as Polk County Medical Society.



WHY YOU'LL SEE A NEW NAME

It **better reflects** the important work we are already doing through our programs to serve physicians and communities throughout Central Iowa.



WHAT ISN'T CHANGING

- ✓ We are still Polk County Medical Society
- ✓ Same physician-led organization
- ✓ Same Board of Directors
- ✓ Same membership
- ✓ Same Foundation
- ✓ Same advocacy
- ✓ Same mission
- ✓ Same commitment since 1851

DIFFERENT NAME.
SAME LEGACY SINCE 1851.



CENTRAL IOWA — PHYSICIANS —

CONNECTING PHYSICIANS. STRENGTHENING CARE.



Thank you for being an essential part of our mission to support physicians and *improve lives* in our communities.



CENTRAL IOWA
— PHYSICIANS —

A d/b/a of Polk County Medical Society

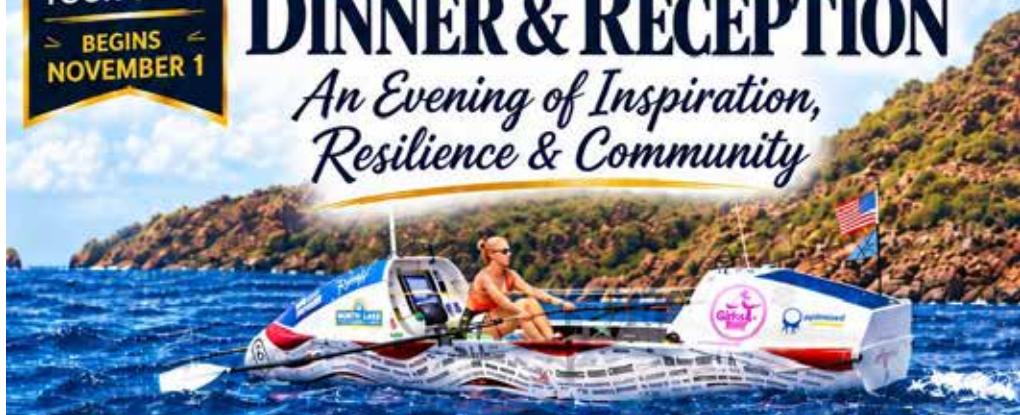
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we make a
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community.*

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THURSDAY, JANUARY 28, 2027

2027 ANNUAL DINNER & RECEPTION

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46 DAYS ALONE
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WOMAN
TO COMPLETE
THE WORLD'S
TOUGHEST ROW SOLO



ONE EXTRAORDINARY
STORY OF RESILIENCE,
PURPOSE & COMMUNITY



COMMUNITY

"Anything is
possible, but
we can't do
it alone."



ADVENTURE

"Stand in
the courage
to push through
fear and dive
into the unknown."



RESILIENCE

"All weather
passes. Rooted
in community
and impermanence."



PURPOSE

"What will you do
now with the gift
of your left life?"



**Greater Des Moines
Botanical Garden**

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Cocktail Reception

5:30 PM



Dinner & Program

6:15 PM



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