

PSYCHIATRIC PHYSICIAN

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**“TO ADVANCE THE QUALITY AND EFFECTIVENESS OF
PSYCHIATRIC CARE THROUGH ADVOCACY,
PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION AND CAMARADERIE”**

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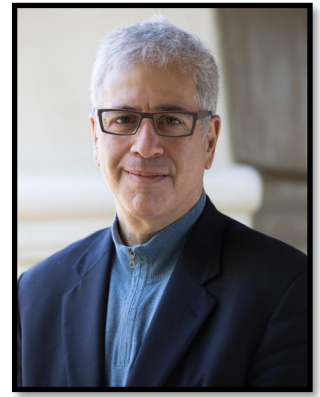
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President's Message: Embracing Our Multigenerational Organization

**Michael Ostacher, MD MPH, MMSc,
DLFAPA**



Dear Members of the Northern California Psychiatric Society (NCPS),

I am deeply honored to write to you in my new role President of our wonderful organization. As I begin my tenure, I want to outline my vision for the coming year. Together, we have an incredible opportunity to shape the future of psychiatry in Northern California and ensure that our organization remains vibrant, multi-generational, and supportive of all its members.

First and foremost, I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to Farah Zaidi, MD, for her outstanding leadership and dedication during her term as the Immediate Past President of NCPS. Dr. Zaidi's tireless efforts in advancing the mission of our society and her mentoring of members, especially those in training and early in career (and of me, as President-Elect), have set a strong foundation for the work that lies ahead. I am grateful for her guidance and commitment to the society and to psychiatry.

I would also like to express my appreciation to several others. First, to Raymond Reyes, MD, for his valuable contributions in his role as the Society's Parliamentarian. Dr. Reyes' expertise and commitment to ensuring adherence to proper governance procedures have been instrumental in maintaining the integrity of our society's meetings and operations, and what he has taught me, for one, has been immeasurable. His guidance will continue to be invaluable as we move forward. Second, I'd like to acknowledge Stephen Gamboa, MBA, who is our (still new) Executive Director, for the work he's done professionalizing our operations. For those who were able to be at our shared reception at APA know that even down to the details of a party, he does a terrific job. Lastly, thanks to all of you who have supported me as Treasurer and President-Elect. There are too many to thank from NCPS, really, but I want to mention Smita Das, especially, who brought me into the Society's

work, and to Shana Levy and Sid Wright for their support of me as I start this term.

One of the key pillars of my presidency will be the support and development of our members across the lifespans of their careers. Psychiatry thrives when it brings together individuals from different backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives. By embracing diversity, including diversity of age and experience, we enrich our collective knowledge and enhance the care we provide to our patients. I am committed to fostering an environment where everyone feels welcome, respected, and valued for their unique contributions.

A vital aspect of fostering diversity is also ensuring that our organization is multi-generational, culturally respectful, and that it actively engages with Resident Fellow Members (RFMs) and early career psychiatrists (ECs). RFMs and ECs bring fresh ideas, energy, and a unique understanding of the evolving landscape of our field. We must create avenues for their active participation, provide mentorship opportunities, and empower them to shape the future of our field. I am so pleased how many RFMs made it to the first General Council meeting of the year, and how many graduating RFMs and ECs are willing to serve on Council along with members across the span of their careers, and to everyone willing to donate their time, expertise, and wisdom to NCPS.

We actively collaborate with psychiatrists in practice, academic institutions, residency programs, and other District Branches and the APA to create networking opportunities and facilitate career development. By fostering these connections, we can create a vibrant community of professionals dedicated to advancing the field of psychiatry and improving mental health outcomes in our region and in the country. The work of our committees and service of our members makes the Society and APA what it is, whether for advocacy through our lobbying at the California State Association of Psychiatrists (CSAP) and the Government Affairs committee, those who are part of APA Assembly, the Education Committee (tasked with organizing our educational and conference offerings), and others, and I encourage you to engage with the Society and APA as much as possible.

I believe that our collective strength lies in our unity and shared goals. To this end, I invite all members to actively participate in the various committees and work groups of NCPS. Together, we can shape policies, advocate for our patients, and promote the highest standards of psychiatric care, while helping develop people's careers. Your voice and expertise are essential to the success of our organization, and I encourage you to contribute actively. I invite you to reach out to me or any member of the General Council with your ideas, concerns, and suggestions. Let us work collaboratively to build a society that is not only responsive to the needs of our diverse membership but also at the forefront of innovation and excellence in the care of our patients.

Warm regards,

Michael Ostacher, MD, MPH, MMSc, DLFAPA

President, Northern California Psychiatric Society (NCPS)

Cover Photo Spotlight

Randall Van Ornam, Marketing & Communications for NCPS/PESC

This month's cover photo image is a photograph from Northern California Psychiatric Society's reception at the recent American Psychiatric Association meeting. This event took place in San Francisco atop the One Kearny Club and shows off the beautiful evening of drinks, networking, and comradery amongst the APA attendees.

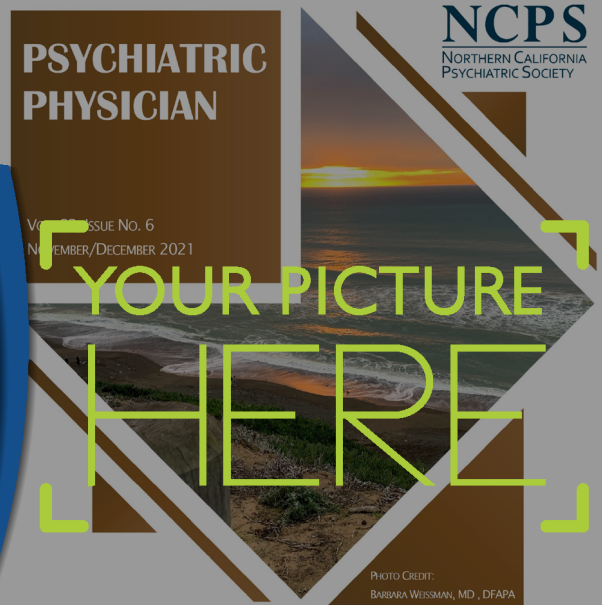
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Cover Page Photo Contest

Do you enjoy taking pictures of different landscapes? NCPS is looking for photos to grace the cover page of future editions of the Psychiatric Physician.

From the great cities to the coastal lines of Northern California, there's no better snapshot to share with our members than the beauty of our region.

To enter, please email your picture, a picture of yourself and brief description to info@ncps.org



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NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2021

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The views expressed in the articles are those of the respective authors and do not necessarily reflect the views or opinions of Northern California Psychiatric Society (NCPS) and/or the American Psychiatric Association (APA).

In this Issue

Peter Forster, MD - Editor

"In this issue we welcome our new president, Michael Ostacher, with his first President's message. NCPS has been fortunate with its recent selection of officers, and Dr. Ostacher is no exception. In a photo montage we highlight a very successful welcoming reception that we hosted for the American Psychiatric Association's annual meeting in San Francisco. Many thanks for the hard work of Stephen Gamboa and the administrative staff of NCPS. The APA's Assembly meets in conjunction with the annual meeting, and also in November. What exactly does the Assembly do and how can you use your Assembly Representatives to make changes in the APA or in the laws and regulations that govern psychiatry or affect your patients? In this issue I was very happy to interview Robin Cooper, an NCPS member who, along with a small group of concerned psychiatrists, used Action Papers to make significant changes in APA policy and in its recognition of the importance that climate change is having and will continue to have on the practice of psychiatry and on our patients. The story illustrates the relationship between Action Papers and APA policy. I hope that some of you, after reading the article, will feel moved to contact one of your APA Assembly Representatives to talk about a problem that is affecting your ability to provide excellent psychiatric care. Already, we have started to think about ways that the APA can play a constructive role in addressing the increasingly chaotic set of market constraints and regulations that affect our ability to prescribe controlled substances for our patients. Also in this edition, Ravi Chandra writes eloquently about how to acknowledge the reality of our own human frailties, and James Polo provides us with an excellent summary of the information discussed and the actions taken at the most recent Assembly meeting in San Francisco in May."



IT'S TIME TO CELEBRATE

THE ACHIEVEMENTS AND SUCCESSES OF
OUR COLLEAGUES

Are you celebrating an achievement? Do you want to celebrate a colleague? Do you have a comment about this article? [Click here to let us know.](#)

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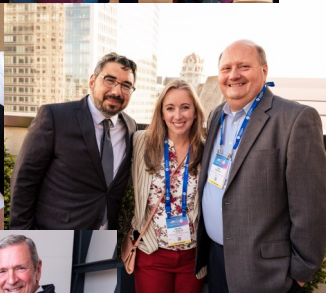


Welcome APA Members to the SAN FRANCISCO SKYLINE SOCIAL

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On May 21, 2023 NCPS hosted a Welcome Reception “San Francisco Skyline Social”, in collaboration with California DBs (SDPS, OCPS, SCPS, CCPS), CSAP, SYASL, and our partners, PRMS and American Professional Agency, to celebrate APA Annual Meeting and welcome APA members to San Francisco.

It was a vibrant and an extremely well choreographed event with delicious appetizers, food and drinks, spectacular rooftop views, spacious seating arrangements at a beautiful venue of One Kearny Club. The spirit of happiness, belonging and camaraderie was vivid, palpable and is reflected in the shared photographic memories.

A big shout out and thanks to Mr. Stephen Gamboa, NCPS Executive Director, for closely collaborating and carefully attending to each and every detail of planning this wonderful event. Also a big thanks to our RFMs (Drs. Sharif, Chen, Shir, Cynthia He, Barnhart, Howard, Nagarajan) as NCPS Ambassadors, for taking the lead in welcoming our guests!

On a personal level, in addition to celebrating and feeling grateful for a very productive Council Year, I was pleasantly surprised, when Drs. Shana Levy, Michael Ostacher and Syd Wright honored me with their kind words and a Souvenir/Award during this event, on behalf of NCPS Council for my services as President. Thank you NCPS for the opportunity to serve and for this acknowledgment!

Farah Zaidi, MD

WELCOME NEW NCPS MEMBERS

GENERAL & FELLOW MEMBERS

Dr. Aaron Winkler
Dr. Volodymyr Karpa
Dr. Jack Van Bezooeyen
Dr. James Worledge
Dr. Andrea Seritan
Dr. Daniel Kostanlnick
Dr. Jennifer Ann Lancaster
Dr. Amalia Hatcher
Dr. Casey Telder Von Drehle
Dr. Chase Anderson
Dr. Clayton Parks

Dr. Eric Debbold
Dr. Huiqiong Deng
Dr. Jacob Treskovich
Dr. Katie Verucchi Weinell
Dr. Kimberly Benton
Dr. Kisani Ogwaro
Dr. Martin Epson
Dr. Tony Hu
Dr. Nataly Beck
Dr. Olesya Pokorna
Dr. Ragini Bhushan

Dr. Ryoko Ishikawa
Dr. Vasundhara-Devi Vemula
Dr. Sarah Shah
Dr. Julia Chung
Dr. Julie Tinklenberg
Dr. Savi Chandha
Dr. Sasikala Manavalan
Dr. Mira Zein
Dr. Nnennaya Nwokeji
Dr. Samuel Hoch

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Dr. Stefana Morgan
Dr. Raghu Kiran Appasani
Dr. Julia Lee Chung
Dr. Oluwatosin Adebisi
Dr. Aimee McArthur
Dr. Amanda Regodon Wallin

Dr. Arya Shah
Dr. Brittany Rush
Dr. Chace Shaw
Dr. Chanel Zhan
Dr. Dani Golomb
Dr. David Balyozian
Dr. Linda Egboziuba

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Can Action Papers Make a Difference in the NCPS and APA?

By Christy Oso

An Interview with Robin Cooper, MD, NCPS member, APA member.

How Robin and her group, the Climate Psychiatry Alliance, engineered a significant policy change in the APA on climate change advocacy.

Identifying a gap

As far back as 2017, a seeming gap in the response of the American Psychiatric Association (APA) to the subject of climate change had become evident. Despite the growing concerns about the impacts of climate change globally, little research had been carried out, and the APA had yet to issue a position statement on the issue. At this time, Robin Cooper felt strongly about the need for the APA to lead the way in addressing this problem and advocating for measures to mitigate the mental health impacts of climate change.

Collaborating with others and taking a step

By joining forces with other members who identified with her concerns, a non-profit organization – Climate Psychiatry Alliance, was birthed. Their vision clearly stated, *‘Since individuals only have a limited impact, we can be more effective when we join together to amplify our voices and actions.’* Mostly comprised of APA members, this organization provided a fertile ground for discussing matters of climate change and mental health, rubbing minds on the operational requirements, and identifying key actions required of the APA. All these gradually morphed into a clear plan for writing an action paper to be presented to the APA assembly.

To paraphrase her words, Robin emphasized the importance of taking the step to write an action paper, stating that *‘it provides a roadmap on the identified issue and serves as a vehicle to expand the conversation around it.’* Working jointly with other interested persons in creating the paper can be very helpful in ensuring that a single person is not inundated with the task.

Also, borrowing suggestions from colleagues in sister organizations such as the American Medical Association helped to crystallize the ideas. Tendering these ideas to the APA was initially met with slight indifference based on an ideology that climate change was not in the scope of the psychiatry discipline. However, with further engagements and collaborations, the first change was soon implemented.

The first action paper proposing a position statement by the APA on climate change and mental health was approved by both the Assembly Executive Committee and the Board of Trustees of the APA in 2017. The position statement read:

‘The American Psychiatric Association (APA) recognizes that climate change poses a threat to public health, including mental health. Those with mental health disorders are disproportionately impacted by the consequences of climate change. APA recognizes and commits to support and collaborate with patients, communities, and other healthcare organizations engaged in efforts to mitigate the adverse health and mental health effects of climate change.’

¹ *Vision and mission.* (n.d.). Climate Psychiatry Alliance. Retrieved June 2, 2023, from <https://www.climatepsychiatry.org/about-our-vision-and-mission>

Creating awareness

To generate awareness of the issue, Robin Cooper met first with the assembly representatives of the Northern California Psychiatric Society (NCPS), briefing them about the immense importance of the subject. Other members of the alliance also educated the assembly representatives in their respective districts. Thus, the informed reps were in a better position to interrogate the issue when it was brought before the APA assembly.

Following the approval of the position statement, a second action paper was passed to the APA assembly in 2019, sponsored by Robin Cooper, Jillian Sackett, Sander Koyfman, and James Fleming. This paper recommended the tracking of the APA's carbon footprint, offsetting of carbon emissions, and completion of a feasibility study toward becoming carbon neutral by 2030. These recommendations were accepted. Not resting on their oars, Robin Cooper and her group continued to pass a series of action papers to the APA, proposing further changes and policy implementation.

The impact

All these efforts were rewarded by significant changes in the APA's policy on climate change, some of which include:

- Establishment of the Council on Medical Education and Life-long Learning (CMELL) Work Group on Climate Change Curriculum.
- Development and dissemination of model curricula on climate change and mental health.
- Cessation of future APA investments in fossil fuel companies.
- Participation in the U.S. Call to Action on Climate, Health, and Equity.
- Increased awareness and understanding of climate change and mental health among APA members.
- Creation of a permanent Committee on Climate Change and Mental Health.
- Revision of the APA's position statement on climate change.

A call for new ideas

By toeing this path, Robin Cooper and her team succeeded in triggering multiple actions at the national level - policymaking, research, setting up committees, and so forth. The impact of these changes will continue to unfold as time goes by.

In the same vein, there may be many other subjects yet to be addressed. The onus lies on every member of the NCPS to bring forward these ideas or concerns regarding gaps in the policy of the organization on matters affecting psychiatrists' or patients' welfare.

To create a successful action paper, it is essential to first look up existing actions on the issue. An archive of various actions on numerous subjects can be found on the [Action Item Tracking System](#). Next, it is imperative to follow the [standard action paper format](#). The pathway for referral of action papers needs to be considered. Action papers are discussed in Reference Committees where they may be endorsed or rejected. Approved papers are passed on to the Joint Reference Committee, and in most cases, they then progress to the Board of Trustees of the APA. Additional information on producing action papers can be found on the [APA website](#).

Liaising with like-minded colleagues with a similar passion to draw up action papers can set off a chain of activities leading to major changes in the organization. This can ensure that, as a professional body, the NCPS, and consequently, the APA continue to make an impact on society.

Dear psychiatric colleagues,

As an NCPS member for several decades, and as a recently appointed board member of the National Alliance on Mental Illness- San Francisco chapter (NAMI-SF), I'd like to spread the word about the under-recognized work of this organization.

NAMI is a national and state-wide organization, with over 600 affiliates throughout the U.S., whose mission is to improve mental health care and destigmatize mental health conditions. NAMI provides free peer education and support for people living with a mental health condition as well as for their loved ones, all facilitated by trained volunteers. These evidence-based programs demonstrably improve the well-being of participants.

Local NAMI chapters also offer formal educational presentations on a variety of relevant topics, presented by academic and medical professionals. For example, in the past year, NAMI-SF presented a panel on Black/ African American mental health issues, a panel on supporting teens and young adults, an Asian American Pacific Islander Mental Health Summit, and a Q & A workshop on medications.

As a practicing psychiatrist in San Francisco in emergency, inpatient and outpatient settings over several decades, I was sadly unaware of the existence of this remarkable organization, whose work may have helped many of my patients and their family members cope with the difficulties of having a mental health diagnosis.

There are chapters of NAMI in the Northern California counties of Alameda, Contra Costa, San Mateo and Santa Clara, as well as in San Francisco. In San Francisco, these events and programs are easily accessible

via or (415) 905- adjacent affiliate information follows:	Tri-Valley area	<i>NAMI-trivalley.org</i>	(925) 980-5331	<i>namisf.org</i> 6264. In counties, contact is as
	East Bay	<i>NAMleastbay.org</i>	(510) 524-1250	
	Alameda County		(510) 835-5010	
	South Alameda County	<i>NAMlacs.org</i>	(510) 378-1578	
	Contra Costa County	<i>NAMIcontracosta.org</i>	(925) 942-0767	
	San Mateo County	<i>NAMIsanmateo.org</i>	(650) 638-0802	
	Santa Clara County	<i>NAMIsantaclara.org</i>	(408)453-0400	

I would like to whole-heartedly recommend NAMI to clinicians as a helpful, cost-free adjunct to our work with patients and their families.

Mark Perl, M.D.

News and Notes for APA District Branches/State Associations | June 2023

Want to keep up with APA in between newsletters?

Connect with us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), (@APAPsychiatric), [Instagram](#) and [LinkedIn](#) for the latest news and updates.

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What's New at the APA

Petros Levounis, M.D., M.A. assumed office as APA President at the conclusion of the 2023 APA Annual Meeting in San Francisco last month. Dr. Levounis is an internationally renowned expert on addiction and LGBTQ+ mental health advocate. The theme for his presidential year is **Confronting Addiction: From Prevention to Recovery**, and will focus on public information and engagement campaigns, as well as collaboration with allied groups. You can read more about Dr. Levounis' plans for his presidential year [here](#) and view other APA leadership candidates who took office at the close of the Annual Meeting [here](#).

The APA Foundation announced the 2023 winners of the APAF Awards for Advancing Minority Mental Health. They are: South Asian Mental Health Initiative and Network, located in Linden, New Jersey; Neighbors' Consejo in Washington, D.C.; Association House of Chicago in Chicago, Illinois; Amani Family Services in Fort Wayne, Indiana; The Center Orlando, Inc. in Orlando, Florida; The Achievable Foundation in Culver City, California; and Lines for Life in Portland, Oregon. Each winning organization has been recognized with an award of \$5,000. [You can read more about these organizations and their work here.](#)

The vast majority of Americans agree that cigarettes are unsafe, according to the latest public opinion poll from the APA and Morning Consult. 84% of those surveyed considered cigarettes to be unsafe, and 87% said it was somewhat or very addictive. Americans also consider vapes (76%) and non-prescription opioids (75%) to be unsafe. While a wide majority of Americans (75%) consider technology to be addictive, only 23% feel it is unsafe. You can see the full poll results from [APA's annual addiction survey here](#).

Visit APA's [Newsroom](#) for the latest news releases, statements, blogs, monthly public opinion poll results, and other information.

APA Communications Monthly Themes: June 2023

Whether you've never talked with a reporter before, or need a refresher, join APA's Senior Media Relations Manager Erin Connors for an engaging training session covering how, when and why to talk to the media. Learn how to prepare, how to respond, and a few tips for different types of interviews (written stories/on camera), etc. Depending on the number of attendees, you may have the (optional) opportunity to practice in front of your colleagues! [Sign up by clicking here.](#)

APA Media Training for Members

Thanks to all who attended the first in our series of webinars on communications! We are planning these as quarterly efforts as live and recorded webinars. These are open to any APA member, but specifically geared to those who are active in their DB/SAs. Stay tuned for an invite for the next live media training session, tentatively scheduled for the September Components Meeting.

June Course of the Month – Ethical Issues in Treating LGBTQ Patients

This course reviews historical psychiatric attitudes towards LGBTQ patients that could be construed, at best, as patronizing and, at worst, overtly hostile. This course also outlines some common clinical questions raised by LGBTQ patients-what is known and not known about the origins of homosexuality and transgender expression, sexual orientation conversion efforts, therapist self-disclosure, how therapists should address LGBTQ patients, and controversies surrounding treatment of transgender children-as well as ethical issues raised in these clinical encounters.

[Click here to access the Course of the Month and sign up for updates about this free member benefit.](#)

Explore APA's MOORE Equity in Mental Health Activities

Registration today for APA's 5K Run, Walk, & Roll on **Saturday, July 29**. This race-which can be completed in person or virtually-will raise money to support programs working to improve the mental health of young people of color. Learn about other events to be held throughout July.

[Learn More & Register Today](#)

Psychiatric News Invites Applications for Medical Editor-in-Chief

APA members who have administrative experience, are passionate about disseminating news in the field of psychiatry, and are knowledgeable about print and digital communications are invited to apply. The deadline for applications, which should include a vision statement and a curriculum vitae, is **July 19, 2023**.

[Learn More](#)

Be a part of APA's Speakers Bureau

APA is seeking members who are active and engaged in Component activities to be a part of APA's Speaker's Bureau. The Speaker's Bureau is aimed at diversifying and broadening APA's bench of public-facing experts. In addition to traditional media requests, APA has a number of other opportunities available for members who are willing to share their expertise. This includes writing blogs on important mental health topics, providing government testimony, and participation in social media events, like Twitter chats, Instagram live, and more.

Members of the APA Speaker's Bureau, as an internal influencer group, will also be asked to amplify APA's voice by promoting public education initiatives via social media and engaging during APA social media events.

Please contact James Carty (jcarty@psych.org) with any questions you may have.

Do You Know Where to Find the Latest Stories in *Psych News*?

Check out the Newswire (formerly PN in Advance) section of the website, where new articles are published each week. This week learn about psychiatrists' reactions to the growing number of policies across the country to divert people with mental illness experiencing homelessness from the streets into treatment and more.

[READ MORE](#)

Vulnerability Solidarity: A Campaign for Community, Unity, Depth, and Growth

by Ravi Chandra, M.D., D.F.A.P.A.

We are all vulnerable. Our common humanity rests on our vulnerability and the reality that we all suffer. We all require safety: physical and emotional. Most of us work towards the belonging, understanding, and being understood that are the surest paths to safety and well-being.

The political and social forces of domination and subordination are on the rise, because we live in a stressful time of change. When people are overwhelmed, they can resort to wielding power over others in order to feel safe and strong. They can become fearful and reactive. Some leaders gain power by scapegoating others as threats. They use fear of others and fear of change to manipulate others into following them down a pathway of callousness and cruelty, and away from compassion and kindness.

What would it mean to be in solidarity with vulnerability?

It would mean being close to our own humanity and vulnerability, and that of others, and gaining strength from being close.

It would mean being able to hear our own suffering, compassionately.

It would mean bearing witness to the suffering of others, compassionately.

It would mean being truly present with what is.

It would mean coming home, to ourselves, and to each other.

It would mean creating an island of belonging and strength on the bedrock of what it means to be human, an island that could become a continent and a world.

Vulnerability Solidarity is a focus on what can't be denied, yet is routinely denied by so many.

Vulnerability Solidarity affirms what must be affirmed.

Vulnerability Solidarity gives voice to what is so often silenced.

Vulnerability Solidarity is an antidote to those who think that strength comes from competition, antagonism, denial and dismissal, rather than collaboration, listening and inclusion.

Vulnerability Solidarity turns shame of difference into acceptance, pride, and celebration.

Vulnerability Solidarity is a path to freedom and liberation, for ourselves and others.

Vulnerability Solidarity is the path to our humanity.

Vulnerability Solidarity. It's the future. It's survival.

Vulnerability Solidarity. Now and forever.

APA Assembly Notes

May 19 – 21, 2023

This digest of events summarizes the business conducted by the APA Assembly during the in-person May meeting in San Francisco. Full reports presented in written form can be found in the Assembly Meeting Booklet found [here](#). It is best to download or read these abbreviated notes online. They may also be printed and distributed in hardcopy (without access to the web links). You may use these notes as documented or edit and modify the content to suit your needs and interests of your District Branch. Any errors or omissions should be considered unintentional. Please send corrections and suggestions to [James A. Polo, M.D.](#)

Welcome by the Speaker – Adam Nelson, MD

Dr. Adam Nelson, MD welcomed everyone to the 98th Meeting of the APA Assembly. Dr. Nelson first introduced Dr. Farah Zaidi, MD, the Area 6 ECP Representative who gave the territorial acknowledgement. She acknowledged both the Ohlones and Coast Miwok tribes who were the indigenous inhabitants of the surrounding area local to San Francisco. Dr. Nelson mentioned that as members of the Assembly we are all leaders who should abide by the Code of Conduct. He reviewed the APA Participation Policy (page 5, Assembly Meeting Booklet) and reminded everyone that we should treat each other with compassion and respect. While we may disagree at times on certain issues, we should never be disagreeable to each other. Dr. Nelson announced that the Board of Trustees had approved the recommendation from the APA Finance & Budget Committee to restore 2 in-person Assembly Meetings beginning in 2023. Hence, the Assembly will meet again in November 2023 in Baltimore, Maryland. Additionally, funding was approved to allow the Area Councils to meet in person in 2023 as well. Dr. Adams highlighted that 4 Assembly Workgroups have been created this past year and thanked those for their efforts thus far. The 4 workgroups are: Workgroup on Social Determinants of Mental Health (SDoMH), Workgroup on Communications, Workgroup on the Assembly of the Future, and Workgroup on Metrics and Quality Improvement. He urged members of the Assembly to help distribute the Notes of our meeting through the District Branches to the broader APA membership. Dr. Nelson concluded his opening remarks by paying tribute to Dr. Albert Gaw, MD (1938-2023), who was the APA Assembly Speaker, 2002-2003. Dr. Nelson's full report can be found in the Assembly Meeting Booklet on pages 16-18.

Report of the Speaker-Elect – Vasilis (Bill) K. Pozios, MD

Dr. Bill Pozios, MD also welcomed everyone to the May Assembly Meeting. Dr. Pozios listed the key activities that he has been involved with over the past 6 months on the AEC, as the Vice Chair of the JRC, and member of the APA Board. Dr. Pozios also highlighted the importance of the efforts by the new Workgroups. Dr. Pozios briefly addressed the ongoing challenges of APA/ABPN relations related to certification and MOC. Dr. Pozios also noted the progress of implementing recommendations from the Systemic Racism and Accountability Committee (SRAC). This work is supported by the assistance of a DEI consultant and will be ongoing well into the future. He closed by summarizing the progress of the O'Leary Campaign in establishing the O'Leary Award for Innovation. The endowment campaign will conclude on May 31, 2023. Dr. Pozios' full report can be found in the Assembly Meeting Booklet on pages 18-23.

Report of Recorder – Steven M. Starks, MD

Dr. Steven Starks, MD noted that representatives from the Bronx, Central New York, Genesee Valley, Kansas, Lester New York, Louisiana, Maine, Michigan, New Hampshire, Puerto Rico, and South Dakota district branches were not represented at this Assembly Meeting. Even so, sufficient members were present in attendance to constitute a quorum. Minutes & Summary of Actions from the November 5-6, 2022 virtual meeting were approved by the Assembly and can be found [here](#).

Report of the APA CEO/CMO – Dr. Saul Levin, MD

Dr. Saul Levin, MD opened his remarks by thanking the Assembly for its leadership in support of a successful Annual APA Meeting. He noted that attendance of the first hybrid synchronous meeting would likely exceed 10,000 in person participants, as well as over 1,000 virtual participants. He noted there would be over 600 scientific sessions allowing members to earn up to 43 AMA PRA Category 1 CME credits. He reminded everyone that the 2023 Mental Health Services Conference was scheduled for October 12-14 in Washington, DC. Dr. Levin provided a high-level review of efforts in support of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Belonging and Antiracism (DEIBA).

Dr. Levin highlighted the top challenges that members continue to face. Those include:

1. Prior Authorizations
2. Preserving the Physician/Patient Relationship
3. Payment for Services
4. Maintenance of Certification
5. Safe Prescribing/Scope of Practice

He noted that all of these issues relate to “standing up for our profession”.

Dr. Lewin also summarized key state/federal legislative impacts as a result of APA Advocacy, noting that mental health continues to be a bipartisan priority.

Dr. Levin reminded everyone of the importance of supporting the APAPAC, and encouraged everyone to give until, “it hurts a little”. He noted that it is the work of the APAPAC that helps steer our advocacy in the direction that benefits our profession, our members, and our patients. Dr. Levin announced that a new national mental health awareness campaign would be introduced at the 2023 APA Annual Meeting. Although, we have previously focused on creating awareness with respect to mental health as a way of combatting stigma, it has come time to shift the conversation. We will move forward highlighting that, “Mental Health Care Works”. In support of the Recovery Model, we can and should be proud of our profession.

Dr. Levin closed by emphasizing the importance of the APA Foundation and urged everyone to contribute to the Foundation and attend the APAF Annual Benefit. He also encouraged all APA members to visit the APA Headquarters (our home) when in Washington, DC. Dr. Levin’s full report can be found in the Assembly Meeting Booklet on pages 23-47.

Report of the APA President – Dr. Rebecca W. Brendel, MD, JD

Dr. Rebecca W. Brendel, MD, JD, opened her comments by thanking members for all the support that she has received during her year as the APA President. She noted that it had been a very busy year with both internal facing issues, as well as external facing concerns. Internally, she was most proud of the work that has advanced in the MUR Workgroup in our continuing efforts to address diversity, equity, and inclusion by considering use of terminology that is historically informed and culturally progressive. She highlighted the reconstitution of the Structural Racism Accountability Committee (SRAC) with accountability to the Structural Racism Task Force (SRTF) which used data and progress report to inform the Workgroup assigned to create the Roadmap of the Future. The focus of the Workgroup was: *Charge: create a road map of recommendations to lead APA's strategic direction for psychiatric practice and research over the next decade.*

The Workgroup had two strategic aims. First, the APA should be established and maintained as the thought, evidence-based knowledge, and practice leader in quality mental illness diagnosis and treatment. Second, the APA's policy development and advocacy agenda for finance/reimbursement, equity and access, public health, primary prevention, and social determinants of mental illness will position the APA as the leading voice in advocating for quality patient care.

Externally, Dr. Brendel was extremely busy as our lead advocate at the Federal levels. Highlights included:

- April 4, 2022 – House Energy and Commerce Testimony
- July 11, 2022— White House Bipartisan Fun Bill Signing
- September 8, 2022—DoL Rountable on Parity
- September 23, 2022—White House Recovery Month Summit
- September 27, 2022—White House Reducing Health Care Costs
- October 15, 2022—APA State Advocacy Conference
- October 17, 2022—CATO Institute Policy Panel Psychologist Prescribing
- December 9, 2022—New Mexico Medical Board Hearing on Psychologist Prescribing
- January 12-14, 2023—AMA State Advocacy Summit
- February 13-15, 2023—AMA National Advocay Conference
- February 27, 2023—AMA Gun Policy Roundtable
-

Likewise, she participated in 10 conferences supporting international and subspecialty collaborations.

Report of the APA President-elect – Dr. Petros Levounis, MD, MA

Dr. Petros Levounis, MD, MA, opened by thanking the Assembly for raising critical issues to the attention of the APA Leadership and Board, most importantly issues related to diversity and structural racism. He mentioned that the focus of his presidency will be Addiction Psychiatry with emphasis in 4 area of addiction: Vaping (nicotine and cannabis), Opioids (specifically MAT), Alcohol, and Technological Addictions. Dr. Levounis shared a story related to a law in California that allows citizens to formally self-disclose as Gamblers as a means of gaining support for their addiction. Ironically, in practice individuals who self-disclose are free to enter casinos and lose money, but should they en-

ter casinos and have good fortune, then any winnings from the gambling efforts will be taken back. He highlighted this as an analogy for individuals with addictions who are “allowed to lose, but not to win”. He wants to lead the effort that will change this dynamic.

Report of the APA Treasurer – Dr. Richard Summers, MD

Dr. Richard Summers, MD opened by highlighting his commitment to increase transparency and improve communication with respect to organizational finances and budgeting. At a high level, he noted that the 2022 financial results were better than expected. There was no need to reach into our APA reserves. While the APA did suffer significant investment losses, these were inline and consistent with market trends. There has already some improvement in the first quarter of 2023. The five key metrics are largely green.

The Flash report demonstrates a high-level look at actual revenue and expense relative to budget and in comparison, to 2022. On the revenue side, it is important to note that publications over-performed in 2022. Membership continues to be consistent. Grants are on budget, although lower than in 2022. Expenses are generally performing to budget expectations. Note the increase in governance expenses compared to 2022 which is the result of returning to in-person meetings.

Dr. Summers also provided an overview of the APA’s portfolio investments which are improving from 2022, but overall, still down by \$9M since Dec 31, 2021. Looking ahead, the planning for continued organizational financial stability is mindful that the Nation is currently in an inflationary environment, anticipating a potential recession, and facing some elements of continued banking instability. Work is underway to rebalance our portfolio asset allocations. Dr. Summers’ report with in-depth financial details can be found in Appendix A of APA Assembly Meeting Booklet, pages 109-119.

Report on the APA Foundation – Rawle Andrews, Jr, JD, Executive Director

Mr. Rawle Andrews, Jr. JD, opened his comments by thanking the Assembly for its support of the APAF. He reminded everyone that there is, “no health without mental health”. He also highlighted the new campaign that the APAF will lead that will no longer use the “S (stigma) word” as we focus awareness to improve mental health literacy so that everyone recognizes that “mental illness is treatable allowing patients to live better lives”. Mr. Andrews provided a high-level summary of the work of the APA Foundation in 2022. He reminded the Assembly that he had committed to recruit a psychiatrist to serve as the Director of fellowships, mentoring, and education so that we can “change the game from the inside out”. Dr. Vedrana Hodzic, MD is that director who started in February 2023. This year the APA welcomes that largest class of fellows, 116 future psychiatric leaders come from 27 different States representing 80 medical institutions. The class of 2023 is also the most diverse in history with 77% of fellows self-identifying as persons of color, 61% female, and 24% as LGBTQ+. Mr. Andrews closed his comments by inviting Melinda O’Leary and her daughters to address the Assembly. Melinda publicly contributed \$50,000 to the endowment fund for the Paul O’Leary Award for Innovation in Psychiatry which has reached \$112,000 of the \$150,000 goal. The first award will be presented at the 2023 Annual APA Meeting.

Report of the APA Political Action Committee – Dr. Brian Hart, MD, Chair

Dr. Brian Hart, MD provided an overview of the APA Political Action Committee. He highlighted that so far this year,

\$106,000 from 482 contributors had been received. This increased by an additional \$22,600 that Assembly Members contributed during the meeting. As of May 22, 2023, 159 Assembly Members contributed to the APAPAC. He emphasized that these APAPAC funds will be used to help shape Congress in a non-partisan manner to be more friendly to the profession of psychiatry. Donations can be made at www.psychiatry.org/APAPAC or with the following QR code.

Dr. Hart highlighted the advocacy accomplishments in 2022.

Contributions this year can help with:

- ✓ Expanding access to telehealth
- ✓ Ensuring mental health parity
- ✓ Addressing mental health disparities
- ✓ Supporting maternal mental health
- ✓ Limiting non-psychiatrist prescriptive authority
- ✓ Funding mental health and substance use disorder programs

Guest Presentation – Dr. Jeffrey M. Lyness, MD, President & CEO, ABPN

Dr. Jeffrey M. Lyness, MD addressed the Assembly. He provided a high-level orientation on the mission and structure of the ABPN, noting that the APBN is the only specialty certifying body for the profession of psychiatry and psychiatric sub-specialties. The intent of the mission is to demonstrate the expertise and abilities of diplomates to provide high-quality inclusive patient care that will serve as credible reassurance to patients, families, and the public. He noted that the APBN and the APA share a long and rich history that is synergistic in support of our profession. The ABPN consists of 40 employed staff and more than 300 physician volunteers. He summarized the importance of DEI, Communications, and Subspecialties. He addressed Initial Certification fees which are 44% relative of fees from 2007 in absolute dollars. Continuing Certification fees for 2024 will remain unchanged at \$175 for 1 certification, \$240 for 2 certifications, and \$310 for 3 or more certifications. He provided a graphical representation of how those fees compared to other ABMS specialties. The 2022 average fee was \$288.

Dr. Lyness highlighted that only the ABPN can continue/maintain ABPN certification. Over the years many modifications have been made for the certification process to be more flexible, less burdensome, and relevant to clinical practice. Meaningful certification requires independent assessment which is integral to the self-regulation of our profession. The ABPN remains committed to professionalism, competency-based medical education, and technological advances in support of improving health and health care.

Report of the Assembly Rules Committee – Dr. Mary Jo Fitzgerald, MD, Chair

Dr. Mary Jo Fitzgerald, MD presented the Special Rules of the Assembly for approval. She highlighted the Special Rules in accordance with the Assembly's format approach for in-person meetings which can be found [here](#). She encouraged Assembly Members to engage in respectful discourse on all matters and in both the Plenary sessions as well as all break-out Reference Committee sessions. The Assembly voted to approve the Special Rules.

Report of the Assembly Committee on Procedures – Dr. Edward R. Herman, MD, JD

Dr. Edward R. Herman, MD, JD reviewed the background on 3 Actions for Assembly consideration.

Those actions are:

Action 1: Amendments to the Procedural Code of the Assembly, aligning with the current Board-approved APA Trustee nomination was approved.

Action 2: Amendments to the Procedural Code of the Assembly, updating the format and content of the Assembly Committees for clarity and consistency was approved.

Action 3: Amendments to the Procedural Code of the Assembly, incorporating the change of the approved and newly established Assembly Committee on Social Determinants on Mental Health (SDoMH) were approved.

Full details can be found [here](#) . The Assembly voted to approve all Actions.

Report of the APA Bylaws Committee – Dr. Edward R. Herman, MD, JD

Dr. Edward R. Herman, MD, JD reviewed the background related to the previous lack of uniformity of with regard to the Board nomination process and deadlines, and petition process for office. All approved changes are reflected in the APA Operations Manual, the APA By-laws, and the Procedural Code of the Assembly. Those were approved and ratified in May 2020. The action before the Assembly at this time is to ratify the Board-approved proposed amendments to the APA-Bylaws, aligning those with the APA petition process. Full details can be found [here](#) . The Assembly voted to ratify the amendments.

Report of the APA Ethics Committee – Dr. Charles C. Dike, MD, MPH, Chair

Dr. Charles C. Dike, MD, MPH reviewed the issues that were identified by the committee in the *Procedures for Handling Complaints Against Unethical Conduct*. Essentially, over the past several years complaints have come forward that more accurately reflect unsatisfactory customer service versus unethical conduct. Under previous procedures, members would be required to report these types of complaints on credentialing applications and to licensing boards. Upon review, the Ethics Committee is proposing the addition of a grievance process for less serious offenses. Full details can be found [here](#) . The Assembly voted to approve the proposed revisions to the *Procedures for Handling Complaints on Unethical Conduct*.

Presentation of the Assembly Awards Committee – Dr. James R. Batterson, MD, Chair

Dr. James R. Batterson, MD presented the Assembly Awards as follows:

1. Assembly Profile of Courage Award – **Dr. Dionne Hart, MD**
2. District Branch Best Practice Award (Large DB Category) – **Washington Psychiatric Society**.
(The New York County Psychiatric Society received an honorable mention.)
3. Award for Area with Highest Percentage of Voting – **Area 2** (at 20%)
4. Award for the District Branch with Highest Percentage Voting – **Brooklyn Psychiatry Society** (at 33%)

5. Assembly Award for Excellence in Service and Advocacy – Dr. Dora Linda Wang, MD

6. Ronald Shallow Award – Dr. Iqbal “Ike” Ahmed, MD, and Dr. Kenneth Ashley, MD

Announcement of Elected Candidates – Dr. Adam Nelson, MD, Assembly Speaker

Dr. Adam Nelson, MD announced the winners (vote by strength) of Assembly election results:

Dr. Steven Starks, MD Dr Evan Eyler, MD Texas (Area 5) Vermont (Area 1) Speaker-elect Recorder

Approved APA Position Statements

The following Position Statements were approved by the Assembly: (by consent)

4.B.1. Proposed Position Statement: Physician Identification: Consumer Transparency

4.B.2. Revised Position Statement on Capital Punishment

4.B.3. Revised Position Statement on Restrictive Housing of Incarcerated Adults with Serious Mental Illness

4.B.4. Retained Position Statement: Lengthy Sentences Without Parole for Juveniles

4.B.5. Proposed Position Statement: Promoting Health and Protecting Vulnerable Populations from Social Media and Online Harms

4.B.7. Revised Position Statement on Assessing the Risk for Violence

4.B.8. Proposed Position Statement: Addressing Discriminatory Policies That Prevent Access to Housing and Employment

4.B.9. Proposed Position Statement: Regulatory Oversight of Data, Apps, and Novel Technologies in Mental Health

The following Position Statements were approved by the Assembly: (by vote after discussion)

4.B.6 Proposed Position Statement on Studying the Decriminalization of Illicit Substance Possession and Use

Approved Assembly Action Papers

Action Papers approved during this meeting included: (by consent)

✓ 12B – Interference with Psychiatry Resident, Physician-in-Training

✓ 12C – Exemption to the Crack House Statute (21 U.S.C S856) for Overdose Prevention Centers

✓ 12F – Expanding Post-Graduate Opportunities for Unmatched Psychiatry Residency Applicants

✓ 12I – Dismantling Racist Policies in Black Mental Health: APA to Repudiate the Moynihan Report

✓ 12M – Making the Nomination and Election Process Fair for Petition Nominees for APA

✓ 12N – Furthering our APA’s Initiative on the Collaborative Care Model

Action Papers approved during this meeting included: (by vote after discussion)

✓ 12A – Incorporation of Medications for the Treatment for Opioid Use Disorder by Opioid Treatment Programs into

Controlled Substance Databases

✓ 12J – Improving the Public and Healthcare Professionals’ Perceptions of Psychiatry and Psychiatrists

✓ 12L – Text Communication to Improve APA National Election Participation

Action Paper approved during this meeting as a part of Old Business: (by vote after discussion)

✓ 2023 A1 13.A (previously 2021 A2 12L) – Addressing Structural Racism in the APA: Replacing Minority and Underrepresented (MUR) Terminology (re-titled)

Final approved Action Papers from the May 2023 Assembly meeting can be viewed [here](#).

You can view all current and previous Action Papers and track their current status at Action Paper Central on AITS [here](#).

Future Assembly Meetings

November 3-5, 2023 (Baltimore Harbor, Maryland)

Deadline for Action Papers is September 7, 2023

May 3-5, 2024 (New York City, New York)

Run, walk, and roll to help individuals and organizations that support awareness programs and provide services to improve the mental health of young people of color.

Meet the APA for an In-Person 5K Run, Walk, and Roll

Wheaton Regional Park in Wheaton, MD

Check-in starts at 7am, July 29th

Participate in the 5K Run, Walk, and Roll from your Home Community:

All Day, July 29th

The American Psychiatric Association (APA)'s Division of Diversity and Health Equity invites you to join us in combating mental health inequities facing young people of color and in honoring mental health advocate Bebe Moore Campbell. Your time and dollars go a long way in making a difference for young people of color facing the mental health challenges and the impact of systemic racism.

Please consider making a contribution today! Or register and get ready to run, walk, and roll with us in-person on Saturday, July 29th in Maryland or in your own community to show support. Your efforts help promote awareness and raise funds to support community organizations that have undertaken innovative awareness programs and/or have provided services to improve the mental health of young people of color.

Dr. Barbara Yates Weissman will be running as part of this fundraiser. To donate to her walk please visit: <https://runsignup.com/bweissman>



**Have You Visited Your
NCPS Member Dashboard Lately?
Update Your Profile & Access Benefits**
<https://ncps.org/dashboard>