

# ASK THE APA CANDIDATES ...

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**David C. Henderson, M.D.**

Candidate for President Elect

## **What is your number one priority, and how would you work towards achieving that?**

While every society has a responsibility to care for those most vulnerable, few have the capacity to do so. The APA can play a major role in accelerating access to care with APA psychiatrists leading these efforts and multidiscipline teams. My priority is to accelerate access to quality care in the US and globally, across generations, populations, and regions for underserved populations such as children and adolescents, underrepresented ethnic populations, and seriously mentally ill, who are at greatest risk and substantial psychiatric and medical morbidity and mortality. I would leverage the APA resources, tools and programs, and foster partnerships and collaborations to accelerate capacity building in care, research, and training. In most health systems, psychiatrists receive the least amount of support compared to other physician disciplines. I would advocate, at the local and national level, for true mental health parity and a public mental health strategy.

## **What is your position on affiliate membership for non-physicians? How will you advocate for your position within this organization?**

I first need to understand why now and what is the purpose of starting affiliate membership. Is this a solution to financial challenges? The APA is a physician organization and should remain as such. I do not believe the American Medical Association has non-physician memberships. There are numerous professional organizations supporting other mental health professions. The risk of affiliate membership for non-physicians would further diminish psychiatrists' roles and leadership in mental health in the US and could significantly change the agenda for the APA. Psychiatrists have unique challenges and issues and the APA provides leadership and guidance for the profession. I would strongly advocate at all levels of the APA including the Board and district branches.

## **From a member services perspective, what would you do to meet the professional needs of psychiatrists throughout their career from training to retirement?**

The APA offers strong career development programs for medical students, residents, and early career psychiatrists and I have participated in many as a mentor. Other programs exist for mid-career on, but are not as robust. I would strengthen the education and research programs for not only medical students, residents, and early career psychiatrists, but also mid-and late-career psychiatrists. As the mental health landscape is rapidly changing, the APA play a major role in continuous learning and in preparing psychiatrists at all stages to be leaders in mental health systems, financial management in private practice, and to lead multidiscipline teams. Finally, the APA can play a major role in the successful transition to retirement.