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## Persevering in 2025

*“Research is an expression of faith in the possibility of progress. The drive that leads scholars to study a topic has to include the belief that new things can be discovered, that newer can be better, and that greater depth of understanding is achievable. Research, especially academic research, is a form of optimism about the human condition.” - Henry Rosovsky*

My original plan for this Director’s Note was to write about the new ACNP Strategic Plan. A task force led by Dr. Lisa Monteggia created a [great strategic plan](#) that will lead the efforts of the College for the next few years. I encourage you to review the [plan summary linked here](#) and offer any feedback. While I am very proud of the plan created, writing the summary felt very tone-deaf to me. 2025 has been distracting. I am not sure how else to describe it. From the government employee buy out to the order mandating a change to indirect rates, it has been hard to focus on the new strategic plan. Focus has been diverted, which is very unfortunate. As I was thinking about what to write, some advice from my dad resonated. He would often say, “Sarah, don’t worry about things you cannot control. Put one foot in front of the other and walk toward the goal not letting worry distract you.” This advice has served me well over the years and has really served me well over the last two months. It has helped me keep the focus of my role with ACNP, and I hope it can help anyone reading this today. Each of our members do incredibly noble work. When things feel chaotic, it is important to know what centers you. The work I hear and read about from our members is centering. You are doing incredibly important research that is driving the field forward. Yes, we can wring our hands about what is to come and how

such important research may be stymied, but that will do no good today. Your work and how you can continue it and help future patients in need is where your energy is best spent. Please know that the College is working to support you and your work. Council is committed to speaking out and advocating for our members' work and anything that impedes our mission.

Living in this ever-changing world, Council is often called upon by members to develop statements about issues. ACNP is made up of the world's brightest and most accomplished research scientists, but many have differing views of our country and politics. I have always encouraged Council and staff to "be Switzerland." While our members agree on finding new therapies for those suffering from brain and behavior disorders, our members don't agree on many other things and that is what makes our College unique. A few years ago, Council developed a policy on when to make statements on behalf of the College. The policy is that the College will only make public statements or sign-on to statements when there is a direct correlation to our mission statement. Council recently developed [a statement on the NIH Imposed Standard Indirect Cost Rate](#). The statement was developed by Council and 8 other organizations signed onto our statement including the Society for Neuroscience, the American Brain Coalition, and the Society of Biological Psychiatry. Council was proud to lead the way in developing a statement that will be circulated. With this statement, we have also given members the opportunity to use the American Brain Coalition legislative alert system to contact their congressional representatives and advocate against this imposed standard. The College will continue to make statements on issues that directly impact our mission and our members.

Just as Henry Rosovsky, the admired dean of Faculty of Arts and Sciences at Harvard University, so wisely stated, research is a form of optimism of the human condition. In a time where things seem to be ever changing for academic research, I encourage you to find the optimism of the human condition today. Put one foot in front of the other and don't let worry distract you. The College and its members have a mission and some lofty goals ahead of us.