

# APA Assembly Notes

May 2018

This digest of events during the May Assembly meetings held in New York City summarizes oral presentations and action items of the Assembly. Many other reports presented in written form can be found in the Assembly Packet. It may be distributed to Assembly representatives and to Area and District Branch Councils and members. It is best to download or read online, but may also be printed (without access to the web links) and distributed in hardcopy. You may use it as is, or edit and modify the content to suit your particular needs. Any errors or omissions are to be considered unconscious (please forward to my analyst). Corrections may be sent to [Adam Nelson, M.D.](#)

*EDITOR'S NOTE: I invite the reader, be you an Assembly representative, APA leader, or APA member, to respond to any of the Action Items described in this edition, or any other topic(s) of interest. Please give voice to your reactions and opinions by contacting your DB Council and/or Assembly representative and drafting an Action Paper for the next meeting of the Assembly. You may support an existing policy, practice, or position, oppose it, or develop something completely different. What you may not do is to remain silent. Please let us know your thoughts on these and any other topics of interest or concern to you. –A.N.*

## Speaker's Welcome and Introduction of New Members — Theresa Miskimen, M.D.



Speaker Theresa Miskimen welcomed everyone to the spring 2018 meeting of the APA Assembly. Dr. Miskimen highlighted some of the accomplishments of the Assembly and its various components over the past year, emphasizing developments since the last Assembly meeting in November 2017. The Assembly M/UR Caucus will be funded to attend a second joint session with the APA Council on Minority Mental Health and Health Disparities during the September 2018 components meetings. Also, the Assembly will continue its mentorship program for APA/APA Foundation (APAF) Fellows and Assembly Committee of Area Resident Fellow (ACORF) Members.

## APAPAC – the APA Political Action Committee — Charles Price, MD

Dr. Price observed that APAPAC contributions have been growing year-over-year. The money buys the ears of legislators who are either already sensitive to the issues important to psychiatrists, or who can be educated, informed, and eventually persuaded to adopt positions important to psychiatrists. PAC funds are not used to contribute to the election campaigns. APAPAC is a bipartisan voice on Capitol Hill, which gives the APA “a seat at the table”, especially now during turbulent political times such as these. It allows us to be heard in important legislative efforts and key committees, including Ways and Means, Energy and Commerce, HELP (Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions), and Finance. So please contribute!

## Report of the CEO/Medical Director of the APA — Saul Levin, MD, MPA



APA will be honoring those psychiatrists who served in Vietnam on the occasion of its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, including 2 women psychiatrists, one of whom was Dr. Marcia Goins, who recently passed away. One psychiatrist, Dr. Peter Livingston, was killed in action. During the war, psychiatric admissions increased four-fold. John McDuffie is the new Editorial Director of APPI and Craig Obey is the new Director of Government Relations. The National Guideline Clearinghouse Extent Adherence Trustworthy Standards (NEATS) gave an excellent rating to the APA's Treatment Guideline for Alcohol Use Disorders, the first APA Guideline to undergo the NEATS ratings process. The ABPN MOC process is “broken”, but APA is working closely with ABPN and ABMS. ABPN recently proposed an alternative pathway for the MOC-3 10 year exam and eligible candidates should have been notified as of March 2018. Members are urged to complete a survey on the [visioninitiative.org](http://visioninitiative.org) website (editor's note: the website survey closed as of May 11, 2018). As APA continues to address the Joint Commission enforcement of recent CMS rules regarding ligature use risks, members are also urged to complete a survey to identify how different states are impacted:

[www.psychiatry.org/psychiatrists/practice](http://www.psychiatry.org/psychiatrists/practice). Already, APA is aware of reductions in psychiatric beds and wholesale unit closures in several states. Dr. Levin also urges those of us who are AMA members to support our APA representatives for AMA office, including Patrice Harris MD, MA, FAPA as candidate for AMA President-elect, Louis Kraus, MD, DFAPA, FAACAP as candidate for AMA Board of Trustees, and Michael Miller, MD, DLFAPA, DFASAM as candidate for reelection to the AMA Council on Public Health. Membership is the highest in nearly 20 years as younger psychiatrists continue to join. Next year's APA Annual Meeting in San Francisco will also celebrate its 175<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. All are welcome to the new APA Headquarters located at 1800 Maine Avenue, SW, suite 900, Washington, DC. More information can be found in the Assembly Packet.

### **Treasurer's Report — Bruce Schwartz, M.D.**

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APA finished 2017 with \$10.5M net income compared to \$6.5 end of 2016. Much of this was attributable to investment portfolio performance, as dues and publishing income were both down while 2017 expenses were generally higher than in 2016. APA Foundation finished 2017 with net income \$5 vs \$1.4M in 2016. Fundraising and investment income was up, while expenses were generally higher as well, mostly due to contributions to the library and exhibits in the new APA Headquarters. Overall, 2018 appears to be on pace with 2017. Our investment portfolio is managed by Marquette Investments and is overseen by an investments committee. Detailed information can be found in the Treasurer's Report available in the Assembly Packet.

### **Report from the Committee on Assembly Procedures — A. David Axelrad, MD - chair**

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Dr. Axelrad reports that 3 of the member caucuses of ACROSS were out of compliance with Assembly procedures by failing to provide current membership figures. The American Psychoanalytic Association has updated their information to the Assembly to bring their organization back into compliance. The American Academy of Clinical Psychiatrists and American Society of Adolescent Psychiatrists will remain on probation pending their updated information. The Association of Women Psychiatrists has applied for membership in ACROSS [associationofwomenpsychiatrists.com](http://associationofwomenpsychiatrists.com). The Assembly voted to accept their application.

### **Report from the APA President — Anita Everett, M.D.**

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As Dr. Everett reflects on some of her accomplishments as APA President, she notes that 1 year is not enough time to make great changes in the organization. The Workgroup on Physician Burnout has created a space and a [website](#) to discuss this important issue, to which medical students close to graduation, women, and minorities are more vulnerable. Other workgroups are addressing the need to partner with innovation, such as EMRs, and increasing participation in the annual fall IPS Meeting. Two other workgroups, on safe prescribing and exploring a Women's Council in the APA, were started by Assembly Action Papers. This year's Annual Meeting had 12,000 registrants before this weekend, including 1/3 international participants.



### **Ratification of APA Bylaws — Renee Binder, MD**

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The Assembly was asked to ratify a recommended change to the APA Bylaws regarding the current "Rule of 95", which was implemented in 1993. According to this rule, members whose age + number of years in APA membership added up to 95 would be granted retired status and no longer required to pay dues. Under the proposed changes to the Bylaws, this rule would be replaced by two new categories based on number of hours of continued work as a psychiatrist: semi-retired (1-14 hours/week) and fully retired. These two new categories would continue to pay dues at the rate of 50% and 33% of the highest dues rate, respectively. There are opportunities to be grandfathered into the old "rule of 95" retired category by different mechanisms if you

achieved “life status” (according to the rule of 95) before 1993 or between 1993 and 2021. Dr. Binder described the efforts of the Task Force to try to simplify the process and to retain as many members, including younger members, as possible. Using a required vote by strength, the Assembly voted to ratify the proposed Bylaws changes.

## **Report of the APA President-elect — Altha Stewart, MD**

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As Dr. Stewart prepares to become the next APA President, she laid out her agenda for the coming year. Dr. Stewart wants to increase the involvement of young psychiatrists in governance and leadership of the APA. She also wants to expand the role of APA in issues of global mental health care, citing a recent meeting held with president of World Psychiatric Association. She also emphasized the importance of reimagining psychiatry’s role in creating greater equity of care, which will also be a theme of the upcoming IPS meetings in October. Finally, she shared a vignette of a worker at the convention center who was unable to see a psychiatrist with his insurance and unable to afford a psychiatrist outside the insurance network, urging her, on behalf of all of us, to fix this problem.

## **Presentation of Assembly Awards Committee — Glenn Martin, MD, Chair**

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Assembly District Branch Best Practice Award: **Large DB: Society of Uniformed Services Psychiatrists** – for outreach to members, despite geographic challenges, with CME opportunities for military psychiatrist members, including disaster psychiatry, suicide, and PTSD. Honorable mention to Washington Psychiatric Society – for their Career, Leadership, and Mentorship Program for RFMs and ECPs. **Small DB: West Hudson Psychiatric Society** – for public affairs, anti-bullying efforts, and college program to encourage local students to pursue mental health careers.

Assembly Award for the District Branch and Area with the Highest Percentage of Voting: Bronx DB (40%) and Area 2 (22%)

Assembly Award for Excellence in Service and Advocacy from the Women of the Assembly – presented by the Assembly Women’s Caucus to a woman member of the APA whose work exemplifies excellence in clinical mental health care combined with service to members of an underserved minority community. This year’s recipient is Dr. Denese Shervington. As President and CEO of the Institute of Women and Ethnic Studies, Dr. Shervington established a community-based post-disaster mental health recovery program following Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans. Dr. Cassandra Newkirk’s introductory comments may be found at the link [here](#).

Assembly Warren Williams Award: Dr. Gary Weinstein - Dr. Weinstein works as the legislative chair of the Kentucky DB and was instrumental this last session in his state protecting patients from dangerous legislation. He serves as a hospice volunteer, on the Medical Advisory Committee, as a companion to dying patients and teaches Tai Chi to oncology patients. He is currently leading a planning group for a free Mental Health center to serve the uninsured.

## **Remarks from Patrice A. Harris, MD, MA, Immediate Past Chair, AMA Board of Trustees**

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Dr. Saul Levin introduced Dr. Harris as a “friend of APA”, a child and adolescent psychiatrist, forensic psychiatrist, former president of the Georgia DB, former AMA Trustee at Large, chief spokesperson on the current opioid crisis, and the next President of the AMA. Dr. Harris updated us on the opioid epidemic and crisis. NH, with the best treatment track record, provides medication-assisted treatment to 1:4 persons seeking treatment, while the worst states can only provide MAT to 1:10 persons seeking treatment. The CDC now recommends no more than 90mg morphine-equivalents prescribed per month. All states have worked to improve access to naloxone for reversing overdoses as well as mandating PDMPs. The AMA’s efforts to end the opioid epidemic can be found

at <https://www.end-opioid-epidemic.org>. The crisis is also impacting persons with chronic pain, who suffer with reduced access to adequate analgesia.

## Election of Assembly Officers

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The Assembly elected as Speaker-elect Paul O'Leary, MD (Area 5) and, as recorder Seeth Vivek, MD (Area 2). Congratulations to all who ran a spirited campaign and best of luck to our new officers.

## APA Position Statements

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### **The following Position Statements were approved by the Assembly:**

- \*Position Statement on Risks of Adolescents' Online Activity
- \*Position Statement on Psychiatric Services in Adult Correctional Facilities
- \*Revised Position Statement on Telemedicine in Psychiatry
- \*Revised Proposed Position Statement on Weapons Use in Hospitals and Patient Safety
- Revised Position Statement: Resolution against Racism and Racial Discrimination and Their Adverse Impacts on Mental Health
- \*Revised Position Statement on Religious Persecution and Genocide
- Position Statement on Discrimination against Religious Minorities
- \*Position Statement: Solitary Confinement (Restricted Housing) of Juveniles
- Position Statement: Research with Involuntary Psychiatric Patients
- Position Statement on Peer Support Services
- Revised Position Statement on Abortion
- Revised Position Statement Access to Care for Transgender and Gender Diverse Individuals
- \*Revised Position Statement Discrimination against Transgender and Gender Diverse Individuals
- Revised Position Statement: Inquiries about Diagnosis and Treatment of Mental Disorders in Connection with professional Credentialing and Licensing (2015)
- Revised 2014 Position Statement: on Firearms Access, Acts of Violence and the Relationship to Mental Illness and Mental Health Services

### **The following Position Statement was referred back to the JRC by the Assembly:**

Position Statement: Screening and Treatment of Mood and Anxiety Disorders during Pregnancy and Post-Partum

(Items with a \* were approved by consent)

## Action Papers/Items

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Among the Actions taken during this session, the Assembly voted to:

- urge the APA to support the AMA Position opposing unsupervised practice of non-physician practitioners
- enforce Parity Laws with Insurance Companies
- promote the supervision of Psychiatric MH NPs and PAs in Psychiatry by Psychiatrists
- request help from CMS to improve addiction treatment process
- adopt the AACAP policy statement on psychologist prescribing
- support Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) in physician health programs
- **table an AP endorsing a single payer nationwide health care system** – pending further study
- support a study on single payer nationwide health care system
- ask the APA Department of Education to find ways of improving identification and treatment of borderline PD

- ask the APA to support improving access to ABPN exams
- improve Tri-Care access for servicemen and women and their families to quality psychiatric treatment
- uphold the Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) Program
- urge the APA to remove MOC as a barrier to credentialing and hiring of psychiatrists
- improve the APA's website to include access for psychiatrists and patients who wish to appeal adverse medical necessity decisions by managed care entities
- urge the addition of adequate amounts of phosphatidylcholine to all prenatal vitamins
- defeat an effort to align the financial contributions of the APAPAC with the stated policy of APA regarding firearm regulation
- urge the APA to increase educational efforts regarding the impact of racism on social and clinical events
- recognize and honor the psychiatrists who served in Vietnam
- **defeat a call for creating guidelines for public statements by psychiatrists** – This was a most contentious issue that elicited substantial testimony in Reference Committee and debate by the Assembly. While the author argued that paper expressly did not call for a revision of the APA Ethical Guidelines on the Goldwater Rule, several felt the scope as stated in the premises was too broad and there was overwhelming concern voiced by many present that it could impact the Goldwater Rule. In the end, and after many attempts to amend the paper, it was defeated by a sizeable majority.
- streamline the APA application renewal process
- create a work group to improve Action Paper follow up by the Assembly
- develop a survey of the APA membership
- **defeat an effort to modify the APA referendum voting procedure** – In a controversy over voting procedures, the measure was initially defeated by 1 vote, then approved in a recast by less than 10 votes, and finally defeated in a vote by strength after being approved by the Assembly 5 times before. However, rumor has it that the BOT is taking the matter up as well. More to follow.

(Items in **bold** were especially controversial and worthy of feedback from constituent DB members.)  
*A full summary of Actions of the Assembly may be found [here](#). Final Action Papers are available [here](#).  
 You can also review previous action papers on AITS [here](#).*

## **Farewells**

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Several representatives are leaving the Assembly after this session. Among the more notable departures are:

Joe Mawhinney, MD – Area 6

Dan Sewell, MD – ACROSS rep from Area 6

Glenn Martin, MD – Area 2

Eric Plakun, MD – Area 1

Your presence and activism will be sorely missed.