

*Immediate Past-President's
Letter*



Shari R. Waldstein, PhD

Everyone said it would go by quickly and it most certainly has! The year has come and gone, the baton has been passed, and I now find myself in the Past-President role. Given delays with our last newsletter, I've been given the opportunity to reflect and update my final column written as President.

It was a pleasure and an honor to serve as President of the American Psychosomatic Society (APS). There are so many reasons why this is the case. Indeed, as I now contemplate the past year I find myself thinking of those dimensions of the APS that make (or have always made) me feel pride.

At the urging of then President Karen Matthews, my fellow graduate students and I at the University of Pittsburgh joined the APS about 20 years ago. It immediately became my professional home. Those characteristics of the society that attracted me then remain among those that continue to make me proud today – our multidisciplinary and international membership; our grounding in history combined with our leadership in the cutting edge of mechanistic biobehavioral research; our friendly and welcoming Annual Meeting full of outstanding science; and our superb journal *Psychosomatic Medicine*.

I am proud of our members for their outstanding records of research, practice, teaching,

general service, and service to the APS. In that regard, I am particularly proud of the Executive Committee with whom I've served during the past year – Drs. Matt Muldoon, Paul Mills, and Mike Irwin. These colleagues have offered sound leadership, collective wisdom, good humor, and a deep sense of caring about the society. I was delighted to turn over the reigns of the presidency to the able hands of Paul Mills in Portland. I am also thrilled that Mike Irwin is our new President-Elect, and that Mustafa al'Absi joins us as Secretary-Treasurer.

Next are our colleagues at Degnon Associates who are always available for thoughtful, intelligent perspective, guidance, and support. I am so very grateful for the able assistance, kindness, and leadership of Laura and George Degnon, Sarah Shiffert, Christine Lusk, and all of their colleagues at the APS main office. These colleagues provide us with a wonderful combination of historical wisdom, forward thinking, and professional expertise.

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Dr. David Sheps and his editorial team continue to provide outstanding leadership for *Psychosomatic Medicine*. We can all be proud of the empirical and theoretical contributions contained therein, including the exciting new “Cutting Edge Reviews” series, and an excellent impact factor. Transitioning into the role of incoming Editor-in-Chief is Dr. Willem Kop of the University of Maryland School of Medicine.

Then there are our colleagues – full of terrific ideas and high energy - who serve on

the Council, and who lead our Committees and Task Forces. In March, we welcomed several new Council members – Drs. Joan Broderick, Kurt Kroenke, Urs Nater, and Lawson Wulsin. Dr. John Ruiz has taken leadership of the APS Newsletter; Drs. Benjamin Natelson and Urs Nater join us as Co-Chairs of the Liaison Committee, Dr. Jos Brosschot has become Co-Chair of the Membership Committee, and Dr. Suzanne Segerstrom is incoming Program Committee Chair (2012-13). I have already spoken about several of the ongoing, amazing efforts of our Committees and Task Forces in my prior columns. Here, I'd like to talk about an initiative that has always been exceedingly important to me – the Minority Initiative.

When I first joined the APS, it was a time ripe with concerns about lack of female representation in the society's leadership and the society as a whole. We have come a long way since that time in terms of enhancement of our female membership, and in seeking gender balance in our leadership. Our society also enjoys diversity with respect to professional degree and international representation. However, we still have a long way to go regarding the inclusion of underrepresented groups. In that regard, I am particularly proud of our Minority Initiative and Minority Travel Awards. Developed and led by Dr. Julian Thayer with Drs. Tene Lewis and Gaston Kapuku, the Minority Initiative has supported a series of outstanding symposia highlighting the science of persons of color, and general outreach to a community of scholars that might not have attended our meeting previously. These efforts have yielded wonderful results at our Annual Meeting, bringing new colleagues and friends to share the mission of and enthusiasm for the APS. I would very much like to see such efforts continue to expand with respect to increasing diversity in our membership, our leadership, and our Annual Meeting program as a whole, and educational

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March 2010 - March 2011

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From the Editor

John M. Ruiz, PhD

In 1997 I attended my first APS conference. It was in Santa Fe, New Mexico and I was a first year doctoral student from the University of Utah. Like other dedicated graduate students, my life was a blur of classes, data collection, binge sleep, trying to elicit positive feedback from my advisor, and time spent digesting decades of research. In this insular context, scientists were like rock stars. I was more familiar with Carver and Scheier than Simon and Garfunkel and a Redford Williams or Karen Matthews sighting was as thrilling as seeing Jay Z or Beyonce. That 1997 meeting was a milestone for me – the moment where I realized I'd taken the right career path and found my professional home.

Having been part of APS for over a decade, I am thrilled to have the opportunity to now serve as Editor of the Society's Newsletter. I'd like to thank my predecessor Mary-Frances O'Connor for her excellent service as Editor of the Newsletter – I clearly have some big shoes to fill! I'd also like to thank Immediate Past-President Shari Waldstein, President Paul Mills, and of course, Sarah Shiffert at Degnon Associates for their sup-

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port.

Consistent with tradition and timing, this edition of the Newsletter features commentary on the 2010 Annual Meeting. Shari Waldstein looks back at her experience with APS and this year's accomplishments as she passes the Presidential baton to Paul Mills.

Josh Smyth reviews the meeting from the perspective of program chair with additional commentary from past program chairs as well as students. Finally, the Awards Committee has provided a review of the state of the awards offered by APS to recognize outstanding accomplishments and promise across all levels of the membership.

As for future editions, I'm planning on emphasizing content that reflects the strength of the Society as a collaborative research network. The Newsletter is a great platform for communicating opinions, perspective, “wisdom”, and teaching that are outside the parameters of the empirical journal format yet are critical to professional success. Therefore, members can expect to see features dedicated to practical science and methodology tips, clinical lessons, perspectives from our Past Leaders, discussions from our award winners, and commentary on past APS milestones and future directions. Don't be surprised to receive emails from me requesting your participation and know that I am persistent. I'd also like to issue an open invitation to the membership to contribute pieces, offer ideas, and to express your opinions. You can email me directly at John.Ruiz@unt.edu.

It's been 13 years since my first APS meeting. I remember returning to Utah with rocket fuel levels of enthusiasm. I hope to bring a similar passion to this new task.



Paul J. Mills, PhD, APS President



Looking Back, Looking Forward – Thoughts on the Annual Meeting

Joshua Smyth, PhD, Program Committee Chair

Although it does not seem possible to me, a few months have already passed since the annual meeting in Portland, OR. Equally astonishing, planning is well underway for our next meeting, March 9 - 12, 2011, at the Marriott San Antonio Rivercenter, San Antonio, TX USA (more on this shortly). Many of the Program Committee members have graciously agreed to continue to serve APS in this capacity, and we have a number of new members joining us to provide new and fresh thinking (the full membership of the program committee is listed on the APS website). This seemed a good time to pause and, Janus-like, both reflect back on the 2010 meeting and look forward to the 2011 meeting.

We had a number of goals for the 2010 meeting designed to supplement the core of the meeting content – that core being the excellent science being presented by our membership. For example, based on member feedback, we attempted to improve the abstract review process, diversify the content of the program and avoid “conflicting” scheduling of sessions, include more membership initiated programming (especially symposia), continue the APS commitment to special programming (e.g., mentor-mentee events, travel support, etc.), offer excellent pre-conference workshops, plenaries, and roundtables, and improve the program booklet (these are just a few among many other initiatives).

Looking back, we were able to implement many of the changes we hoped for. Most importantly, we were able to feature a truly extraordinary range of speakers and topics, largely derived from our own membership. Preliminary feedback, both informal and formal, was that many of you greatly enjoyed the meeting and content. In fact, our biggest problem seemed to be the tremendous interest and attendance (for the record, this is a good problem to have in my book!). The meeting had well over 600 attendees and, at times, we were cheek by jowl in some of the more popular sessions and/or smaller meeting rooms. Last, but not least, we once again concluded the conference with a wonderful

banquet (including some extraordinary food), music, and dancing!

Looking forward, the 2011 meeting will be held in San Antonio, TX – home to the Alamo, the Paseo Del Rio (river walk), and so much more! The conference hotel is right on the River Walk – a wonderful collection of restaurants, attractions (the Alamo is just three blocks from our hotel), nightlife, and local flavor (see www.riverwalkguide.com). I am also sure you will all be very pleased to note that I am assured that the San Antonio conference hotel has faster elevators and we have larger space! I also am reasonably will-

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ing to wager that the weather will be a tad better than it was in Portland.

For San Antonio 2011, we aim to continue the programmatic aspects (of the Portland meeting) that worked well, whilst striving to “fix” the things that didn’t work as well. Details are still being developed and refined, but the 2011 meeting will have a general theme of understanding mechanisms and implementing interventions. This developing meeting theme will allow us to meet another membership initiated request – namely, to incorporate and highlight components of the meeting with an intervention focus. At the same time, we will be able to also explore cutting edge work on mechanisms in psychosomatic processes. Ideally, the meeting will serve to catalyze these two processes in conjunction. For example, we will seek submissions and program content that has applied some basic mechanistic research to the development and/or administration of an intervention to improve efficacy and/or effectiveness, carefully tested presumptive mechanisms of change subsequent to the delivery of an intervention as possible mediators of benefit in response to the inter-

APS Past Program Chair Reflections

William Gerin, PhD, Past Program Chair

Rather than commenting on the nature of the APS programs I have had the opportunity to attend - I am sure that others will - I’ll take a nostalgic turn and comment upon the personal connection I feel for the Society and the conference. Over the course of the past 25 years that I have been attending the Annual Meetings, I have often reflected on their intimate nature, which feels more like a gathering of the mispocha (Yiddish for “extended family”) than merely a convocation of colleagues. At how many meetings can you fit the entire group into a room to have dinner together? (At how many meetings would the guests want to be there?!). Being a believer that it is more important to work with people you like and trust than on any particular topic, this gathering has become personally very important to me. I don’t believe I have ever failed to come away without at least one new collaboration with someone I’ve known for years, and with whom had oft had the conversation you’ve all had at one time or another, “one of these days, we’ve got to come up with something we can work on together”. More than any of the other meetings I attend, APS fosters this feeling of closeness and makes me feel connected with my friends who just happen to also share my passion for the work we do. Here is one example: Several years ago, when my pal Julian Thayer and I served as co-Program Chairs, we managed to precipitate an event so statistically unlikely that it could be publishable: We both were compelled to miss our own meeting (me due to a motorcycle accident, Julian due to a burst appendix). I don’t believe that in the history of the Society, a program chair has ever missed his or her own conference; what are the odds that two at once would be missing in action? Several weeks after the meeting, I received a large piece of paper on which at least 50 people - most of whom I have known for years, but many with whom I had never even spoken! - had expressed their good wishes and support for my recovery. (The paper hangs on a wall in my home office). The most recent meeting, under the leadership of Shari Waldstein and Josh Smyth, felt as intimate as ever, while maintaining and pushing forward the standard of excellence that we have come to expect. I feel humbled and grateful to be a small part of it.

Annual Meeting, continued on page 4

efforts regarding the conduct of research with underrepresented groups. It was a pleasure to attend the symposium organized by Julian and colleagues entitled "Stress and Coping in the Context of Health Disparities" that featured the excellent work of Drs. Kofi Kondwani and Paige McDonald.

This topic leads me more generally to our Annual Meeting, a continuing source of pride for us all! Indeed, our Annual Meeting in Portland once again broke our attendance record and was a huge success. Many thanks to Dr. Joshua Smyth and the Program Committee for constructing a superb program. The meeting theme – Stress and Health – was supported by a series of outstanding invited lectures, symposia, and membership-driven submissions. Please see Josh's column in this issue for more details!

I'd also like to congratulate this year's award winners: Barchas Award recipient Dr. George Davey-Smith; MacLean Award recipient Dr. Tor Wager; Oken Fellowship recipient Dr. Jurgen Unutzer; Shapiro Award recipient Dr. Daniel Clauw; Weiner Early Career Award recipient Dr. Anna Phillips. Please see the 2010 program for an extensive listing of travel award recipients. Also see the article in this issue for general information about our awards program and selection process.

Thanks to all for a great year!

Annual Meeting, continued from page 3

vention, or done both of these in some process over time (basic mechanism work informing intervention, intervention results being taken back to inform mechanism study, etc.). More details on calls for specific topics, abstract submission deadlines, and other related topics will be forthcoming (stay tuned!).

In conclusion, your Program Committee is again hard at work planning the program, and we welcome any and all suggestions you may have. Please feel free to send your thoughts on the Portland 2010 meeting, and/or your suggestions for San Antonio 2011 directly to me (jmsmyth@syr.edu), and I will ensure that the Program Committee considers your thoughts. I look forward to another great meeting in San Antonio, and to seeing you there!

Important message from the Editor-in-Chief of the International Journal of Behavioral Medicine

The International Journal of Behavioral Medicine has a free table of contents (ToC) alert e-mail that notifies individuals as soon as a new issue of IJBM has been published online. The alert contains the table of contents for each new issue, along with the article titles (and a direct link), author names, DOI, and page numbers. You can easily keep up with what is published in IJBM by registering for this free service at www.springer.com/medicine/journal/12529. Alerts for this journal (at your right hand, middle of the page). If you choose to unsubscribe, you can do so easily and quickly.

All members of ISBM member societies (APS is one) receive free access to the online version of IJBM.

Just to remind you how this functions:

- Go to the ISBM website: www.isbm.info
- Left click on International Journal of Behavioral Medicine
- Username: *ijbm* Password: *ijbm2008*
- Left click on IJBM and you have access to all published content, i.e. published issues and papers published Online First.



Shari R. Waldstein, APS Immediate Past-President

APS 68th Annual Meeting ~ March 10 - 13, 2010 ~ Portland, OR



...special interest groups...

...trainees...

...award recipients...



...speakers...leaders....

...colleagues...friends...



Awards, Awards, and More Awards

Matthew Muldoon, MD, MPH and Douglas Carroll, PhD, on behalf of the Awards Committee

Through 1998, our annual scientific meeting had two awards, the Early Career Award and the President's Award, the latter which allowed that year's president to invite a prominent leader in our field to the meeting. Over the past 12 years, however, an ever expanding number of honorific and outreach awards have been born and now appear throughout our annual 3.5 day program. The list at the end of this article provides a synopsis of our Society's current awards.

These awards provide a platform for scheduling leading investigators to speak, giving our members the opportunity to learn "from the best." Each award talk has a unique focus; collectively, these should map onto cross-cutting themes central to the APS mission. Named awards – Herbert E. Weiner Early Career Award, Patricia R. Barchas Award in Sociophysiology, Alvin P. Shapiro Award, Donald Oken Fellowship, and the new Paul D. MacLean Award for Outstanding Neuroscience Research — also provide a mechanism to ensure the legacy of some of our field's most esteemed past leaders.

Additionally, the Society seeks to cultivate growth and diversity among its membership and, with that in mind, we provide numerous travel awards for young investigators with a variety of backgrounds: APS Scholars Awards, Medical Trainee Travel Award, Minority Initiative Travel Awards, the Cousins Global Outreach Travel Award, and a component of the new MacLean Award for Outstanding Neuroscience Research.

This entire award program represents a significant cost to the organization but also provides opportunities for the generation of new revenues. Through deliberate planning and effort, the Society's leadership has had the good fortune of securing sufficient donations and grants to support its awards programs.

Along with this array of awards now being offered comes the need for committees and guidelines to oversee nomination and selection procedures. Travel award selections involve rather simple applications with evalu-

ation of appropriateness for each specific award and, in some instances, rank ordering by the score received from the Program Committee for the applicant's original research abstract.

Named awards involve solicited nominations and competitive review of academic achievements and leadership in psychosomatic medicine. Any potential conflict of interest between a nominee and an awards committee member is discussed during the preliminary evaluation process. We apply the National Institutes of Health definition of conflict of interest, including employment, financial, professional and personal relationships.

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If upon adjudication by the awards committee a conflict of interest is found to exist (and as occurred this year), the conflicted committee member neither participates in discussions of the highest ranked nominees nor takes part in the final voting.

Up to this point, the awards programs evolved and grew without deliberate forethought. Currently, Council and the Awards Committee are undertaking a review of the entire awards program to evaluate its overall "fit" to the needs and goals of our organization, as well as the financial solvency of the various awards. In the later regard, for example, named awards either require recurring contributions or an endowment of \$50,000 to \$100,000 to be self-sustaining.

Several current named awards are at risk of expiring without additional funding. Any input from Society members regarding the our awards program is welcome and can be directed to either Doug Carroll, Chair of the Awards Committee (carrolld@bham.ac.uk) or Paul Mills, APS President (pmills@ucsd.edu).

CURRENT APS AWARDS

Herbert E. Weiner Early Career Award

Begun 1991 to recognize outstanding early career research achievement, in honor of Herbert E. Weiner since 2001; chosen by the Awards Committee; funded by contributions; honorarium and featured lecture

Patricia R. Barchas Award in Sociophysiology

Begun 1999 to honor Patricia R. Barchas and recognize outstanding research in sociophysiology; chosen by the Awards Committee; funded contributions from the Barchas family; honorarium and featured lecture

Alvin P. Shapiro Award

Begun 2001 to honor Alvin P. Shapiro and recognize outstanding research primary care by an internist; chosen by the Awards Committee; funded contributions from Shapiro family; honorarium and featured lecture

Donald Oken Fellowship

Begun 2006 by Dr. Donald Oken to immerse a non-member, senior psychiatrist or internist on our society by attending and participating in the annual meeting; chosen by specific selection committee; funded contributions from Oken family; honorarium and travel support

Paul D. MacLean Award for Outstanding Neuroscience Research

Begun 2010 to honor Paul D. MacLean and recognize outstanding neuroscience research in psychosomatic medicine; chosen by specific selection committee; funded by solicited contributions; honorarium and featured lecture (additional travel awards for young neuroscience researchers)

Medical Trainee Travel Awards

Begun 2005 to increase access of MD trainees to APS annual meeting; chosen by demonstrated interest in psychosomatic medicine; funded by NIH meeting grant; 10-30 travel stipends given each year

APS Scholars Awards

Begun 1998 to increase access of promising young investigators to APS annual meeting; chosen by quality rank of submitted abstract; funded by NIH meeting grant; 12-20 travel stipends given each year

Minority Initiative Travel Awards

Begun 2007 to increase access of young minority investigators to APS annual meeting; chosen by demonstrated interest in psychosomatic medicine; funded by NIH meeting grant; 5-10 travel stipends given each year

Cousins Global Outreach Travel Award

Begun 2002 to increase access of investigators in developing countries to APS annual meeting; chosen by quality rank of abstract, funded by Cousins Center; 1-2 travel stipends given each year



Richard Lane, MD, PhD and the first Paul D. MacLean Award recipient Tor Wager, PhD

New Educational Resources for PMIGs

APS has undertaken an exciting new project to bring lectures from some of the Society's most respected leaders to the Psychosomatic Medicine Interest Groups (PMIGs). The PMIG program was created to stimulate interest in psychosomatic medicine among physicians in training, and APS supports up to 10 PMIG each year with financial assistance, mentoring and educational resources. Several dozen leaders of the Society have agreed to present talks for which the audio and slide presentations will be captured and posted on the Educational Resources section of APS' new website – watch for details later this summer!

APS Graduate Student Reflections

“As a graduate student, the APS theme this year, Stress and Health, was particularly relevant. While I was somewhat disheartened by the effects of stress on the body, I was fascinated and inspired by the research presented in the poster sessions and lecture series. I found the symposium on wound healing especially interesting, and am motivated to further investigate this area of study. APS continues to offer novel and exciting research and I look forward to attending next year's conference in San Antonio.”

Erin Kauffman, BA
University of North Texas

“As an avid health psychology enthusiast I had trouble isolating a specific research area from this year's meeting that stood out beyond the rest. What appeared to be the real highlight of the conference was the feeling of collaboration that permeated the conference. Findings on similar topics were discussed by researchers from a broad variety of disciplines. Despite differences in backgrounds and career stages, it appeared that people were genuinely enthusiastic about sharing their ideas and moving the science forward. Seeing studies presented from the animal literature, next to those from dietetics labs and others from epidemiology illustrates how complicated the interactions between psychological variables and physical health outcomes really are. The open and collaborative attitude towards solving these research questions was what really made this year's APS special.”

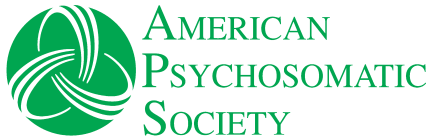
Lianne M. Tomfohr, BA
University of California, San Diego

“The 2010 Annual Scientific Meeting of the American Psychosomatic Society (APS) held in Portland, Oregon was truly an enriching experience for a graduate student. With each day offering a large collection of events and symposia, one was never left dissatisfied. The underlying theme of the conference, Stress and Health, was effectively woven into the topics presented; ranging from those addressing biological mechanisms of stress to research examining the social components involved in the stress-health relationship. Of particular interest was Dr. Steptoe's presentation on stress recovery and cardiovascular risk factors. I was also impressed with the emphasis placed on multicultural characteristics of health. I had the opportunity to attend several symposia addressing matters such as race, ethnicity and discrimination, and the role they play in the biopsychosocial health model. The APS meeting not only allowed me to expand my knowledge of psychosomatic science, but also gave me the opportunity to be an active participant in this exciting field. To be a part of this event was a stimulating experience, and I look forward to attending in upcoming years.”

Kali Patterson, BA
Northern Arizona University



New investigators at the 2010 APS Annual Meeting



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Psychosomatic Society with the cooperation of Degnon Associates.

Comments and Suggestions are invited. Remember, this is YOUR Newsletter.

The deadline for submission for our next Newsletter is August 16.

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