

PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL STATE OF THE ACADEMY REPORT FEBRUARY 2005

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The theme for the American Academy of Clinical Neuropsychology (AACN) for this past year was growth. In my yearly State of the Academy report, I will outline the many ways that AACN has grown as an organization. I will also discuss planned growth for the coming years.

First, however, I would like to introduce your current Board of Directors (BOD). Three new members joined the BOD this year: Mariellen Fischer, Ph.D., Deborah Fein, Ph.D., and Edward Peck, Ph.D. Dr. Peck joined the BOD for a full term, after having served for a year completing the term of original BOD member Joan Borod, Ph.D. We also said goodbye to original BOD board members Wayne Gordon, Ph.D., and Catherine Mateer, Ph.D. Regrettably, Michael Schmidt, Ph.D., elected in 2003, resigned in September for medical reasons. Dr. Schmidt has made notable contributions to AACN, including writing the Oral Examination chapter in our study guide (the longest chapter, by the way) and chairing our Practice Committee and Practice Guidelines Working Group. He will very much be missed. The BOD replaced Dr. Schmidt with David J. Williamson, Ph.D., following procedures in the Bylaws. By the time you read this report, we will have elected three new members, who will take office in February 2005. At that time, we will be saying goodbye to original BOD members Lidia Artiola y Fortuny, Ph.D., and H. Gerry Taylor, Ph.D., who, like the others who have rotated off in the past several years, have served since AACN's inception in 1996. Our elected officers for 2004 to 2006 are as follows: Robert L. Mapou, Ph.D., President; Jerry J. Sweet, Ph.D., Vice President; Daniel Tranel, Ph.D., Treasurer; and Manfred Greiffenstein, Ph.D., Secretary. Drs. Sweet and Tranel, also members of the original board, will continue to serve as *ex officio* voting members of the BOD, per our Bylaws. Their terms expire at the end of their terms in office, unless they seek office again.

So, how have we grown as an organization? To begin, in April 2004, the American Board of Clinical Neuropsychology (ABCN) awarded the ABCN diploma to the 500th neuropsychologist. This is a momentous event in our history, because we now have over 500 ABCN board-certified neuropsychologists in the U.S. and

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Canada, second only to the American Board of Professional Psychology specialty of clinical psychology. We also certified more specialists in 2004 than any other specialty. In recognition of reaching the 500th board-certified neuropsychologist, Corky Boake, Ph.D., sent out a news release to neuropsychology organizations across the country. I am hoping that we will send a similar news release to state psychological associations.

Our next most notable area of growth is our annual meeting. The meeting was held in Minneapolis, MN, in June, again under the able leadership of Greg Lamberty, Ph.D., and assisted by colleagues Mike McCrea, Ph.D., Sandra Lundgren, Ph.D., and Susan McPherson, Ph.D. Meeting attendance doubled to over 200 attendees, including AACN members and non-members alike. The number of workshops doubled to 17, and we had a poster session for the first time, which Dr. McCrea oversaw. In addition, Ida Sue Baron, Ph.D., organized a specialized pediatric track of workshops. We also awarded our first Distinguished Neuropsychologist Award to Steven Rao, Ph.D. Dr. Rao presented an excellent award address on functional neuroimaging, outlining the history of his work in this area and his current research projects. As in the past, Richard Kaplan, Ph.D., our Continuing Education (CE) Committee chair, handled the large job of tracking and awarding CE credits – 154 people received credit at the meeting. The 2005 meeting, plans for which are already underway, will be held again in Minneapolis, but in a new, larger venue. We hope to double our attendance this year to 400, so please spread the word about the excellence of the program. We anticipate moving to other locations starting with the 2006 meeting and have a tentative location of Philadelphia, PA. Other locations under consideration include Cleveland, OH, Phoenix, AZ, San Diego, CA, Portland, OR, Denver, CO, Washington, DC, and Baltimore, MD. However, any member interested in working on local arrangements in their hometown is encouraged to contact Dr. Lamberty.

Apart from the meeting, our CE program has grown as well. We began awarding 14 CE credits to those taking the ABCN examination. To date, 50 people have received these credits. Participants in our workshops have also inquired about home study programs for those unable to attend the annual meeting. Accordingly, the CE Committee is considering the possibility of Home Study and Self-Managed CE Programming. Proposals for this will be presented for discussion at the 2005 BOD meeting in St. Louis.

A variety of projects spearheaded by our members are continuing or have been established. AACN has taken on the neuropsychology salary survey, and Dr. Sweet, a veteran of this work, is in charge. He is currently “fine-tuning” the instrument and is working on how he will notify neuropsychologists across the U.S. and Canada. The survey will most likely be completed on a website and, by the time you are reading this, the survey may be complete. The Practice Guidelines Working Group, initially chaired by Dr. Schmidt and now chaired by Robert Heilbronner, Ph.D., has done an extensive literature review and is working on a draft document. The Group is planning to meet again at the 2005 INS meeting. In a more recent development, Michael Westerveld, Ph.D., and Shanna Kurth, Ph.D., have agreed to represent AACN as part of a working group on establishing work values for new CPT testing codes. They are working closely with AACN member Neil Pliskin, Ph.D., who chairs the Practice Advisory Committee of Division 40. Once the codes

are accepted by the American Medical Association, a survey will be developed, and a cadre of AACN members will be asked to complete it. This is a very important project that will determine insurance reimbursement rates in the future, and we urge all who are asked to participate to do so.

Jacques Donders, Ph.D., has continued to oversee our Mentoring Program. As of the end of September, 59 candidates for board certification had been assigned mentors. Some of our 58 mentors have worked with more than one candidate, while nine had not been connected with a candidate. A survey at the October 2004 oral examination indicated that slightly more than half of the candidates had worked with mentors. Of these individuals, half had worked with a mentor provided by AACN and half had obtained their own mentor outside the program. All but one individual was very satisfied with the mentoring experience. Outgoing BOD member Dr. Artiola y Fortuny has served as Communications Chair. She has been in touch with the new publisher of *The Clinical Neuropsychologist*, Taylor and Francis, discussing the possibility of offering the journal as a member benefit. However, because this will entail an additional cost to members, many of whom already subscribe, we will be considering this carefully. Finally, thanks again to Robert Ivnik, Ph.D., for continuing to manage the AACN list serve. Many members have commented on its value as a source of information about clinical practice and research.

Our growth also means that we must review our financial status and how we manage our finances. An organization of over 500 people is far different from one of 150 or 200. Although previously able to handle administrative tasks purely on a volunteer basis, with the considerable assistance of Annunciata Porterfield in the ABCN/AACN Executive Office, we have realized this year that the time demands for this work have greatly increased, especially since the addition of the meeting, its growth, and the expansion of our CE program. Consequently, a committee chaired by Dr. Yeates is looking at new options for handling these administrative demands. We will also be establishing a formal budget. Until this year, it was possible to work on a purely cash in-cash out accounting basis, but the growth of our membership and programs means that we can no longer do this. Dr. Tranel is developing a budget, which will be reviewed at our meeting in February 2005. We anticipate increased expenses, and accordingly will monitor the adequacy of member dues and other sources of AACN revenue to support our expenses. The BOD recognizes that there are increasing financial demands on all members from other organizations and will continue to view member dues as only one source of revenue from which the increasingly larger list of AACN activities is supported. However, we believe that our members would like us to continue to offer the quality services and programs that require these expenses.

As always, the BOD welcomes input from members. We also welcome anyone who would like to volunteer to work on ongoing projects. Thanks to anyone else who has contributed this year but who, through no deliberate intent, was omitted from my report.