

## AVAPL Annual Business Meeting August 5, 2016

### 1) Call to order and Welcoming remarks, Tom Kirchberg

Dr. Kirchberg welcomed the attendees, expressing his appreciation for their presence. He reflected on the large amount of productive work in which AVAPL participated in the past year, and expressed his thanks for the engagement of the executive committee, advisory committee, and AVAPL members.

### 2) Review of minutes

Minutes were summarized by John McQuaid and approved by the attendees.

### 3) Financial report

Dr. Mary Beth Shea reported the current funds as follows:

- a. Membership account; 64,978.79
- b. Conference account; 24761.44

She noted that given the availability of funds, the Executive Committee, in consultation with the advisory board, had approved using funds in the past year to support the attendance of Executive Committee members at APA and sending AVAPL members to present at the Commission on Care and an advocacy meeting coordinated by AFGE. She noted that the organization needs to continue to work down its holdings, however, to maintain its nonprofit status. She also reported that the membership has continued to grow, and was 413 as of 6/30/16. Dr. Shea stated that she will continue to review the listserv to remind members to pay dues, and that the Executive Committee plans to continue to work on increasing membership.

Dr. Lemle proposed that additional funds be used to support an Advocacy day in Washington DC.

### 4) Elections:

Dr. McQuaid announced the election results:

- a. President- Elect: Mary Beth Shea
- b. Treasurer, Sam Wan

In Addition, Dr. McQuaid announced that he had agreed to fill out the remaining term for Secretary that had been previously occupied by Monica Cortez-Garland, and which Dr. Steve Cavicchia had covered when she left the VA.

### 5) Conference

A report was presented on the Psychology Leadership conference. There were 180 participants. Highlights included the dinner for Dr. Kathy MacNamara, the presentation by Dr. Jennifer Lee, Deputy

Secretary for Health and Policy, and Mr. Collier who oversees strategic partnerships in the VA. Other notable events included the presentation by Dr. Maffucci of IAVA and Mr. Berger of VVA on partnering with VSOs, and the presentation by Mr. Tchirnosky on the changes in the political environment and the VA. Dr. Russell Lemle was awarded the Pat DeLeon Award for Advocacy. It was announced that 77 attendees participated in leadership training, and the conference will be held in San Antonio again next year.

6) Report from APA; Dr. Heather Kelly

Dr. Heather Kelly presented on coordination with APA. She noted how much APA supports and values the VA Psychologist Leadership Conference, and noted particularly what a success the training dinner was. She noted that the AVAP participation in the Commission on Care was excellent, and that APA and AVAPL had signed onto a critique of the report. She also noted the excellent work of engaging VSOs in this process.

She reported that APA had been doing a number of Capitol Hill briefings related to VA, including in partnership with Friends of VA research (FOVA). She reported that Under Secretary Shulkin had a positive meeting with FOVA. She also noted that there had been a number of White House summits regarding VA, and that she was working with Caitlin Thompson. In particular, APA is supporting efforts for lethal means reduction, discussing gun safety, and working with Gabby Giffords to start a veterans group. She also noted that she is going to participate in a call with the AVAPL Early Career Psychologist group to discuss policy issues. In addition, APA is working on issues of legal services for veterans, and participated in a summit with 4 behavioral health groups. The goal is to set up on-line and app-based access to lawyers for vets, to support coordinating mental health and legal needs. Dr. Kelly also offered to discuss prescription privileges, and then offered to take questions.

Dr. MacNamara asked "Do we have congressional people who agree with our critique of the Commission on Care?" Dr. Kelly responded that remains to be seen. The policy brief has gone to congressional staff, but we don't know if we have immediate champions. Dr. Lemle stated that VSOs have not come out strongly, and Dr. Kelly noted they may not, but they have come out more than ever.

Dr. Steve Shea about Title 38. Dr. Kelly reported there was no movement yet. It did not get included in the big authorizing bill, and she hopes to get it into the Director's bill.

Dr. Kearney asked about prescription privileges. Dr. Kelley reported that there was a recent comment opportunity on VA nursing prescription authority, and 215,000 people ("a huge number") weighed in. She noted that APA supports prescription authority in all settings, including federal agencies. There is a push to get it into the VA, although a recent bill died in congress. Dr. Kelly noted that Dr. DeLeon suggests APA support nursing, and more than 20 APA presidents support the nursing efforts regarding prescribing in a letter. She states there has been discussion with Drs. Shulkin, Tenhula and Pollack regarding prescription privileges. Dr. Tenhula is getting more information about perceptions at VACO, but notes concern about pulling psychologists away from other roles. Dr. Kelly noted she will be working with both APA and Congress and hopes to bring the bill back up. Dr. DeLeon notes that

pharmacy has written a letter regarding this issue. He also noted that Drs. Resnick and Anton want to create a VA office within APA, and Dr. Kelly supports this as well.

#### 7) Awards

- a. Dr. McQuaid announced the following awards
  - i. Dr. Steve Cavicchia received the Antonette Zeiss Distinguished Leadership Award.
  - ii. Dr. Steven Shea received the Leadership Award
  - iii. Dr. Clifford A. Smith received the Special Contribution Award
  - iv. Dr. Candace Drake received the James Besyner Early Career Award.
  - v. Dr. McQuaid was awarded a Professional Service Award for his role as AVAPL president

#### 8) Presidential Address

Dr. Tom Kirchberg provided the presidential address. He noted that the state of VA psychology is strong, and that in coordination with our VA colleagues we provide excellent care. The narrative in the community that the VA is broken is not true, and that there needs to be an extensive advocacy campaign in conjunction with other disciplines, labor, and VSOs to make change. He noted that as part of these efforts AVAPL presented testimony regarding VHA behavioral health and provided an in-depth review of VA healthcare. This helped to undercut efforts to privatize the VA. He noted these efforts have benefited from sustained collaboration with APA, and particularly with Dr. Kelly. He stated that study after study shows VA provides the best care, and at the same time we are working to improve those systems and processes needed to provide veterans better care and access to resources. He shared that he comes from a line of veterans stretching back to the civil war. "Our mission is noble and compelling."

Dr. Lemle spoke, stating of Dr. Kirchberg "You encompass the moral voice and have been a true inspiration."

#### 9) Passing of the Mantle and New President's address

Dr. Gironda received the Presidential mantle (i.e., sweatshirt) from Dr. Kirchberg, and then provided his Presidential Address.

He shared that his role as president-elect had been a "fantastic and rewarding" experience, that he felt privileged to work with the executive committee, and he looked forward to working together moving forward. He noted that the advisory committee was an impressive group and thanked them for their time dedicated to the organization. He reflected that the membership does not realize how much they do. He shared that he had learned a great deal about challenges in the VA, and that we are leading the charge.

In preparing for this role, he shared that he had studied about the history of the organization. He noted it had begun as AVACP in 1977, and next year will be the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The original goals were to achieve medical staff membership, gain clinical privileges, thwart (successfully) requirements to practice under a psychiatrist, and create a training program for chiefs. At various points, AVACP/AVAPL fought to fend off cuts to VA training (1979-80), cope with the conversion to service lines and consequences of low morale (1995-1996), sponsor the VA leadership conference (1998) and helped produce the UMHS. Recently, AVAPL has addressed the Choice Act and Commission on Care. It has become one of the first public voices on these issues, and through active advocacy he believes we have changed the narrative, had a strong impact, and energized others.

Dr. Gironda shared that his goals for next year include:

- 1) Continue opposition to privatization
- 2) Reframe the debate around
  - a. Quality, cost, care coordination
- 3) Build on collaborations
- 4) Bring tools to our members to help and continue with this
- 5) Expand membership
  - a. Targeted messaging
  - b. Marketing our mission and accomplishment
  - c. Incentivize recruitment
  - d. Leverage social media.
- 6) Focus on measurement based care
  - a. We should be part of this debate
  - b. Gives a role to those who ask what we can do to help.

In closing, Dr. Gironda stated he was honored to be part of the organization, and cited Oakley Ray on being an effective advocate for psychology: We have to do it together, and everyone has to contribute time and work.

#### 10) Open discussion

Dr. Lemle asked how to follow up on developing an APA office for veterans. Dr. Kelly suggested talking to the CEO. Dr. DeLeon stated we should go to people on the board and say what should happen. Find those veterans on the board and ask them to make this a priority. Dr. Lemle asked if Dr. Kelly had asked about including first responders under the office. She stated she did, but AVAPL can advocate for what they recommend. There was some discussion of how many past APA presidents were veterans and a discussion of the need to get VA psychologists on the APA board and get VA psychologists to be APA members. Dr. McQuaid noted that AVAPL members may be more likely to join APA as they learn the efforts happening on their behalf.

Dr. Lemle asked if AVAPL would endorse Jessica Daniel for APA president. He noted that AVAPL has endorsed 2 past candidates (DR. DeLeon was the last). Dr. Kearney noted that Dr. Daniel is strongly supportive of veterans, and has a calm and supportive leadership style. A question arose as to how endorsing was done before. Dr. McQuaid suggested that membership be asked for input. Dr. Steve Shea suggested inviting members to participate in the monthly executive meeting. Dr McNamara stated there may need to be some way to evaluate the candidate, and asked whether any candidates have approached AVAPL. Dr. Kelly noted that Division 19 lists candidates comments on its website.

11) Announcements- some final announcements by Dr. Gironda

The Executive Committee had approved a women in psychology leadership SIG.

He noted 3 anniversaries: the 70<sup>th</sup> year of Memorandum 2, establishing the academic affiliations, the 20<sup>th</sup> annual conference approaching, and the 40<sup>th</sup> year of existence.

Finally there was a discussion of the name of AVAPL, noting that some individuals do not know they are eligible for membership because of the name. It was raised to consider whether the name should be changed. It was noted that this would require a by-law change, and could be a complex issue. There was no initial opposition.

The meeting was adjourned.