

President's Address
2017 PCFA Annual Meeting

(The transcript is an abridged version of the speech given the meeting)

I feel fortunate to have led the organization during a time when we have expanded our funding activities. We are now both a service and funding organization where just a handful of years ago we were mainly a service organization. Our core commitments to teach, supervise, mentor and treat ever endure and are the foundation of our purpose. But increasingly, through the funding of programs and events, we are creating new experiences for the residents and fellows that enrich their training and shape their identities as psychiatrists. PCFA owes this—to all of you who stepped up when we increased dues in 2016, and to Dr. David Coffey and recently Dr. Richard Metzner, whose donations have laid the foundation for our modest but growing endowment.

Consistently providing the residents with morale boosting, community building, de-stressing, and identity enhancing experiences has influenced the culture of the residency. During times of distress and change in the training program, the steady and generous voluntary support we provide contains and stabilizes the residents. They feel genuinely cared for by the VCF, and time and time again they express their gratitude for us. So, our giving of our time, expertise and resources in this way is truly a powerful act that leaves its mark on the forming professional capacities and identities of these, our future colleagues.

Among the number of programs that we now host or fund, two stand out in my mind for influencing residents in this way. The first is the intern psychotherapy retreat. It is the first bonding experience for the class and introduces them very early in their training, in a relaxed setting conducive to openness and sharing, to the principles of psychotherapy and to faculty role models who cherish and practice it. This past year the retreat faculty enlightened them through the use of examples from [film and professional training videos] and every intern was given the clinical manual of psychodynamic psychotherapy as a resource.

The other program is the funding of fleece jackets for the residents at UCLA and the San Fernando Valley programs. A seemingly whimsical purpose, these jackets create strong professional and collegial identity, and establish the psychiatry clinicians' status on par with those of the other medical specialties, who have their own departmental jackets. Some female residents have noted that wearing the jacket helps identify them as physicians at the hospital, where they might otherwise be wrongly assumed to be nurses or ancillary staff. The jackets are also worn proudly outside the hospital, spreading the name and reputation of our program and the value of psychiatry into the community. The residents approached the board with this proposal, and I am delighted that we are supporting it.

What do we hope to accomplish in the coming year between now and the next annual meeting?

God and the stock market willing, our endowment grows and we continue to fund more of these experiences, and to give *ourselves* some of them through volunteer faculty dinners and gatherings.

We are now in the process of applying to the California CME Institute to become a CME

provider, and we expect that next year's DPSS lecture accreditation will be under our new license, saving us some thousands of administrative dollars we currently pay to the UCLA CME office annually. We will also be able to provide CME presentations so that VCF have more opportunities to fulfill them free of charge

We are currently launching a PGY-I and -II mentorship program to address the recent expressed need of residents for more attention from attendings and faculty who proactively support them during the first two demanding years of training. The innovation of this program is that residents can meet with their mentors via video conferencing to eliminate the highest barrier to engagement. I thank new board member Dr. Tom Blair and chief resident Dr. Ashley Covington for taking charge of this effort.

These efforts are in addition to all of our ongoing programs including the funding of recruitment happy hours, the intern BBQ, the holiday party—this year on December 10th in the evening so please save the date—the Coffey memorial film night, and more.

In January the newly elected officers of the board will take their positions. David Sones assumes the leadership of PCFA as president, Paul Puri president-elect, past president Wayne Sandler will be treasurer, and Alex Lin, our new website master, becomes the secretary. I am looking forward to turning our leadership over to this very capable team.

Thank you to the board members who served in 2017. David Sones president elect, Elizabeth Casalegno treasurer, Paul Puri secretary, Bernie Bierman, Sheldon Kardener, Matthew Koury, Alex Lin, Zeb Little, Richard Metzner, Francisco Navarro, Ralph Obler, Allen Pack, Shirah Vollmer and faculty liaison Andrew Russell.

And, as I round out my tenure as president, a big personal thank you to our executive director Lela Degolia for your expertise, judgment, generosity and initiative, without which we could not be growing in the way that we are. I have had great pleasure in working hand in hand with you to do such rewarding work and PCFA is extremely lucky to have you.