

Statements for the AWP Newsletter

APA President Elect Candidate Statements

Donna M. Norris, MD

Dear AWP Colleagues,

It is a special privilege to be a candidate for the Office of President-Elect of the APA. This is a time of challenge and change for our Association and our country.

We are at a critical crossroads as our nation engages in a vigorous health care debate and we must assure that psychiatry is on the agenda. We must double our advocacy efforts for our patients with mental illnesses and substance use disorders to assure that their needs are not overlooked. Please join me in working on building a positive future for our patients and our profession.

My full campaign statement may be found on my website: www.donnanorrismd.com

I began my work in the APA during residency as a Falk Fellow. Over the years, I have been active in the APA Assembly as minority representative for African Americans, Senior Representative from Massachusetts, Recorder, Speaker-Elect, and Speaker. My APA Board service includes Area 1 Trustee, Secretary-Treasurer during which time I chaired the Ad Hoc Task Force to Review Disclosures and Interests of DSM-V Nominees. I have served on over 30 APA components and am currently Secretary of the American Psychiatric Association Press, Inc. As the immediate past APA Treasurer, I am well aware of the serious fiscal concerns now facing the APA. At the same time, it is critical that APA protects those aspects of membership involvement which are important to our Association's growth and strength. Even with fiscal constraints, we must find ways to keep members involved.

In private practice for over 30 years, I treat children, adolescents, and adults, including forensic work. My medical experience includes hospital practice as an attending psychiatrist in Boston Children's Hospital, Medical Director of several community mental health agencies, as a psychiatrist in a public sector court clinic, and as consultant to agencies involved in rehabilitation of persons with mental illnesses.

In 2008, approximately 31% of all physicians and surgeons in the United States were women with a ris-



ing trend of women who select psychiatry as a specialty. During this same time, women represented 34% (14,066) of all physicians who identified themselves as practicing psychiatry in the United States. The American Psychiatric Association reports that the number of women psychiatrists in APA increased nearly fourfold since the mid-1970s-- from 2,679 in 1976 to 12,958 in 2009, whereas the number of men psychiatrists has decreased within the last five years, from 23,777 in 2004 to 23,566 in 2009.

With medicine's increasing appeal to more women, there is a notable positive change in the number of women pursuing psychiatric careers. In some academic centers, women residents represent over 50% of psychiatric trainees. APA membership mirrors this trend in the numbers of women, including women residents, joining the organization.

It is critical to our growth as a profession that we strongly support and mentor young women as they pursue personal and professional life balance. I have been fortunate to have a wonderful group of men and women as mentors in my career who are representative of the broad spectrum of the field and on whom I can call for advice. My leadership has included mentoring women to be assertive and to take on more active roles, including leadership positions, within professional groups.

In recent years, APA has made progress as more women have attained positions at the highest levels of leadership. Our members-in-training and early career members are important to APA's future. I support their active participation at all levels of the APA and will promote opportunities for their leadership development. AWP has fostered women's efforts in achieving success in the APA and other medical organizations. I ask for your support and your vote in this election for APA President-Elect.

Best Regards,

Donna

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