



American College of Neuropsychopharmacology



Carlos A. Zarate, Jr., M.D. ACNP President 2022

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(22-24)

Marina R. Picciotto, Ph.D.
(22-24)

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Executive Director

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I am truly honored to serve as President in 2022. ACNP is my home away from home, a place where we get to meet, catch up, talk science, have engaging discussions, and set up collaborations—some of which may never happen but nevertheless generate inspiring new ideas. More importantly, ACNP is the place where we get to see the future of our College take shape by bringing in and engaging with the best and the brightest, those who will make future discoveries and develop better treatments for our patients. I fondly remember my first invitation to attend the ACNP meeting. I fell in love with the meeting and have not missed one since the 1990’s. I plan to keep attending for years to come.

I will focus on four main goals for 2022, which I briefly summarized at the Business meeting.

The Future of ACNP Annual Meetings in a Newly Hybrid World

As a College we need to plan for the future by setting up the infrastructure that will help us adapt rapidly and efficiently to our changing world, regardless of whether those changes are occurring in science, technology, training, advocacy, or economics, among many other considerations. One major decision to be made this coming year is whether to have our annual meeting be hybrid or only in person. As we make this decision, we also need to keep our planned growth in mind. The number of attendees permitted to attend is currently capped at 2000, and we are close to that number. Having hybrid annual meetings from now on would allow us to expand our capacity. This expansion, in turn, would further diversify our College both in terms of its membership and science areas, help us connect with other societies to exchange science and ideas, and allow us to continue sharing what our College is about. This discussion will be spearheaded by our Virtual Task Force, chaired by Judy Ford.

Enhance the “Clinical” in Clinical Translational Research

In 2022, we will seek to expand the College’s emphasis on clinical translational neuroscience while maintaining the highest standards of science and ethics and synthesizing basic and clinical science findings to better translate our work into meaningful discoveries and treatments. As you all know, our College is very strong in terms of “bench”, but I believe we must pay equal attention to addressing “bedside” issues, with the added goal of facilitating the link between both areas and filling gaps in our knowledge. This, I believe, will give us the best chance to develop desperately needed improved treatments for our patients. I would also like to see continued focus on cutting-edge research, methods, and tools to study the neurobiology of neuropsychiatric illnesses, including collaborations across government, academia,

industry, and other interested parties to develop urgently needed novel treatments. I am committed to maintaining high-caliber science and will work on behalf of the College to integrate its mission and activities with those of other organizations devoted to neuroscience, clinical psychiatry, psychology, epidemiology, public health, advocacy, and pharmacology.

Enhance and Embrace Inclusiveness, Diversity, and Equality

One of the most important commitments I made to the College concerned my efforts to expand diversity of representation—including of thought, scientific background, and opinions—which I strongly believe can enhance both our science and its clinical applications. Towards this end, I will facilitate the underrepresented minority Near Peer Mentorship Program and report back on its success; if successful, I will consider expanding this flagship program. I will also continue to ensure that we have the highest quality membership as well as meeting experience by advancing diversity, inclusiveness, and equity initiatives. I will strongly support these initiatives through the Education & Training Committee co-chaired by Vaishali Bakshi and Lorenzo Leggio; the Membership Committee co-chaired by Paul Kenny and C. Neill Epperson; the Program Committee co-chaired by Rajita Sinha and Victoria Risbrough; the Diversity and Inclusion Task Force co-chaired by Marisa Spann and Sade Spencer; and the Women’s Task Force co-chaired by Stephanie Borgland and Kathleen Brady. I’m truly excited by our potential to enhance diversity in our College and am confident that the work by our chairs, co-chairs, and members will help expand diversity and representation among members and trainees.

Expand Global Outreach Efforts

I believe that permitting participation in some aspects of the ACNP annual meeting via virtual attendance will allow us to expand global outreach and engagement with different societies and institutions who focus on neuroscience, clinical research, neuropsychopharmacology, drug discovery, and drug development. Our goal in this area will be strategic, seeking out future members who can bring expertise that we lack but need for the future growth of our College. This, in turn, will help us fulfill our College’s mission and vision. We will also continue to promote the College by increasing collaborations and submissions to the ACNP program through outreach to key clinical research and neuroscience societies. This effort will be carried out by the Virtual Task Force, the Program Committee, the Education and Training Committee, and the Latin American Task Force chaired by Alan Frazer.

I will work with President-Elect Kerry Ressler and the chairs of the Task Forces and Committees to address these important issues for the College. I also wish to take a moment to thank the recent past Presidents, Linda Brady and Maria Oquendo. I look forward to working with them as well as with Council members Rita Valentino,

David Rubinow, William Carlezon, Marina Picciotto, Carrie Bearden, Ellen Leibenluft, Mary Philips, and Diego Pizzagalli. Of course, I also wish to give an enormous thanks and my gratitude to Sarah Timm and her wonderful team at Parthenon Management Group for their outstanding leadership, support, and dedication to the College. None of this would be possible without their contributions.

I feel a tremendous sense of gratitude to the ACNP and am driven by a deep desire to pay the College back for the many gifts and wonderful memories it has given me. I will work hard to serve the College and fulfill its important mission. I look forward to a productive and, more importantly, a fun year, particularly the opportunity to see all of you virtually and in person in 2022.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Carlos A. Zarate, Jr.", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Carlos A. Zarate, Jr, M.D.
President