



American College of Neuropsychopharmacology

ACNP President’s Letter 2021
Linda S. Brady, Ph.D.

Dear Members,

It is a great honor and privilege to work with all of you this year in my capacity as President of the ACNP. The ACNP is my scientific home. The annual meeting affords a unique venue for our members and invited speakers to share exciting new advances in science at the intersection of brain, behavior, and therapeutics as well as to deliberate, discuss, and debate issues of importance to the College.

As I briefly described at the ACNP Business Meeting in December, I propose three areas of focus for 2021 that build upon the work and achievements of our past ACNP Presidents, our Council, our Committees and Task Forces, and our members. These are:

Advance the Mission of the College. Despite the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, our scientists have continued to conduct research and publish cutting-edge basic, translational, and clinical findings that are vital to the development of novel treatments for psychiatric and substance use disorders. Through the hard work of the Program Committee and co-chairs Guillermo Horga and Rajita Sinha as well as our NPP Editor Bill Carlezon, we will continue to develop an outstanding scientific program and enhance the scientific impact of our Journal. In particular, I will encourage a continued focus in two high-impact areas: 1) novel technologies developed through the BRAIN initiative to enable identification of biologically similar subgroups within brain and behavioral disorders; and 2) high-quality, openly shared, multi-modal biomarker and clinical data to identify circuits and pathways for intervention. I will also work with the Program Committee to enhance the representation of high-quality clinical research in the scientific program through targeted outreach to key clinical research societies to solicit strong clinical research for submission to the ACNP. In addition, I will work with the Animal Research Committee, co-chaired by Mar Sanchez and Andre Der-Avakian, to continue the committee’s efforts to educate and inform the community about the value of animal research.

Enhance Collaboration and Communication Among all of Key Stakeholders. The ACNP affords the perfect venue for members and invited speakers to interact with academic, government, and industry scientists and our advocacy partners to share and discuss cutting-edge, basic, translational, and clinical research to advance treatments that address the needs of individuals who suffer from mental illness and substance use disorders. I will work with the Liaison Committee, co-chaired by Stephen Strakowski and Kimberly Vanover, to foster alliances and initiatives among these stakeholders and to encourage, through targeted outreach, the submission of successful public-private partnerships focused on advancing therapeutics development to our scientific program and Journal.



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Vitalize the College by Embracing Diversity and Inclusion. Over the past years, our committees and task forces have made progress in advancing the diversity and inclusion of members in the College, but more needs to be done. I will strongly support the outreach efforts of the newly formed Career Development Committee, which supersedes the Membership Advisory Task Force. It will be co-chaired by Mercedes Perez-Rodriguez and Karen Szumlinski. This committee together with the Diversity and Inclusion Task Force, co-chaired by Jair Soares and Marisa Spann, and the Women's Task Force, co-chaired by Kimberly Yonkers and Stephanie Borgland, will identify, encourage, and aid the recruitment and application of diverse and under-represented members (URMs) to the College. I will then rely on the Membership Committee, co-chaired by Anne Andrews and Paul Kenny, to evaluate and select a diverse set of new members, and on the Education and Training Committee, co-chaired by Robert Swift and Vaishali Bakshi, to select a diverse set of Travel Awardees to foster their development and interest in becoming members of the College.

New this year, Council will convene a Task Force on URM Mentoring to develop a plan for outreach initiatives focused on: broadening the pipeline of URMs interested in brain research careers; providing mentoring and resources to recruit URM members; and better engaging URM members in the College. I will work with President-Elect Carlos Zarate and the chairs of the Career Development Committee, Diversity and Inclusion Task Force, the Membership Committee, and the Women's Task Force to address this issue of importance to the College.

In closing, I thank the recent past Presidents, Maria Oquendo and Marina Wolf, our Council, and Sarah Timm for their outstanding leadership of and dedication to the College. I especially thank Sarah and her talented team at Parthenon Management Group who embraced the challenge of COVID-19 in 2020 and quickly pivoted to develop an amazing virtual meeting platform so that the ACNP could have a highly successful meeting!

And, I thank the members and co-chairs of all of the [committees and task forces](#) who will work diligently to carry out their charges from Council in 2021.

I look forward to a productive year and the opportunity to see all of you in person in 2021!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Linda Brady". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Linda S. Brady, Ph.D.
President