



American College of Neuropsychopharmacology



Kerry J. Ressler, M.D., Ph.D. ACNP President 2023

Dear Colleagues,

I am humbled and honored to work with all of you this year in my capacity as President of the ACNP, which is my scientific home as well as a source of inspiration, rejuvenation, and friendship. Our community affords a unique venue for our members, guests 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.

ACNP’s core purpose is to contribute to alleviating human suffering by advancing dissemination of knowledge of the brain as well as the biology, prevention, and treatment of brain disorders. I feel that we are now at an inflection point in our field, where decades of exponential progress in neuroscience is being integrated with human genetics, digital phenotyping, and big data, towards deriving new effective therapeutics based on our understanding of the brain. However, there are complex hurdles to overcome, and as many have pointed out previously, we face a critical gap in translation of potentially transformative discoveries, due to remaining lags in development and implementation of new neurobiologically-driven pharmacological and device therapeutics. I believe that ACNP can play a critical role in its leadership through academic, governmental, industry, and regulatory relationships to help overcome this gap.

As I briefly described at the ACNP Business Meeting, I propose the below areas of focus for 2023 that build upon the work and achievements of our College. As a premier organization of leaders in Neuroscience & Psychiatry, ACNP is uniquely positioned to help transform our fields through *Bridging the Translational Gap*, through several initiatives:

Inspiring next-generation Academic-Industry-Government conversations for translation of Neuroscience Discoveries to Novel Interventions. Working with Alik Widge, Danielle Graham and the Liaison committee, along with others, I hope that ACNP can be considered a convener for critical stakeholder discussions, both at the ACNP annual meeting as well as through other opportunities to bring our college expertise to FDA / NIH and other stakeholders along with industry. These discussions need to address how do we bridge this translational gap; how can we enhance opportunities for public/private consortia; how can we help to leverage FDA

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Breakthrough Therapy and Fast Track drug designations while focusing on biologically defined subtypes of our broad heterogeneous clinical phenotypes. As others have said, multilateral collaborations between academia, the non-profit sector, and the pharmaceutical industry are the most certain near-term paths to progress, harnessing existing capabilities under pre-competitive models. I hope to help ACNP to further these opportunities and discussions to support efforts to rapidly bring new neurobiologically-informed, safe and effective treatments to patients.

Empowering new approaches to enhance robustness and predictability across model systems to de-risk translation and transform understanding of human neuroscience & pathology. Working with Georgia Hodes, Zoe Donaldson and the Animal Research committee along with others, I hope that ACNP can inspire scientists and stakeholders to both acknowledge and overcome prior limitations of our preclinical discoveries. We need new approaches, collaborations, and consortia to identify and implement predictable and robust targets, as well as mechanistic and predictive biomarkers, and to integrate our knowledge of molecular networks and circuits. I hope that ACNP can be a force for change and improvement in identification of preclinical tools from cells, circuits, and behaviors to identify and de-risk discoveries for translation. Finally, I hope we can help to utilize progress in the genomics sector for translational, biologically informed approaches to advance genomics targets from consortia such as the Psychiatric Genomics Consortia and PsychEncode, among others, combined with translationally relevant model systems.

Enhancing innovative technologies and approaches to digital and quantitative phenotyping across patients and models for discovery and translation. Working with council, the Scientific Communications committee, the new *Neuropsychopharmacology* Co-Principal Editors - Tony George and Lisa Monteggia, and college members, I hope that the college can support and help create opportunities for discussion, identification, validation and publication of transdiagnostic and cross-species robust models and tools. These approaches are critical for the initiatives mentioned above. One particularly exciting new development is the pending launch of a new journal, *NPP-Digital Psychiatry and Neuroscience*, led by Bill Carlezon, to facilitate such publications and discussions. I also look forward to working with our 2023 Program Chair, Victoria Risbrough, co-chair Tracy Bale, and the Program committee to encourage submissions at the annual meeting to expand our understanding of cross species / cross model validated models and tools, explore satellite meetings and other ways to expand these discussions.

Finally, as part of our core mission and values, we must **continue important ongoing college initiatives** including: 1) continuing and expanding diversity initiatives such as the URM Near Peer Mentorship Program, installing our first DEI officer, expanding BIPOC and LGBTQIA2S+ initiatives, among many others; 2) continuing to expand our clinical research initiatives; and 3) expanding our global outreach and engagement of international societies. Through Diversity & Inclusion, Education & Training, and Global Outreach committees, made up of many dedicated college members, we will continue to work towards progress in these very critical missions.

In closing, I thank the recent past presidents, Carlos Zarate, Linda Brady, and Maria Oquendo, as well as our Council, Erin Shaw and Sarah Timm for their outstanding leadership of and dedication to the College. Finally, I thank the dedicated members and co-chairs from all of our committees and task forces who will work diligently to carry out their charges from Council in 2023.

I very much look forward to a productive year and the exciting opportunity to see all of you in person again in 2023!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kerry Ressler". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Kerry J. Ressler, M.D., Ph.D.
ACNP President