



Association for Applied Psychophysiology and Biofeedback

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Dear Colleagues,

It was a distinct honor for me to preside over the AAPB 40th Annual Conference in Albuquerque this year. We enjoyed pertinent and cutting-edge science addressing a broad range of topics, great camaraderie, and good food and entertainment, all of which combined for an exceptional meeting. I extend my sincere thanks to the Program Committee and Chair, Howard Hall, our Board of Directors, the AAPB staff, BCIA, and all who attended for their contributions to making the Annual Conference a resounding success.

It is no coincidence that AAPB is celebrating its 40th anniversary this year. You will recall that in 1969, Neil Miller published his seminal research that launched the field of biofeedback. It was also in that year that the Biofeedback Research Society, now AAPB, was founded.

We have thrived as an organization for 40 years because we represent a science that has much to offer toward the improvement of the human condition, and as an organization, we have tended to the needs of our constituents. But those needs are changing. If we are to survive another 40 years, I believe AAPB must be relevant to what our members do in their daily professional lives, and responsive to the needs of consumers and others who look to us as a resource for information and guidance. This is the basis of keeping our strategic plan alive, and making AAPB membership, and the Association valuable and relevant.

AAPB's strategic themes, "Science, Education, Professional Support, and Technology", are essentially our brand. They define what we are about as an organization, and drive what we do to accomplish our mission. At last year's Annual Conference I identified a number of priorities on which I would ask our Board to focus in service to these strategic themes and plans. These priorities were:

1. Strengthening support for practitioners
2. Membership growth
3. Effective stewardship of our financial and intellectual resources.
4. Expanding the scope and definition of AAPB's education initiatives.
5. Organizational collaboration

To address some of these priorities, we focused on certain operational issues, and for others, launched a number of strategic initiatives.

Operationally, the focus has been on expanding our markets, developing new sources of revenue, and methods of cost-containment that are sensitive to the current economy. This has resulted in a balanced budget for 2008, and we are on-track to accomplish the same in 2009. We have also invested in a proactive marketing, communications, and PR effort in support of membership and revenue growth. We are increasingly employing technology and distance learning methods to offer CE programs. In an effort to address a critical health care need, our Fall meeting in Washington, DC under the direction of Gabe Tan, focused on Blast injury: TBI, PTSD, and pain. We made invaluable connections with national brain trauma groups, the Department of Defense, and the Defense Centers for Excellence, and a contingent of those speakers presented at our meeting in Albuquerque. We are also developing plans to offer a more state-of-the-art, cost-sensitive Annual Conference that takes greater advantage of technology and possibly teleconferencing.

The strategic initiatives that were adopted in support of this year's priorities are as follows:

1. **Renovation of AAPB Website**—Phase 1 of the website renovation is complete and the new site went live earlier this year with a total redesign of its format, navigation, and aesthetics. Subsequent phases will involve using the website for delivery of CE programs, editing of original content, and the addition of new materials and features.
2. **Membership Initiative**—the goal of this initiative, chaired by Susan Antelis, is to increase our numbers and ensure a member-friendly culture that encourages member retention. We enjoyed a 10% increase in membership through the end of 2008, which we largely attribute to this effort.
3. **Insurance Initiative**—we have commissioned and funded an aggressive effort, chaired by Ron Rosenthal, to identify and pursue all avenues for increasing health insurance coverage for biofeedback and neurofeedback. To date, this has involved petitioning CMS/Medicare and private insurers to include coverage for treatment of specific disorders, such as headache and incontinence, for which there is strong support of efficacy. This will be an ongoing effort to which AAPB is committed.
4. **Chapter Outreach Initiative**—we have begun an effort to strengthen and formalize our relationships with our state and regional chapters. This project includes the development of an effective communication network to link state/regional chapters and AAPB to assist in cooperative CE and other program planning, the extension of AAPB benefits and discounts to chapter members, and the development of a chapter support package that AAPB will provide in order to make our chapters true partners of AAPB.



5. **University Initiative**—the ultimate purpose of our university initiative, chaired by Connie Schrader of UNC, is to encourage more regionally accredited university and professional school graduate programs to incorporate courses in clinical/applied psychophysiology and biofeedback into their curricula in order to introduce new people to the field, and encourage their involvement in our professional associations.
6. **Clinician’s Tool Kit**—with the help of Francine Butler, we have compiled a compendium of information to help clinicians with practice development, patient communication, procuring insurance coverage for biofeedback and neurofeedback services, and developing a fee-for-service practice that is now posted to our website as a member benefit.
7. **Biofeedback Neurofeedback Alliance**—a major accomplishment in our organization collaboration effort was forming the BNA, comprised of AAPB, BCIA and ISNR. Its charter is to identify means through which the three organizations can collaborate toward the promotion of our field, certification, and the strength of our individual organizations.
8. **Science Initiative**—the goal of this initiative is to make AAPB the go-to place for support of BF/NF research, and to be responsive when issues regarding research come to the forefront. This is the beginning of a crucially important endeavor to reach out to those doing research in our fields, sign them up, and expand our efforts to fund scientific activities.

In order to survive in a competitive world and volatile economy, AAPB members are, by necessity, focused on that which will sustain us professionally. We want to know what AAPB can do for us that will help us make money, be reimbursed by insurance, get grants, grow in professional stature, publish, gain more knowledge and clinical skills, get licensed, fend off legal challenges, and have a professional identity of which we can feel proud. AAPB needs to add value, to be a resource, to function as a professional home, and to add new, young members to our ranks. To accomplish these things, we must have our fingers on the pulse of everything pertinent to our field(s), listen to our constituents, and when we identify opportunities, act on them. It is right for you to ask, “what is AAPB going to do for me”, and in return, I hope you will volunteer your time and talents to help insure AAPB’s viability for another 40 years and beyond.

I am confident in passing the gavel to AAPB President John Arena, that he has the vision, creativity, and energy to carry the organization forward, and I appreciate his kind words of recognition. Thank you for the opportunity to serve as your President.

Aubrey K. Ewing, PhD
Immediate Past-President

