



# AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF THE HISTORY OF PHARMACY

## **Report of the President Annual Business Meeting November 14, 2019**

The primary focus of this report is on the work of the AIHP Board of Directors over the past six years, the period corresponding with my service as president and chair of the Board. This has been a momentous phase in the Institute's history, marked by a transition in executive and scholarly leadership and renewed focus on the Institute's place in the world of pharmacy.

### **Role of the Board of Directors**

At its essence, the Board of Directors is responsible for stewardship of the Institute, ensuring that its direction, activities, and finances are consistent with the purposes established by AIHP members through our governing documents. This stewardship entails functions such as strategic planning, goal setting, resource development, budgeting, programmatic review, and advising the Executive Director.

### **Strategic Planning**

Starting in 2014, the Board devoted time each year to strategic thinking, working with AIHP staff to forthrightly assess the Institute's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, and to establish a short list of near-term goals aligned with the best opportunities for advancing the Institute. Initially, these goals related to improving our journal, *Pharmacy in History*; raising the organization's profile and support among national pharmacy organizations; invigorating membership development; and nurturing a strong relationship with the University of Wisconsin-Madison School of Pharmacy (which has been our physical home from the beginning). Subsequent goals dealt with succession planning in staff leadership and sponsorship of the 2019 International Congress for the History of Pharmacy.

### **Staff Leadership Transition**

When Dr. Gregory Higby announced his intention to retire as Executive Director by the end of 2018, the Board launched a process of succession planning. Dr. Higby's announcement came at a time when the position of Urdang Chair in the History of Pharmacy at the University of Wisconsin-Madison School of Pharmacy was vacant. The Board had earlier developed a memorandum of understanding with the School that called for the Urdang Chair to serve as Historical Director of the Institute, consistent with the wishes of the benefactors who funded the position.

The Board redefined the role of Executive Director, making this position responsible for administrative leadership of the Institute while relying on the Historical Director for scholarly programming in the history of pharmacy. Mr. Dennis Birke was hired as Administrative Director in January 2018, allowing him to work with Dr. Higby for a year before being promoted to the newly defined role of Executive Director.

As Board chair, I participated in the School of Pharmacy's recruitment process for the Urdang Chair. The Board is very pleased that Dr. Lucas Richert was hired for this position. Dr. Richert and Mr. Birke have established an excellent working relationship, which has given the Board good reason for being optimistic that the new formula for staff leadership will serve Institute members well.

In honor of Dr. Higby's long service to AIHP, the Board created the Gregory J. Higby Fund, which has already attracted sizable donations that will support enhancement of AIHP historical collections. We are pleased to have Dr. Higby's continuing service as AIHP Fischelis Scholar, a part-time position related to historical collections.

### **Governance**

The Board proposed, and members approved, bylaws amendments intended to improve membership engagement in governance. In addition to officers and at-large Board members *elected* by the AIHP membership, the Board now has authority to *appoint* a small number of Board members to help ensure that the range of perspectives, interests, and expertise of stakeholders is represented in governance. We also established term limits, which in effect requires AIHP leaders to continually identify and cultivate members who are qualified and interested in serving on the Board. In general, diversity and reasonable turnover in governance help ensure that organizations stay well connected with their constituents.

### **External Support of the Institute**

The Board is gratified that several national pharmacy groups recognize the value of AIHP's work through sizable annual financial support as participants in the National Association Sponsorship program launched in 2015. This program complements the previously established AIHP Pharmacy Education Fund supported by colleges and schools of pharmacy.

In 2018, AIHP was accepted as an observer organization by the Joint Commission of Pharmacy Practitioners (JCPP). We now have a representative at the quarterly JCPP meetings of national association executives and elected leaders, giving us opportunities to discuss the Institute's work and expand our external support.

### **Wisconsin Historical Society (WHS)**

AIHP has had a long cooperative relationship with WHS related to archival materials and a designated fund that supports pharmacy-related historical collections. The Board established a formal agreement with WHS that ensures an AIHP voice in how that particular fund is used.

## **Recent Board Activities**

At its meeting in June 2019, the Board reviewed and endorsed the plans of the Historical Director and the Executive Director regarding AIHP publications, historical collections, and programming. The Board appointed Dr. Holly L. Mason to a three-year term as Treasurer beginning at the end of the 2019 Annual Business Meeting, and it approved presentation of the AIHP Robert P. Fischelis award to George B. Griffenhagen. Other business included budget approval, review of plans for the September 2019 International Congress for the History of Pharmacy, and discussion of potential methods of increasing AIHP financial resources.

## **Conclusion**

The Board of Directors over the past six years has established a solid foundation for continued strengthening of the Institute through membership development and historical programming. These efforts are being led by an energetic staff and governing team that has a deep commitment to advancing the field of pharmacy history.

One of the most gratifying facets of my tenure as president has been the opportunity to speak with others about the Institute, to observe their dawning awareness of this remarkable organization, to sense their recognition of the importance of the Institute's work, and, often, to experience their readiness to support the Institute through personal membership. I encourage all members to have such conversations with individuals in their circle of influence.

I am deeply grateful to the founders of AIHP for creating this unique institution that has been a source of inspiration and intellectual growth for me since my days as a pharmacy student. I thank Institute members for giving me the opportunity to serve as President.

William A. Zellmer