



# AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF THE HISTORY OF PHARMACY

## **Report of the President**

(November 2020)

2020 has been a year unlike any other in the life of our nation, our Institute and, indeed, the whole world. We have experienced some of the worst of times as a society. Yet, despite working under seemingly ever increasing and shifting limitations, the staff of our Institute have displayed incredible resiliency, adaptability and productivity that are moving us forward in the pursuit of our missions in publishing, programming and collections. You have already heard of many of these efforts and will hear more very shortly.

Consider the many changes that have taken place since our last meeting. To name just a few – Institute print and electronic publications, enhanced content and appearance of our website, development of a presence in social media, advent of online seminars and a virtual symposium. The latter involved dozens of speakers from countries around the world delivering talks on a broad array of topics that spanned five days. Toiling all the while under work from home restrictions, these incredible accomplishments all demonstrate the ingenuity and dedication of Institute personnel. Yet more advancements are coming.

In spite of the upheavals taking place throughout the economy our Institute has remained relatively unscathed financially. Remarkably, we have been able to retain all staff and no publications and programming have had to be postponed or cancelled.

The importance of our mission is becoming ever greater; the many changes impacting nearly every facet of pharmacy and healthcare must be chronicled and preserved:

- Exposed weaknesses in the manufacturing supply chain and subsequent distribution of medicines and medical supplies
- Rapid response of pharmaceutical manufacturing of vaccines and treatment modalities

- Pharmacist role in the eventual nationwide administration of vaccines and pharmacies serving as Covid-19 testing sites
- Evolving interactions between telemedicine and telepharmacy
- Impact of social isolation on health and substance abuse
- Innovations occurring in the on-line delivery of pharmacy education, credentialing and licensing
- Potential changes in overall healthcare delivery and cost

AIHP's role in all this uncertainty and change remains the same – we must be the agency to record, preserve, analyze and disseminate all of this information for future generations of practitioners and historians. A major step in this direction has been the creation of our Covid-19 Pandemic Pharmacy Historical Documentation Project. The Institute has already received many submissions and I encourage all our members to take part in and raise awareness of this effort.

In addition, we must continue our efforts to highlight and preserve research that focuses on the diverse people and institutions that have been part of the development of our profession. Our publications, programming and collections practices must cover a wide range of topics and serve an audience that is broad and inclusive.

To these ends, the Board will soon be carrying out strategic planning to chart the course for future endeavors involving the efficient utilization of communications and social media, exploring our diverse past, and acquiring the financial resources that will be necessary to carry out such an ambitious agenda.

Our Institute's Board of Directors and staff are committed to these endeavors and with the continuing support of our membership we will fulfill our mission of recording pharmacy's role in the history of American society.

Respectfully submitted,

W. Clarke Ridgway  
President