



American Society™  
*of* Acupuncturists

**Public Meeting Report**

**First Annual Meeting**

**of the**

**American Society of Acupuncturists**

**Albuquerque, New Mexico**

**March 4-5, 2016**



March 12, 2016

Dear Colleagues:

The board of the American Society of Acupuncturists extends a heartfelt ‘thanks!’ to all who participated in our first annual meeting this past weekend in Albuquerque, New Mexico. From the states and their delegates; to the key structural institutes of the profession ACAOM (Catherine Niemiec), CCAOM (Jason Wright), and NCCAOM (David Canzone, Eugene London, Kory Ward Cook); to our AOM guest speakers from AAAOM (Don Lee), ANF (Matthew Bauer), ETCMA (Gerd Ohmstede), and POCA (Lisa Rohleder); to our subject matter experts Brent Foster, Marilyn Allen, Kory Ward Cook, Amy Lewis, James Shelby, David Griffiths, Bernard Holicky, and Doug Newton; to our vendor supporters AcuClaims, American Acupuncture Council, Biotics Research Corporation, Crane Herb Company, Evergreen Herbs/Lotus Institute of Integrative Medicine, Golden Flower Chinese Herbs, and Lhasa OMS; to the rocking performance by John Scott, OMD and Rock Zone ( [www.placitasrockzone.com](http://www.placitasrockzone.com) ) – this was truly an event to launch many years of collaborative efforts in working to advance our profession! We had an ambitious agenda, but accomplished it fully and with fruitful outcomes. Please enjoy the summary below, and be in touch with your state associations and their delegates with questions and feedback.

<b>ASA Voting State Association Members in Attendance (21)</b>		
<b>CSOMA:</b>	California State Oriental Med Assoc	Ra Adcock, Bill Mosca (BM)
<b>AAC:</b>	Acupuncture Assoc of Colorado	Kimberley Benjamin (KB), Scott Richardson
<b>CSAOM:</b>	Connecticut Soc of AOM	Karen Borla (KBo), Regina Walsh
<b>ASDC:</b>	Acup Soc of the District of Columbia	Amy Lewis (AL), Tracy Soltesz (TS)
<b>FSOMA:</b>	Florida State OM Assoc	Sandra Kahn
<b>FAA:</b>	Florida Acup Assoc	Hongjian He (HH)
<b>ILAAOM:</b>	Illinois Assoc of AOM	Lindy Camardella (LC), Vel Natarajan (VN)
<b>IAAOM:</b>	Indiana Assoc of AOM	Melea Alexander, Jen Stone (JS)
<b>AOMSM:</b>	AOM Soc of Massachusetts	Linda Robinson Hidas, Rebecca Schirber(RS)
<b>MAS:</b>	Maryland Acup Society	Sheri Barnes
<b>MAAOM:</b>	Michigan Assoc of AOM	Henry Buchtel
<b>NCAAOM:</b>	North Carolina Assoc of AOM	A. Jude Roman
<b>NHAAMA:</b>	New Hampshire Acup & Asian Med Assoc	Beth Ann Schmitt (BAS)
<b>NMSAAM:</b>	New Mexico Soc for Acup & Asian Med	Steven Malins (SM)
<b>ASNY:</b>	Acup Soc of New York	Kerith Kilhenny, Michelle Wright
<b>OAAOM:</b>	Oregon Assoc of AOM	Beth Howlett
<b>APA:</b>	Assoc for Prof Acup in Pennsylvania	BJ Putnam, Heather Shultz (HS)
<b>ASVA:</b>	Acup Soc of Virginia	Jodi Knauer
<b>VTAA:</b>	Vermont Acup Assoc	Molly Beverage
<b>WEAMA:</b>	Washington East Asian Med Assoc	Zeyiad Elias (ZE), Andy McIntyre
<b>WISCA:</b>	Wisconsin Soc of Certified Acup	David Bock, Kelly Hora
<b>ASA Voting Members Absent (2)</b>		
<b>MAAOM:</b>	Maine Assoc of Acup & OM	
<b>NJAOM:</b>	New Jersey Assoc of Acup & OM	

CSA Non Voting State Assoc Members in Attendance		
<b>CAA:</b>	California Acup Assoc	Michael Fox, Mori West
<b>GAAAM:</b>	Georgia Assoc of Acup & Asian Med	Rawls Whittlesey
<b>IAOMA:</b>	Iowa Assoc of OM and Acup	Ashley Mayrose
<b>RISAOM:</b>	Rhode Island Soc of AOM	Elizabeth Collins

ASA Board of Directors	
Chair	David W. Miller (DM)
Vice Chair	Eric Buckley (EB)
Past Chair, Acting Treasurer	Candace Sarges (CS)
Secretary	LiMing Tseng (LT)
Member at Large	Lindsay Meade (LM)
Member at Large	Amy Mager (AM)

Institutional Non Voting Members	
ACAOM	Catherine A. Niemiec (CN)
CCAOM	Jason Wright (JW)
NCCAOM	David Canzone (DC), Kory Ward Cook (KWC), Eugene London (GL)

Guest Speakers	
AAAOM	Don Lee (DL)
AAPAS, NCASI, others	Brent Foster (BF)
Acupuncture Now Foundation	Matt Bauer (MB)
Affinity Healthcare	Bernard Holicky (BH)
American Acupuncture Council	Marilyn Allen (MA)
AON	David Griffiths (DG)
European TCM Assoc	Gerd Ohmstede (GO)
Harris F. Underwood III, Inc. Insurance Agency	James Shelby (JS)
Independent Consultant	Doug Newton (DN)
POCA	Lisa Rohleder (LR)

Additional Guests	
March 4 <sup>th</sup> AM	Stewart Watts
March 4 <sup>th</sup> PM	Will Morris

### **ASA PARTICIPATION**

As of the time of the annual meeting, the ASA had 23 paid state association voting members, 13 active CSA list (non-voting member) participants, and 5 inactive CSA list participants. This represents 2795 professional, paid acupuncturists in 22 states from only the voting member groups.

## **STATE UPDATES**

After introduction of all participants, each state association gave an update on highlights of activity over the past year, and current key projects. A summary of those updates is being compiled and will be distributed later this month. Please keep your eyes open for the updates!

<https://www.facebook.com/search/top/?q=american%20society%20of%20acupuncturists%20%20asa>

## **DRY NEEDLING: REPORT OF THE DRY NEEDLING COMMITTEE AND PRESENTATION BY BRENT FOSTER, JD**

Background work on the issue of dry needling was conducted by the ASA Chair and co-Chair Amy Mager (Member at Large). Numerous practitioners, key stakeholders, and representatives of various groups throughout the acupuncture community were interviewed, and study of key social media forums was conducted. Monitoring of activity in the dry needling 'community' was conducted, and a review of course offerings and teaching strategies evaluated. Key papers put out by groups such as the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) and the Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy (FSBPT), as well as existing documents created by the acupuncture community recently and in years past were reviewed. The ASA Council voted in December 2015 to take the position that Dry Needling is Acupuncture, and the rationale behind this was reviewed. Brent Foster, a lawyer working nationally on the issue of Dry Needling, presented an overview of current legislation, as well as key components of the process of law formation around this subject.

The Council was presented an overview of goals of positioning for the organization (ASA), including a desire to avoid prolonged litigation that stands to drain both human and financial resources, but also recognition that the current disinformation campaigns, being promulgated by the PT community predominantly, were important to counter. State associations should engage in efforts to prevent perversion of the practice act systems, and should not tolerate the current efforts to defraud the public into believing that Dry Needling is a distinct technique, separate from the field of acupuncture. Key teachers and leaders in the field of dry needling have publicly stated that dry needling is acupuncture, and though this technique is coined "biomedical acupuncture", it is acupuncture none-the-less. Arguments that dry needling is either superior to or sufficiently different from the existing field of acupuncture due to a basis in biomedical terminology are spurious, and ignore the entirety of research and professional conversation that has been occurring in the acupuncture community for more than 40 years. Further, there is no specific technique of dry needling, and this term is without clear definition beyond "the use of the filiform needle for therapeutic purpose", which is acupuncture. There are no vetted curricula for dry needling, no legitimate certification testing, no standards for continuing education, and no standards for clinical practice prior to treating members of the public.

A full report on dry needling will be forthcoming, however the recommended ASA position at this time is to oppose expansion of this practice until such time as meaningful training standards are determined that are benchmarked to existing acupuncture curricula, legitimate certification testing is developed, meaningful clinical training standards are determined prior to treatment of the public, and continuing educational standards are put into place. Further, every effort should be made to oppose the defrauding of the American public and medical regulatory system into believing that dry needling is a specific, distinct technique that should be regulated differently than acupuncture.

The ASA is joined in coalition in these efforts by the American Alliance for Professional Acupuncture Safety (AAPAS), the American Association of Medical Acupuncture (AAMA), and this position appears echoed in intent by all major acupuncture associations nationally and internationally, including the World Federation of Chinese Medicine Societies.

### **FRIDAY WORKING LUNCH**

At a luncheon sponsored by Marilyn Allen and the AAC, the ASA Delegates received an update on work being done surrounding ICD 11 codes. These codes incorporate traditional medicine diagnoses, and would allow, for example, for the coding of conditions such as 'Liver Qi Stagnation'. The World Health Organization (WHO) will be presenting approximately 800 codes at the WHO Family of International Classifications meeting in Japan

<http://www.who.int/classifications/en/>, and

[http://www.who.int/classifications/2016\\_02\\_ICD11\\_Newsletter.pdf?ua=1](http://www.who.int/classifications/2016_02_ICD11_Newsletter.pdf?ua=1).

Following this, a brainstorming session co-lead by Marilyn and Kory Ward Cook on leadership development explored resources and planning for enduring materials to be available to our community. Kory outlined three major domains of leadership that need to be addressed: fiduciary, strategy, and values (generative). A leadership training committee was established (LT, AM, KB, KBo, BAS). One immediately available resource is noted to be On Board(s), by Tom Suddes: [https://s3.amazonaws.com/fi\\_guidebooks/fi\\_onboardguide\\_021512.pdf](https://s3.amazonaws.com/fi_guidebooks/fi_onboardguide_021512.pdf). We look forward to the development of board training materials and general leadership development resources for the professional community.

### **SATURDAY WORKING LUNCH**

At a luncheon made possible by our generous supporters, the ASA worked to evaluate three different malpractice policies. Amy Lewis (ASDC), Marilyn Allen (AAC), and James Shelby (Harris Underwood)/David Griffiths/Bernard Holicky (AON and Affinity Healthcare) all presented and answered questions related to the pros and cons of these plans. ASA is working to help make strong recommendations to practitioners about plans that will serve them well, as well as considering which companies support our communities. We also heard about other benefit options for members, including disability insurance options, liability insurance options, and the already secured 'Freshbenies' benefit. Please keep your eyes open for more information soon on all of these topics.

### **BOARD UPDATES**

**The Society for Acupuncture Research (SAR):** This past year ASA board members and delegates attended the Society for Acupuncture Research meeting in Boston in November of 2015. ASA has a reciprocal relationship with SAR, as complementary organizations within the Acupuncture profession. All individual acupuncturists are encouraged to join SAR, as this organization is the primary force for high quality research exploration in the field of AOM. The SAR meeting was felt to be extremely valuable and well-orchestrated, and this should be a high-priority conference for Acupuncturists to attend. For more information, see: [www.acupunctureresearch.org](http://www.acupunctureresearch.org).

**The American Academy of Medical Acupuncture (AAMA):** Both David Miller and Marilyn Allen have been involved with the AAMA, which is the premier professional association for medical doctors practicing acupuncture. The organization has increasingly become a vocal supporter of high quality acupuncture practice nationwide, having released a position statement on Dry Needling and increasingly incorporating lectures from Licensed Acupuncturists at their annual conference. We look forward as an organization to increasing communication with this critical group. See [www.medicalacupuncture.org](http://www.medicalacupuncture.org) for more information.

**American Alliance for Professional Acupuncture Safety (AAPAS):** Hongjian He, delegate from the Florida Acupuncture Association, also represented AAPAS to the Council. AAPAS is a newly formed organization of 22 predominantly Asian medical groups and schools who have come together to help fight the unregulated expansion

of acupuncture. ASA looks forward to partnering with AAPAS. Together, under AAPAS leadership, ASA, AAMA, and AAPAS have submitted a letter of concern to federal acupuncture advocate Congresswoman Judy Chu <http://chu.house.gov/>, regarding the regulation of acupuncture needles as controlled medical devices. AAPAS is also closely connected to the World Federation of Chinese Medical Societies.

### **Committees:**

The **Governance Committee** gave its report of actions and goals for the year to come (RS, ZE, BM). Work for the coming year includes exploring options for electronic voting, and working to establish a mechanism for the submission and management of resolutions to the ASA Council. The Committee is seeking two additional members, who should be current delegates.

The **Nominating Committee** (CS, KB, SM, DB) developed policies and procedures surrounding the vetting of candidates for board service. The final versions of these will be made available to the Council soon. Work in the coming year will include developing a similar rubric for the vetting of organizations wishing to join the ASA Council as voting members. The Nominating Committee is seeing nominations for 3 board member positions, and also is open to the addition of 1-2 delegates to the committee itself.

The **Public Education Committee** (LC) worked mostly on the Opioid Task Force, but also helped coordinate AOM Day activities in 2015. AOM Day work will again proceed for 2016, and we look forward to expanding this committee and also helping it to interface with the work of the Acupuncture Now Foundation.

**AMA CPT Committee:** This committee is an American Medical Association (AMA) committee, and has been attended by Eric Buckley since April 2014 under the auspices of the NCCAOM. As a profession, we have never achieved membership on this committee, but have participated as non-voting guests only. In recent years, the AMA has changed the membership requirements for participation, so any new seats will only be given (as voting members) to groups that can show they represent 50% or more of their entire profession. For the Acupuncture world, that would mean about 15,000 or more members. None of our current professional associations, ASA included, could meet that requirement at this time. As you may know (see below), NCCAOM has been considering for some time the possibility of an administrative restructuring to better cordon off the work it does as a certifying agency from the extensive work it has been doing for years in support of the profession in general. A very large advantage to this restructuring and creation of the Academy is that this new entity may also qualify as a large enough membership organization to obtain a voting seat on this committee. For our profession, this gives us a voice in the arena of the creation of new procedural codes, and better helps us advocate for the codes that describe acupuncture. It should be understood, there is no financial gain or “kick back” to voting members of this committee. In all fact, holding this seat is a responsibility that requires a financial byline on the agenda, as each meeting must be attended, and that means expenses for the representative must be covered. The CPT committee meets three times per year, with the location rotating around the U.S. Concerns that NCCAOM unduly benefits itself (rather than the profession at large) by holding this seat are unfounded. ASA supports the profession having a voice in this important arena, and is grateful to NCCAOM for being willing to make this investment on behalf of all practitioners. For more information about the CPT creation process, see: <http://tinyurl.com/4y98g67>

### **Website Creation / Marketing and Branding**

ASA has hired Rich Silivanch of Silivanch Communications <http://www.silivanch.com/> to assist us in the development of a logo, branding, and website. Rich has an extensive and impressive portfolio, including a number of major name brand companies. A logo was developed and can be found at the top of this document. Website development is well underway, and will be a multistage process. We hope to have the website functional within the next couple of months. At present can be found on Facebook at **American Society of Acupuncturists – ASA.** <https://www.facebook.com/search/top/?q=american%20society%20of%20acupuncturists%20%20asa>

### **REPORTS FROM ACAOM, CCAOM, NCCAOM**

The ASA thanks Catherine Niemiec, JD, LAc for her attendance and contributions to the meeting this year. Catherine is a past chair of ACAOM. <http://www.acaom.org/>

#### **Key components of the ACAOM Report:**

1. ACAOM accredits 57 institutions in 22 states with approximately 8000 students in 68 locations.
2. Changes and openings: ACAOM welcomes Jason Wright, immediate past-chair of CCAOM, as assistant/associate director at ACAOM. ACAOM also has openings for 2 AOM college administrators, 1 practitioner member, 1 AOM college academic member. Please contact ACAOM directly if interested; information is on the website at <http://www.acaom.org/>.
3. Gainful employment continues to be a major issue for our profession, and regulations are still in force. The potential impact of this on our industry is that an estimated 1/3 of schools could be forced out of the market. While the rules surrounding gainful employment unfairly disadvantage our industry, we are subject to them nonetheless. It is possible that shifts in the national political landscape could ameliorate some risks, but this is uncertain at this time.
4. Degrees: DAOM, FPD, Masters. ACAOM is working to update standards and is involved in a process to create and narrow some options for naming to reduce confusion. This process is called a “Delphi Study”, and is underway. This process is multistage, and the community will be given feedback and the opportunity to respond to each stage. Stage I is complete, and review is pending. The ASA did contribute opinions to stage I.
5. Finalization of Masters Standards Task Force Review: An internal commission committee is reviewing the latest version of this work. ACAOM plans to announce details within the next 30 or 60 days.
6. Distance Education. ACAOM is working with the U.S. Department of Education to create guidelines for distance learning. As this technology advances, the field will need standards to determine how to integrate this medium of education.
7. A number of schools have achieved regional accreditation for their First Professional Doctorate programs. This allows them the ability to obtain federal financial aid. The schools are also maintaining ACAOM accreditation, however, as this is needed for graduates to sit for NCCAOM exam. In total of about 5-6 FPD programs are preapproved to start the candidacy process (takes 12-18 months to submit Self Study).

## **CCAOM**

Jason Wright, LAc, current CCAOM board chair, gave an overview of CCAOM's primary initiatives, as well as its status and structure. Highlights include that the Council has been the national membership association for ACAOM-approved AOM programs in the U.S. since 1982. The Council is thus in its 34th year of operation and currently has 56 member colleges exclusive of branch campuses which are not eligible for membership) in 21 states. Most of the Council's member colleges are located in California (15), with a significant number of programs in Florida (6) and New York (5).

The Council has four strategic goals (no order of priority):

1. To provide for the long-term financial stability of the Council
2. To support member institutions
3. To increase the visibility of the Council as a national leader in the AOM profession
4. To support the advancement and integration of the AOM profession within U.S. healthcare

To these ends, the Council has had a number of significant projects of late, including increasing the number of college off-site clinics, spotlighting AOM education in Acupuncture Today, highlighting successful graduates on-line to demonstrate the potential of the educational path, and creating research conference resources for AOM faculty.

The Council also completed and released a no-cost, pdf update the Clean Needle Technique Manual <http://www.ccaom.org/cntmanual.asp>, has assisted in the fight against unregulated acupuncture by physical therapists and other groups, and continues to help clarify and interpret educational standards. For the complete report, please see: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B4CFzCUCHmtcaTFOVWdmWW5iQkE/view?usp=sharing> and <http://www.ccaom.org/>.

## **NCCAOM**

NCCAOM CEO Kory Ward Cook, along with Board of Commissioners Chair Eugene London, LAc and Board Vice Chair and first chair of the NCCAOM Academy David Canzone, DOM gave an overview of NCCAOM's work. This included a detailed overview of certification requirements around the U.S., work with California to allow NCCAOM credentials, reviews of the organizational mission statement, updated code of ethics and strategic goals, and also the expansion and administrative reorganization of the organization to include a new membership arm, the NCCAOM Academy of Diplomates. See this link for the PowerPoint presentation:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B4CFzCUCHmtcUUowNI9rSGVtdGc/view?usp=sharing>

All involved with this process recognize the potential and risk of the creation of this new Academy, and ASA has worked with NCCAOM to create a Memorandum of Understanding regarding the relationship of the two groups. ASA Delegates discussed the need to carefully proceed with this new entity in such a way that it does not detract from the work of the ASA professional association. Conferences, vendor relations, membership benefits, and other areas of overlap will need to be carefully discussed. Membership in the NCCAOM Academy is only open to Diplomates of NCCAOM, and is at no additional cost. Active Diplomates will automatically become members of the Academy, with the ability to 'opt out'. ASA membership is automatic for all practitioners who join their state associations, so long as those associations are members of ASA. ASA is thus open to all practitioners regardless of Diplomat status.

ASA looks forward to collaboration with NCCAOM, and recognizes the powerful, positive potential this shift holds for our profession.

## **ASA GUEST SKYPE PRESENTERS**

**Peoples Organization of Community Acupuncture:** Lisa Rohleder, Co-Founder of POCA, Publications and Content Circle volunteer, presented a wonderful overview of the philosophy of POCA, as well as offering a look into POCA Tech. POCA Tech has been an ambitious, largely volunteer project of POCA that has come to fruition, and offers an ACAOM quality education at a fraction of the price. POCA grew out of Working Class Acupuncture (WCA), founded in 2002, and has grown to have 2084 members. A POCA survey done showed that in 2014 alone, 200 POCA clinics had delivered over 1,000,000 low cost treatments nationwide. For a full read of Lisa's presentation see: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B4CFzCUCHmtcN1UtX2ILOGIXaGc/view?usp=sharing>, and for general information about POCA see <https://www.pocacoop.com/>. Anyone can join POCA as a Community Member, and organizations can join as well as institutional supporters. ASA supports cross-organizational memberships, and encourages everyone who believes in POCA's mission to become a supporter of this highly functional structure.

**European Traditional Chinese Medicine Association (ETCMA):** Gerd Ohmstede joined us from Germany to tell us more about the ETCMA <http://www.etcma.org/>, which is, in many ways, a parallel organization in Europe to the ASA. ETCMA membership is made up of approximately 25 member organizations from 18 countries. Some organizations are as small as a few practitioners; others are many hundreds. Overall, this organization, in existence now for 25 years, represents about 14,000 acupuncture practitioners throughout the EU. They are very interested in international collaboration. Gerd is also Congress President of the TCM Kongress Rothenburg, Germany [http://www.tcm-kongress.de/en/index\\_us.htm](http://www.tcm-kongress.de/en/index_us.htm) and Co-chairman of the World Acupuncture Congress at UNESCO, Paris 2018. ASA will not be attending the May meeting in Rothenburg this year due to budgeting constraints, and due to the fact that the United States will already be well represented by Marilyn Allen, Kory Ward Cook, Eugene London, John Scott, and Matthew Bauer, and ASA has every confidence that these individuals can support and foster lines of communication between the continents. We will be in close contact with them to hear more. ASA and ETCMA also share a Memorandum of Understanding.

**American Association of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (AAAOM):** AAAOM President Don Lee, LAc addressed the ASA to give an update on AAAOM activities. Don noted the redesign of the AAAOM website as a major project <http://www.aaaomonline.org>, as well as plans to hold an educational conference at Yo San University in Los Angeles this coming June. Be on the lookout for more information about the upcoming conference. Don also noted that AAAOM had revamped its membership structure, and was working to increase outreach to the acupuncture community.

## **Other Updates**

**The Integrative Health Policy Consortium:** Kory Ward Cook, board member for IHPC, presented on the activities of the IHPC. This consortium represents a multidisciplinary, multi-organizational effort to promote integrative health care in America. IHPC is led by ED Alyssa Wostrel, MBA and Len Wisneski, MD. <http://www.ihpc.org/> ASA has been in contact with IHPC since our work as the CSA. One of the most relevant efforts that overlaps our profession is the "Cover My Care" project that is working see that Section 2706 of the ACA be fairly enacted in every state. This section of the ACA helps assure that if a procedure is covered by a health plan (e.g. Acupuncture), then that plan cannot discriminate on who can provide that procedure to the covered patient, so long as that procedure is within the scope of practice of the practitioner. Some states have run Cover My Care initiatives, such as <http://www.peopleforacupuncture.org/home.html>. If your state is interested in running a similar campaign, please contact the ASA for more information.

**Meridians, The Journal of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine:** Jennifer Stone, LAc and Editor-in-Chief of Meridians presented to the group on the status of the journal, including its collaboration with NCCAOM, new clinical pearls section, and expanded content. <http://www.meridiansjaom.com/> Meridians has been the official journal of the ASA, and continues as such, but is also the official journal of the NCCAOM Academy. NCCAOM will help support the work of the journal, and both ASA members and Academy members will receive free pdf copies. Print copies of the journal are also available, and will be at a reduced rate for members, and even greater reduced rate for dual ASA/Academy members.

**National Guild of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (NGAOM):** The NGAOM referred the assembly to their website for the most up to date information on the group's activities. Key initiatives for the Guild over the past year include seeking mandatory malpractice coverage in a number of states <http://www.ngaom.org/malpractice-debate.html>, and promoting the Acupuncture for Heros and Seniors Act, HB 3849. The Guild works with the AFL-CIO union system to increase its impact, and offers an extensive benefit package to members. For more information, see: <http://www.ngaom.org/>.

### **ASA INITIATIVES**

**Joint Opioid Task Force:** The ASA worked hand-in-hand with the Acupuncture Now Foundation to create a working group to address acupuncture's role in the opioid crisis. A strong position paper was created, and can be found here: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B4CFzCUCHmtcV3JwblZIMU9QT3M/view?usp=sharing>. This paper was submitted to the Centers for Disease Control in response to a call for comments on non-pharmacologic solutions to pain control. Lindsay Meade and Lindy Camardella represented the ASA to this task force, and Lindsay presented an excellent summary of the scale of the opioid epidemic, as well as the process of the working group. The Opioid Task Force was chaired by independent practitioner Bonnie Bolash of Minnesota. Other groups interested in joining this effort include AAPAS, AAMA, and SAR. We continue to work on developing a strong collaborative structure around this issue. We were very pleased to see that a draft document released by the CDC this year notes, "Based on contextual evidence, many nonpharmacologic therapies, including physical therapy, weight loss for knee osteoarthritis, complementary and alternative therapies (e.g., manipulation, massage, and acupuncture), psychological therapies such as CBT, and certain interventional procedures can ameliorate chronic pain." ( <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B4CFzCUCHmtccnVaeF9MaXJTDA/view?usp=sharing> ) Much work remains to be done to see acupuncture integrated as first line care, but this is a step. We were also reminded at our meeting of the importance of the Joint Commission statement which included acupuncture: [http://www.jointcommission.org/assets/1/18/Clarification\\_of\\_the\\_Pain\\_Management\\_Standard.pdf](http://www.jointcommission.org/assets/1/18/Clarification_of_the_Pain_Management_Standard.pdf) The Joint Commission is the chief accrediting agency for US hospitals and health care organizations.

**International Organization for Standardization (ISO):** Eric Buckley has devoted many hours to work on this project, and continues to represent the ASA in this arena. Eric is one of a handful of American delegates who are working to assure that the organization's efforts benefit American practitioners <http://www.iso.org/iso/home/about.htm>. Eric is working with working groups TC249 and TC215 that affect products used in Chinese medicine. He will be attending the next working meeting in Rome this summer. ASA held a teleconference on the ISO last year, and will continue to work to keep the community aware of this topic. This is a difficult position to hold, as meetings are held world-wide, and so the time and financial commitment to them is considerable. ASA hopes to partner with NCCAOM in supporting this effort. Eric gave the ASA Delegates an excellent presentation on what this group does, the tremendous workload even between meetings, and the importance of American representation in this national forum.

**Acupuncture Now Foundation (ANF):** Matthew Bauer, President and Founder of the ANF, gave an overview of the mission, growth and development, and immediate future planning of the ANF.

<https://acupuncturenowfoundation.org/> The ANF is an international organization dedicated to promoting acupuncture and its benefits as widely and completely as possible. ASA has been in discussion with Matt about how to partner, including working on the development of a joint fundraising campaign. More detail on that will be forthcoming as it takes shape. ASA has hired Doug Newton to assist in the planning and implementation of this effort. Doug has experience as a communications director previously within the AOM community, and other critical skill sets.

The ASA commends Matt and the ANF on the tremendous work done so far. The organization has put out numerous public statements, educational videos, and other resources <https://acupuncturenowfoundation.org/for-acupuncturists/resources/>. We look forward to many years of partnership. The ANF is a 501c3 organization, and so is purely not-for-profit. It cannot lobby, but can do public education and create resources. It has a complex task ahead, as conditions for acupuncture practice vary dramatically by country, and messaging to the varying demographic groups and legal structures is a challenge. The ANF has collected a talented, international team, however, and are on their way. ASA encourages all acupuncturists to donate in support of this organization: <https://acupuncturenowfoundation.org/donate/> With sufficient funds, exciting projects are in the planning.

## **THANK YOU!!!**

To all the state associations who have become ASA members, sent delegates to the meeting, and continue to help with the activities of the organization. This structure is your structure, and your participation is critical to its success. We hope all practitioners will join their state associations, and all state associations will join the ASA. The Board also gives special thanks to Lindsay Meade who will be leaving the board. Lindsay will continue with the ASA as a New Mexico (NMSAAM) Delegate.

The Board of the American Society of Acupuncturists



**Thank you again to our sponsors for their AMAZING SUPPORT!!!**

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