

A New Physician Assistant Society

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First Acting President of the Society for the Preservation of Physician Assistant History

In January 2002, the Society for the Preservation of Physician Assistant History (SPPAHx) was incorporated for educational, research and literary purposes. The Society will be a preeminent leader in fostering the preservation, study and presentation of the history of the PA profession. The society will support education and research by ensuring that the achievements of the PA profession are documented and made readily accessible to PAs, PA students, historians, medical sociologists, researchers, and the general public. The society will develop and maintain an integrated, on-line searchable archival database that identifies the existence and location of key documents, articles, books, films, oral history audio- and videotapes, and other artifacts that detail the evolution of the PA profession. The archival database will be cross-indexed and linked to relevant historical collections currently housed at various academic institutions, health professional organizations, federal and state agencies, and foundations throughout the United States.

An executive committee of officers will oversee the daily operations of the society. Officers of the society include a president, president elect, immediate past president, secretary, treasurer, and several members-at-large, one to be appointed by the Student Academy of the American Academy of Physician Assistants (SAAAPA).

Policy issues will be voted on by the membership at the society's annual meeting. This meeting will occur at the same time as the American Academy of Physician Assistants' Annual PA Conference, held each May. In addition to maintaining the

archival database and a Web site presenting the virtual history of the PA profession, the society will maintain relationships with other PA, medical, and historical organizations. The society will be a resource to national PA organizations, educational programs, researchers, and newsletter and journal publishers. The society will identify areas needing more documentation and will foster studies and dialogue about the benefits of collaborative, team-oriented, health care practice.

Membership in the society will consist of individuals cognizant of the importance of the preservation of PA history. Fellow members will be PAs, professionals, or lay people with an interest in supporting the ideals of the society. They will have full voting privileges and the ability to hold office. Affiliate members will be individuals with the same interests, they will not have voting privileges or ability to hold office. Student membership will be extended to an individuals currently enrolled in an accredited PA program or surgical assistant program. Student members will not have voting privileges. However, student members will have SAAAPA representation on the Board of Officers. Honorary members will be persons of distinction who have rendered outstanding service to the profession. Honorary lifetime membership will be subject to approval of the Board of Officers.

The society leaders will be sharing information with all interested parties at the Annual PA Conference to be held in Boston in May 2002. In the meantime, information can be found on the society's Web site at <http://pahx.org>.

Feature Editor's Note: The newly formed Society for the Preservation of Physician Assistant History is committed to supporting efforts already underway to establish an on-line, searchable, PA history archival database and an illustrated virtual history Web site. Dr. Heinrich and the newly appointed officers of the society want to assure that our professional history is known, especially by the next generation of health care providers and health policy makers, so they can make better informed decisions about how best to improve access to affordable, quality health care services. It is not often that one has a chance to become a charter member of a newly formed organization; I hope that you will give it your careful consideration and encourage others to do likewise.—*Reggie Carter*

Authors desiring to contribute to the "PA History" feature should forward submissions to Reginald Carter, PhD, PA, at: Physician Assistant History Office, DUMC 3848, Durham, NC 27710. Telephone: 919-681-3156; fax: 919-681-3371; e-mail: pahx@mc.duke.edu. Visual media should be accompanied by a brief narrative.