

AACH President's Message

February, 2015

I have just returned from our Winter Course. What a wonderful opportunity for professional and personal growth and development for our faculty, facilitators-in-training (FITs), and interested guests! One participant, who was present as a guest last year and is now a FIT, captured the impact of the course in a way that resonated with me. She described last year's course as a gift that had not been fully opened, or even understood, at the time of the course, but kept reappearing with more parts of it to be unwrapped, appreciated, and used over subsequent months.

This year's course was no different. It focused on improving the organizations in which we participate through communication and relationships. Of course AACH recognizes that personal growth is integrally related to our growth as teachers, leaders, and change agents, so that is always part of the process. There were also incredible large group exercises led by our wonderfully talented and committed team of external facilitators: Gerald Boyd, Amina Knowlan, and Charlie O'Leary, and guest facilitator Tony Suchman, an AACH faculty member and organizational consultant with expertise in building relationship centered care organizations. Top that off with great workshops and plenty of opportunity to build upon existing and form new relationships. Our winter courses are the richest faculty development courses many of us have ever attended. Most of the above serve our mission of being "the professional home for researchers, educators, practitioners, and patients committed to improving communication and relationships in healthcare ... *a home that provides opportunities for collaboration, support, and personal and professional development.*" An exciting new element this year was a faculty development track led by Calvin Chou and Nan Cochran, designed to train more faculty for our expanding number of external courses, which is helping us make progress toward realizing our vision of "a healthcare system where all patients, providers, and trainees feel valued, are treated equitably with respect, compassion, understanding, and are actively engaged in healthcare processes and decisions." Finally we thanked Craig Roth for his years of service as co-director of our facilitator-in-training committee and welcomed Jim Bell who is replacing him.

After the meeting, I know that I feel personally renewed and energized to embark upon my role for this calendar year as President of this wonderful organization. I felt myself emerging from the winter of fermentation and thought to the spring of ideas, potential, and empowering relationships. Two goals for the organization this year are to increase and diversify membership, including the makeup of the board, and to enrich opportunities for our members so that they truly benefit from and are engaged by their membership. There were rich discussions around these goals. Of course, organizational change requires the input of many. Winter Course was also rich in relationships, and I, and the Board, need not only to build upon those cultivated at the course, but also those with members not able to be present, to preserve our existing excellence and to make further progress.

Please visit our website to review our existing [committees](#). A diversity task force is being formed. An updated list of goals for the year is listed below. And please, under "[Membership/Volunteer](#)", send us your ideas and let us know how you would like to contribute. We would welcome your input and your help.

Dave Kern

GOALS FOR 2015

- **Maintain Financial Strength**
 - Fiscal responsibility for core programs
 - Profit for external programs
 - Philanthropy
- **Preserve/Strengthen Current Programs**
 - Core Faculty Development: ENRICH, Winter Course, FIT Program
 - Research Meetings: ICCH/Forum
 - DocCom, External Programs
 - Publications: Medical Encounter, PEC
- **Expand Membership**
- **Diversify Membership and Board**
- **Enhance Member Benefits and Engagement**
- **Increase Meaningful Input from Patients**
- **Increase Recognition/Publicity**