

NEWS

From the Desk of the ACCP President

October 19, 2020

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**Both Sides Now***I've looked at clouds from both sides now**From up and down, and still somehow**It's cloud illusions I recall**I really don't know clouds at all*

Lyrics from "Both Sides Now," by Joni Mitchell

With my presidential term ending after the 2020 ACCP Annual Meeting, I contemplated what to write in my final piece that would be appropriate for such a tumultuous year. My first thought was the overused quotation by Charles Dickens, "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times," but for some reason, Joni Mitchell's lyrics in "Both Sides Now" seemed more fitting and contemporary, at least for me. She has described the meaning of the lyrics as "what we're taught to believe things are and what they really are." In this year of COVID-19, we have all experienced a reality check on how things really are.

Looking at one side of these clouds, I see that the past year has been challenging for students in pharmacy, particularly those trying to finish their final-year rotations in settings that haven't allowed traditional experiential education during the COVID-19 pandemic. It has also been challenging for pharmacy residents, who quickly had to become familiar with new acronyms like *PPE*. In fact, this year has challenged all pharmacists, regardless of their practice setting. As one example, clinical faculty have had to move their teaching online while figuring out how to continue to provide care for patients at their clinical sites. Terms such as *burnt out*, *frustrated*, *angry*, and *worn out* have become commonplace – indeed, at times, I have used some of these terms myself to describe what I have observed, or felt, over the past several months.

Nevertheless, looking at the other side of the clouds, I remain an eternal optimist. I'm aware of students who have recognized what they didn't know and had to find ways to improve their clinical acumen. I'm also aware of pharmacy residents who have had to do most of their preceptor's work during periods of short staffing. As for pharmacists, only a cursory look at the stories reported in ACCP's "Clinical Pharmacy's Response to COVID-19" posts reveals how so many have excelled by overcoming formidable barriers at their practice sites.

In addition, after I transition to immediate past-president, rest assured that ACCP will remain in good hands. My successor, Dr. Jimmi Hatton Kolpek, is an experienced educator and clinician with administrative proficiency. Her desire to resolve issues of disparity is particularly timely in light of recent events. Furthermore, she will be supported by ACCP's outstanding staff, who will keep the organization running well regardless of occasional setbacks out of their control.

Certainly, ongoing discussions and subsequent actions concerning important issues such as health disparities, diversity, equity, inclusion, and harassment will continue. Moreover, despite our capable leadership, they will likely be challenging, but that, too, is to be expected. And if these exchanges do *not* feel uncomfortable, we will need to determine whether we are asking the right questions.

Finally, I would like to thank those of you who have retained your membership during these trying times – I appreciate your ongoing support of the College. In addition, I would like to thank those who have volunteered to assist the organization by running for office, volunteering for task forces and committees, serving as PRN leaders, and engaging in other professional service activities available to members. ACCP would not be the exceptional organization that it is without your time and dedication.