



October 12, 2016

AAIDD Members:

Your Board of Directors has just held a retreat in Hartford, Connecticut, the site of the 2017 AAIDD Annual Conference, and we would like to update you on a number of current initiatives. In addition, the Board would love to hear your ideas and suggestions, so please feel welcome to be in touch with any of us. There is much collective wisdom in our membership. We want to hear it.

AAIDD Annual Meetings

First, thanks to so many who contributed to a terrific conference in Atlanta. Just over 600 people attended this year's event and we hope to continue that momentum at next year's conference, which will be held June 26-29, 2017 in Hartford. You should have received the **Call for Proposals** for next year's conference that is being coordinated by President-Elect Susan Havercamp. We hope you will spread the word among your colleagues and submit one or more proposals for this meeting. The deadline for submissions of proposals is November 25, 2016; [click here for more information](#).

SIGs and Divisions

Second, we want to let you know that Conference of Professional Interests (CPI) met during the conference in Atlanta and recommended a series of changes that would clarify the roles, activities, and initiatives of special interest groups and divisions. The Board and current leaders of the CPI believe that the SIGs and Divisions could be even more effective professional "homes" within AAIDD that can form, work, and contribute to the overall mission and vision of AAIDD in new ways. We authorized a joint Task Force of Board members and leaders from the CPI, co-chaired by Vice-President Liz Perkins and Kim Fisher, to begin work on developing revised policies and procedures to help this happen. All members should be hearing more about this from the groups within AAIDD you have joined.

National Service, Awards, and Becoming a Fellow

Third, in this fall consumed by a national election, it is also time for AAIDD to **solicit nominations for its Board of Directors**. Who would you like to see in leadership roles within AAIDD and on the Board? This is the time for nominating the next candidate to the Vice Presidency (the one who then becomes President Elect, President, and then Past-President) and one Board Member at Large.) Look at the requirements. Think about people who are willing to work and serve. Get permission to nominate them, or nominate yourself. The deadline for nominations is October 17, 2016; [click here for more information](#).

Knowledge | Support | Empowerment

It is also the time **to apply for Fellow status within AAIDD**. AAIDD has recognized a significant number of new Fellows in the last two years. We hope that trend continues. The Board will be exploring with Fellows potential ways they would like to use their experience to further enhance the mission of the Association, such as recruitment and mentoring of the next generation of professional leaders. The deadline for applications is October 31, 2016; [click here for more information](#).

This is also the time **to nominate candidates for AAIDD Annual Awards**. It is an honor for individuals and organizations to be nominated for the ways that their work and leadership has made real contributions to the lives of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families, and to the wider field. Nominees do not have to be AAIDD members, but it takes members who take the time to nominate. The deadline for nominations is October 31, 2016; [click here for more information](#).

Membership

Fourth, the organization is engaging in new discussions about marketing, membership, and expanding the outreach and effectiveness of AAIDD. For example, the Board brainstormed in Hartford about strategies to increase the diversity within the Association's membership and more effective strategies to reach service providers and mid-level managers in all settings. AAIDD, at our best, embodies the creative interplay of research, policy, and practice. Board members have also challenged themselves to recruit, personally, one or more new members this year. We invite you to do the same! New members can join at any time, [click here for more information](#).

Finally, as you are in touch with our national staff, thank them. With Maggie Nygren's leadership, AAIDD has a lean, dedicated, and impressive professional national office that does great work to support our membership and to further the mission of AAIDD.

On behalf of the Board and our staff, with best wishes to all of you in your ongoing work, and hoping that you encourage everyone to vote on November 8.

Sincerely,

Bill Gaventa, President (bill.gaventa@gmail.com)
Susan Havercamp, President Elect (Susan.Havercamp@osumc.edu)
Liz Perkins, Vice President (eperkins@mail.usf.edu)
Susan Palmer, Past President (spalmer@ku.edu)
Alexandra Bonardi, Secretary/Treasurer (abonardi@hsri.org)
Anthony Rodriguez, Board Member at Large (rodriguez@providence.edu)
Matt VanAuken, Board Member at Large (M.VanAuken@dpcolo.org)
Melissa DiSipio, Board Member at Large (mdisipio@pmhcc.org)
David Helm, Board Member at Large (David.Helm@childrens.harvard.edu)

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