

I consider it a true honor to be assuming the position of President of the Colorado Pharmacists Association. It's also a bit intimidating, for although I am now the President I somehow don't feel very presidential. I still feel like a relative newcomer to the profession! I have enjoyed serving on the Board of Directors of first the Colorado Society of Health-Systems Pharmacists and then CPS as the organizations were being joined and CPS was getting off to its start. Like many members of the two organizations, I was initially only mildly optimistic that the merger could successfully take place. However, it has been very gratifying to see how relatively easily the unification of the organizations has occurred and how successful CPS has been in its first year of existence. There were a number of individuals from both CSHP and CPhA that put in a tremendous amount of work during the unification process in order to make sure that as many problems as possible were worked out ahead of time. I have been very impressed with how smoothly the transition has taken place and how well the new organization has functioned since then. The unification process has certainly been interesting and instructional to watch and be a part of.

There obviously remains much work to be done as CPS strives to solidify its position as the premier pharmacy organization within the state and do those things that are necessary to ensure its long-term stability and viability. You will be happy to know that there was very good agreement between the challenges delivered by Larry Clark in his address as outgoing CPS President and my own list of what I consider to be the top priorities for CPS during the next year. It's always good for an organization when a relatively seamless transition between officers occurs, and the fact that Larry and I are in agreement on so many points hopefully bodes well for the coming year. I'll briefly outline my thoughts in these areas.

Membership must be a top priority for CPS and will remain a challenge, not just in terms of numbers but in consideration of CPS's diversity as well. Retaining our existing membership and growing our numbers is crucial to the long-term viability of the organization. Professional education, legislative representation, and professional camaraderie are just a few of the important benefits offered by membership in CPS. All members of CPS, not just the elected leadership, must take an active role in educating nonmembers regarding the potential benefits of belonging to CPS and promoting joining the organization. Although the numbers are important, successfully meeting the needs of a diverse membership is also paramount to ensuring the continued success of CPS. The Society represents an extraordinary group of individuals with widely varied professional interests; our professional degrees are sometimes the only obvious common links. CPS must strive to meet the professional needs of these diverse groups through exemplary leadership, active participation of the membership, providing well thought-out educational opportunities, and wise legislative maneuvering.

CPS must be actively involved in what I, for lack of a better term, call "outreach programs". CPS is meant to represent the entire state of Colorado, not just the Denver Metro area. It is true that we already have outstanding individuals from more rural areas of Colorado who have been instrumental in the unification process and are highly visible leaders within the organization. However, I believe that we can do more to reach out to other areas of the state such as, for example, southern and southeastern Colorado and the Western Slope. Pharmacists practicing in these areas must also feel that CPS is cognizant of them and is working to meet their needs as well, even though they are far removed

from the major population centers of the state. We need pharmacists in these areas to be more involved and actively represented in the activities of the organization.

Bolstering the leadership within CPS is another high priority. Past and current officers of CPhA, CSHP, and now CPS have done outstanding jobs and have served very faithfully and tirelessly. However, it is not fair or desirable to have the same small group of individuals perpetually asked to carry the weight of the Society and continuously assume leadership roles. We need to focus on identifying and “recruiting” new individuals to serve in leadership positions. It’s crucial that we increase the overall level of participation of the membership within CPS.

Maybe it’s because of my ties to the School of Pharmacy, but I believe that CPS must be more actively involved with the students. We have approximately 400 students enrolled in the School of Pharmacy at any one time, a great number of whom are from Colorado and will stay and work within this state after they graduate. These students represent a great pool of potential CPS members who can help the organization not only by increasing the numbers, but by assuming positions of leadership as well. Many of these students are actively involved in student organizations and are highly effective leaders within the campus community. Wouldn’t it be nice if we could keep these students active after they graduate and join the ranks of practicing pharmacists within the state? CPS must do more to educate these students regarding the benefits of Society membership and try to keep them actively engaged in the profession after their time at the school is over.

As Val Kalnins mentioned in his legislative update at this meeting, there still remains much work to do regarding the Sunset Review of the Colorado Pharmacy Practice Act. Many members of CPS have been actively involved in a Sunset Review Task Force and have crafted many proposed changes in order to advance our professional practice interests. However, the work is far from over and there will still be many challenges to be met as this legislative process moves forward. Continued involvement in the Sunset Review process and successfully representing our professional interests is an obvious and extremely important priority for CPS during the coming year.

Maintaining the financial stability of the organization is another obvious priority for CPS during the next year. The success and longevity of CPS obviously depends on keeping a good bottom line to the finances. The Society had a very good first year under Larry Clark’s leadership and we are currently on a good footing, but we must strive to maintain and further improve the financial viability of the organization.

Finally, working on improving public relations is a must. We state that part of our mission and vision is that CPS will be the premiere pharmacy organization within Colorado, and we have gotten off to a good start toward achieving that portion of our mission. However, it will be an ongoing challenge to make sure that other professional organizations, legislative bodies, and most importantly, the practicing pharmacists of this state recognize CPS as being the preeminent organization for the profession of pharmacy and acknowledge our leadership in this regard.

The Society obviously has much work to do in the future in order to meet all of these objectives. Although I sometimes ask myself how I got into this position, I thank you for this opportunity to serve the Society. I look forward to working with the CPS Board of Directors and the membership to keep CPS moving successfully forward in the future.