

May 21, 2018

Dear EACH nomination committee,

I am writing this letter to indicate my interest in being considered for President-Elect of EACH. Below I provide a brief biography of my professional work as well as my involvement with EACH and my vision as to what I can contribute to EACH in future if nominated.

I am Professor of Family Medicine and Faculty Development Consultant in the Office of Consultation and Research in Medical Education at the University of Iowa Carver College of Medicine. I received my PhD in Medical Anthropology from University of Kentucky in 1994, was a National Institute of Mental Health post-doctoral fellow from 1994-1995 and was Director of Educational Resources and Development at Oklahoma State University College of Osteopathic Medicine, before joining the faculty at the University of Iowa College of Medicine in 1998. I have been actively involved in research related to clinician-patient communication and medical education for over 20 years and have published extensively as well as serving as a mentor for students and colleagues interested in this area of scholarship. My educational focus has included overseeing the development of a longitudinal clinical communication curriculum for medical and physician assistant students and postgraduate trainees in a wide variety of disciplines at Iowa as well as providing courses and workshops related to teaching communication to audiences throughout the world. I also direct several comprehensive faculty development programs at the University of Iowa and am one of the primary faculty members for the UI Masters in Medical Education Degree Program.

I have been an active member of EACH since 2002 and I helped establish and have served as Co-Chair (2005-2013) and Chair (2013 – present) of tEACH, the teaching committee of EACH. I also served as the elected National Representative for the US on the EACH steering committee (2010-2014). In 2007 I helped develop and have since served as Chair of the Pairing with Colleagues program, which matches junior and senior colleagues at annual International Conferences on Communication in Healthcare (ICCH) and have also been on the Scientific Committee for ICCH meetings since 2005. Most recently I was asked to serve as Chair of the planning committee for the 2018 ICCH conference in Porto.

EACH is one of the only existing professional organizations focused specifically on communication in healthcare. As such, EACH provides a unique and important academic home for professionals in research, teaching, and policy with likeminded interests who can often feel relatively isolated in their own professional workplace. One of the strengths of EACH is it can provide opportunities for international exchange and sharing of ideas and resources to establish and further best practices in health care communication research, teaching and policy. Over the past several years, EACH has grown substantially in its membership and significantly broadened its efforts to support the needs and interests of those members through the work of its subcommittees and the Executive.

In order to help EACH to sustain and expand its impact on communication in healthcare, if I am elected to serve as President –elect, my focus would be to build on the strong foundation already established by EACH through a variety of potential activities:

- I would seek to more clearly identify the needs of its current and potential members in order to appropriately focus the efforts of EACH's largely volunteer workforce to address these needs.
- Increasing opportunities for both informal and formal networking among EACH members based on discipline, geographic proximity and areas of interest is an important area for future EACH efforts. Ways to facilitate networking among EACH members beyond what occurs at face to face ICCH conferences is also important because it could result in the development of international research, policy and educational projects.
- Another important activity would be to leverage the existing expertise of participants in EACH to influence the conduct of education and research related to communication and healthcare throughout the world. EACH members include most of the top scholars and teachers in the field and the organization is therefore poised to have significant impact on establishing and disseminating best practices in research, in the education and assessment of health professional learners, and in the way that healthcare institutions address and improve health care communication and patient healthcare experiences.
- It is worth exploring a broader variety of ways to disseminate the expertise and ideas in EACH, for example through social media platforms, webinars and podcasts, review articles and project reports, as well as regional and topic focused conferences, courses and workshops and consultative projects.
- The efforts of the EACH subcommittees need ongoing and additional support and encouragement. For example, pEACH in particular needs additional support in order to use the expertise in EACH to influence policy at the institutional and national level. Because research is a primary focus and strength within EACH, rEACH needs support for development of research mentoring and dissemination of research expertise through educational offerings and international projects and publications. tEACH can be encouraged to continue and refine its efforts in developing resources, networking and courses to support health communication educators. In addition, cultivating increased involvement of early career researchers, educators and health professionals in determining the vision and future activities of EACH will contribute to the organization's appeal and sustainability and contribute to the career advancement of this next generation of scholars as well as advancement of the field.

Of course all of these proposed activities need to be considered in the context of ongoing strategic planning within EACH as well as trying to identify ways to increase the financial resources available to support these efforts in a sustainable manner.

I believe I possess the leadership qualities necessary to successfully fulfill the roles of president elect, president and past president for EACH. In my work within EACH as well as in my other professional positions, my leadership approach represents a balance between facilitating consensus based decision making where all stakeholders perspectives are elicited and taken into account, and when necessary a willingness to be more directive in overseeing and accomplishing concrete tasks. I have been told that I am an effective meeting facilitator and possess skills necessary to manage and complete a wide variety of tasks in an organized, inclusive and timely manner. If elected, I will be committed to fitting the responsibilities of EACH president elect and subsequent positions feasibly with my other professional and personal obligations. As a non-European candidate for this position, in addition to face to face meeting opportunities, using

electronic communications and video conferencing will allow me to fully participate in the required executive responsibilities while minimizing travel requirements and costs.