

## **Executive Director Annual Report to ADFM Membership January 2021**

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What a year! It has been an exciting first year in the Executive Director role and I wanted to highlight a few things that I think have gone well plus and some priorities for 2021.

In my first week as Executive Director and at the 2020 Annual Conference, I highlighted 4 priorities for the year in a message to the membership. These were: 1) staffing, 2) membership and inclusivity, 3) communication and regular updates, and 4) how to best gather, share, and use our data for our members and the discipline. Although everyone's priorities were shifted with the events of the last year, I think these remain as themes throughout our 2020 efforts and you will see them woven throughout my comments below.

### **Transitions and Relationship Building**

The greatest transition this year was of course the retirement of Ardis Davis, and me taking the role as Executive Director. I was extremely fortunate to find a very capable new staff person in Samantha Elwood (with the help of our member departments) to take over some of my prior duties. Our staff team has continued to grow and learn together and operations are feeling smooth. We are thrilled to welcome Jessie Vera to the team as of January 2021; Jessie is our first full-time staff person!

In 2020, ADFM took the plunge into the virtual age, as did many others, by moving from conference calls to Zoom (something we were working on before the pandemic hit, though it just sped up our pace of transition). This has given us the opportunity to deepen the engagement of our committees and our programs, including the LEADS fellowship, by allowing some face-to-face interaction. I do anticipate some additional transitions in 2021 as we continue to organize for efficiency, adapt to new technologies, and take on new challenges.

One of the highlights of the year has been growing some of our relationships with new (and longtime) allies and collaborators. We have been looking at ways to more closely align with AAMC and its efforts on their new strategic plan alongside their new, more primary care-supportive administration. We have had conversations with the AAFP about how to better collaborate, particularly in the sphere of Government Relations and the clinical sphere. I have been working very closely with the new NAPCRG Executive Director on considering the future directions for the Building Research Capacity Initiative, among other efforts. Our relationship with STFM continues to be strong and we are finding more ways to be closer collaborators; their support and willingness to share experiences with ADFM this year, particularly around negotiations with hotels for moving conferences, has been invaluable.

### **Communication & Data-Driven Decision Making**

In later 2019 and throughout 2020, our newsletter, including a "What's on Our Plate" update from the President, has gone out quarterly. This year we ended up with a variety of other communication and programmatic efforts as a result of the COVID pandemic and the response to racial injustices. These are noted below.

## ***COVID-19 Response***

*COVID 19 resources page* - when the pandemic hit, our very engaged membership shared numerous resources with one another each day. The ADFM staff quickly set up a space to house these resources for easy access and sharing.

*COVID 19 blog with the Annals of Family Medicine* – the early weeks of the pandemic also generated a lot of great material needing a place for broader dissemination faster than a peer review process could manage. With member encouragement (particularly Jen DeVoe), ADFM worked with the staff at the *Annals of Family Medicine* to set up a blog space to get these stories out more quickly than publication in a journal.

*Open discussion forum* – recognizing a need for a space beyond the listserv to debrief with colleagues, ADFM staff set up a standing “open discussion” time for members to share and check in. As the urgency of the pandemic and its all-consuming changes have lessened, these have evolved into roughly monthly “hot topic discussions” based on listserv conversations and input from the strategic committees.

*Careful and ongoing budget forecasting for implications on conference, membership* – we were very fortunate to have a successful conference in 2020 just before the pandemic hit, solidifying much of our revenue for the year. Despite this, our team made ongoing and careful considerations of budgetary implications of the pandemic to ensure a solid start to 2021.

*Moving conference virtually* - using our member survey data, the Board made the decision in September 2020 to move our February 2021 conference to a virtual platform. It was very helpful to have close to real-time information from our membership to make this decision.

## ***Response for Call to Action around Racism***

*Anti-racism statement and action plan* – following the murder of George Floyd, ADFM, like many other organizations, put out a statement of its stance on racism and the goal of trying to be an anti-racist organization. This statement was a testimony to our Board’s dedication and nimbleness, being collectively written and agreed upon in a matter of a few days. One key components of this statement was a commitment to taking action, which has led to an action plan for the organization. The action plan, currently in draft format (and meant to be a living document) describes several areas of action for the organization and its members, including internal work for the organization, considering our economic investments, gathering and sharing data and best practices, creating the space for critical conversations, and developing active and activated partnerships.

## **Strategic & Programmatic Growth**

### ***LEADS***

Our LEADS program has been going incredibly well this year, with our well-bonded fellows meeting weekly for excellent discussions, journal clubs, project check-ins, and webinars. Our

application cycle for the 2021-2022 cohort received the most applications of all time, by almost double, with 22 total applicants. We had to turn eligible applicants down for the first time ever!

I am also very excited to share that the ABFM-Foundation has funded our proposal for expanding the LEADS program. Their support, at a total of \$100,000 over 3 years, will allow us to both grow the cohort, reconfigure the program to allow for a larger group, add paid fellowship director time and more staff time, and add an additional in-person meeting each year for the cohort. The ABFM-Foundation has also put \$20,000 per year forward to support 4 fellows each year with partial scholarships for the program.

### ***Advocacy Committee***

In September the Board approved creation of a new strategic committee focused on Advocacy – including legislative and institutional/internal advocacy. This new committee has begun their work and you will hear from them during the conference.

### ***Ongoing support and effort for the DIHE committee work***

In February 2020, our Diversity, Inclusion, and Health Equity Taskforce became a formal standing committee. This group has been incredibly active over the last 10 months, forming 3 sub-groups that are meeting regularly between full committee meetings and have collectively put forward some SMART goals as well as a DIHE framework for the organization and individual departments; have designated “DIHE liaisons” for each of the other strategic committees along with a planned annual time to review other committees’ SMART goals to make sure they are inclusive of DIHE; and are working on a publication of the current state of DIHE efforts among departments. You will also hear from them during the conference!

### **Priorities for 2021**

In addition to continuing the themes I highlighted in 2020, a few areas I see as priorities for the coming year include: 1) moving our anti-racism action plan forward; 2) staying on-track with our budget and growth despite the economic challenges presented in 2020; 3) preparing for the expansion of the LEADS program beginning in 2022; and 4) continuing to build on and move forward our relationships with our sister organizations and others like the AAMC.