

Reflections on my presidency of American Federation of Medical Research (AFMR)

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As I convened my last national council meeting as the president of American Federation of Medical Research (AFMR), it can be difficult to discover the proper words to express the feelings one feels about my involvement, with its hundreds of recollections, and future, with all its questions and new opportunities. I can tell you; I'm overwhelmed with emotions —yes, with the sadness that comes with saying farewell as the President, but also with excitement for what the future will bring.

As I look back at my time as the President of AFMR, I am overpowered by all that we were able to achieve together. When I took up the role of councilor for Western AFMR in 2012, I did not know that it would be the start of such a long journey with AFMR. But soon I became the Secretary-Treasurer for Western AFMR followed by the Chair of Southern AFMR followed by President of AFMR national council. I just couldn't drag myself away from all the energizing advances we were making in AFMR. Together we have pushed for more Diversity and Inclusion sessions at each of our regional meetings, gave institutional membership to historically black medical schools to support those who are underrepresented in medicine, championed mentorship sessions, endorsed advocacy efforts in collaboration with Federation of American Sciences of Experimental Biology, started virtual education portal, started new partnerships, strengthened our journals and have increased our visibility by our presence at national meetings.

One of the things I am most proud of is how we as an organization never let go of directing standards that have guided us since our establishing. We have done so with wide vision, the soul of consideration and, most imperatively, civility. Indeed, when the talks got extreme with our collaborating societies, we were able to stay gracious. We saw the esteem in contrasts of supposition, and it is in these contrasts where we find our quality.

None of the triumphs of the AFMR would have been conceivable without the national and regional councils past and present. By working together, we have accomplished numerous incredible things, and I have no question that with the proceeded leadership of our national



council, and the commitment from the extraordinary staff from PRRI that those successes will continue for a long time to come.

While my personal journey ends as the President of AFMR, this is a new beginning for even greater opportunities with upcoming discussions about the *Journal of Investigative Medicine's* contract renewal, possibility of a national meeting and increase in our membership by implementing all the great ideas the national council has discussed so far.

It has been an outright joy to be at the helm of this extraordinary organization for the past 1 year. Thank you to AFMR national council and all AFMR members in making a difference in me to see the intelligence, the charm, the delight, and the bliss that comes from working with great individuals in a great cause. I will continuously keep in mind this as the most noteworthy organization I will ever be with.

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