

Dear APSARD membership and potential 2024 conference attendees:

As you may know, our next annual meeting will take place in Orlando, FL at the same hotel as last year. ([Renaissance Orlando Sea World](#)). I'd like to provide you with some background on this decision as we know that it may be hard to understand in the context of ongoing initiatives and legal changes in that state (e.g., [the recent overhaul of African American history standards in education](#); [a new law banning state colleges and universities from spending money on DEI programs](#)).

First, I'd like to share that we are, first and foremost, a professional organization that is saddened by the extensive body of evidence that individuals minoritized on the basis of race, ethnicity, sexual and/or gender identity, and multiple other intersecting minoritized identities (e.g., physical disability, immigrant status) have significantly and substantially elevated rates of mental health difficulties and barriers to care. As such, in 2021 under Dr. Jeff Newcorn's presidency, we formed a DEI task force to evaluate and find actionable steps to enhance access to a diverse group of professionals and support underserved populations within APSARD and the field of ADHD & related disorders. You may have noticed that our recent meetings have included plenaries and symposia directly addressing diagnosis and treatment of ADHD experienced by Black children and adults and other relevant topics. We continue to encourage presentations addressing the minoritized individual's experience and treatment of ADHD. The task force recently emailed out a Health Equity Survey ([click here for link](#)); please take 10 minutes to complete it.

Second, with the growth of APSARD (now about 400 members) and passing of COVID quarantine, we are starting to plan our meeting venues farther into the future. We are looking closely at venue options with respect to membership comfort, safety, and accessibility all while being fiscally responsible. Most organizations are having substantial conversation about hosting meetings in states where the rights of minoritized individuals are being attacked. The discussion often involves already-signed contracts amidst constantly changing political and social climates. In these discussions, and for future planning, two opinions are often heard: 1) we should not take our business to that state nor cause our membership to fear for their well-being; 2) we should take our expertise and knowledge to that state where many professionals want and need to hear the science we have to offer. These conversations will continue as we discuss and negotiate our future venues after 2024.

For 2024, we realize that some members may choose to refrain from attending and we respect that decision. For those attending, we are planning, with the involvement of our DEI Task Force, actions to demonstrate our commitment to being an inclusive organization that is working to be aware of the needs of our members. In addition to welcoming presentations and audience questions and suggestions pertaining to equity in ADHD mental health care, we plan to; include a posted APSARD statement upon entry to the meeting about our commitment to inclusivity and equity in mental health research and treatment; provide a box at the meeting for anonymous suggestions (especially those that may be forgotten by the time of the post-conference survey); ask all presenters to be clear about the

demographic characteristics of the participants in their research presentations and acknowledge areas in need of growth; provide gender pronoun pins at the registration desk; and ensure that our after-meeting survey includes opportunities for members to suggest improvements. If you have other suggestions, please send them to info@apsard.org.

I hope that this communication provides you with some helpful information about APSARD's position now and going forward. As with other professional organizations, we are always on a learning curve, with intention and action, and look forward to feedback that you may have to offer. We hope to see you at APSARD 2024.

Sincerely,

Ann Childress, M.D.,
APSARD President

Brooke Molina, Ph.D.
APSARD 2024 Program Chair

[Preferred Terms for Select Population Groups and Communities provided by the CDC.](#)

**CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES IN
UNDERSTANDING & TREATING ADHD**