



## Chinese American Hematologist and Oncologist Network

### 美国华裔血液与肿瘤专家学会

May 31, 2020

Dear CAHON Family:

Today is my last day as CAHON's Chair of Board and the new leadership team will start their term tomorrow. Traditionally, the transition occurs at our ASCO Reception. This year, however, a face-face meeting is not possible due to COVID-19 pandemic so I am sending this announcement instead. I would like to take a moment to reflect on what we have accomplished and express my gratitude.

I must admit my term as the Chair of Board has been more challenging than I had expected. With the newly signed professional management partner with EDI and my outstanding President Partner, Dr. Lei Zheng, I thought I would be more like a cheer leader; but as it turned out, the past two years have brought us many challenges.

**Transitioning** from a volunteer-run organization to a professionally managed organization wasn't easy. Bylaws needed to be revised, operating procedures standardized, financial policies established, leadership succession plans developed, and financials had to be stabilized. This was a tremendous amount of work requiring numerous virtual board meetings, different task force teams, attorney calls, etc. During the initial phase, we had weekly calls or even multiple calls each week. Thankfully in the end, we have transformed CAHON into a very professional and highly efficient organization.

**Financial sustainability** was another challenge we faced. Our expenditures significantly increased due to paying management fees to our newly signed management company while our source of revenue was limited (monies from the New York Oncology Forum and loyalty from Journal of the Hematology/Oncology being the only sources of income). Clearly, CAHON would not be financially sustainable without new sources of funding. During the term, the board made financial sustainability a priority. We held our first ever strategic planning board meeting to develop plans for bringing in revenues. We developed a new model for ASH and ASCO receptions/symposia that not only made them financially independent, but also profitable. We also developed the Community Oncology Forum (COF) model that brings funding to CAHON steadily. Several other models are also being tested. In our move to the next term, we not only have a better financial foundation, but have also developed mature models that will make CAHON financially stable.

**Membership expansion**, particularly from the community oncology sector, was another focus during my term. Traditionally, community hematologists/oncologists, even though make up the majority of Chinese American hematologists/oncologists, have not been actively involved in CAHON. Our term made it a priority to recruit members from community practices. CAHON leadership and disease site experts from CAHON joined the “**血液肿瘤那些事**” WeChat group, the popular site founded by Dr. Bo Zhao and composed of mainly community oncologists to provide support. We also developed the COF model which fosters participation and networking among community oncologists. As a result, many community oncologists joined CAHON which certainly contributed to the 60+ membership growth. The rejuvenated vital energy and enthusiasm have been quite evident.

**Political challenges** also arose unexpectedly. During this term, the controversy of racial profiling caused a big wave of anxiety among Chinese American communities. As a highly respected Chinese American professional organization, we felt obligated to speak up. Nevertheless, the Board has a judiciary responsibility to the well-being of CAHON and was concerned about not having the resources to weather potential negative attention and scrutiny it may bring to CAHON. After extensive debates of pros and cons at our emergent ad hoc board meeting, we decided to join the effort against racial profiling by co-signing the letter to Science and subsequently also co-sponsored a conference with Committee of 100 (C100) for similar purposes. CAHON was put on a national stage and exerted positive influences. It was not an easy decision, but I am glad we did it for our members, our Chinese American communities, and our future generations.

**COVID-19 pandemic** presented yet another unexpected challenge. As a Chinese American organization, CAHON first organized donation drives for personal protective equipment (PPE) to help our colleagues in China, and shortly after a second drive to help our own members and our colleagues in the States. Every CAHON member received needed PPE through the donation drive and none of our CAHON members have been infected with COVID-19.

These are just a few examples of what we have accomplished over the past two years. We faced many challenges, but through collective efforts we have accomplished a great deal. None of these would have been possible without the amazing support and great efforts from all parties. I wish to take this opportunity to make a few acknowledgements.

First and foremost, I would like to thank our Executive Director Nichole Nikolic, our Consultant Tara Withington, and the entire EDI team; their expertise and tremendous efforts helped transform CAHON. We have had numerous meetings – board meetings in the evenings, task force team meetings, emergent ad hoc board meetings on weekends, etc. Whenever the need arises for us to hold a meeting, they are and have been there for us. Without their professional guidance, this transition and transformation would not have been so smooth.

I am very fortunate to have a strong and supporting board. They are Drs. Jingzhou Hou, Yiwu Huang, Yuxia Jia, Tina Li, Delong Liu, Chongxian Pan, Wenru Song, Weijing Sun, Ruirong Yuan, Lei Zheng, and two exited board members, Drs. Zihai Li and Ke Liu. From leading specific task forces, to running candid debates, providing advice, and offering sister/brotherhood support, every board member stepped up to the plate and no one shied away. I could not have asked for a better board. This Board is the most dedicated, unselfish, and noble-minded group I have ever met. It was truly an honor and privilege to have the opportunity to work with such a group of people.

A strong President and Executive Team is critical to an organization and the Chair of Board. I have been lucky to have a great President partner, Dr. Lei Zheng and his executive team. Dr. Zheng is one of the most dedicated president I have seen; his strong drive and dedication greatly helped our accomplishments for CAHON. We did not always agree with each other and debated regularly, but we always respected each other as we both strived to do what is best for CAHON. We have proven to be the best Yin/Yang team. Thanks Dr. Lei Zheng for the great partnership!

I also want to specifically thank the community oncology group, particularly Practice Committee co-chairs, Drs. Bo Zhao and Jane Liu, and the COF Committee members for their support and efforts that turned my vision of engaging community oncologists into a reality. Through your efforts, many

community oncologists joined CAHON, the COF took shape, and our members not only networked but also bonded as brothers and sisters!

Last but not least, I would like to thank each one of our CAHON members for your participation in CAHON events and your generous support.

Starting tomorrow, June 1, 2020, CAHON will be under new leadership with Dr. Wenru Song as Chair of Board and Dr. Chongxian Pan as President. We know CAHON will be in great hands and I am sure they will take CAHON to a new level.

It has been a privilege to serve CAHON. Being one of the founding members, a former President, and the Chair of Board during the past two years, it is quite satisfying to see CAHON developed from ground zero to its current thriving stage! I look forward to continuing work with the new leadership team and with everyone as a board member and CAHON member.

Sincerely,



David Z. Chang, MD, PhD, FACP  
Chair of Board Directors, 2018-2020