

Questions for Candidates for President Elect**1) What are the greatest challenges and opportunities for APHA today?****Challenges*****Public Health Funding***

Advocating for public health funding remains a persistent challenge, yet in the wake of the pandemic, our collective influence has become increasingly evident. We swiftly mobilized resources to reshape systemic structures, addressing community needs that demonstrated our resilience. To construct a compelling case, it is imperative to marry the connection of evidence-based science and public health practice to build the business case for population health for thriving communities. Therefore, sharing human interest stories and emphasizing the community-wide benefits of public health funding and investments in advancing population health takes on paramount significance. Achieving this objective hinges on establishing genuine relationships within communities and fostering connections with policymakers and legislators across all branches of government.

To effectively build empathy and understanding, the art of storytelling consistently emerges as a key strategy. Sharing our personal lived experiences, written and oral forms, with legislators, the media, businesses, and potential funders is indispensable in creating a persuasive narrative that underscores the vital importance of public health funding.

**Challenge and Opportunity**

The pandemic and other economic and capacity-building deficiencies for all types of organizations have forced successful cross-sector collaboration within the public health landscape. Higher education has made continuous investments in public health education curricula. State and local health departments are operating under the revised *2020 Ten Essential Public Health Services* with equity to promote policies, systems, and overall community conditions that enable optimal health for all, which seek to remove systemic and structural barriers that have resulted in health inequities. The leveraging of skilled community health workers, Doulas, has filled a needed gap for home visitation programming, clinical settings, and other sectors. Corporations and non-profits have invested in DEI initiatives and affinity groups to create psychologically safe spaces for employees.

APHA members, adjacent partners, and decision-makers seek to hear the practical application of diligent efforts. Most especially promising practices that encompass cost containment, quality improvement, and enhanced outcomes. These are just a few examples of opportunities to leverage during this season to engage listeners:

- *Sustain and Further Build Trust in Public Health*
- *Public Health Workforce Pipeline Development*
- *APHA Advocacy Priorities*
- *APHA Membership Growth*

**2) As President-Elect, how will you use your role to elevate the voice and impact of APHA (at the global, national, state and local levels)?**

My goal is to be a voice for APHA's advocacy priorities and enhance its influence and reach to harness our members' collective spirit, passion, and diverse voices, which span traditional and non-traditional public health sectors at the global, national, state, and local levels.

Our association is a testament to trailblazers and pioneers, encompassing precious Tribal lands, urban and rural settings from a myriad of backgrounds who stand firm as students, early professionals, professionals, and retirees, representing academia, corporations, non-profits, and federal, state, and local health departments.

My role extends beyond my partnership with APHA as an organization; it encompasses the broader member-based community. Together, we amplify our voices, ensuring inclusivity for those often marginalized. This collective effort bolsters the case for public health advocacy, funding, and equity.

Drawing upon my extensive experience as a former state affiliate president, Governing Councilor, CoA and Action Board Member, Executive Board member, and Executive Board Chair, coupled with over two decades of involvement in public health, I have cultivated a robust network. Furthermore, I have also remained deeply engaged in community and service-based activism for the past 15 years.

As a member-based organization, the President-Elect provides a supportive net for the President if presenting obligations at the APHA state affiliate conferences are needed. This also includes other commitments (Executive Board meetings, advisory and ad hoc teams, and media visits (live and recorded) deemed necessary for a seamless leadership transition when the President's term ends. The role is crucial in ensuring the continuity of leadership and the effective functioning of the organization. During all interactions, my foundational tenets are based on authentic relationships, intentional listening, empathy, and action. Through this vehicle, I will lift the importance of **public health workforce development, destigmatizing mental illness, and centering equity in all facets of work.**

On December 10, 1964, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. gave one of his most pivotal speeches as he accepted the Nobel Peace Prize at the University of Oslo in Norway. He stated, "*I have the audacity to believe that peoples everywhere can have three meals a day for their bodies, education and culture for their minds, and dignity, equality and freedom for their spirits. I believe that what self-centered men have torn down men, other-centered can build up.*" I am the "other-centered," walking in servant leadership and humility, ready to serve APHA as the next President-Elect.

I still have the audacity to believe in our collective synergy, fortitude, social and political will, and overall tenacity to make a difference. Allow me to humbly serve you.