

**2019 Vice President's Report**  
**Business Meeting (3/29/2019, Submitted 2/11/2019)**  
**American Association of Physical Anthropologists**  
**Cleveland, OH**  
**Steven R. Leigh, Vice President**

### **Introduction**

The Vice President, in conjunction with both President Leslie Aiello and President-elect Anne Grauer undertook regular duties this year centered on organization of the 88<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting in 2019 in Cleveland, Ohio. Our meetings last took place in Cleveland in 1946. Standard tasks related to organizing the meetings included composing and charging committees, receipt and review of symposium proposals, receipt and review of abstracts, notification of abstract review outcome, scheduling the meetings, publication of the abstract issue and the meetings program. In addition, we undertook an initiative to revise keywords (or session preferences) that help organize our meetings.

It is important to recognize the many contributions of our Program Committee, who worked efficiently and expeditiously to review symposium proposals and abstracts. Their efforts were remarkable, and key to maintaining and enhancing our professional standards.

### **Keyword Review Process**

This year's first initiative was to revise keywords (session preferences) used during abstract submission, with the goal of carefully considering, and if necessary, replacing the system used through the 2018 meetings. Keywords are used to classify abstracts and this system plays an important role in arranging our annual meetings. Specifically, keywords are used to group abstracts prior to sending to reviewers. In addition, the annual meetings advance team uses keywords to help compose sessions.

In collaboration with President Aiello, we formed a committee in June of 2018 to review keywords, with a July 15 deadline. Committee members included Leslie Aiello (AAPA), Brenda Baker (ASU), George Perry (Penn State), Liza Shapiro (U Texas), Andrea Taylor (Touro U), and Erin Vogel (Rutgers U). The committee ultimately recommended substantial revision of the keyword system. Specifically, we designed a four-level system that was implemented in this year's abstract submission process. The first level included broad categories (e.g., Primatology, Human Biology). The second level differentiated between research on humans (hominins) and nonhuman systems. The third and fourth levels filtered abstracts by primary and secondary specialties (e.g., ecology, cognition and communication, etc.) (see Appendix 1, Keyword System, 2019 and Appendix 2, Timelines). We are still evaluating the consequences of the new system,

and will determine whether or not it assisted in streamlining the meeting organization process. Our initial impression is that it increased the efficiency of session composition and scheduling. We will also determine whether or not the new system enhanced the overall quality of our annual meetings.

### **Program Committee**

The Program Committee for the 2019 meetings was formed anew, with limited carryover from 2017. This committee is responsible for reviewing invited symposium proposals and abstracts, playing a critical role in maintaining the high scientific quality of our annual meetings.

We used a new system this year designed to broaden participation in the committee. Specifically, President Aiello issued a call for applicants in a July Newsletter from the association. Applications were submitted to the Vice President via web survey form. These applications were then used to compose the committee. We had an outstanding response to our call for applicants. The final Program Committee includes 50 members. The committee is diverse. It also includes international representation, individuals from a range of institutions, and members from a broad spectrum of career stages. It should be noted that the committee requires that members be regular members of the AAPA.

### **Invited Symposia**

Submission process. The invited symposium submission process was revised this year in response to a recommendation from our Committee on Diversity. Specifically, the committee suggested that we include a brief statement (300 words) on how factors related to diversity were involved in composing the symposium. A wide range of factors could be considered, including race or ethnicity of presenters, gender, career stage, colleagues from abroad and those representing a range of institutions. Symposium submission guidelines specified the process and criteria, and the symposium submission system was modified to account for the new guidelines.

We are continuing to evaluate the results from this initiative. Our initial findings are that most symposium organizers attended carefully to this. However, we had variation in adoption of the new criteria. Nonetheless, the new guidelines resulted in closer attention to broadening participation in our field. We expect that, as with any change in routine procedures, we will see greater clarity and attention to this in the next submission cycle.

Proposal review process. Our opening date for submissions for invited symposium proposals was July 15. We received a total of 23 proposals by the August 15 deadline, including 10 podium proposals and 13 poster proposals. It should be noted that we had 5 submissions of abstracts, and one submission of a workshop proposal. These were deleted from the system, and those who submitted were notified, and encouraged to attend to the proper submission processes. Symposium proposals were distributed to the full Program Committee for review. In addition, the AAPA Executive Committee participated in proposal review.

Review outcomes. Review of the proposals was complete by September 10. The review process recommended rejecting only one proposal: 22 proposals were accepted. Of the 10 proposals for podium presentations, 7 were accepted as podium sessions (in line with previous years), meaning that 3 podium proposals were accepted as posters. A single invited session ultimately failed to receive a sufficient number of submissions. Posters that were received for this last session were grouped together in a contributed poster session. A total of 21 invited symposia were scheduled for the meetings.

### **Abstract Submission and Review**

Abstract submission. The abstract submission system was opened on September 17 (Monday), providing nearly a month for submissions. Approximately 10 days later, we discovered problems with the abstract submission system in that authors were having difficulty selecting invited symposia. In addition, the system seemed to be assigning abstracts to invited symposia, including abstracts that were not in symposia. This may have resulted in an unusually large number of abstracts that were not properly scheduled for invited sessions. We have addressed this on an individual basis, responding to authors once they received scheduling information on 4 February 2019.

By the abstract submission deadline (October 15) we had received a total of 1121 submissions, consistent with the average number of submissions over the last six years (averaging 1137). Only meetings in New Orleans and Austin received more submitted abstracts. Several requests for late submissions were received and were declined.

Abstract review. Pairs of reviewers were assigned to each abstract and reviewers were given access to abstracts on 23 October, with a deadline for review of 19 November.

Almost all Program Committee members submitted reviews by the deadline. Subsequent to receipt of all reviews, abstracts with one or more rejection recommendation were submitted to a second round of reviews. A total of 65 abstracts (5.7%) received at least one recommendation for rejection. These abstracts were distributed to 15 program committee members for further evaluation. Following this second round of review, a total of 31 abstracts had received at least two recommendations for rejection. I evaluated each one of these abstracts, and determined that rejection recommendations were warranted. Ten abstracts received three reject recommendations, while 15 had a single low priority accept recommendation. The remaining six abstracts had one acceptable high priority rating along with two rejections. Authors were notified of the decision to reject abstracts on December 3.

Notifications to authors of accepted abstracts were sent on 7 December 2018. Unfortunately, we encountered several problems with e-mail systems rejecting messages from [AAPAVP2019@gmail.com](mailto:AAPAVP2019@gmail.com). This occasionally affected all authors from some institutions. In these cases, we worked to notify authors individually that abstracts had been accepted. We recommend that authors work with their home institutions to minimize this problem in the future.

Following the meeting of the Advance Team in Cleveland, authors were notified regarding scheduling for their presentations. Specifically, schedule information was distributed to authors on 4 February 2019. As noted, we received notification of presentations that had not been properly assigned to invited sessions. We re-scheduled several presentations to the proper sessions.

### **Workshop Proposals**

The deadline for workshop proposals was 15 November 2018. We received a total of 15 workshop proposals, all of which were accepted. President Aiello handled the review and decision process, notifying authors of acceptance on 2 January 2019.

### **Abstract Issue**

Following completion of the abstract review process, we initiated preparation of the annual abstract issue. This involved some effort because we encountered problems downloading abstracts into a CSV format. Specifically, the system, which outputs author names, titles, affiliations, abstract text, and funding statements into CSV format had problems with certain special characters (e.g., superscripts and subscripts). This necessitated significant efforts to copy edit abstracts. Burk and Associates assisted with formatting and copy editing of the abstract issue. Proofs were submitted to Wiley on 1 February 2019.

### **Advance Team and Meetings Schedule**

The AAPA advance team met in Cleveland from 24-26 January 2019. The team included Lori Strong and Hiede Rohland (Burk and Associates), Leslie Aiello, Anne Grauer, Steve Leigh, Denise Su, Chris Kuzawa, Geoff Hayes, and Scott McGraw. The team composed a total of 41 sessions, complementing the 21 invited symposia accepted through our review process for a total of 62 sessions. We assigned days, times, room locations, and session chairs to contributed poster and podium sessions. Information on this year's meeting is presented in Table 1.

### **Meetings Program**

The first version of the program was developed during the Advance Team meeting. Subsequent to the meeting, we made editorial changes to the program (resolving conflicts, copy editing, etc.). We notified authors of schedules on 4 February 2019. Following notification, we needed to resolve the problems mentioned previously with the abstract submission process and invited symposium assignments. Preliminary versions of the were initially published on 8 February 2019, with updated programs published occasionally thereafter. The print version of the program was sent to the printer on 14 March 2019.

### **Acknowledgements and Thanks**

Our Program Committee did an outstanding job this year, reviewing symposium proposals and abstracts thoughtfully, thoroughly, and expeditiously. I offer my sincerest thanks to the committee members for their efforts. The committee includes: Amanda Agnew, Kari Allen, Ben

Auerbach, Jonathan Bethard, Nicole Burt, James Calcagno, Zachary Cofran, Paul Constantino, Lynn Copes, Jennifer Cramer, Andrew Deane, Maureen Devlin, Christina Fojas, Rebecca Gilmour, C. Eduardo Guerra Amorim, Lauren Halenar-Price, Ashley Hammond, Donna Harrison, Geoff Hayes, Amber Heard-Booth, Brian Hemphill, Nathan Holton, Rob Hoppa, Jennifer Hotzman, Rebecca Jabbour, Jessica Joganic, Kent Johnson, Erin Kane, Claire Kirchhoff, Myra Laird, Kristi Lewton, Christina Nicholas, Heather Norton, Robert O'Malley, Alejandra Ortiz, Nicholas Passalacqua, Christine Pink, Stephanie Poindexter, Emma Pomeroy, Sean Prall, Melissa Schaefer Elizabeth St Clair, Claire Terhune, Sam Urlacher, Qian Wang, Timothy Webster, Katherine Weisensee, Julie Wiczowski, Frank Williams, John Willman. The AAPA Executive Committee provided valuable feedback and reviews on symposium proposals. The Cleveland Advance Team also provided valuable service to the association through their efforts in composing the meetings (Leslie Aiello, Anne Grauer, M. Geoffrey Hayes, Edward Hagen, Christopher Kuzawa, W. Scott McGraw, and Denise Su). Ed Hagen has been immensely helpful as our talented webmaster. Graduate assistant Kathleen McGuire aided greatly in meetings planning and execution.

We thank our partners from Burk and Associates, especially Lori Strong, for her efforts in working throughout the year on meetings planning. Also from Burk, Heide Rohland, Brett Burk, Cooky Basura, Jill Drupa, Tammy Liberati, Raelene Sok, and Mary Lou Scarbrough, assisted in numerous ways, including handling registration problems, organizing volunteers, arranging invitation letters and certificates of participation, and sending out meeting-related e-mail announcements.

Special thanks go to our gracious hosts in Cleveland, the Local Arrangements Committee, Denise Su and Yohannes Haile-Selassie. We appreciate their time and energy, and the opportunity to engage with the Cleveland Museum of Natural History.

Table 1. Information on AAPA meetings, 2014-2019

Meeting	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
	Calgary	St. Louis	Atlanta	New Orleans	Austin	Cleveland
Registrations	1416	1552	1536**	1895**	1711**	1147***
Abstracts submitted	1019	1080	1110	1346	1229	1121
accepted	955	1065	1100	1311	1214	1090
Symposia (submitted/accepted/presented)	22/20	22/22/21	25/25/23	29/29/28	26/26/24	23/22/21
Podium symposium sessions	7	6	7	7	8	7
Poster symposium sessions	13	15	16	21	16	14
Contributed sessions	36	39	35	43	51	41
Podium sessions	19*	21*	18	17	22	18
Poster sessions	16	18	16	26	29	23
Evening poster sessions	1	0	0	3	2	1
Withdrawn papers (as of 3/25/19)	30	37	9	16	15	16

\*includes half-sessions, \*\*pre-registrations only, \*\*\*as of 11 Feb 2019

## Appendix 1. 2019 Keyword System

### Level 1

Bioarchaeology  
 Education in Biological Anthropology  
 Forensic Anthropology  
 Functional Anatomy/Tissue Biology  
 Genetics and Genomics  
 Human Biology  
 Paleoanthropology  
 Primatology

### Level 2

Human (Contemporary, Past or Fossil Hominins)  
Nonhuman Primates  
Other Animals

### **Levels 3 and 4**

Adaptation  
Ancient DNA  
Behavior  
Biogeochemistry/Biomolecular Studies  
Brain and Neurobiology  
Cognition and Communication  
Community Outreach  
Conservation  
Demography/Paleodemography  
Dental Anthropology  
Diet  
Early Homo  
Ecology  
Energetics  
Environment  
Epidemiology  
Epigenetics and Epigenomics  
Evolutionary Anatomy  
Genetics and Genomics: Evolutionary  
Genetics and Genomics: Population  
Health and Disease  
Hormones  
Late Homo  
Life History, Reproduction  
Methods  
Migration/Mobility  
Musculoskeletal Functional Morphology and Biomechanics: Cranio-dental  
Musculoskeletal Functional Morphology and Biomechanics: Postcranial  
Non-human Primate Evolution  
Nutrition  
Ontogeny, Growth, and Development  
Pedagogy  
Phylogenetics/Taxonomy/Systematics  
Pre-Homo Hominins  
Sexual Selection  
Skeletal Biology

Taphonomy  
Variation and Variability

**Appendix 2: Timelines**

<b>Event/Process</b>	<b>Open Date</b>	<b>Close Date</b>	<b>Reviews Complete</b>	<b>Notification Date</b>
<b>Keyword Revision</b>	6/18	7/15/18	N/A	N/A
<b>Symposium Proposals</b>	7/15/18	8/15/18	9/10/18	9/17/18
<b>Abstract Submission</b>	9/17/18	10/16/18 deadline 10/23/19 assigned to reviewers	11/25/18	12/3/18 (reject) 12/7/18 (accept)
<b>Workshop Proposals</b>	10/15/18	11/15/18	1/2/19	1/2/19
<b>Presentation Schedule Announced</b>				2/4/19