

***President's Weekly Bulletin – June 19, 2020***

***Robyn Mehlenbeck, PhD***

Dear Members, Trainees & Friends,

It is Juneteenth today, and so many of us are just learning what Juneteenth signifies. If you are still not sure, Juneteenth is a holiday commemorating June 19, 1865 when the last enslaved people in Texas and parts of Louisiana learned that slavery had been abolished. They had been kept in illegal slavery for 2 years, 6 months after Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863. This is Black America's 4<sup>th</sup> of July, with celebrations, gatherings and somber reflections.

What does this mean for SDBP? I don't have specifics yet, other than learning about this important holiday is one more step we can take as we work toward becoming an anti-racist society. Today, I personally plan to engage in more conversations, participate in a webinar and continue to seek education regarding Black history, and my own relationship with bias. If every member takes just one step today toward growth, imagine how SDBP might change for the better! The Board has created a subgroup to discuss the variety of actions we plan to propose to membership to help improve our society as an inclusive whole. Members have shared many ideas, and our goal is to thoughtfully, carefully and inclusively set up an action plan. Thank you to all who have contributed to these ideas! Keep them coming!

**2020 MEETING UPDATE**

***I am pleased to announce that our annual meeting in October has officially gone virtual!*** While we will clearly miss our in-person connection, Degnon Associates and our Program Committee are working hard to ensure an incredible, well connected and engaging meeting. More information will be forthcoming as the program is finalized. We hope that this will help with planning and saving time to participate! We have some creative ideas to share. And...we will get to visit Austin in 2021!

**A TIMELY UPDATE FROM OUR ADVOCACY COMMITTEE**

The Advocacy Committee would like to highlight two important victories in the world of legal rights this week. This past Monday (6/15/2020) the SCOTUS (Supreme Court of the United States) ruled (6 to 3) [affirming that sexual orientation and gender identity discrimination are prohibited under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act](#). Just yesterday (6/18/2020) the SCOTUS ruled (5 to 4) to [block the current executive branch administration's plan to dismantle the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals \(DACA\) program](#). Of note, the SCOTUS did not actually debate the status of DACA, it instead ruled that there was insufficient reasoning presented by the administration to revoke DACA.

We are still amid dual pandemics, one acute, the other acute and chronic. There is still a lot of work to be done in the world of advocacy. COVID-19 has placed a spotlight on significant disparities in healthcare. These are two examples of checks and balances in the US Government working to promote and maintain the rights of individuals. Today being [Juneteenth](#), let us all keep striving to advocate for change. Continue to advocate for reduction in healthcare disparities for our children. Continue to advocate for a world where children can grow up to be anti-racists. Today is the day of our Advocacy Action moment, but do not let it end today. Please continue to post blogs, write editorials, and promote policy changes for the betterment of patients and families. Please continue to post your stories on the discussion board.

Gratefully yours,  
The SDBP Advocacy Committee

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### SDBP CONNECT – WEDNESDAY June 24<sup>th</sup> at 12 Noon EST

Bring your questions, comments and thoughts. Let's share our ideas, prioritize issues to address and just connect. Share the topics that you would like to see covered in future SDBP Connect calls.

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Have a good weekend everyone – healthy, safe & with some self-care.

*Warmly,*  
Robyn Mehlenbeck  
President, SDBP

