

**ASSOCIATION OF PROFESSORS  
OF DERMATOLOGY  
STRATEGIC ROADMAP 2010  
MARCH, 2006**

## STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

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## INTRODUCTION

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The Association of Professors of Dermatology (APD) was established in 1960 by leading educators in dermatology. The initial purpose of the organization—which remains much the same today—was the promotion of medical education, research, and patient care, particularly in undergraduate and graduate dermatology training programs. Some of the objectives that have evolved and provided direction for activities by APD since the organization’s inception include:

- Advancing educational and patient care standards.
- Providing forums and networking opportunities for the exchange of information on academic dermatologic issues.
- Fostering the development of existing and new faculty.
- Developing support strategies for academic dermatology.
- Monitoring dermatologic person power needs for both academic centers and clinical practice.
- Maintaining a proactive organization that represents all academic dermatologic centers.
- Providing ethical leadership in the dermatologic community.

Over its 45-year history, the APD has enjoyed many successes. Its membership has grown significantly; its financial position is solid; and its programming and services attempt to be responsive to its growing membership. However, in more recent years, the organization has been confronted by many of the same challenges as other medical specialties. Total membership numbers, constrained by a stable number of training programs and two-member-per-program rule, have remained relatively stable, as has the approximately 40% of the membership who attend the annual meeting. The average age of an APD member is slightly beyond 58 years. With the top graduates of medical school (including MD/PhDs) selecting careers in dermatology, one would think that graduates of dermatology training programs would be interested in pursuing academic careers. Unfortunately data indicates just the opposite. At the same time, many academic dermatology programs are experiencing increased financial, personnel, and image challenges.

Convergence of these factors revealed the need for APD leadership to develop a strategic plan that will guide the organization over the next five years. Leadership recognized that critical issues such as the programs and services it provided, the APD’s image and visibility, human resources needs, and future funding of the organization needed to be addressed. Additionally, members of the leadership team, cognizant of APD’s organizational culture, recognized that both the strategic planning process as well as the quality of the plan would be of equal importance in getting membership to embrace and follow through in implementing it.

The APD planning process was initiated in March, 2005 and will be brought to the Board for approval in March, 2006. This plan provides both strategic directions for the APD, as well as incorporates the tactical steps to be undertaken to carry out the organization’s mission and achieve its vision. It is a powerful tool to guide the APD as it moves with clear purpose in creating its desired future.

## STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

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To assist the APD in its strategic planning efforts, Dr. John A. Yankey, PhD, the Leonard Mayo Professor Emeritus at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, was engaged to help design and facilitate the planning process. A 24-person Strategic Planning Committee was established, comprised of current APD board leadership, other APD board members, previous APD board leaders, representatives from other organizations or interests, e.g., DTEG, AADS, etc., as well as other invited participants and APD/SID administrative staff.

In June, 2005 a mail survey was conducted among current APD members, former APD members, and members of other dermatologic organizations to ascertain their perceptions of the APD, issues confronting the organization, and potential strategies that might be employed to address these issues.

Two working sessions at the October 1-2, 2005 APD Annual Meeting were used to develop and refine the organization's Mission, Vision, and Core Values Statements, as well as to identify the most critical issues confronting the APD. Additionally, these sessions focused on the initial development of strategic goals around four major thematic areas: (a) Programs and Services, (b) Organizational Structure and Operations, (c) Image and Visibility, and (d) Funding.

With APD members' input in hand, the APD's Strategic Planning Committee participated in a two-day retreat. Facilitated by Dr. Yankey and with support from the APD/SID administrative staff, the APD's organizational history and finances were reviewed and benchmarked in the context of similar organizations. The Mission, Vision, and Core Values Statements were further refined and four working teams each addressed one of the major thematic areas. The most critical issues in each of the areas were identified and goals and strategies to address these issues were proposed and reviewed in an open forum of retreat participants.

Following the retreat, ideas were distilled and incorporated into a draft strategic plan that also included tactical planning related to specific tasks, lead responsibilities, and timelines. This initial draft was directed to retreat participants for their edits and/or modifications, following which it was sent in draft form to the APD membership for their input.

This plan provides the APD a strategic road map to an exciting and challenging future. The statements of mission, vision, and core values that follow provide the focus for investing the organization's financial and human resources over the next five years:

## MISSION STATEMENT

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The mission of the Association of Professors of Dermatology is to advance dermatology through exceptional education, science, and clinical care.

## VISION STATEMENT

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The Association of Professors of Dermatology is the recognized leadership organization of and voice for academic dermatology. It is a vitally important vehicle for networking and communicating among dermatology programs throughout North America, facilitating the exchange of information regarding best practices and excelling in programming aimed at the recruitment, retention, and mentorship of academic faculty and future leaders. The APD will be the leader in setting the standard for ethical practice, professionalism, and excellence in academic administration.

## CORE VALUES STATEMENT

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The following core values serve as guiding principles for the APD to conduct itself with both internal and external constituencies and stakeholders.

### ***Integrity***

By this we mean:

- We are guided in our relationships by trust, candor, and honesty.
- We model and promote ethical behavior.
- We hold ourselves accountable to the highest personal and professional standards.

### ***Excellence***

By this we mean:

- We seek to achieve the highest standards of performance.
- We pursue the highest levels of academic quality and effectiveness.
- We have an unwavering commitment to quality.

### ***Leadership***

By this we mean:

- We assume a central role at the Academic Center, regional and national levels for planning and implementing programs leading to excellence in academic dermatology.
- We display qualities and behaviors that serve as a strong and desirable role model for academic faculty.
- We consider it our leadership responsibility to mentor others.

### ***Collaboration***

By this we mean:

- We effectively share new and improved systems of education and educational materials.
- We coordinate limited resources to maximize benefits to those we serve and to our profession.
- We work collegially with other dermatology organizations.

### ***Innovation***

By this we mean:

- We constantly seek new methods and tools for dermatology education and assessment.
- We develop and embrace new ideas for improving current practices.
- We maintain a long-range, visionary perspective.

These statements of the APD mission, vision, and core values provide the foundation upon which are based the following five goals that will guide the organization's allocation of human and financial resources over the next five years:

- Strengthen the academic dermatology workforce.
- Diversify and expand the APD membership base to ensure the organization's future.
- Create a comprehensive communications plan to increase the APD visibility.
- Establish a multi-year plan to generate sufficient revenue to sustain current and future APD programming.
- Enhance the composition, structure, and operations of the APD Board.

## **STRATEGIC GOALS AND STRATEGIES**

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### **Strategic Goal 1: Strengthen the academic dermatology workforce.**

#### ***Strategies***

- 1.1 Implement mechanisms to identify and attract future academic dermatologists.
- 1.2 Establish links to basic educational organizations to identify state-of-the-art teaching methodologies.
- 1.3 Initiate efforts to nurture and retain academic dermatologists, including career development activities.
- 1.4 Establish an ongoing mechanism to develop and offer varied training programs targeted to deans, chairs, faculty, and residents.
- 1.5 Enhance the mentoring program for future academic leaders.
- 1.6 Establish strategic affiliations aimed at expanding the workforce.

### **Strategic Goal 2: Optimize the APD membership base to ensure the organization's future.**

#### ***Strategies***

- 2.1 Explore, and extend as feasible, membership to all those with academic appointments.
- 2.2 Examine, and establish as appropriate, new membership categories.
- 2.3 Implement an aggressive membership recruitment campaign.
- 2.4 Establish a system to acknowledge and welcome new members.
- 2.5 Optimize the Annual Meeting format and content to grow membership.
- 2.6 Establish strategic affiliations to grow the APD's membership base.

### **Strategic Goal 3: Create a comprehensive communications plan to increase APD visibility.**

#### ***Strategies***

- 3.1 Design a communications approach for each of the APD's various audiences or constituencies.
- 3.2 Refine the use of the APD's web site to serve and report to its multiple audiences.
- 3.3 Establish formal procedures for dissemination of various types of information.
- 3.4 Revamp the design and expand the distribution of the APD's newsletter.
- 3.5 Distribute reports and other selected information to all academic dermatologists.
- 3.6 Place selected articles in a variety of dermatology publications.
- 3.7 Cultivate relationships with media representatives to enhance public relations and marketing efforts.

**Strategic Goal 4: Establish a multi-year plan to generate sufficient revenue to sustain the APD's current and future programming.**

**Strategies**

- 4.1 Determine the desired revenue mix (type, source, percentage) for APD.
- 4.2 Develop the capacity to identify and distribute information on funding for dermatological education, research, and clinical care.
- 4.3 Examine, and modify as appropriate, the APD's dues structure.
- 4.4 Develop and offer targeted fundraising training, including endowments-focused training.
- 4.5 Pursue strategic affiliations with other organizations for the purpose of raising funds.

**Strategic Goal 5: Enhance the composition, structure, and operations of the APD Board.**

**Strategies**

- 5.1 Examine the board's composition to ensure representation of dermatology programs of all sizes.
- 5.2 Expand board composition to include two residents.
- 5.3 Clarify the roles, responsibilities, and expectations for board members.
- 5.4 Revisit, and modify as appropriate, the terms of office for board members (including officers).
- 5.5 Revamp the board committee structure to effectively carry out the strategic plan.
- 5.6 Implement evaluations of individual board member's satisfaction and overall board performance.

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**CONCLUSION**

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The process of developing this strategic plan has deepened understanding of all involved regarding the APD's successes, challenges, and bright future. Additionally, the process has resulted in renewed commitment by members to work diligently to position the organization as the recognized leadership organization of and voice for academic dermatology. While the process has resulted in an excellent road map to strategically guide the organization over the next five years, this plan must be revisited and updated annually to remain relevant and responsive to the APD's changing environment. Such revision will keep the plan the living document it must be in order to best serve the organization in fulfilling its mission and achieving its vision.