



IAPB COUNCIL OF MEMBERS MEETING
17 SEPTEMBER, 2013

AGENDA ITEM 1.2D: NORTH AMERICA REGIONAL REPORT

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Report North America Region of IAPB 2013

January Regional Chair visited with Chair of V2020/Canada, John Ratcliffe in Toronto. Activities in Canada have focused on WSD events in the capital, Ottawa. WSD 2013 will be no exception. There is also a goal of strengthening the alliance across the country. The office of V2020/Canada is maintained at the offices of the Canadian National Institute for the Blind in Toronto. CNIB is an active member of IAPB and has offices across the country.

February Regional chair visited the blindness prevention program in Barbados. The major cause of blindness there is open angle glaucoma. Under the leadership of Dr. Dawn Grosvenor, a major glaucoma awareness week was held later that month. The report of that week's activities will be highlighted in the WSD advocacy materials being prepared by IAPB for 2013. In addition, an evaluation of the blindness prevention program is being conducted. Throughout the Caribbean, under the leadership of the Caribbean Council for the Blind, major blindness prevention efforts are ongoing. There will be sub-regional meeting in December.

March A monthly conference call was begun that brings together various groups working in Haiti. The goal is to better coordinate the activities of the various international organizations working in Haiti. To date IEF, ORBIS, AAO, Brien Holden Foundation, VOSH International and CBM have joined in the calls. We will soon be joined by PAHO. There is a national plan for blindness prevention being crafted at this time. Its release is anticipated for September or October of this year. This will then lead to a meeting with those IAPB members interested in working in Haiti in order to better coordinate the implementation of this plan.

Exciting news is the development of a school of optometry in Haiti to begin to address the acute need for primary and secondary eye care in this very poor country. The Brien Holden Foundation is heading up this worthwhile endeavor. It is hoped that the first class can be enrolled in the next few months.

April The Regional Chair attended the Board Meeting of IAPB, held in Bangkok. The information from that meeting has been distributed previously. The next Board meeting will take place along with the Council of Members meeting in London in September.

May A conference call for V2020/USA was held that included Peter Ackland. As a result of that call, V2020/USA has developed a plan to further develop a unified message for funders at the US Federal level. A consultant has been hired and a plan is under development. This is being done to assure that the already massive amount of US support for blindness prevention will continue.



June The second national Eye summit was held in Washington, DC. This exciting meeting brings hundreds of individuals interested in blindness prevention in the USA. Highlights of the meeting included presentations by the head of the National Eye Institute and the Centers for Disease Control. Of significance was the announcement of the results of an economic study on the costs of blindness in the USA. The total annual costs of blindness are **\$139 billion**. This ranks blindness as one of the major causes of economic costs attached to disability in the US. It highlights the value of programs that reduce these costs. Further information on this study is available at www.costofblindness.preventblindness.org. Also in June the Regional Chair and the Chair of V2020/USA were invited to the National Eye Institute. IAPB activities in the region were presented and a dialogue was begun that will continue in the future. It was a good time to remind the staff at NEI of the close relationship that existed between IAPB and NEI in the past.

Mark Ackermann chaired the annual V2020/USA meeting in Washington, DC. Many organizations, which are members, were able to attend. The decision was made to continue the plan to employ a consultant to coordinate advocacy for blindness prevention funding at the national level. The issue was also raised about the use of the V2020.org website for dissemination of information within the V2020/USA membership. Also, the opportunity to collectively purchase various services will be pursued in order to save money for the members who are interested. There is a great deal of enthusiasm among the members to strengthen the V2020/USA organization.

Submitted by:

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Regional Chair
September, 2013.