



Physician Citizens

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



By Richard J.D. Pan, MD, MPH

"The first requisite of a good citizen in this republic of ours is that he shall be able and willing to pull his own weight."

- President Theodore Roosevelt

Citizenship means active participation and service in civic life. Citizens create communities and hold them together. Research in public health shows that people with denser social networks and greater trust and reciprocity are healthier and live longer. The founding members of SSVMS were civic leaders as well as physician leaders. Your Board has recognized the importance of promoting civic leadership by SSVMS members today and I am pleased to share with you the results of our Community Involvement Survey conducted in July.

Of our members, 177 completed the survey. These members are interested in being active in a variety of areas, the top five being 41 percent in public health, 34 percent in children and adolescent issues, 30 percent in environmental issues, 20 percent in senior citizen issues, and 20 percent in parks and recreation. Approximately 80 percent are interested in serving on a local government committee or commission or on a non-profit board. Half lived in their neighborhoods for over 15 years; however, 6 percent lived in their neighborhood less than one year.

Of the respondents, 72 percent would participate in training in being an effective Board or Committee member, 49 percent on how to partner with local associations, and 57 percent on influencing local policy.

With the elections this year, it is comforting to know that 97 percent of the respondents vote regularly, 64 percent have written to an elected official, and 69 percent have made a political contribution. If these responses were representative of all physicians in SSVMS we would be a powerful force indeed in shaping policies to promote the health of our patients and communities. In the hierarchy of influence, these are the beginning steps towards active participation in the political process. However, at the higher levels of influence, only 4 percent have held a political fundraiser or have considered running for political office.

Our members are involved in a wide range of voluntary associations. Respondents reported participation in religious groups most frequently (40 percent), followed by charitable groups and drives (27 percent) and education groups (21 percent). However every one of the 31 different types of associations in the survey had a respondent who was a member.

Here are just a few examples from the survey of our physician citizens.

Dr. Gregory Herrera is on the board of "Never a Victim," an organization dedicated to self-defense to protect women and children, and a leader in fundraising for Child Protective Services; he is also involved in the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, the

Sacramento Revolver Club and the Sierra Club.

Dr. Dorr Bogard participates in the Area Agency on Aging in El Dorado County and writes for the Senior Times. Dr. Sandra Hand has served as president of school site councils and church councils and is currently on the board of the American Correctional Health Services Association. Dr. Richard Frink is active in the Sacramento County Tobacco Coalition and is Vice-President of the Sacramento Pioneer Association.

In addition to chairing our Committee on Environmental and Public Health, Dr. Donald Lyman is President of the American Cancer Society for California, on the board of the American Heart Association (Western States Affiliate), and a trustee for the Westminster Presbyterian Church.

Our Chair of the Historical Committee, Dr. Bob LaPerriere, is also a leader in numerous organizations, including chairing the California Historic Cemetery Alliance and the Sac-Area History Network and serving on the boards of the Pioneer Association Board, the Sacramento County Historical Society, and the Sacramento Association of Museums.

These are just a few examples of our members who are leaders in our community, and I hope we can recognize more of you in the future.

Thanks to everyone who completed the survey last July. Your civic leadership is impressive, and you are shining examples to your peers. SSVMS plans to field the survey again next year, and I strongly encourage you to complete the survey if you missed it this summer. This information will be important to SSVMS as we take our next steps toward increasing physician citizenship. I hope you too will volunteer to become a civic leader and strengthen our society.

richard.pan@ucdmc.ucdavis.edu

Sierra Sacramento Valley Medical Society
5380 Elvas Avenue #100 • Sacramento, CA 95819
916.452.2671 PH • 916.452.2690 FX • Email: info@ssvms.org

Copyright © 2000-2008 Sierra Sacramento Valley Medical Society - All Right's Reserved