

## CAHH SGM President's Report 2020 October 1

“Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose”. True and not true. Artists, scholars, clinicians, and citizens concerned with justice, wellness and suffering have dealt with much change over this past 18-month year. So, too, has CAHH. As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, we have needed to cancel our annual conference, find new ways to connect, work despite some members spending extra time on front lines of differing sorts. Yet we are fortunate in where we live and resources at hand. As a result, this report is being presented months later than usual, in a virtual rather than a physical, convivial gathering. But the Association continues to make progress.

One impact of the pandemic was the need to cancel Creating Space 10 in Vancouver in April 2020, and with that, to cancel the associated AGM. This prevented the elections that would have resulted in the planned transition of some Executive positions. The constitution mandates that the President's position, at the end of the two-year term, be taken over by the Vice-President and an election be held for the vacated Vice-President position. (Secretary and Treasurer positions are to be replaced by election in the alternate years). The constitution, like most governing documents, did not take into account such an extraordinary occurrence. Faced with this problem, in order to ensure continuity, the Executive proposed extending the term of the President and Vice-President for the time being and the Advisory Council agreed. Ultimately, we proposed to hold this SGM to allow the membership to weigh in on this issue. The AGM planned to be held at Creating Space 11 in April 2021 will include elections as required by the constitution.

### Creating Space conferences

**Creating Space 9.** The Creating Space 9 Conference at McMaster University was a success thanks to the efforts of Dr. Joyce Zazulak and Dr. Shane Neilson and their team.

**Creating Space 10.** During CS9, planning began for the Creating Space 10 Conference at the University of British Columbia in April 2020 by a team co-chaired by Dr. Sarah de Leeuw and Dr. Brett Schrewe. As the risks of the pandemic became more clear in early 2020, the conference organizing committee, in consultation with the CAHH Advisory Committee, made the painful but necessary decision to cancel the conference. They considered and dismissed a number of options that included postponing the conference to the autumn, converting keynote addresses to virtual (too little opportunity for active participation and too little time and expertise to ensure technical quality). We initiated several steps to lessen the blow to members and the Association:

- The conference organizing committee confirmed that all abstracts were still to be considered accepted and could be so referenced in presenters' CVs.
- Brett Schrewe compiled the abstracts into a document sent to registered attendees and placed on the CAHH website.
- The organizers offered to return conference fees unless registrants considered the process not worth the complexity and were offered the option of donating the fees to cover losses to the conference. CAHH is grateful to those who waived return of their registration fees.

- CAHH is also deeply grateful to UBC, the host site, for their generosity in refunding a large share of the deposits to secure the venues.

**Creating Space 11.** In view of the impact of cancelling our national conference in 2020 and the uncertainties of how conferences will be fashioned in the coming years, the Advisory Council began planning for Creating Space 11 in 2021. We agreed to continue to link ourselves with the Canadian Conference on Medical Education. CCME is planned to be in St. John's, Newfoundland in April 2021, though the balance of physical and virtual remains uncertain. CAHH member Dr. Monica Kidd, now at Memorial University, has convened an organizing committee which includes herself and Jill Allison (RN/PhD), Beth Whelan (PhD), Margo Wilson (MD).

### **Advisory Council**

Elections at the April 2019 AGM in Hamilton resulted in the creation of the inaugural Advisory Council whose positions and names are listed on the CAHH website. Recall that the duties of Council are to advise (quelle surprise) the Executive, raise issues of concern based on their individual and collective view of the health humanities community and take on defined tasks. The Council (which includes the Executive) has met monthly via videoconferencing since September 2019. At today's Special General Meeting, members of the council will share in describing their accomplishments since that AGM.

- **Rehana Hirji.** Represents clinical professions (Nurse or Allied Health or Physician). Occupational Therapist, University of Calgary and Alberta Health Services.
- **Bernice Fonseca.** Represents clinical professions student or resident. Family Medicine Resident, University of Calgary.
- **Tinu Ruparell.** Represents the arts and humanities including academics. Associate Professor, Classics and Religion, University of Calgary.
- **Ebru Ustundag.** Represents the public. Associate Professor, Geography and Tourism Studies, Brock University.
- **Alan Blum.** Represents international health humanities. Professor, Family Medicine, University of Alabama School of Medicine, USA.

The Advisory Council also includes ex-officio members, representatives from the two journals with which the Association is linked.

- **Barbara Sibbald,** Associate Editor, Humanities, Canadian Medical Association Journal
- **Allison Crawford,** Editor, Ars Medica

### **Enhancing the value of CAHH**

The Advisory Council and Executive have been working on several fronts to increase value to its members and profile in the community. Information resources mentioned are or will soon be available in searchable form on the redeveloped CAHH website. We hope that CAHH members will find these useful in their work and be keen to recommend extensions, enhancements and revisions.

- Support to members submitting grant proposals

- The AAMC Request for Proposal for a Scoping review of the use of arts and humanities in the education of physician and interprofessional learners across the developmental spectrum. This competition was won by Lorelei Lingard, Tracy Moniz and colleagues.
- The SSHRC New Frontiers in Research Fund – Transformation 2020. H.E.A.L. Medicine: Humanities Education and Anticolonial Learning for the Transformation of Medical Curriculum and Healthcare Delivery in Canada.
- Create a catalogue summarizing health humanities academic resources (significant journals, conferences, associations, scholars, training programs). *Sarah de Leeuw, Barbara Sibbald and Nicole Schafenacker.*
- Extend the existing map of Canadian Health Humanities programs and activities. *Rehana Hirji and Ebru Ustundag with support from Nicole Schafenacker* on Sarah de Leeuw’s team at the University of Northern British Columbia.
- Increase social media presence. Enhance website. *Ebru Ustundag.*
- Transition the AHSSM listserv, initiated by Pam Brett-MacLean in 2010, to CAHH. The new CAHH-L listserv was activated on 2020 May 25.
- Continue support for *Ars Medica*. *Allison Crawford.*
- Update and curate a database of Canadian health-related creative writing. Based on a website initially developed by Monica Kidd. *Bernice Fonseka and Ebru Ustundag.*
- Initiate a Canada-wide Virtual Health Humanities Rounds. *Alan Blum and Tinu Ruparell.*

This series will allow national or international participation and provide an opportunity for each of the centres to present once per year. The virtual rounds immediately following the SGM will inaugurate this series.

The pilot webinar, held in December 2019, was hosted by UBC. Led by Brett Schrewe and Sarah de Leeuw, it was used to explore the topic of “What’s in a Word: Exploring the Multiple Meanings of Humanism in Contemporary Healthcare and Health Professions Education. This was deliberately in preparation for CS10 and the theme chosen by CCME of “Weaving humanism into the fabric of medical education”.