

## **Welcome From ABCT's President**

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It is an honor and pleasure to welcome you to the 50<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention of the Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies. We have been planning this one for a long time! There is no better place than New York to hold our 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and the program is full of intellectual stimulation and fun surprises.

Our theme is “Honoring the Past, Envisioning the Future,” and it encompasses four broad, cross-cutting domains central to the recent history and future of ABCT. These include: (a) technology and treatment; (b) dissemination and implementation; (c) neuroscience and psychological treatment; and (d) cognitive science and transdiagnostic principles. The convention will feature four invited panels (each comprised of four panelists and a chair/moderator) on each topic, scheduled on the Friday and Saturday of the convention. The panelists will not only present their research, but will participate in a moderated discussion about the current state of the field and where we are heading. They are world-renowned leaders in their respective fields and we are therefore particularly eager for as many people to attend these panels as possible. For this reason, the program committee worked tirelessly on this innovative program to reduce overlap in scheduling. And a shout-out to students—you will have the opportunity to enter a raffle for a coffee hour with the panelists on the topic of your choosing.

Of course, we will also have our leading clinicians and researchers presenting workshops, symposia, panel discussions, and clinical roundtables, and don't forget to attend the poster sessions (with a record number of posters presented this year). In addition, unique celebratory activities at the convention will include 50 “fun” awards for the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, a “Golden Moments” area for taking photos of mentors and mentees, an interactive board for tracking of members' behavioral roots, a photo booth for fundraising, and a special Saturday late night social event. The videos and photos from those who participated in the Gold Challenge to raise funds for student travel and research awards will be on display at the convention and, in Play It Forward, ABCT members who are musically inclined are contributing to a commemorative album of songs that will be sold at the convention and on the ABCT website.

To celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of our organization is something special indeed. We have made enormous accomplishments over the last 50 years. With our central value being evidence-based treatments, we have succeeded in continuously updating our work to be in line with the latest scientific advances. Now is a particularly important time for innovative directions that will be showcased at our convention.

I want to thank the Program Chair, Katharina Kircanski, who has done an amazing job! I also want to thank Terry Wilson, chair of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee. In addition, I would like to thank the members of the 2016 Program Committee who reviewed general session submissions, and the chairs of the Convention and Education Issues Committees—Jeff Goodie (CIT), Aidan Wright (AMASS), Lauren Weinstock (Institutes), Sarah Kertz (MCS), Risa Weisberg (Research & Professional Development), and Barbara Kamholz (Workshops)—all of whom did an exceptional job. Finally, I appreciate the guidance of Linda Still, ABCT Director of Education and Meeting Services.

Look forward to seeing you in New York.