

Rachel Brakke Holman, MD, FAAPMR

Chair, Medical Education Committee

Tell members a little bit about yourself.

Your Practice

After growing up in Dallas, TX I attended college at Swarthmore College outside of Philadelphia. After college, I tried out a variety of jobs including working for a hedge fund and teaching pre-algebra at an international school in Indonesia. Ultimately, I decided to attend medical school in my home state at UTMB in Galveston, TX. After obtaining my medical degree, I completed a PM&R residency at the University of Washington and then went on to complete a sports focused Pain Fellowship at the University of Colorado. Currently, I am an Associate Professor at the University of Colorado and practice sports and spine medicine in Boulder, Colorado. I have worked in academic medicine since graduating from my fellowship. I work with residents or fellows almost every day of the week and have a passion for teaching and mentoring. I also serve as medical director of the CU Sports Medicine and Performance Center, where I have learned a tremendous amount regarding both the clinical side of medicine and the business side. I am also the Clinical Director for our academic PM&R department at the University of Colorado. I have served in a number of roles with the AAPM&R since residency. I first served as a member of the residency physician council (now the Phit board). I have remained active by serving on other committees including the Reimbursement and Policy Review Committee, Spine Vertical Planning Committee, and the Program Planning Committee which I have chaired. I am now the Chair Elect for the Medical Education Committee. I have truly enjoyed my roles with AAPM&R because they give me a different and broader perspective of physiatry and have given me the opportunity to try to move the needle in the educational offerings that are made available to practicing physiatrists no matter their practice setting.

Your Life Outside of Work

Outside of work, I am married to an Anesthesiologist and enjoy the challenges of balancing our work load and family life which includes two busy kids. On the evenings and weekends, I can often be found on the sidelines of a soccer or softball game. I also enjoy hiking in the Colorado high country and maintain a passion for running (slowly!) which began on my college's cross country team.

What accomplishments/honors are you particularly proud of that you would like to share with members?

As the newly appointed medical director of the multidisciplinary CU Sports Medicine Clinic, I faced an immediate challenge. Our clinic was struggling financially. By forming a strong partnership with the executive director of this clinic and its various committees and making some tough decisions, we turned the clinic around and have now had 3 profitable years in a row. In my role, I have learned much about

the business side of medicine and understand some of the common leadership challenges that come with it, including juggling a multitude of competing interests from providers, administrators, and two separate health care entities.

What have you advanced in your local community outside of or in conjunction with your medical practice?

In all my roles, a few themes seem to rise to the top. Collaboration, building relationships, and cultivating trust are essential. As former chair of the PPC, I am proud of the changes we brought to the Annual Assembly. Improving inclusion within our meetings was a high priority for me. This was reflected in the content offered and the backgrounds of the speakers. There is a lot more to do in this vein, but I am happy to say that we continue to head in the right direction. I also have a passion for leadership and teamwork training. This topic has fascinated me for years and is something I am always seeking out and attempting to refine. My interest in anthropology and medicine makes this field of study particularly fascinating to me. I hope to continue to publish and build my skills in this area to move this forward in medicine and Psychiatry. I believe that all physicians are seen as leaders and benefit from honing these skills.

What special skills or unique attributes do you bring to the Board of Governors?

I pride myself on being calm and open minded and enjoy listening to all perspectives before arriving at a decision. I possess no hidden agenda and I am apt to change course if a good reason supports it. Asking good questions seems to generally lead one in the right direction. I also recognize that I represent the voices of others that are not seated at the table and plan to approach topics and decisions with this in mind.

What is a current or future challenge to the Academy or the specialty that you look forward to addressing as a Board Member?

Medicine is in an interesting place right now. With many hospital systems and private practices facing economic woes, the physicians tend to get stuck in the middle where they are being squeezed to help the bottom line. I believe that this adds a tremendous amount of stress to the practicing psychiatrist. I am concerned about the high levels of burnout in our specialty and believe some of these issues are contributing to this. I look forward to working with other board members and committees to help support our physicians who are on the front lines. This could be through educational offerings, or legislation lobbied for, etc. I think most importantly we need to listen carefully to our colleagues to understand how best to help and move our specialty forward. 8. What have we not asked you that you think members should know about you? I think having fun is incredibly important to leading a happy life and having a fulfilling career. We don't always have to be so serious all of the time! Humor (when appropriate) is how I insert fun into my life while I work and play. I appreciate that I am surrounded by some really funny people and that ridiculous situations are happening to me on a regular basis. I try to find the good and the positive even in the challenging times. These traits keep me moving forward with my head up. I look forward to bringing my passions and skills to the Board of AAPM&R and am extremely humbled to have this opportunity.