

**1. How do you envision growing membership and promoting APHA in the next 5 years? How is APHA 2029 different from APHA 2024? What are key emerging issues and how will you approach them?**

The growth, promotion, and sustainability of our association are primarily through our ability to recruit, reclaim, and retain our members. The recruitment of new members can come from strategies we currently use and should also include potentially expanding member categories and reviewing our current fee structure. The review of membership categories has been done in the past but should be revisited from time to time as the needs of our communities change. It can also be helpful to review how similar organizations have structured their membership categories and how they engage with their members' recruitment, reclamation, and retention. While these strategies will also be helpful when reclaiming members, the key to this is to understand why they no longer are members of the association. APHA has some of that data and has been working diligently to provide an understanding of the benefits of membership and, essentially, the return on investment. Reviewing this data and talking with current members, especially students and early career professionals, can also provide insight into innovative and inclusive strategies that will retain our members and give a sense of belonging that we all seek in a professional home.

Our members are our voice, and the promotion of the association is the responsibility of the members, leadership, and APHA staff. This can be accomplished by creating an association-wide social media and marketing strategy to be utilized by all members, components, affiliates, and partners. Their active engagement within the association and their respective communities will provide opportunities to promote the association and show how the association supports communities in addressing critical issues like achieving health equity through addressing the social determinants of health, climate change, building workforce capacity and effectiveness, and increasing the overall recognition of public health as a critical need for community wellness. As President-Elect, I will engage with our members, components, affiliates, partners, students, and larger public health community to gain an understanding of current initiatives to address critical issues, identify the gaps, and work to build bridges in partnership with the association to champion our profession and work to strengthen the capacity of our communities.

APHA will look and operate differently in five years as we continue to increase member satisfaction and effectively implement our strategic plan. We will have highly engaged members across the association, a more inclusive environment, a more robust leadership pipeline, and increased visibility as an association and, thus, the field of public health. Our ability to accomplish our mission to build public health capacity and promote effective policy and practice

will be stronger than ever before. We must ensure that our voices are never silenced, that APHA is always at the forefront of innovation, and that we are never-ending in pursuit of equity.

**2. How do you propose to mentor, inspire and develop members of the APHA Community from underrepresented groups, with respect to rural and minority populations, into APHA leadership positions?**

As a candidate for APHA President-Elect, an educator, mentor, and mentee, I recognize the importance of mentorship and building leadership capacity. As a Black woman who has lived and worked in rural areas for over 16 years, I also understand the lack of representation, access, and resources for rural and minority populations. As we build a more inclusive association with a strong leadership pipeline and a stronger sense of belonging, I am confident that we can create an environment that nurtures and supports leaders as they find their voice in our profession. To provide these experiences, I propose the following:

*Continue to build our new APHA Mentoring Program.* Through this expansion, it is crucial to identify what mentor gaps exist. Do we have representation from rural areas and minority populations? If not, work with experts within our membership and engage with partners who serve these communities to recruit mentors from underrepresented groups. We should consider allowing non-members to be mentors if we don't already. Doing this could expand the mentor options for our members and encourage the non-member mentors to join the association. It is also beneficial to receive feedback from those currently being mentored and those serving as mentors within the APHA program. What has their experience been, and how can we improve moving forward? Additionally, adding fun and innovative activities (virtual and face-to-face options) can add excitement to a usually intimidating process.

*APHA Leadership Development Trainings and Handbook.* APHA recently released a leadership handbook that provides insight into the various leadership opportunities within the association, particularly in sections. This is currently being marketed to include a webinar to provide an overview of the document and leadership in the association. Discussions and training designed to groom potential leaders will provide a pathway to leadership across the association. As an association, we have done some of this in the past, but we need to be intentional with our marketing and engagement. These can be town halls or roundtable discussions facilitated through the Caucuses, SPIGs, Sections, Affiliates, and tailored to the needs and interests of the group. Additionally, providing training around public speaking, advocacy, strategic planning, and other essential leadership skills would be an invaluable addition.

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Responses to questions for the  
2024 President Elect Candidates

*APHA Rising Leader or Leader Spotlight.* This innovation would provide an opportunity to recognize members from across the association and highlight their service, leadership, or other accomplishments. Regardless of their current role in the association and the extent of their service, a simple “thank you” or “way to go” can go a long way. Each specified time frame can highlight one of the components, provide examples of rising and current leaders, and provide kudos to members. This can be communicated through APHA Lead, The Nation’s Health, our social media platforms, and newsletters.

People want to feel seen and supported and desire a sense of belonging and community. That is hard to do when you sign up for a mentoring program and aren’t matched because there aren’t mentors with what you desire or need or if you don’t feel supported or appreciated. We are working to provide that, but we must do better. The future of our association and profession depends on it.