

[From the President's Desk](#)

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Thank you for this honor

Donald S. Karcher, MD

September 2025—It's hard to believe that my two-year term as president of the CAP is already at its end. By the time you read this column, Jim Zhai, MD, will have been sworn in as our new president at the CAP annual meeting in Orlando.

Serving as CAP president has given me amazing opportunities that I'm sure I would never have experienced otherwise. Perhaps the most rewarding has been the chance to meet hundreds of pathologists in the U.S. and across the globe and to witness firsthand the great work they're doing for our profession, for the CAP, and particularly for our patients. The worldwide community of pathologists is truly impressive.

I've had the privilege of representing the CAP at a number of state pathology society meetings and seen how these organizations are supporting pathologists in their states and providing powerful advocacy on both local and national issues. These groups are also a great source of educational resources for their members and provide a wonderful entrée into organized medicine for pathology trainees. A particularly noteworthy activity for residents that I've seen at some state society meetings is Pathology Jeopardy, where residents from multiple state programs compete by answering pathology questions. What a great way to celebrate the residents' mastery of pathology and make them feel welcome and valued at these meetings!

My travels as CAP president have brought me to 16 states, Canada, Great Britain, South Korea, Japan, Malaysia, and the United Arab Emirates. I've given talks, hosted dinners, and attended many pathology meetings, finding a common theme across all of these varied places and audiences: The CAP is revered as the standard bearer of pathology and laboratory quality worldwide. When I attended the Medlab Middle East conference twice in Dubai—a meeting that attracts 30,000 attendees—it was not unusual to see a line of people waiting to shake my hand or get a picture taken with me. I know this wasn't about me personally but about their respect and admiration for the CAP.



Dr. Karcher

An important role for the CAP president is to help advocate for the things we need to provide the best possible care for our patients. One of the proudest moments I've had was helping to stop the unworkable FDA rule for oversight of laboratory-developed tests. Part of that effort involved my

testifying before a congressional committee. I still remember getting goosebumps when I realized I was seated in the very chair that Anthony Fauci so capably occupied during the many times he was grilled by Congress. Stopping the rule was certainly a welcome victory for the CAP, but it was also a great example of the entire clinical laboratory community speaking clearly and forcefully about what was right for our laboratories and our patients.

I also had the chance recently to attend a health care roundtable held by Republican physicians serving in Congress, alongside the president of the American Medical Association and leaders of most of the other major physician organizations. I was thrilled to be the voice of pathologists for such an important audience.

I've been entrusted in other ways to carry messages on behalf of the pathology community, in this case to the people we all serve—patients. I've given well over 100 interviews on television and radio and in the print media, helping the general public to understand what pathologists do and the expertise we provide, as well as driving home critical points about health care, such as the importance of vaccination against common infectious diseases and the increasing need for cancer screening in younger people.

As I look ahead, I see so much promise and opportunity for the CAP and pathologists in the U.S. and around the world. We are successfully addressing the workforce shortage of pathologists—it's been very satisfying to see that the number of young people choosing pathology is now on the rise. I hope we continue that work and focus on increasing diversity and eliminating inequity within our ranks and throughout health care going forward. Also, as we continue to expand our international footprint, I'd like to see the CAP make every effort to bring what we have to offer to parts of the world that can't yet fully afford our resources. Even though my term as president is ending, I will keep working through the CAP to help achieve these important goals.

I want to express my heartfelt thanks for the opportunity to lead this great organization. It has truly been the highlight of my career and the honor of a lifetime. I also want to publicly thank my wife, Lois, and our entire family for being so patient and understanding as I've fulfilled my duties as CAP president.

Finally, I want to welcome Dr. Zhai as our new president. I know we will be in good hands under his capable leadership. Jim, I wish you all the best in this rewarding role.

Dr. Karcher welcomes communication from CAP members. Write to him at president@cap.org.

