

# From the President's Desk: Welcome home

## Emily E. Volk, MD

October 2021—I was born into the home of medicine. With a father who was an obstetrician/gynecologist and a mother who was a nurse, there was virtually no separation between our home and medical practice. And while I value how much medicine has shaped my life, I should probably note that my health-care-focused upbringing was little consolation to the parents of my third-grade classmates when I brought in a human placenta for show and tell and delivered some unwanted birds-and-bees education in the process.



Dr. Volk

While medicine has always felt like home to me, as a pathologist, the CAP has become my home as well. This organization has given me a sense of belonging and tremendous opportunity. The first CAP committee I served on was the Cytopathology Resource Committee. I had the privilege of attending the historic Bethesda meeting where we determined how Pap tests would be reported going forward. That system is still in place today.

Through the CAP, I have participated in Hill Day to advocate for pathologists with our elected officials in Washington; I have done the same with policymakers in state governments. Along with my CAP colleagues, I have screened women for breast and cervical cancer at See, Test & Treat events at the Rosebud Indian Reservation in South Dakota. Recently, my CAP activities helped me stand out among other candidates and land a new job as chief medical officer at Baptist Health Floyd, a tertiary care hospital in southern Indiana.

Thanks to the CAP, I have developed large professional networks and lifelong friendships with pathologists from all over the world. (Those connections most recently led to an adjunct position at the University of Louisville as a cytopathologist, a role that nicely complements my CMO position.) I hope that all CAP fellows share this experience, and this feeling of having a professional home. Whether you practice clinical pathology or anatomic pathology, whether you practice in a hospital or an independent laboratory, whether you are a practice owner or an employee, the CAP is your home. Whatever your ancestry, your country of origin, your gender, this is your home. The CAP is where we can come to fill our cup, to keep us on mission, to connect us to our shared purpose as pathologists.

I am so proud to be a member of the CAP, and one of the best ways I share this with others is by using FCAP in my credentials. Generally I prefer to avoid endless letters after my name—I have an MBA, for instance, but don't feel the need to tack it on after my MD—but the FCAP is a powerful designation. I always use it when signing my name professionally.

FCAP is more than just a simple abbreviation. It means you are a physician and a board-certified pathologist. It means you're a member of the largest pathologists' organization. It means you're part of the quality community for laboratories, a community that stands for truth. The CAP was founded on the notion that we needed to find the truth in medicine. It is a profound mission that means as much today as it did at our founding 75 years ago.

In the past year and a half, we have all borne witness to the fact that bad information can kill people. Lies about vaccination that have been propagated on social media have led to thousands of deaths. Being a pathologist

means being part of a community that always seeks out the truth. We actively stand against misinformation. I think that's amazing. And I hope we all show that we're part of that community by proudly using FCAP on our badges, on our lab coats, and on our signature lines.

As I begin my term as president of the CAP, I would like to thank my predecessor for everything he did in that role. Pat Godbey, MD, and I have been partners in leadership roles in the CAP for a long time, and I have valued that partnership. He is thoughtful and strategic and a fierce advocate for membership and payment advocacy on behalf of all CAP members. I believe the entire pathology community is better because of his service as our president. Thank you, Dr. Godbey, for your friendship and your leadership.

*Dr. Volk welcomes communication from CAP members. Write to her at [president@cap.org](mailto:president@cap.org).*