

President-elect candidates discuss how they would help AAP navigate political landscape

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Editor's note: To learn more about the candidates and election rules, visit www.aap.org/election (login required). Voting will take place from May 26-June 9.

How will your skills and experiences help the AAP navigate the politically polarized national landscape?



Moira A. Szilagyi, M.D., Ph.D., FAAP

Marina del Rey, Calif.

The AAP masterfully navigates our politically polarized national landscape to advance the health and well-being of all children. I believe my career experiences integrate well with the AAP in this challenging endeavor.

My career as a primary care physician, child welfare specialist and academic pediatrician has been dedicated to developing programs and advocating for improved health care for children and adolescents in foster and kinship care. I have worked in close partnership with and often led large interdisciplinary teams whose members had varying and sometimes conflicting viewpoints. Finding common ground and forging a workable compromise has required attentive, attuned listening to varied perspectives, using data wisely and forming respectful partnerships with leaders in health, mental health, child welfare, insurance and policy while keeping the ultimate shared goal of best serving children and families in mind. While progress toward a larger goal can sometimes feel incremental, goal-informed collaboration occasionally leads to large leaps forward.

In New York, on behalf of children in foster care, I led teams that created an integrated-care medical home; developed the national foster care health guidelines; and tested the transition from fee-for-service to Medicaid managed care. My work with the AAP Washington office reinforced the importance of collaborative cross-systems partnering to achieve important changes for children.

These leadership experiences have sometimes required me to reach across chasms to find common ground, while simultaneously identifying like-minded partners and advocating vigorously for children, families and pediatricians. Bridging chasms is always easier when we focus on what is best for children.

Mobeen H. Rathore, M.D., FAAP

Jacksonville, Fla.



I have had the privilege of working with organized medicine at the local, state and national levels for decades. These experiences have taught me to form coalitions, regardless of political affiliations, to successfully advocate for children. I have succeeded in my efforts because of my focus on children, which disarms polarized constituencies, which allowed for success in advocacy. As a registered independent, kids are my focus. Advocating for children is my life's mission and passion.

I successfully advocated for increased resources for access to health care for HIV affected children and families. I formed coalitions with government agencies, activists and parents, and effectively used media to get women and children's programs funded adequately. This allowed me to establish a multidisciplinary, comprehensive HIV program in north Florida after several previous failed attempts (<https://hscj.ufl.edu/pediatrics/ufcares/>).

I also organized in my community to start a free clinic for the uninsured.

When it was absolutely necessary, I led the charge for children in the courts. As president of the AAP Florida Chapter, I led the court battle to successfully overturn the Florida law prohibiting physicians from discussing firearm safety with patients and parents. I also successfully fought for improved access to health care for children by bringing Medicare parity for Medicaid payments. Both of these court battles had many partners, including the AAP and several professional organizations.

I have the skills and experience required to form partnerships, build consensus and find common ground.

Please visit my website to learn about my experience and positions, <https://mobeenrathore.com/>.