



WASHINGTON, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA – The American Psychological Foundation (APF) has launched its 2024 program year with the appointment of Dr. Melba J.T. Vasquez as APF President. After serving as APF Vice President since 2017, Dr. Vasquez will now oversee the implementation of APF’s comprehensive plans for 2024 as President.

Dr. Vasquez is a past president of the American Psychological Association (APA) and was the first Latinx and woman of color of 120 presidencies of APA to serve in that role. She also served on the APA Board of Directors, is a former president of the Texas Psychological Association (TPA) and of APA Divisions 35 (Society of Psychology of Women) and 17 (Society of Counseling Psychology). She is co-founder of APA Division 45 (Society for the Psychological Study of Ethnic Minority Issues), and of the National Multicultural Conference and Summit.

“I am enthusiastic about assuming the role of President of APF. I am fortunate that this is during a time when we have a very strong Board, and a solid and talented staff. I am very much in tune with and passionate about the principles and goals of the Foundation to fund researchers and practitioners who use psychology to solve societal problems and improve people’s lives,” said Dr. Vasquez. “We are embarking on an exciting model of fundraising that we believe will be inspiring for donors and grant recipients alike. I am honored and eager to support the continued success of this thriving and vital Foundation.”

Joining Dr. Vasquez and filling the vacancy in the Vice President role for APF is Dr. Katherine Nordal. After 28 years in independent practice in Mississippi, Dr. Nordal served as the APA Executive Director for Professional Practice from 2008 until her retirement in 2018. Dr. Nordal is a fellow of APA and past president and fellow of the Mississippi Psychological Association (MPA). Prior to her position at APA, Dr. Nordal was very active in APA governance, having served on its Board of Directors, Council of Representatives and chair of both the APA Committee on Rural Health and the Committee for the Advancement of Professional Practice (CAPP).

“I am so very honored to serve in my new role on the Board of APF, the premiere philanthropic organization dedicated to the support of doctoral level graduate students and early career psychologists engaged in academia, research and psychological practice,” said Dr. Nordal. “These individuals are indeed the future leaders of our discipline and profession. APF has a wonderfully dedicated, energetic, and passionate staff as well as a very committed Board of Trustees. I look forward to working with this incredibly talented and committed group as we continue to grow in our ability to fund the very important research which addresses key societal issues and improves the lives of our citizens.”



Together with APF CEO Dr. Michelle Quist Ryder, the Board of Trustees and staff, Drs. Vasquez and Nordal will guide the Foundation into the next stage and oversee the expansion of multiple areas of focus. APF's efforts in 2024 will include significant growth in programming related to combatting LGBTQIA+ stigma and fighting for racial equity.

“Dr. Vasquez and Dr. Nordal are such amazing women with phenomenal accomplishments; I am honored to be tackling these pressing societal issues with them,” said Dr. Quist Ryder. “APF is entering a new era of work – we are not only continuing our role as a donor choice organization, wherein we help individuals realize their dreams of having a significant philanthropical impact in the field of psychology, but we are also building out our own programs to address our Visionary priorities. I can't think of anyone I would rather have on my team than this slate of Trustees and staff!”

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