



As APS president, I have focused much of my energy on the APS issue of the year: Increasing Access to Quality Healthcare for Children and Adolescents Who are Incarcerated (2023–2024). The APS Presidential Plenary highlighted our effort to activate child healthcare leaders to engage in a multi-disciplinary strategy for improving the healthcare of youth in custody. Also, during the Presidential Plenary, Bryan Stevenson JD, the founder and director of the Equal Justice Initiative ([Home\(eji.org\)](http://Home(eji.org))), provided a powerful point about our carceral system and the need for just mercy in supporting our youth held in custody. Other tangible APS actions related to the year's issue was the summer 2023 council meeting in Montgomery, Alabama, where we visited the [Legacy Museum from Enslavement to Mass Incarceration](#) and the [National Memorial for Peace and Justice](#). The visit set the tone and provided the background and context for the APS council to embrace the APS issue of the year.

Other tangible APS outcomes for the issue of the year have been multiple commentaries published in our official journal, *Pediatric Research*, emphasizing several of the biggest challenges for this invisible population: (1) APS issue of the year [Increasing access to quality healthcare for children who are incarcerated: American Pediatric Society issue of the year \(2023-2024\) - PubMed \(nih.gov\)](#), (2) [Time-sensitive healthcare guidelines for youth with chronic diseases in custody: gaps in care - PubMed \(nih.gov\)](#) -see the table below, (3) [Enhancing medical education: youth in custody - PubMed \(nih.gov\)](#), (4) [Medicaid policy changes are set to allow coverage for some health services for youth in custody: what should pediatricians know? - PubMed \(nih.gov\)](#), (5) [Increasing access to sexual and reproductive health care for youth in custody | Pediatric Research \(nature.com\)](#). With the help of the APS Advocacy Policy Committee, we have elected to reach out to the medical professional societies that write evidence-based guidelines for medical care for children and adolescents and encourage these societies to at least mention the invisible population of youth health in custody and provide reasonable minimum health care standards for this population.

The American Society of Hematology has been the first to embrace this new quality care objective. In May 2024, we met in Washington DC, with 6 carceral experts and 3 sickle cell disease experts to address this gap in the American Society of Hematology's evidence-based guidelines for children and adults with SCD held in custody. The small group has been tasked to move forward with a commissioned commentary to adapt the ASH time sensitive SCD guidelines for those in custody. The APS Advocacy Policy Committee will continue to identify other gaps in evidence-based guidelines for youth in custody and will continue to solicit changes in these guidelines to at least acknowledge our youth in custody. A special thanks to Elizabeth Barnert, MD, newly elected APS member, who has been my tutor and partner in educating me about the challenges of this special population of children and working with me to advance APS's issue of the year.

We introduced a pilot program, the APS President Book Club, which has been a resounding success. I am grateful to the moderators and the participants who have supported enlightening conversations regarding the selected books. The books were 'a Lab of One's Own — One Women's Personal Journey Through Sexism in Science' by Rita Colwell, PhD, and Sharon Bertsch McGrayne; 'The Deepest Well' by Nadine Burke Harris, MD; 'Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents' by Isabel Wilkerson; 'Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption' by Bryan Stevenson, JD; 'The Sum of Us: What Racism Costs Everyone and How We Can Prosper Together' by Heather McGhee, JD; and 'GRIT: The Power of Passion and Perseverance' by Angela Duckworth, PhD. I want to extend a special thanks to the moderators who ventured into the uncharted territory of a virtual APS Book Club – Lisa Satlin, Peggy Hostetter, Harold Lehmann, Lisa Robinson, Tamera Coyne-Beasley, Elizabeth Barnert, Katie Plax, and Joseph St. Geme, III. Through this initiative, we have learned about each other and explored ways to enhance our academic mission of advancing medical care for our children.

APS leadership also teamed with SPR leadership to create the first-ever mini-Gordon conference for our APS-SPR Journeys recipients at PAS, which had 62 attendees. The conference was a success, and I want to acknowledge the Burroughs Wellcome Foundation, which co-sponsored it.

Also, for the first time at PAS, APS with SPR sponsored 50 medical students, residents, and physician-scientist trainees from the University of Toronto Medical School focused on improving child health. This urgent effort was our immediate response to the recent match results in pediatrics, revealing the low number of medical school graduates electing a pediatric residency. Special recognition for this timely response goes to the APS Council, APS staff- Lisa Thompson, Michelle Brunoehler, and Shelly Jobe, immediate APS Past President Lisa Robinson, APS President-elect Cliff Bogue, and APS Secretary-Treasurer Catherine Gordon, who all supported a timely response to register and host the 50 trainees at PAS in less than 30 days!

On a more personal note, one of the year's highlights was having dinner and coffee the following morning at Alan Jobe's home, the 2024 Howland Awardee, in December of 2023. Rarely do you have an opportunity in your career to share a meal with a pioneer in the field who has meant so much to so many.

In summary, thank you for a great year as APS President. Although my time has ended, the memories will last a lifetime.

Peace,



Michael

APS President 2023-2024

Professor of Pediatrics and Medicine at Vanderbilt University School of Medicine,
JC Peterson Endowed Chair

Founder and Director of the Vanderbilt-Meharry Sickle Cell Disease Center of Excellence.

Guidelines for the management of morbidities or youth incarnated with the acute manifestation of the following chronic disease classified as having an Emergency Severity Index (ESI) of 2 requiring triage within 20 minutes [Time-sensitive healthcare guidelines for youth with chronic diseases in custody: gaps in care - PubMed \(nih.gov\)](#)

Life Threatening Chronic Disease (acute exacerbation)	Time Sensitivity	Professional Organization	Guidelines For Adults in Custody Settings	Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Custody
Type 1 Diabetes (hypoglycemia)	Immediately	American Diabetic Association	Yes	No
Asthma (status asthmaticus)	Immediately	Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America/American Thoracic Society	Yes/No	No
Cystic Fibrosis (acute pulmonary exacerbation)	Immediately	Cystic Fibrosis Foundation/American Thoracic Society	No	No
Sickle Cell Disease (acute vaso-occlusive pain)	Immediately	American Society of Hematology	No	No
Epilepsy (seizure)	Immediately	American Epilepsy Society	Yes	No
Cancer (acute illness)	Immediately	American Cancer Society	No	No