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Renewals for 2019-2020
Membership Dues
Dues notices for regular and associate members should have been received by now. Dues run from July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020. To download a membership form click here.

Nominations to Serve on NASCSA’s Executive Committee
It is not too late to begin thinking about running for office on the Executive Committee. At the present time all officer positions are open and there are several Executive Committee positions that are open. If you are interested in serving please email Ralph Orr

President’s Message
Many months have passed since we last gathered in beautiful sunny Scottsdale, AZ to learn about all things controlled substances. This year our conference is being held in Richmond, VA where it should be warm and sunny, just perfect for those of us who experienced record cold and snowfall this past Winter. The conference will begin on Monday, October 21, 2019 at 8:30 a.m. and end at 11:30 a.m. on Thursday, October 24, 2019. In the past, the conference began on Tuesday and ended Friday, but the membership indicated in post-conference surveys that holding the conference from Monday-Thursday would be preferred.

With the 2018 conference behind us and in preparation for the 2019 conference, which will be the 35th Annual Conference, the program committee has been busy preparing another informative agenda.

In addition, the other eight committees, including the newly formed, “Controlled Substance Committee”, chaired by Karen Tannert, TX; have been meeting regularly and working diligently for YOU the members of NASCSA. I applaud them for their efforts and thank them for volunteering their time. Remember-you too can participate on any of the nine committees, as new members are always welcome. Just contact the committee chair to express your interest.
Speaking of participating, NASCSA is always looking for members interested in running for a spot on the Executive Committee, please contact Ralph Orr, Nomination Committee chair if you are interested or know of someone who might be interested.

I am looking forward to seeing each of you in Richmond, VA and wish you a wonderful spring and summer.

Barbara Carter, President

Save the Date for our Annual Conference

The 35th annual conference will take place at the Omni Hotel October 21-24, 2019 in Richmond, Virginia. Online registration is available under the NASCSA room block here. Conference registration information is located here. We strongly urge members to book your hotel early as this is a particularly busy time of year and the hotel is extremely popular. A draft program has been posted however we will be updating the program periodically so please make sure to check the 2019 conference website frequently.

Don't Miss the June 28, 2019 Travel Scholarship Deadline

The Executive Committee has authorized the awarding of six (6) travel scholarships to attend this year’s annual conference. Travel scholarship criteria as well as the application form and instructions have already been posted here. The deadline for submitting applications is June 28, 2019.

NASCSA Committee Spotlight

NASCSA President Barb Carter created a number of committees that have been meeting throughout the year on a variety of projects. Committee members, comprised of volunteers from member states as well as associate members are the backbone of the organization. For a list of committee members click here.
FDA Issues Request for Information on Possible Packaging Requirements for Some Opioids

Describing the ongoing opioid epidemic as a "defining public health crises of modern times," Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is seeking feedback on a potential requirement for certain types of opioid painkillers to be made available in unit-dose packaging that would help to mitigate opioid misuse. Specifically, the agency is requesting:

- comments on the potential public health impact of making fixed-quantity unit-of-use blister packages of these medications available for the treatment of acute pain; and
- feedback on which specific opioid or opioid-containing products are good candidates for blister package configurations and the number of pills to be included in the configuration.

FDA is considering these actions following the passing of the Substance Use-Disorder Prevention that Promotes Opioid Recovery and Treatment for Patients and Communities Act (SUPPORT Act) in 2018. The SUPPORT Act grants FDA the authority to require special

Membership - Members of the committee have finalized the Bill Ward Education Award (see sidebar) and have revised the current Travel Scholarship criteria and will be updating the NASCSA brochure. Additionally, the committee is working on identifying and inviting others within the realm of controlled substances and controlled substance authorities who may benefit from being a member of NASCSA.

Controlled Substances Committee - The Controlled Substances Committee met for the first time March 29th. Members reviewed the long-term goals of the committee including such items as routine review of bylaws and resolutions of the association, as well as identifying emerging trends in controlled substances enforcement. The committee is currently working on identifying potential speakers and topics on specific issues related to controlled substances for the upcoming conference.

Program Committee - Members of the committee are well on their way to finalizing the 2019 conference program. A preliminary draft has already been posted but please continue to check for periodic updates as the program is finalized.

Survey/Data/IT - The committee has begun its work of developing potential surveys of the membership. We ask that state agencies check the state profile page here for their respective states and let us know whether any information needs updating by contacting Kathy Keough at kathykeough@nascsa.org. If there is information you feel would be helpful, please forward those suggestions.

Prescription Monitoring Program - The NASCSA PMP Committee has been busy with several efforts including brainstorming topics for the PMP-related presentations at the Annual Conference as well as working on an outline to guide future reviews of NASCSA's Model Act. The Committee has several subcommittees which are focusing on resolutions and bylaws, data integrity, and collaborating with partners. Furthermore, one individual represents the PMP Committee on NASCSA's Education and Survey Committees and provides the Committee with updates and action items. We also review ad hoc requests that arise from the Executive Committee or membership. It has been a busy and productive season.

Policy and Procedures - A committee has been formed to review NASCSA's written policies and procedures to ensure that these documents are up to date. These policies ensure the smooth operation of the organization and provide a roadmap for overall operations of the organization.

Finance Committee - A committee has been formed to review NASCSA's finances on an ongoing basis and to
packaging for opioids and other drugs that pose a risk of abuse and overdose.

“Our goal, through the step we’re taking today and the many complementary actions we’re taking to address the opioid crisis, is to promote more rational prescribing practices of opioids and reduce the rate of new addiction while maintaining appropriate access for patients who need these drugs,” the agency said in a statement posted on the FDA website.

A full listing of the requirements being considered and an outline of the general process for implementing any packaging requirement changes are detailed in a Federal Register announcement.

**NASCSA is on Twitter**

NASCSA is pleased to announce that it is now on Twitter and the number of followers continues to grow each month so please follow us at @NASCSA.

**Education Committee** - The NASCSA Education Committee has been working on some exciting and educational Webinar's for our members. On May 1st, we hosted a Webinar entitled: *PMP Reporting: Department of Veterans Affairs and Military Health System*. For those unable to participate we have posted the recording along with responses to several questions received.

Another webinar will be hosted on June 11, 2019 at 2 p.m. Eastern Time entitled *The Pain of Trauma, the Trauma of Pain: How Changing Our Thinking About Chronic Pain will Positively Impact Our Approach to our Patients and to the Opioid Crisis* that will feature Dr. Bennett Davis on how trauma and the opioid epidemic intersect. To register please click here.

Additionally, the Education Committee continues to explore new and exciting ways to bring educational materials and topics to our members. We welcome any suggestions from our membership regarding topics or other methods to share education and information.

**Nominating Committee** - In order to streamline the nominating process for election of officers, a formal committee has been formed.

**Resolutions/Bylaws** - The Resolutions and Bylaws Committee sent out a survey to membership requesting feedback on potential resolutions for the upcoming NASCSA annual conference. The committee is asking for your assistance by taking the time to complete the survey as well as any suggestions members may have on possible resolutions for consideration.

**Comings and Goings**

The following changes in personnel have occurred. If you know of any changes/updates in personnel please contact Kathy Keough at KathyKeough@nascsa.org.

**Alaska** - Brian Howes, Investigator at the Alaska Division of Corporations, Business and Professional Licensure, who also served on the Board of NASCSA announced his retirement as of May 31, 2019.

**Georgia** - Ronnie Higgins retired as Deputy Director of the Bureau of Drugs and Narcotics Agency. Michael Karnbach has assumed his role.

**Idaho** - Nicki Chopski has been named as Executive Director of the Board of Pharmacy.
Nevada - Larry Pinson, long time Executive Director of the Board of Pharmacy and past officer of NASCSA recently retired. David Wuest has been named as Executive Director, while Yenh Long has been appointed Deputy Executive Director.

Massachusetts - David Johnson has been promoted to Director of the Drug Control Program at the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. In addition to his duties as Director of the Drug Control Program, Mr. Johnson will also be responsible for the state's Prescription Monitoring Program.

Mississippi - Susan McCoy was recently named as Executive Director of the Board of Pharmacy.

New York - Paul Thompson has been named as the Acting Executive Director for the New York Board of Pharmacy.

NABP and Partner Organizations Release White Paper Detailing Illegal Pill Press Activity

Three organizations are raising the alarm about the easy availability of pill presses that are used illegally to make dangerous counterfeit drugs. NABP, National Association of Drug Diversion Investigators, and The Partnership for Safe Medicines have released a jointly produced white paper titled *Illegal Pill Presses: An Overlooked Threat to American Patients*. The paper details how bad actors can purchase pill presses for less than $500, allowing them to turn cheap, readily available, unregulated ingredients - such as fentanyl - into counterfeit, adulterated, or unapproved drugs. The white paper notes that Americans in at least 30 states have been killed by taking such drugs masquerading as medication, and explores how criminals acquire such devices.

Key findings include:

- Pill presses are broadly available for sale on the internet and are virtually untracked.
- The broad availability and sale of pill presses allow novice criminals to make millions of doses of counterfeit medications.
- Possession of a pill press is not well regulated; at most, it is a violation of a DEA registration requirement that carries no jail time.
- Disrupting the availability of pill presses will be a challenging process.

The white paper also includes a Policy Tools section that details ways legislators, law enforcement, and other key stakeholders have suggested to address the problem of widespread pill press availability.
The paper was officially released on March 19, 2019, during a live event and roundtable discussion in Tallahassee, FL. In attendance were former national law enforcement officials, family members of people lost to pills made in illegal presses, and Florida health care and law enforcement representatives. The white paper is available under Research Briefs and Papers in the Publications and Reports section of the NABP website.

New Steps Announced by FDA Related to Regulation of Cannabis and Cannabis-Derived Products

Following the passage of the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018, which creates a new category of cannabis classified as "hemp," and removed hemp from the Controlled Substances Act, FDA is announcing new steps being taken to advance consideration of lawful marketing of cannabis and cannabis-derived products under existing authorities, the agency announced in a statement. These steps include:

- A public hearing was held on May 31, 2019, and a broader opportunity for written public comment, encouraging stakeholders to share their experiences and challenges related to these products.
- The creation of a high-level internal agency working group to explore potential pathways for dietary supplements and/or conventional foods containing cannabidiol (CBD) to be lawfully marketed.

Updates to FDA's frequently asked questions page on the topic of cannabis and cannabis-derived products. Issuance of multiple warning letters to companies marketing CBD products with egregious and unfounded claims aimed at vulnerable populations.

"Ultimately, we remain committed to exploring an appropriate, efficient and predictable regulatory framework to allow product developers that meet the requirements under our authorities to lawfully market these types of products," Gottlieb said in the statement. "The actions we're announcing today will allow us to continue to clarify our regulatory authority over these products and seek input from a broad range of stakeholders and examine a variety of approaches and considerations in the marketing and regulation of cannabis or cannabis-derived products, while continuing to protect the public's health and safety."