Dear ABNM Diplomates:

Last year, as we marked the 50th anniversary of ABNM, a new era in the modernization of the Board has commenced. Several pivotal milestones have been achieved, which made our 50th birthday very special and remarkable to the future of the Board. Since its incorporation in 1971, ABNM has issued 5,970 certifications. This year, our ABNM family welcomed 53 new diplomates with diverse cultural and academic backgrounds.

Last year, despite challenges posed by the pandemic affecting every aspect of our lives, ABNM operations continued uninterrupted. Similar to 2020, the 105th and 106th Board meetings were conducted virtually, followed by additional conference calls to finalize critical tasks including question selection and exam productions. Thanks to the dedicated efforts of ABNM Office Staff and Board members, while maintaining business-as-usual, several strategically important new projects to modernize the Board were accomplished. The highly anticipated question database system was implemented upon extensive training of Office Staff and Board members. As a result, for the first time, new questions were entered directly in the database, which seamlessly replaced the old method. By modernizing question-writing, the process is rendered more efficient, with significantly reduced workload. This upgraded process will subsequently improve exam content, including the quality of questions, images, and overall delivery of exams for years to come.

Along with implementation of the new database, the exam sub-committees, as well as exam blueprints, have been restructured to facilitate exam production and to improve preparation of our diplomates for emerging opportunities, specifically in theranostics and newly approved radiotracers. The exam sub-committees have been increased from 9 to 12 in order to add new topics such as therapy, and to create additional sub-committees for review of larger content areas such as cardiovascular imaging and oncology. The exam blueprints were also updated to reflect emerging needs in our practice. These changes will gradually further facilitate exam production and improve the quality of questions. Additional information about the new exam blueprints can be found at: https://www.abnm.org/exam/exam-blueprint.

Implementation of the new questions bank paved the way for the premiere online delivery of the In-Training Exam (ITE). Thanks to the exceptional effort by the ABNM staff, executive director, and associate executive director, as well as the exam committee, ITE was delivered smoothly in January of 2022. In addition to improved exam administration, noteworthy cost-savings was realized by replacing booklet printing, delivery, and return, by the environmentally friendly, online method. We hope to implement more ITE-related improvements based on this years’ experience and feedback from the exam takers and residency program directors.

Last year was also another successful year for our new open nomination process. The ABNM welcomed three new board members, Drs. Lisa Bodei, Hollie Lai, and Medhat Osman. The new process was introduced three years ago with intention of increasing membership diversity and to provide a better representation of our diplomates and trainees by encouraging all qualified diplomates to participate. This year was particularly remarkable since, by inclusion of the new board members, the majority of the Board has now been elected by the open nomination process.

In closing, I would like to thank our former Chair, Dr. Ruth Lim, for her distinguished leadership in the past year of remarkable accomplishments, and our outgoing Board members Drs. Akin, Iagaru, and McConathy, for their exemplary service. Dr. Leonie Gordon, the ABNM Associate Executive Director, is sadly retiring this year. Her departure is a great loss for our board. We thank her for her many years of dedicated service to the Board and wish her a happy retirement. We have been fortunate to recruit Dr. Kirk Frey to fill the position. We eagerly welcome Dr. Frey and look forward to our collaboration. I also take this opportunity to recognize ABNM office Staff, Maria Watts, Patrick Murphy, and Monica Frye, for a job well done at such challenging times, and wish a safe and healthy year for all of you and your families.

Gholam Reza Berenji, M.D.
Chair

Message from the Chair

Gholam Reza Berenji, MD, MS – Chair, American Board of Nuclear Medicine