

December 21, 2023

Dear AAPM colleagues and friends,

As I am wrapping up my year as a president of our association, and passing the baton to my distinguished colleague and friend, Dr. Todd Pawlicki, I wish to leave you with some brief departing words on this day of the winter solstice (Yaldā), which in my ancient Persian tradition is celebrated as the birthday of the light.

First, thank you for entrusting me with the leadership of our association. I use the word entrusting because the authority of our community rests with the community itself. Any personal position of leadership draws its authority from its source. Thank you for the trust. This has been a major highlight in my professional career.

Second, as I ponder what I have accomplished, mostly via the significant contributions of many of you, I could try to enumerate many accomplishments of relevance and impact to the field, you might say the business of Medical Physics. But here I am reminded of the poignant words by Charles Dickens in *A Christmas Carol*, a favorite story at this time of the year. When asked about his business when he was alive, Marley's ghost cried: "'Business!', wringing its hands again. 'Mankind was my business. The common welfare was my business; charity, mercy, forbearance, and benevolence, were, all, my business. The dealings of my trade were but a drop of water in the comprehensive ocean of my business!'"

Much of what we do is about the "business" of diagnosing and treating human maladies, humans caring for humans. But in doing so, I'd like to think that anything I have done, or anything that any of us do, draws its meaning from the bigger context within which we contribute to the broader common good and the health of humankind. That context also includes forbearance, benevolence, fostering and upholding a collegial space that we ourselves would like to be a part of. Health is a rich word. We often equate it with a lack of disease, but we all know that there is more to health than that. Isn't it so often our experience that when one aspect of our life is out of shape, it alters the very fabric of everything else? So I wish to leave us with an encouragement to think of our work as taking steps towards fostering health, in the full measure of the meaning of the word, clinically, communally, and personally.

Thank you again for the privilege and the opportunity that you provided me to contribute to this space. I wish you all a rich and rewarding holiday season and leave you with the hope that in the new year we will encounter anew the reality and richness of our humanness, the dignity of our calling in advancing health, and the necessity of purposefulness and collaboration in carrying it out.

Wishing you a rich holiday season and a wonderful year ahead,



Ehsan Samei, PhD, DABR, FACR, FAAPM, FSPiE, FAIMBE, FIOMP
President, American Association of Physicists in Medicine
Reed and Martha Rice Distinguished Professor, Duke University
Chief Imaging Physicist, Duke University Health System