



# National Certification Council For Activity Professionals

## 2020 Annual Report



National Certification Council for Activity Professionals  
*Enriching Lives Through Person-Centered Engagement*

3015 Upton Drive, Suite 103, Kensington, MD 20895 USA | (757) 552-0653 | [info@nccap.org](mailto:info@nccap.org)



## Message from the President

As I enter my last year as President, it continues to be an honor to serve Activity Professionals who are members of our family recognized for the highest knowledge and skills to deliver person-centered care.

Like most of you, my daily work as an Activity Director in Baltimore, MD was severely impacted by the COVID Pandemic. Group activities, communal dining programs as well as visitation and external vendors were brought to an abrupt halt in March of 2020. Our Profession proudly responded with creative and person-centered care solutions and resources.

The most challenging times occurred when I, as an Activity Director, and our department staff, reported to work daily worried if we were going to contract COVID and bring it home to our families. We reported to work each day donned in layers of PPE so we could continue to make a positive impact on our residents and coworkers. We used technology to virtually celebrate birthdays with residents, and we stood in as surrogate family members with cake, balloons and song.

Choosing to take a more positive approach, these struggles made many of us stronger and improved the quality of the care we deliver. The Pandemic forced many of us to innovate to deliver life-enriching activities. Importantly, I learned that an essential element required to provide quality care to others during times of severe disruption is to exercise self-care.

My thoughts and best wishes go out to each of you as we enter a post-COVID world. I am committed to ensuring NCCAP Certification remains the highest quality credential for our Profession.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dawn Worsley".

Dawn M. Worsley, ADC  
NCCAP President



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## Message from the CEO

Most of 2020 was dominated by the response of the long-term care community to the COVID-19 Pandemic. This resulted in major changes and adjustments to how Activity Professionals deliver the Social Model of Care across the continuum of care. Reduced social gatherings, elimination of visitors, volunteers and outside trips, and extensive use of PPE became the norm. These changes will likely continue, and have forced NCCAP to reassess how to meet these adjustments in care delivery.

As CEO, most of my time was spent speaking and seeking advice from Allied Health Professionals that were also pivoting to deal with the impacts of COVID. This led to a fundamental question of what knowledge and skills are needed for the Activity Profession in a post-COVID world, and how NCCAP will adjust our Certification Standards to meet these realities. Accordingly, 2021 will see fundamental adjustments to enhance, standardize and ensure the quality of both our curriculum for certification, the MEPAP, as well as the entry-point of Certification that leads to Activity Director.

In closing, I want to both personally and professionally thank the NCCAP Board, Committee Members, Volunteers and our independent experts on the Clinical and Curriculum Advisory Board. They all provided guidance on how to ensure that the Social Model of Care, primarily delivered through life-enriching activities, grows in quality and recognition. This will ensure that NCCAP remains the highest credential meeting Professional Standards of Practice and accepted by CMS.

*Peter Illig*

Peter J. Illig

NCCAP CEO and General Counsel



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# 2020 Highlights

- Received an official letter from the **State of Texas Department of Health** that our Certification and Modular Education Course for Activity Professionals (MEPAP), and the CITRAX, are the only credentials accepted to be an Activity Director in the State.
- In response to the COVID-19 Pandemic, we created a variety of resources to assist Activity Professionals deliver life-enriching activities during restrictions of infection control and social isolation that was referenced in *McKnight's Long-Term Care News*.
- Our CEO was interviewed in the national Blog entitled [\*Checking the Vitals\*](#).
- Established a formal partnership with *Pioneer Network* to collaborate and integrate the Values and Principles for person-centered care into our curriculum for certification.
- Participated in monthly calls with the *Advancing Excellence in Long-Term Care Collaborative* (AELTCC), including signing on to formal statements on diversity and inclusion.
- Participated in monthly calls with *Leaders Engaged for Alzheimer's Disease* (LEAD), including signing on to formal submission to the US Congress for funding for both care givers and research.
- Issued a formal position statement calling on our government leaders to address *systemic racism* in long-term care and across society.
- Issued a formal statement maintaining that Activity Professionals meet the definition of “*Essential Worker*” for the delivery of care mandated by Federal law to ensure physical, cognitive and psychosocial well-being.
- Participated in numerous *online forums and social media* outreach including forums on Caregiver Health, Person-Centered Care and the Social Model of Care.
- Presented in over a dozen virtual *State Activity Professional Conferences* and other National Conferences.
- Launched our new *Montessori Home Engagement Certification* with a curriculum for both Caregivers and Family members to deliver person-centered care in home settings.
- Piloted *NCCAP Academy* which is intended to offer a range of resources focused on engagement certifications in demand by care communities and family members.



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# NAAP and NCCAP



ACTIVITY CREDENTIALING  
COUNCIL



NATIONAL CERTIFICATION COUNCIL  
FOR ACTIVITY PROFESSIONALS  
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NCCAP continues to work closely with our Professional Association NAAP. The COVID-19 Pandemic impacted the entire Activity Profession and resulted in closer cooperation to support our Activity Professionals. Along with other partners like Pioneer Network, NAAP graciously provided free Continuing Education courses to assist in Certification Renewal.

Greater emphasis was also placed upon the importance of the NAAP Professional Standards of Practice for the Activity Profession. This is significant for NCCAP as we remain the only credential accepted as meeting these Professional Standards of Practice.

NCCAP and NAAP also coordinated on joint statements supporting Activity Professionals as “Essential Workers”, and co-developed and shared resources to assist in the delivery of life-enriching activities during the restrictions of the pandemic.

Initiated under our new leadership starting in 2016, NCCAP has turned over all traditional membership services to NAAP, with the largest item being the Annual Conference. Along with the creation of NCCAP’s Experiential Track, ensuring these membership services reside within NAAP allows NCCAP to operate objectively and independently. Consistent with NCCA and ICE requirements for Credentialing Bodies, NCCAP will also soon adjust our Bylaws to reflect our sole function as the Certification of the Activity Profession. Importantly, this structure will similarly reflect how AOTA-NBCOT and ATRA-NCTRC operate.

Going forward, Professional Membership functions will only occur within NAAP and NCCAP will operate to ensure our certification curriculum and standards continue to meet the Professional Standards of Practice for the Activity Profession. Steps in this direction have already been taken such as recruiting non-practitioner professionals to serve on our Board of Directors and the creation of our independent Clinical and Curriculum Advisory Board of independent subject matter experts.



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# MEPAP Instructor Courses



Our nearly 50 MEPAP Instructors remain the foundation of our Activity Profession. Functioning as our nationwide education system, several thousand students took either or both the MEPAP 1 for Activity Professional Certified (APC) Certification and the MEPAP 2 for Activity Director Certified (ADC) Certification.

Reflecting the original historical design of our Profession, we heard from several State Regulators and many Healthcare Providers that they only accept the MEPAP and NCCAP Certification. This was due primarily to the fact that NCCAP conforms to national credentialing standards and requires a formal course of study along with an independent Certification Exam. Otherwise, NCCAP Instructors continue to advise us on needed enhancements to reach a wider and younger audience in a long-term care sector that continues to evolve.

## Administrative and Finance

NCCAP continues to operate with a team of 5 committed individuals who perform a wide variety of tasks on a daily basis. This includes the full-time staff of Peter Illig, Asel Valentine and Connie (Le) Kaufusi, as well as Dawn Basile and Bryan Rife who work on a contract basis.

In 2020, NCCAP continued to invest in reorganization and restructuring. At the same time, growth targets did not meet expectations, primarily due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. However, with funding from the Paycheck Protection Program, we were able to cover a modest shortfall for the year. The financial outlook remains positive for 2021, in particular as the pressure and restrictions due to the pandemic are eased.



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## **NCCAP BOARD**

President: Dawn Worsley

Vice President: Lori Presser

Immediate Past President: Debbie Hommel

Secretary: Penny Cook, CEO and President, Pioneer Network

Treasurer: Thomas Trexler, CPA, President, The Corporate Finance Institute

## **NCCAP COMMITTEE CHAIRS**

Special Projects: Linda Redhead

Professional Outreach: Kara Reiser

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