A year ago, I began my president's report by noting that it had been a most unusual presidential year, and concluded with this statement that we were Family Physicians - and that we did not stop.

It has been an honor and a privilege to serve a 2nd term with you as president of the Indiana Academy of Family Physicians. It has been a particular honor to be able to be the face of this Academy through a year of challenges and transformations - in our state, our nation, and our world. As family physicians, our duty is to our patients and their continued good health, and the challenges that we have been presented in the last year have given us an opportunity to show just how deeply and passionately we care about that health.

We are family physicians, and we do not stop working.

I don’t have a list of exotic places (or mundane ones) that I traveled in the last year, or reports of the business conducted at other states’ meetings that I attended on behalf of your Academy. Our meetings have been virtual for a year; my first chance to see our hard working staff face-to-face came at a campaign meeting this month. But meeting on e-mail and virtually rather than in person does not mean that your Academy has been any less tireless this year than any other.

This year, your state and national Academy have been there to speak out on behalf of our patients and against the inequities that affect their health. I have met with the Indiana Department of Health alongside other state medical society leaders regarding pandemic management and allocation, and I have been proud to be part of a state whose medical leadership has prioritized getting vaccines into the arms of every Hoosier, and whose medical community has come together to offer free transportation to vaccine sites, traveling vaccine clinics throughout the state, free COVID-19 testing in the height of the pandemic, and steady access to the data that we need to make scientifically driven decisions for the benefit of our patients’ health.

We recognize that your training and experience and qualifications matter, and that being a family physician makes you uniquely qualified to do the things that you do. In September, we partnered with the Indiana State Medical Association in forming a coalition focused on scope of practice issues. The Indiana Physician Coalition is a multi-specialty project whose mission is to ensure that health care in Indiana continues to be led by physicians and is delivered with a team-based approach.

The influence of Family Medicine reaches even outside our own specialty: I was able to attend the Indiana State Medical Association virtual meeting in September, where Dr. Darroca, an OB-GYN and the newly installed president of the ISMA, named the Indiana Academy of Family Physicians as one of the formative elements in his medical leadership journey.

In October, I was able to meet with the Indiana University School of Medicine Bicentennial Scholars on a virtual panel about legislative advocacy, introducing the Indiana Academy of Family Physicians, the specialty of Family Medicine, and our legislative priorities to a new generation of medical students.

In January, I joined with the Indiana State Medical Association and the Indiana Academy of Pediatrics in a joint letter urging Gov. Holcomb to raise the cigarette tax and use those proceeds to invest in proven health programs to reduce mortality and chronic illness among Hoosiers.
In March, your Academy announced the candidacy of Dr. Teresa Lovins for the AAFP Board of Directors, and I have been privileged to serve on her campaign committee as we prepare for the Congress of Delegates in September.

In April, I was able to attend the virtual National Conference of Constituency Leaders, and serve as your delegate for the LGBT/allies constituency. While we were unable to meet in person, this conference contained powerful energy, and the virtual format allowed it to reach family physicians around the nation and around the globe. I assisted in crafting resolutions that encouraged the AAFP to go even further in making our specialty one that attends to the health of every patient, no matter what their identity.

At NCCL I reconnected with family physicians whom I have come to consider some of my dearest friends. Their passion, their drive, and above all their concern for the health and well-being of every person make me so proud to be a part of this family. As my 2 years as president draw to a close, I leave this office as hopeful for the future of our specialty as I entered it.

You are my family, and it has been an honor to serve as your voice.

Nykki Boersma, MD, FAAFP
President of the Indiana Academy of Family Physicians