



## Spotlight On Andrea Stolar, MD, Houston, TX

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**Dr. Stolar** is Professor of Psychiatry at Baylor College of Medicine, Houston TX.

### **Why did you want to join the ABPN Board?**

I have had a positive experience with the ABPN since taking my own boards in the mid-'90s. I have always enjoyed the opportunity to focus on learning and to be able to demonstrate my efforts. I actually went back to complete a fellowship in forensic psychiatry after 9 years of practice, and jokingly (not entirely) asked my program director, Dr. Phil Resnick, if I could be a permanent fellow. I love the process of learning, and I found the method of studying for the boards and the challenge of the boards satisfying. I was fortunate to be able to take my boards when we still had the oral exams and recall clearly the patient I examined and the experience of being quizzed by the examiners. There is something invigorating about being challenged intellectually and the detail and focus that is required by ABPN committee participation. After years of committee work and examiner teams, I was honored to be nominated to serve on the ABPN board of directors. By then this work was part of my professional identity and there was no question that should I have the expertise that the board needed at the time of my nomination, that it would be a tremendous honor and opportunity to continue this work that I've so enjoyed being a part of.



### **What do you want to achieve with the ABPN Board?**

I enjoy learning about and observing systems to identify gaps and opportunities for increased efficiency and improved processes. It takes some time to really understand an organization; honestly it can take several years. It is important to understand history and context before making changes, because there are always unintended consequences. Thus, I did not come on to the board with any preconceived notions about what I could achieve or what should be changed. I came to learn and to contribute and over time have found opportunities to offer new ideas and proposals for changes. The Board is made up of a remarkable group of individuals and the ABPN senior leadership is unparalleled, so my greatest achievement – and primary goal – is to contribute to the excellent work of the ABPN.

### **What is the most important thing people should understand about the Board?**

The Board is comprised of psychiatrists and neurologists who are incredibly devoted to their fields, to their work, and to the work of the ABPN, and who are great fun to be around. The board is a team of

psychiatrist and neurologists, that changes yearly with the departure of the senior-most members and the introduction of the newest members, that partners with our staff and our stakeholders to help ensure quality psychiatric and neurologic practice in our communities. It is a thoughtful group that aims to represent the breadth of our fields, through diversity of experience, background, and thought. The board is ever evolving, as is our field, but stays true to the mission and values of the ABPN because of the commitment of the members and ABPN staff.

**Why is the patient perspective important to you and how does that connect to your work on the board?**

We have no work without our patients. The patient's perspective is crucial to everything we do in the ABPN. This work is not just an academic exercise, but it is a commitment to our communities as a whole, and to our patients in specific, to do our best to ensure that the doctors caring for them have the requisite knowledge and skills and competence to address their conditions and improve their lives. The work is of no value if not to serve our patients.

**Did you have a mentor that affected your career journey?**

Dr. Bob Ronis was the first to introduce me to the work of the ABPN oral exam committees. He was my boss at the time, and the best boss one could possibly have. Once I joined the exam committee, I found how much I enjoyed the people and the process, and I was hooked. Bob later served as an ABPN director but had timed off the Board prior to my involvement. I look to him as the mentor I hope I have been to those who have come behind me: steady, supportive, kind, thoughtful, and doesn't take himself too seriously. This is serious work, but we need to stay humble to do our best work.

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