

Candidate for Governor

Caroline Leilani Valdes, MD, FCAP



- **Institution:** Regional Pathology Associates, Victoria, Texas
- **Age Group:** 46-55
- **Years in Practice:** 12
- **Boards:** AP and CP, Dermatopathology
- **Education:** Received MD, 2004, USC Keck School of Medicine, Los Angeles; Internship & Residency: LAC+USC Medical Center, Los Angeles; Fellowship: Duke University Medical Center, Durham, North Carolina
- **Employment Status:** Full Time
- **Practice Type:** Hospital/Community-Based Lab
- **Practice Size:** 0-5

CAP Experience

CURRENT

- **Chair:** Professional and Community Engagement Committee
- **Member:** Council on Membership and Professional Development, DEI Workgroup, Quality and Clinical Data Registry Affairs Committee, Pathologist Pipeline Workgroup
- **Delegate:** House of Delegates (HOD)

PAST

- **Chair:** NewsPath Editorial Board
- **Vice Chair:** Professional and Community Engagement Committee
- **Delegate:** Residents Forum (RF)
- **Member:** CAP Nominating Committee, CAP Spokesperson, Economic Affairs Committee (EAC), EAC Measures & Performance Assessment Subcommittee, EAC Payment Policy Subcommittee, Federal and State Affairs Committee (FSAC), FSAC Federal Legislation Subcommittee, HOD Action Group (AG) on CAP Foundation - Leadership Development Awardee Mentorship, HOD AG on HOD Orientation, HOD AG on HODSC Leadership, HOD AG on Leadership II, Professional and Community Engagement Committee, Strategy Management Committee, TPOSC Module II: Roles and Value Proposition
- **Junior Member:** National Meeting Planning Committee, Public Affairs Committee, Strategy Management Committee

Experience in Other Organizations

- Texas Society of Pathologists: Vice-President, 2021; Secretary/Treasurer, 2020, Treasurer, 2019
- Intercounty Clinical Society (invitation only, 100 year old medical society; first pathologist member)
- Chief of Medical Staff, Citizens Medical Center (asked to serve consecutive terms; first pathologist to serve)
- Texas Medical Association Council on Health Promotion, Committee Member, 2016-present



- Victoria-Goliad-Jackson County Medical Society: President, 2016; Delegate to TMA, 2016-present
- COVID-19 Medical Advisory Committees, Physician Advisor, 2020-present
 - Victoria County Office of Emergency Management, Victoria TX
 - St. Stephen's Episcopal School, Austin, TX
 - Trinity Episcopal School, Victoria, TX
 - Victoria Ballet Theatre, Victoria, TX
 - Kieve Wavus Education, Nobleboro, ME
- Be Wise Immunize: Physician Advisory Panel, HPV Vaccine Working Group, Community Program Volunteer, 2016-present
- Hard Hats for Little Heads: Community Program Volunteer, 2016-present
- Walk With A Doc, founding physician, Victoria program, 2016
- Victoria Ballet Theatre: Board Member, 2012 - present; Star Trustee Award 2012; Board Vice President, 2016 -2018
- Trinity Episcopal School Board of Trustees: President, 2018-2019; Vice President, 2017-2018; Head of School Search Committee, Chair, 2017; Board Member, 2015 – present
- Children's Discovery Museum of the Golden Crescent, Guest Speaker, 2015, 2016

Why do you want to be a governor of the CAP?

As an active member of the CAP beginning early in residency and continuing through more than a decade as a practicing community pathologist, I recognize the incredible value of organized medicine. By giving my time and energy to the CAP, I have learned to be a better pathologist, leader, mentor and advocate. Through the years, I've participated in CAP initiatives that provide incredible value to our members, and advocated for our specialty at the federal, state and local levels. As a leader on the CAP board, I plan to use my experience in our organization and my personal leadership drive to support and develop initiatives that expand and improve the value of the CAP to our members and support the future of pathology, its place in the house of medicine and its importance in our communities.

If elected, what do you hope to accomplish?

As a member of the CAP Board of Governors, I hope to create and promote a clear vision of the future by capitalizing on the lessons learned from our past and present initiatives.

Our story as an organization and a specialty has a past, a present and a future. Our past is rich with the history of excellence through our lab accreditation and proficiency testing programs, our role as expert diagnosticians on the medical team and our advocacy on behalf of our patients. Our present includes so many stories of innovation in diagnostics, advocacy in new health care delivery paradigms and perseverance amidst health crises. Our legacy depends on how we strategically prepare for and influence clinical advancements and continue to add value to the practice medicine.



My goal as a board member is to ensure that our future story incorporates the past and the present to build a bright future for pathology, pathologists and the CAP. Using strong communication and collaboration skills, I see an opportunity for the CAP to align current initiatives happening in the many corners of the organization. Through my work on committees under different councils, I often see areas that would benefit through connection and collaboration. By aligning our initiatives, I believe we will be well positioned to magnify the work of the CAP. Given my background in strategic planning initiatives, I am well-positioned to guide this process.

The future holds many opportunities, and it would be incumbent on us to identify the right path to make the most of what lies ahead.

What major issues do you see facing the CAP during the next three years?

Like healthcare and medicine in general, our major issues are multiple, complex and vitally important to the future of pathology and the CAP. In general, I feel our most important issues can be grouped into a few major focus areas:

- **Payment / Reimbursement Issues:** Government, private payors and balance billing have challenges with increasing regulatory burden including MIPS/MACRA/value based care and narrow network / “preferred lab” issues; downstream effects of these payment issues on CAP revenue (proficiency testing and laboratory accreditation program)
 - **Protecting Pathologists Scope of Practice:** Pathologist pipeline concerns; diversity, inclusion and equity; state and local society support
 - **Embracing, incorporating and maximizing the use of AI and new technologies in pathology practice:** Pathologists need to “own” future testing developments in AI and demonstrate our leadership in adopting and validating new testing tools; CAP will need to support these efforts through PT and LAP programs as well as targeted communication with the medical community and the public
 - **Building stakeholder (healthcare management, government, public) recognition of the pathologist physician and our value in the medical care team, community health and medical advancement:** use pandemic to leverage and raise our profile (capitalize on our publicity); by engaging a diverse group of stakeholders (including the diversity within the pathologist community), we can strengthen our specialty and our leadership in healthcare delivery and initiatives; ultimately, this recognition helps with ALL of the above issues
 - **Strategic alignment with a growth mindset for CAP programs and initiatives:** The CAP is a dynamic revenue generating organization with incredible programs and human capital; however, continued strategic alignment of these programs and resources through communication and collaboration is critical to strengthen the organization in the changing healthcare environment.
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