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Dr. Marc S. Williams of Geisinger Genomic Medicine Institute Begins Presidency with the American College of Medical Genetics and Genomics (ACMG)

BETHESDA, MD –April 12, 2021 | Marc S. Williams, MD, FAAP, FACMG, FACMI is the new president of the American College of Medical Genetics and Genomics (ACMG), the national professional organization for clinical and laboratory genetics professionals.

Dr. Williams assumes the responsibility from Anthony Gregg, MD, FACMG, who completed his two-year term during the 2021 virtual Annual Clinical Genetics Meeting this April.

“To be recognized for my prior service with ACMG and entrusted with leadership of the organization is quite an honor,” said Dr. Williams. “It’s a big job, there’s a lot of complexity to it, but between our CEO Dr. Max Muenke, the staff, and my colleagues on the Board of Directors, I feel very well supported in this role.”

Dr. Williams has been actively involved with ACMG for more than 20 years. During one of his early volunteer positions with the College, as chair of the Economics of Genetic Services Committee from 2000 to 2006, he helped publish the first genetic services reimbursement manual, still in use today, that became a transformative resource not only for College members but for outside groups, as well. He also served on the ACMG Board of Directors from 2007 to 2013 and as Vice President for Clinical Genetics from 2009 to 2013, and he organized and then chaired the Special Interest Group on Quality Improvement in Clinical Genetics.

“I’m certainly very excited about this opportunity to serve the College as its president,” Dr. Williams noted. “It’s the College’s role to try to get people to feel passionate about the issues that affect all of us, and then to channel that passion into efforts that can benefit individuals and the College as a whole. I came to genetics mid-career having practiced general pediatrics for 10 years. Caring for patients with genetic conditions as a pediatrician opened my eyes to the importance of genetics in medicine. Going back for training in genetics was the best decision I made in medicine, and I try to convey my excitement about the field whenever I have the opportunity to talk with students.”

Dr. Williams is a member of numerous national professional societies, including the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Society of Human Genetics, the American Medical Informatics Association, and the American College of Medical Informatics (ACMI). He is one of only three individuals who have dual board certification in clinical genetics and clinical informatics, and he is the only board-certified clinical geneticist who has also been elected as a fellow of ACMI—a mark of his contribution to informatics research. Of note, in 2013 he was recognized by *Bio-IT World* with the Best Practice Award in Genomics Grand Prize for co-leading a project that tested a “Genome-Phenome Analyzer” as a point-of-care tool to help clinicians improve diagnosis.

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Currently, Dr. Williams volunteers with the American Medical Informatics Association Genomics and Translational Bioinformatics Working Group, the Institute of Medicine Electronic Health Record Action Collaborative, the National Human Genome Research Institute Genomic Medicine Working Group Planning Committee, and the NIH Undiagnosed Diseases Program External Scientific Panel. He is also a professor at Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine and an adjunct professor of biomedical informatics at Ohio State University and the University of Utah.

Dr. Williams' medical career began with private practice pediatrics, first in Michigan, then in California, finally joining Wisconsin's Gundersen Lutheran Medical Center as a pediatrician in 1991. It was during his practice here that he completed his fellowship at the University of Wisconsin-Madison becoming the first geneticist to practice at Gundersen. He became Gundersen Lutheran Health Plan's associate medical director in 1999, adding the responsibility of overseeing quality control, coverage, credentialing, technology assessment, and disease management for diabetes and congestive heart failure. Five years later he moved to Utah as founding director of the Intermountain Healthcare Clinical Genetics Institute, a position he held until 2011, when he joined the Geisinger Genomic Medicine Institute in Pennsylvania as the first director of that institute.

Dr. Williams is currently professor and director emeritus of the Genomic Medicine Institute at Geisinger. His research interests, represented by more than 200 published journal articles, relate primarily to the diagnosis and treatment of patients with genetic disease, as well as development of electronic health record capabilities to identify patients who have genetic diseases at the point of care. He works with the National Institutes of Health's ClinGen project to provide expert curation for the pediatric actionability working group and leadership for electronic health record integration, and he is a co-investigator with the Newborn Screening Translational Research Network, a project that creates a central bank of information generated by newborn screening programs across the United States.

Chemistry was the focus of Dr. Williams' undergraduate degree at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and he earned his medical degree four years later from the same institution. He completed his residency in pediatrics at the University of Utah, his fellowship in medical genetics at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and he received his certification in Clinical Informatics from the American Board of Preventive Medicine in 2015.

"The American College of Medical Genetics and Genomics is fortunate to have Dr. Marc Williams as its incoming President," says ACMG's CEO Max Muenke, MD, FACMG. "Dr. Williams' more than two decades of service to ACMG in various leadership positions has given him a deep understanding of the workings of the College. He is intimately familiar with the various working groups and committees, and his knowledge as a practicing physician with triple board certification in medical genetics, pediatrics, and medical informatics has well-prepared Dr. Williams for this important leadership position of the College."

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About the American College of Medical Genetics and Genomics (ACMG) and ACMG Foundation

Founded in 1991, the American College of Medical Genetics and Genomics (ACMG) is the only nationally recognized medical professional organization solely dedicated to improving health through the practice of medical genetics and genomics, and the only medical specialty society in the US that represents the full spectrum of medical genetics disciplines in a single organization. The ACMG is the largest membership organization specifically for medical geneticists, providing education, resources and a voice for more than 2,400 clinical and laboratory geneticists, genetic counselors and other healthcare professionals, nearly 80% of whom are board certified in the medical genetics specialties. ACMG's mission is to improve health through the clinical and laboratory practice of medical genetics as well as through advocacy, education and clinical research, and to guide the safe and effective integration of genetics and genomics into all of medicine and healthcare, resulting in improved personal and public health. Four overarching strategies guide ACMG's work: 1) to reinforce and expand ACMG's position as the leader and prominent authority in the field of medical genetics and genomics, including clinical research, while educating the medical community on the significant role that genetics and genomics will continue to play in understanding, preventing, treating and curing disease; 2) to secure and expand the professional workforce for medical genetics and genomics; 3) to advocate for the specialty; and 4) to provide best-in-class education to members and nonmembers. *Genetics in Medicine*, published monthly, is the official ACMG journal. ACMG's website (www.acmg.net) offers resources including policy statements, practice guidelines, educational programs and a 'Find a Genetic Service' tool. The educational and public health programs of the ACMG are dependent upon charitable gifts from corporations, foundations and individuals through the ACMG Foundation for Genetic and Genomic Medicine.

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