



ACCSS Associated Chaplains in California State Service

Jacob Matchak, President

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Fellow ACCSS Members,

The return of spring each year always brings excitement for many of us as we eagerly await with anticipation the arrival of new beginnings. With the dormancy of winter behind us, spring brings a burst of color and fresh life all around with each new day of bright sunshine and warmth. We here in California especially have much to be grateful for this year as we have seen an abundance of rain fall on our beloved State giving much relief to thirsty soil and the concern of a lingering drought. And even though we might say that we could still use more rain, our Creator's merciful benevolence reminds us of His ever watchful concern and care for us and the promise of an enduring and everlasting love for all that learn to lean and depend upon Him.

In each of our respective settings, whether they be in prisons, hospitals, centers, or homes, we all have been given the unique opportunity to bring fresh hope and encouragement to lives that are themselves desperately thirsty for new beginnings. It is my prayer that each and every one of you are renewed and ready to take up your calling afresh and carry forth the truth of your faith with vigor and enthusiasm so that from your lives would flow an excitement and energy that is infectious to all that look to you for purpose and direction in their spiritual journeys of faith.

Last fall, one of our Chaplains and President of ACCSS, Abdul Johnson, was elected as the President of AFSME Local #2620. We offer to him our sincere and wholehearted congratulations and pray Godspeed on all his very important endeavors on behalf of our profession. Due to Abdul's election as President of Local #2620, the presidency of ACCSS was vacated. The ACCSS Executive Board voted to appoint me to fill that vacancy for the remainder of the term and I have accepted the position until October 2017. As President, I look forward to representing all of you at the various meetings and state functions that require representation from our Association and am sure that the good reputation and standing that has been developed over the years with CDCR, CalVet, DDS, and DSH will continue uninhibited.

Early last month (March 2017), ACCSS was informed of the passing of a dear and beloved colleague of ours, A.S. Muhammad. For those of us who had the privilege of knowing A.S. for many years, his passing has left a deep hole in our Association and we feel the loss of his friendship very deeply. A.S. was the epitome of dignity and integrity

as a Chaplain and represented the highest of grace and professionalism in his day-to-day interactions with all staff, inmates, and patients that he worked with. There was elegance to his demeanor that will be difficult to replace.

To honor his life and legacy, the ACCSS Executive Board has established the "A.S. Muhammad Excellence in Chaplaincy Award" which will be given out at each meeting of the General Membership to a Chaplain/Native Spiritual Leader who best represented the qualities of A.S. that we value in our Association. A standard and criteria for this award will be posted soon to our website for your review so that candidates may be submitted for review by the ACCSS Executive Board. We sincerely hope that all within our Association would strive for excellency in your profession and look forward to acknowledging and honoring those that stand out... in the same way that A.S. Muhammad did for all the years that we were privileged to call him one of our brothers. Our prayers are certainly with his family during this time and we offer to them our utmost thanks and gratitude for allowing A.S. to be a part of our lives. He will be sorely missed.

The ACCSS Executive Board looks forward to more regular communications with you throughout the rest of this year and hope that you will find the information we send out to be beneficial to your profession as state Chaplains/Native Spiritual Leaders. Look for future news and updates from other members of the Board each month. There is much good work that is being accomplished on your behalf and we hope to keep you informed and updated as this work progresses and continues.

Thank you again for all that you do to represent our profession as Chaplains/ Native Spiritual Leaders with principle and integrity. I am privileged myself to be a chaplain and I carry this responsibility with a resolve that, while I may be focused on my own duties at my own institution, we all should be striving to build each other up through the faithful performance of our duties for the good of all in our Association.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jacob Motabek". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and a long, sweeping underline.

President
ACCSS