

Southern California  
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**President's Column:**  
**The privilege to throw a starfish, and vote.**  
*by Galya Rees, MD*

Dear SCPS Members,  
It's that time of year again. The days are getting shorter, yet the heat remains relentless. Halloween decorations are appearing, and pumpkin spice is returning to our lattes. Just around the corner lies one of the most divided elections. And I am confident that we will all be using our privilege to vote.

This is also a time of extraordinary turmoil, locally and globally, that is affecting us all, some more than others. Wildfires, hurricanes, landslides, wars, and grief. Sometimes I wonder if we are becoming numb to these natural and human-made disasters, and if the numbness is a result of feeling too powerless to make a difference.

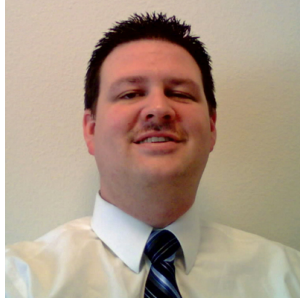
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## GLP-1 Agonist Medications and the Treatment of Substance Use Disorders

by Steven Allen, MD

Addiction is a complex, chronic, and relapsing disease that remains a leading cause of morbidity and mortality. According to the NSDUH, more than 48 million Americans have struggled with a substance use disorder, involving alcohol or illicit drugs, over the last year.[1] Similarly, over 177 million Americans have used a tobacco/nicotine product over the last year.[1] The annual financial cost of substance use remains high. The US Department of Health and Human Services estimates the annual economic impact of alcohol and illicit drug use in the United States at \$249 billion and \$193 billion respectively.[2] In 2018, tobacco/nicotine use cost the United States more than \$600 billion.[3] Despite increasing use associated with tremendous financial and health consequences, available pharmacological treatments remain limited in number and efficacy. Currently, the FDA has only approved pharmacological treatments for opioid, alcohol, and tobacco use disorders. Given the paucity of highly effective and widely accessible medication treatments for substance use disorders, it is imperative to urgently explore other possible novel treatments. In this context, the gut brain axis, including the gut brain peptide glucagon-like peptide-1 (GLP-1), has garnered increasing attention.

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## Existential Musings on a Possibly Post-Pandemic Experience

by Alex Lin, MD

I have recently seen a few graduate students for intake and was struck by how their undergraduate experience was deeply affected by the pandemic. I reminded me that, in the isolation and quiet of the early part of the lockdown, I had wondered if our

vaguely decadent society would ultimately change, and I wished for some sort of shared sense of humility, compromise, and kindness to emerge from the madness and chaos.

I had not realized it at the time, but what I had been hoping for was “post-traumatic growth.” First coined by Tedeschi and Calhoun in 1995,[1] the term refers to “the process of development of positive changes in the struggle with trauma, and the outcomes themselves.”[2] Posttraumatic growth is distinguished from “resilience” because the former results in “transformative growth,... [and development] beyond previous levels of adaptation, psychological functioning, or life awareness. It has a quality of transformation or a qualitative change in functioning.”[3]

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## Prop 32 Affects Residents Too!

*by Justin Nguyen, DO*

The wages of resident physicians in California are on the ballot this November in the form of Prop 32, which, if passed, would require employers of 26 or more workers to pay their workers a minimum of \$18/hour starting January 1, 2025.

This is much less than what residents earn, but they would still be impacted by Prop 32. In California, residents are classified as “exempt” workers who must be paid at least twice the state minimum wage. Currently this amounts to an annual salary of \$66,560.

The minimum PGY1 salary in the state would increase to \$74,880 if Prop 32 passes, and \$68,640 if the measure is defeated (reflecting an increase of the state minimum wage to \$16.50/hour in 2025).

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## SCPS DMURR Position

**Position Title:** Deputy Minority and Underrepresented Groups Representative (DMURR)

**Tenure:** 2 year total commitment. June 2025 – May 2026 as DMURR. The DMURR is then expected to serve as the Minority and Underrepresented Groups Representative (MURR) and

head of the Diversity and Culture Committee in the following year June 2026 – May 2027.

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## June Council Highlights

### INTRODUCTIONS and ORIENTATION

Dr. Rees

Council members introduced themselves to each other. Orientation materials present in the meeting Dropbox were reviewed, including elements from legal orientation by attorney Dan Willick, council member duties/expectations, basics of parliamentary procedure, how to find SCPS bylaws on SCPS website

### PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Rees

1. Training Advocacy Outreach – our goal this year is to visit all training programs in SCPS area, not only for recruitment, but to help instill the importance of psychiatric advocacy in trainee psychiatrists.

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### SCPS

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