

Greetings to you, members of the VAFCC,

On behalf of the entire Board of Directors, let me first say “thanks.” Thanks for what you, your teams and your volunteers do each and every day for those persons in your communities who might not otherwise receive essential care and support. Thanks for your tireless dedication and thanks for your participation in the VAFCC. As your newly elected Board Chair, I made a personal promise to myself that I would strive to start each Board Meeting with a word of thanks to my fellow Board members for their time and service. In kind, I will strive to start every communication with you, our member clinics, with an equally sincere and appreciative thank you.

Those of you in attendance at the recent Executive Directors (ED) Conference in Fredericksburg, know how productive, engaging and of course, fun, this event was. I was grateful to be able to facilitate our business meeting on Thursday afternoon and then to enjoy dinner with the group. I do, however, regret that I was not able to stay for the evening festivities and in particular, the Super Hero costume party. I am told that many of you elevated creativity to a new level. I look forward to seeing some pictures.

For those EDs who were not in attendance, you were missed. A message that I conveyed to the group (and one that I wish to reinforce now) is that we as Board and Linda as your CEO commit to transparency, open and honest dialogue and effective communications. The establishment of our ED Advisory Council is but one step in this direction. The VAFCC is celebrating its 20th year of service and I am convinced that this year and beyond will be both our most challenging and most rewarding. We all have much to be proud of and yet, so much more to accomplish. 2014 is just around the corner and it will mark a significant milestone in health care and the delivery of health service in the United States. Free Clinics will most likely serve in an expanded and increasingly important role in 2014. As such, we must now begin working together to ensure that both the VAFCC and the various Free Clinics that we serve in Virginia are vibrant, successful and mutually aligned locally and at the state and federal levels. Our missions and messages must be clearer and more compelling than ever before and we need each and every one of your voices to achieve our desired successes.

It was a privilege to meet many of you for the first time in Fredericksburg and for those of you that I have not met; I look forward to that pleasure, as well.

Wishing you all the best,

Colin