

NEWS & VIEWS



From Jim's Desk

So long til we meet again

My Dad never said goodbye to me when I left from a visit to him. My Mother passed away ten years before Dad, and he lived alone for a decade. Every time I would leave, he'd say "I'm not going to say goodbye, I'll just say so long til we meet again." He didn't show emotions easily, World War II veterans like him usually didn't.

My Mother, on the other hand, was quite emotional. She endured a lot in her life, seeing Huntington chorea disease in her immediate family kill her mother and all her brothers and sisters, seeing her first husband die at an early age, and seeing two of her sons (my brothers) die in their forties. She was a strong woman but showed emotions easily.

So I've inherited my Mother's emotional reactions more than my Dad's. I'm not good at goodbyes, so I'll simply say "so long til we meet again". After 32 years and 10 months I leave ACA and Rob Green becomes Executive Director. He will do great things for ACA's future and each of you will be excited and proud of Rob's

tenure. I am happy to know ACA is in excellent hands with Rob Green.

Today I leave with deeply held gratitude, strongly held optimism of our future, and heartfelt love of my Creator, my family, my friends, my country and ACA.

There are hundreds of people to thank for my time at ACA. At the risk of leaving someone out, I'm not going to list anyone here except Dr. Elizabeth (Betty) Desiderio Gondles. She, more than anyone I know, has raised the bar of treatment in

corrections. She, more than anyone I know, has raised more revenue and business for ACA during my tenure. She, more than anyone I know, has improved ACA's standing and activity on the international stage. Simply put, Betty Gondles has been a diamond for your association, and I thank her.

I'm not "selling anyone short" by not thanking and mentioning persons I worked with inside our office or external to our office, they will hear from me one on one, in writing, in talking and/or in remaining good friends.

Today I leave with deeply held gratitude, strongly held optimism of our future, and heartfelt love of my Creator, my family, my friends, my country and ACA. So long til we meet again.

James A. Gondles Jr., CAE
ACA Executive Director