

Dear friends, colleagues, and members of the Association: I am deeply honored and humbled to have been selected for this wonderful award. I am sorry that I can't be with you in person to accept it, but my health precludes joining you at the Conference. I do wish to thank members of the Association, retired members of AASCIPSW, and especially the persons with Spinal Cord Injury who taught me so much over the years, and graciously contributed their time, thoughts, and energy to my research projects over the last 35 years.

I want to urge my younger colleagues to get involved in the governance and work of ASCIP. I found that the people running the Association were quite welcoming and ready to bring me into the committee work and governance of the Association. My participation in the Association and in its predecessor AASCIPSW over the years was incredibly valuable to my career and to developing and deepening my research. One example of benefit to my work came from the project that developed Standards for Psychologists and Social Workers, and other benefits came from the many fine professionals I met at these meetings, including of course my dear wife, Dr. Nancy Merbitz. Our first conversation when we met at the Conference was about outcome measures, and I can tell you that we still talk about measurement and its use in rehabilitation, medicine, and education to this day. As another example, people that I met at this Conference also helped me integrate Radical Behaviorism and Person-Centered rehabilitation, and that was a fun exercise. I also want to mention that for some reason people at this Conference always produced the best jokes, a tradition that I hope can endure.

In closing, I again want to thank ASCIP for this great honor. I do feel that my participation in our Associations has benefitted me infinitely more than I have contributed, and I am thankful for knowing and learning from and laughing with so many fine professionals over the years. Thank you all and may each of you have many happy and productive years ahead!

Chuck Merbitz