

Another year is coming to a close, and many members and groups are looking at transitions. This is true at the national level as well, as the longtime Executive Director of American Mensa, Pam Donahoo, has moved on to a new opportunity after 20 years with the organization. I certainly wish her well on her new endeavors, and I am excited to see the opportunities for change and growth within Mensa going forward. The American Mensa Committee (AMC) has appointed Trevor Mitchell, a current member of our National Office staff, to the role of Acting Executive Director. A transition team, made up of five members of the AMC, has been charged with the task of reviewing our next steps to fill the role on a permanent basis. They will make a recommendation to the entire AMC during the December meeting.

Speaking of the December meeting – you're all invited! The AMC will hold its quarterly meeting on Friday, December 1 and Saturday, December 2 in Houston at the Doubletree Intercontinental. All members of American Mensa can attend the meeting to see the AMC in action. On the evening of Saturday, December 2, Gulf Coast Mensa will hold its annual holiday party, featuring Annise Parker, former Mayor of Houston, as the keynote speaker. Members and guests are \$30 per person. You can register online at <http://bit.ly/2hvmUP2>. If you are traveling to attend the event from out of town, or simply want to ensure that you won't have to make a late drive home, you can reserve a room at the Doubletree for only \$89. Reservations can be made online at <http://bit.ly/2zEcpDN>.

December is also the time that people make charitable donations. If you have not yet found your worthy cause, I would ask you to consider donating to the Mensa Foundation. The Foundation awards tens of thousands of dollars in scholarships each year, as well as providing funding for many gifted youth programs and educational efforts. Your donations to the Mensa Foundation are tax-deductible. More information and an online donation form can be found at www.mensafoundation.org. You can also call the office at 817-607-0060 ext. 199 and speak to a staff member if you have questions or prefer not to donate online.

During the hustle and bustle of this month, I encourage you to take the time to attend a local Mensa event. Growing up in this organization, I have repeatedly found kindred spirits and some of the most fascinating people through conversations with my fellow members. It is my personal experience that the connections with fellow members are largely rewarding. So go forth and enjoy the top benefit of membership in this fantastic organization – other Mensans.

As always, I ask that if you have any questions, concerns, or general comments, please let me know. I have created a simple online form where members can offer feedback on any topic, both by name or anonymously. You can find this form at <http://tinyurl.com/AML-R6-Feedback>. Of course, if you prefer, you can always contact me via email at rvc6@us.mensa.org, phone at 512-779-3945, or snail mail at 10518 Horseshoe Bend Dr, Houston, TX 77064.

I wish all of you a very happy new year.

Taz Criss