

## 15th Annual AAHB Scientific Meeting Evaluation - 2015

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The 15<sup>th</sup> Annual American Academy of Health Behavior (AAHB) Scientific Meeting was held March 15-18, 2015 at the [Hyatt Regency on the Riverwalk](#) in San Antonio, Texas. A total of 143 people attended the meeting. The survey was available from Wednesday, March 18 until Friday, April 10 and participants were offered the incentive of registering for a drawing for ½ of the regular registration cost for the 2016 AAHB meeting (1 drawing/50 surveys).

Unique individual invitations to complete an evaluation survey about the meeting were first emailed to all attendees at 12:00pm on March 18. Follow-up emails were only sent to those that did not complete the survey. Three additional follow-up emails were sent on Wednesday March 25, Wednesday April 1, Wednesday April 8, and the morning of Friday April 10. A total of 103 people completed a survey (72% response rate).

The survey was greatly shortened from previous AAHB meeting evaluation surveys. Participants were told that the survey would take 5-10 minutes to complete. After removing the outliers (i.e., those with response times >30 minutes) the average time to complete the survey was 7 minutes and 31 seconds (SD = 5:07) with a range from 1:06 – 28:22.

### Meeting Aspects

The first section of the survey asked participants to rate nine aspects of the meeting on a scale from 1 = “Poor” to 5 = “Excellent.” As shown below in Table 1, the highest rated item was Networking Opportunities (4.5 ± 0.8, n = 101), followed by Breakfast Roundtables (4.3 ± 0.9, n = 85), Research Posters (4.3 ± 0.7, n = 102), and the Meeting Overall (4.2 ± 0.8, n = 101). The lowest rated items were the AAHB Business Meeting (3.8 ± 1.0, n = 28), and the Opening Reception (3.9 ± 1.1, n = 80).

**Table 1. Ratings for the overall quality of the following aspects of the Meeting.**

Aspect (n)	Rating					Mean	SD
	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent		
Networking Opportunities (101)	0	3	7	25	66	4.52	0.76
Breakfast Roundtables (85)	1	3	9	29	43	4.29	0.88
Research Posters (102)	0	0	14	46	42	4.27	0.69
Meeting Overall (101)	0	1	18	41	41	4.21	0.77
Optional Workshops (38)	0	4	4	11	19	4.18	1.01
Professional Development Luncheons (48)	0	4	10	11	23	4.10	1.02
Scientific Oral Presentations (98)	0	2	25	34	37	4.08	0.85
Opening Reception (80)	1	9	17	23	30	3.90	1.07
AAHB Business Meeting (28)	0	2	10	7	9	3.82	0.98

## Attending AAHB Meetings

Participants were asked to indicate the top 2 reasons why they decided to attend this year’s meeting from a list of 7 different reasons. They were given the opportunity to provide an “Other” reason, if they so choose. The survey system prohibited participants from providing more than two responses. As shown in Table 2, the top two reasons included the “Ability to network with well-known health behavior researchers (n = 65, 63%) and the “Ability to present my own research” (n = 58, 56%).

**Table 2. Reasons for Attending This Year’s Meeting.**

Reason	Number	%
Ability to network with well-known health behavior researchers	65	63
Ability to present my own research	58	56

This is my professional home	24	23
Meeting theme: "Digital Media and Behavior Change"	21	20
Meeting location	14	14
Relevance of the Meeting to my work	13	13
Other: *Job search *Invited speaker *Learn something *Social network workshop *Opportunity to meet with current and new mentees	6	6

As shown in Table 3, an additional analysis was conducted to examine reasons for attending the meeting by membership status. Additional key reasons for non-member attendance included the meeting location (n = 10) and theme (n = 8). For affiliate members, the meeting theme was also influential (n = 5), while many full members (n = 14) and Academy Fellows (n = 7) felt that AAHB is their professional home.

**Table 3. Reasons for Attending the Meeting by Membership Status.**

Reason	Non-Member	Affiliate Member	Full Member	Academy Fellow
Ability to network with well-known health behavior researchers	29	8	20	6
Ability to present my own research	28	5	12	1
This is my professional home	-	1	14	7
Meeting theme: "Digital Media and Behavior Change"	8	5	7	-
Meeting location	10	-	3	-
Relevance of the Meeting to my work	4	1	6	1

For the largest group of survey respondents, this was their first meeting (n = 45, 45%), and the majority were not currently AAHB members (n = 35, 78%). About 1/3 (n = 29) had attended 2-4 AAHB Meetings, 10 (10%) had attended 5-7 meetings, 5 (5%) had attended 8-9 meetings, and 11 (11%) had attended 10 or more meetings.

Participants were asked to indicate, on a 5-point scale from 1-very unlikely to 5-very likely, their likelihood of attending a future AAHB Meeting. The average score for the 100 participants who answered this question was 4.2 ± 1.1, with 55% very likely, 28% likely, 9% undecided, and 8% very unlikely to attend a future meeting.

## AAHB Business Meeting

Two questions were asked regarding the AAHB Business Meeting with the goal of learning why the meeting has often not been well-attended. The meeting electronic program specifically stated, “all members are invited and encouraged to attend” the meeting on Tuesday afternoon from 4:30-5:45pm in the main meeting ballroom. Twenty-four people reported attending the business meeting, while 77 did not, and two did not complete this question. Of those who attended the meeting, three were AAHB Fellows (13%), 13 were full members (54%), three were affiliate members (13%), four were not currently AAHB members (17%), and one indicated “other” for their membership status (4%).

The second question was only asked of participants who indicated that they did not attend the business meeting (n = 77). They were asked to indicate all of the reasons why they did not attend. Table 4 shows that the top answers included “I am not a member of AAHB” (n = 31, 40%), “I needed to do something else at that time” (n = 22, 29%), and “I did not know I was invited” (n = 18, 23%). Of note, 2 affiliate members, 5 full members, and 1 Fellow indicated that they did not know they were invited to the business meeting.

**Table 4. Reasons for Not Attending the Business Meeting.**

Reason	Number	%
I am not a member of AAHB	31	40
I needed to do something else at that time	22	29
I did not know I was invited	18	23
I was not interested in attending	13	17
I did not have anything to contribute	11	14
It was at an inconvenient time	8	10
It sounded boring	6	8
It was too long	0	0
Other: <i>*Forgot about it *A time for sightseeing *I needed to catch a flight *Left the conference early to attend another conference *I had to leave a few minutes and when I got back it was already over. It started early. *Unfortunately, I had to return to my institution before the business meeting but hope to attend next year.</i>	6	8

## Poster Tours

Poster tours (i.e., Nutrition, Physical Activity, Digital Media & Health, Alcohol, and Sexual Health) were a new feature introduced at this year’s meeting. Thirty-two people (31%) indicated that they participated in or led one of the poster tours. Those individuals were then asked to rate the value/usefulness and the quality of the tours. As shown in Table 5, both aspects were rated as Very Good. The majority of poster tour participants/leaders (72%, n = 23) felt that the tours should be offered at future AAHB meetings, while 4 were undecided (13%) and 5 did not think they should be offered (16%).

**Table 5. Ratings for Poster Tour Value/Usefulness and Quality.**

Item (n)	Rating					Mean	SD
	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent		
Value/Usefulness (32)	2	3	7	11	9	3.69	1.18
Quality (30)	1	2	7	10	10	3.87	1.07

Participants were asked if they had any comments about the poster tours. The following comments and feedback were written by 13 participants.

### Praise

- *I think it is a wonderful opportunity while chatting and having lite fare to review the works and gain new ideas.*
- *Jay Maddock was an excellent poster tour leader. My positive experience was in large part due to Jay.*
- *I really enjoyed the poster tour!*
- *I thought they were an interesting element to the poster sessions. Please bring them back*

### Length

- *I like the idea quite a bit, but I think the poster sessions need to be longer if we do this, so that people can go on the tour and still be able to wander around the posters on their own. It also seemed like some tours didn't have that much interest, while other tours had a nice group of five or six people but then it became hard to have a group of five/six crowd through the poster aisles and stand in front of a poster.... maybe putting poster tour posters in the same area and having larger aisles/spaces in that section would help.*
- *Limit the time at each poster*

- *My tour was poorly attended. Only 2 participants and the guide. The interactions were excellent in particular because of the small group, however it would be good to promote more. Left little to no time to visit posters not on the tour.*

#### Suggestions

- *There should be two drink tickets per person instead of one. The socialization lubricants need more juice if talented minds are to socialize beyond their own shells of subjective experience, made worse as many tend to be highly introspective in nature. Puritanism has never been a leading force in change and discovery, freedom of thought is where it's at.*
- *Yes, as the conference progressed they got better. Mine was the first and only one person signed up, but I noticed the physical activity one had more people signed up and went well. Perhaps just have a few or one per night???*
- *Posters on tours may need a bit more space; maybe put them on the ends as it gets really crowded.*

#### Criticism

- *Poor location choices for posters*
- *I think this was a good concept, but I missed being able to interact more directly with presenters.*
- *We are too small for that*

## Research Posters

Eighty-one people reported that they presented a research poster at this year's Meeting. Over half of poster presenters were non-members (51%, n = 41), while 30% were full members (n = 24), 10% were affiliate members (n = 8), and 6% were Academy Fellows (n = 5).

All respondents were asked if they planned to submit a poster abstract for next year's AAHB Meeting. Sixty-two (60%) said yes, while 31 (30%) were undecided, and 7 (7%) said no. The distribution for responses by membership status is shown in Table 6.

**Table 6. Research Poster Presentations by Membership Status**

Question	Non-Member	Affiliate Member	Full Member	Academy Fellow	
Did you present a research poster at this year's Meeting?	Yes	41	8	24	5
	No	4	3	8	4
Do you plan to submit a poster abstract for next year's AAHB Meeting?	Yes	27	8	22	3
	No	3	0	1	2
	Undecided	15	3	9	3

Participants were asked to write suggestions for improving the poster session for presenters at next year's Meeting. The responses from 53 participants have been grouped into themes below.

**Room Size**

- *It would be nice to have all the posters in one space with room to walk around.*
- *Fitting all posters into the same room instead of having two joined, but separate rooms would make it easier to walk around and view all presentations.*
- *Larger space*
- *More open location, spread out, all in one room*
- *It would have been nice to have an open floor plan so that visitors had more room to circulate around the room and view the posters. The rectangular layout made it difficult to navigate the posters, as a presenter and as a*

*visitor. I also felt "stuck" in a corner as a presenter and was not sure my poster was as visible as those closer to the high traffic areas (i.e. doors, food & drinks).*

- *I don't have additional suggestions other than the location may need to be a bit larger.*
- *Better space for posters. Some were essentially hidden by being in the back of either the small room or along the railing outside.*
- *The space seems to be key in terms of attendees rotating through. I know it's hard and depends on the hotel, but getting a good space is key.*
- *A bit more space would be great, but I know it's hard to come by.*
- *Rooms were a bit tight.*
- *The space seems to be too small to hold that many presenters and guests. It would be nice if we have a larger space next time.*
- *The space this year was a little small*
- *Better arrangement so that the posters in the back get noticed as well.*
- *This year the location of the poster was awkward. I would suggest having all of the poster in the same location*
- *Keep the open-concept set-up. Separating the session into different rooms ruined the flow.*
- *Have larger areas in which the posters are presented so that there is better visibility and flow between the posters.*
- *Layout at this venue was awkward. A more "open" setting (like in Santa Fe) is better.*
- *Better location in relation to being able to walk through, as they were very cramped.*
- *Space is always so critical to these poster sessions. This year, they were chopped up, dark and not at all open (pillars in the way). When looking at venues, the layout of the space should be a top priority.*
- *Bigger rooms.*
- *Rooms made it a little inhospitable....*
- *A larger space. As a presenter on Tuesday night, I found it difficult to compete with the presenters next to me. We were very close to one another and had to speak over one another to discuss our work with session attendees.*
- *The space for the posters this year was not ideal. Some areas were too tight and compartmentalized. I would prefer a larger open space.*

#### Praise

- *Food and drink are excellent.*
- *Keep doing what you are doing!*

- *Nothing much. You guys did a great job.*
- *I think current poster session format is excellent. Would not change. Enjoy reading posters, especially those of students and young investigators.*
- *None. The session was very good.*
- *The poster session was fine*
- *Nothing for presenters. Smooth process and excellent communication.*

#### Space Between Posters

- *More space between poster boards. Maybe only have 2 rows per room (if the rooms aren't too big).*
- *More space between posters, please!*
- *Don't have them so close together.*
- *More room between rows of posters.*
- *Better room. They were too close together*

#### Poster Tours

- *Perhaps have a poster tour for students or new members who may not know many folks, which will give them an opportunity to meet people and feel more integrated.*
- *Also, my poster was supposed to be part of a poster tour, but no one ever came.*
- *I liked the idea of the tours this year. But, it may be nice to have posters with similar topics (sex, alcohol, exercise) located in the same area. This may help attendees and presenters to interact more about the research.*
- *Have a mixed topic poster tour, not just specific topics (alcohol, physical activity, etc.). I didn't go on one, nor did mine have a chance of being featured in one because my topic is injury. Also, consider having a new member/first time attendee tour group at each session. Maybe sprinkle in some long-time members in the group though. Easy mingling for shy people.*
- *It was a great opportunity to have the poster tour guides, but they did not attend all the posters. I think the guides should allow the participants to view all the posters. Maybe they could alternate posters, instead of taking them to the same sets of poster all the time.*

#### Poster Set-up and Numbering

- *Many posters were missing and some were not in the correct location.*

- *Also the "abstract number" and "board number" for my poster were confusing. I think we would need to know just one of them so we wouldn't get confused.*
- *Better organization of poster space assignment. Some presenters had posters up in wrong locations.*
- *...also, when possible, grouping together posters with similar topics/themes might be helpful.*

#### Timing

- *Do not allow the opening reception to cut into the poster session.*
- *The opening session was delayed so it was rush for the poster session at which I presented my poster.*
- *Move the poster session earlier in the day. By the evening, people are tired and seemed non-engaged, especially during the last night.*
- *I think the poster sessions should be longer to give people more time to walk around and chat with people*
- *However, leaving the posters up for viewing for most of the day might be worth considering. It might contribute to dialogue and networking too.*

#### Poster Content

- *Request considerations for marijuana and marijuana related health information.*
- *I personally would like a clearer sense of the greater implications (beyond conclusions) and suggested courses of action that emerged from each of the posters.*

#### Hors Devours

- *I am not sure! There was definitely a drop-off in attendance over the course of the three nights. (Lucky for me, I was presenting the first night, and I was right next to the bacon, so I had some interest in my poster!) Perhaps trying to make all three nights a little more attractive to attendees by serving the same level of appetizers each night? (I realize with sponsorship that may not be feasible.)*
- *Heavier hors devours.*

#### Other Meeting Aspects

- *I attended the business meeting and I was disappointed at the few number of people who attended, and I thought it was very low key - not really geared to excite people about the organization or next year's meeting. I also attended the first professional development luncheon, but the lunch was pretty awful, and only the students attended. It would be good if you could let us know when a presentation or luncheon is only for students or junior folks. I was disappointed.*
- *I liked the workshops; they are very informative and practical. I hope to see more next year.*

### Miscellaneous

- *I was able to present a few different posters this year (yay!), but ended up getting assigned to a poster presentation every night. I know this can't always be avoided, but I wasn't able to really see other posters this year because I was with my own.*
- *I think that all AAHB members should vote for poster awards.*
- *Having fewer sessions. It is difficult to attend so many sessions.*

## Future Meeting Locations

Seventy-three participants suggested location(s) for future AAHB Meetings. Their suggestions have been grouped by popularity of location below. The number of participants that suggested a specific state, city, or location is indicated in parentheses.

### California (5)

- San Diego (11), Napa Valley (4), San Francisco (2), Northern/Central (2), Carmel (1), Coronado (1), Lake Tahoe (1), Los Angeles (1), Newport Beach (1), Redondo Beach (1), Santa Barbara (1), Santa Cruz (1), Sonoma (1), Southern (1), Yosemite (1)

### International

- San Juan, Puerto Rico (8),
- London, England (1)
- Toronto, Canada (1)
- Vancouver, Canada (1)
- Maybe an international meeting? (1)

### Florida (2)

- Key West (6), Napa (2), Miami (2), Amelia Island (1), Fort Lauderdale (1)

### Texas (1)

- Austin (2), Corpus Christi (1), Dallas (1), Fort Worth (1), Houston (1), South Padre Island (1), San Antonio (1)

- NOT Texas (1)

#### Arizona

- Phoenix (3), Sedona (3), Scottsdale (2), Flagstaff (1), Grand Canyon (1)

#### Colorado (4)

- Denver (2), Boulder (1), Fort Collins (1)

#### New Mexico (1)

- Santa Fe (3), Albuquerque (2), Tucson (2) (Very excited about the Tucson meeting! I like locations with hiking and outdoor activities (it would provide a nice active break from sitting all day)!

#### Louisiana

- New Orleans (6)

#### Oregon

- Portland (6)

#### Hawaii (5)

- Honolulu (1)

#### South Carolina (2)

- Myrtle Beach (2), Charleston (2)

#### Georgia

- Savannah (4)

#### Tennessee

- Nashville (3), Memphis (1)

#### Nevada

- Las Vegas (3)

Warm Location/Warm and Sunny/Warm Beach Location (3)

New York (1)

- New York City (2)

Massachusetts

- Boston (2)

Washington DC (2)

Washington

- Seattle (2)

Cities that are charming and have conveniences close by are fine! (1)

Anywhere that can balance some uniqueness with access to restaurants, etc (1)

Mississippi

- Alligator (1), Oxford (1)

North Carolina (1)

- Outerbanks (1)

Utah

- Park City (1), Salt Lake City (1)

Alaska (1)

Idaho

- Sun Valley/Ketchum (1)

Illinois

- Chicago (1)

Indiana

- Indianapolis (1)

Maine (1)

Missouri

- Kansas City (1)

North Dakota

- Bismark (1)

Ohio

- Cleveland (1)

Oklahoma

- Oklahoma City (1)

Pennsylvania

- Philadelphia (1)

Wyoming

- Jackson Hole (1)

A location that is easily accessible - in major city with appropriate transportation. (1)

On a cruise ship? ☺ (1)

More SW locations and places that are not utilized typically by the larger associations. Competing with larger meetings (such as with SBM) with overlapping times and/or places (e.g., in 2012 and this year by having the two meeting in San Antonio) is a barrier. (1)

## AAHB Digital and Social Media

The next set of questions asked participants if they accessed any of AAHB’s digital or social media during the Meeting. As shown below in Table 7, the majority of participants accessed the electronic program on the AAHB website, and almost half accessed the Eventboard Mobile app and AAHB on Facebook.

**Table 7. Participants Who Accessed Digital or Social Media Resources During the Meeting.**

Resource (n)	Number	%
Electronic program through AAHB website (98)	85	87
Eventboard Mobile App (94)	43	46
AAHB on Twitter (@AAHB_org) #aahb2015 (92)	33	36
AAHB on Facebook ( <a href="http://www.facebook.com/AAHB.org">www.facebook.com/AAHB.org</a> ) (96)	47	49
AAHB Listserv ( <a href="http://www.groupspaces.com/AAHB">www.groupspaces.com/AAHB</a> ) (91)	30	33

Participants were asked what suggestions they had to improve AAHB digital and social media. The responses from 20 participants are grouped by theme below.

### Eventboard Mobile App

- *Loved the mobile app!*
- *Have the app again next year*
- *I could not find the event board app on iTunes*
- *The instructions for Event Board were too vague and I was not able to figure out how to use it.*
- *It would be great if you could add your own meetings, in addition to the scheduled meetings, via the Mobile App. This way everything would be located in one spot.*
- *Really loved the app too!*

### More Use and Marketing Ideas

- *Use it more*
- *Just keep using them and folks will start responding more.*
- *I think increasing awareness that we have it and getting someone to actually be responsible for updating it.*

- *LinkedIn profile*
- *More communications with members (Push-type communications but not annoyingly frequent) re: stuff in the field of health behavior*

#### Electronic Program

- *I appreciated having access to the electronic program*
- *LOVED the electronic program, access to the slides so I could read along when I could not see the screens (the room was terrible).*
- *The poster locations/titles were not on the AAHB website. That would have been helpful.*
- *Would very much like to have digital versions of all the posters!*

#### Multiple Digital/Social Media Aspects

- *Include pictures, links, etc. on all social media sites (instagram, Twitter, Facebook) on the AAHB hashtag before meeting.*
- *More promotion of hashtags and inclusion of various members' social media handles in distributed materials and presentations.*

#### Twitter

- *Encourage use of the hashtag more and show the Twitter feed on the screen.*
- *Broadcast the hashtag before the meeting begins.*

#### Less Social Media

- *I keep it pretty basic so may not be the best one to ask. For the size of the conference, less is better. Also, I want us to still talk and communicate face-to-face. It's fine for use up until the conference and I get using less paper. I think some balance of digital, social media and face-to-face is achievable.*
- *Just leave options for those of whose lives don't revolve around digital and social media.*

#### Praise

- *Again, you are moving nicely.*
- *I enjoyed having pictures posted to the Facebook page!*

#### Miscellaneous

- *More research to back up hypotheses.*

Participants were next asked to provide suggestions to improve the AAHB website. The responses from 32 participants are grouped below into themes.

#### Information Suggestions

- *Adding info on criteria for membership/fellows/etc; adding actual health behavior research content - maybe a running list of papers published by AAHB members and conference attendees?*
- *Would be great to have a curation of projects at all phases of all members who care to post.*
- *More content about what members are doing. Accomplishments, news, etc.*
- *I would also like to see more information on past events and current updates on members and their contributions to the research community.*
- *Also, more communications with members (Push-type communications but not annoyingly frequent) re: stuff in the field of health behavior.*
- *More opportunities for Master's students*
- *Research work from students.*
- *Needs more photos!*
- *I like the idea of having additional resources, such as professional development, available online. Maybe feature a new member on the website every so often.*

#### Modernize

- *Needs to look more modern. 21st century*
- *More white space and regular fonts. Looks outdated.*
- *Modernize website design style...looks dated.*
- *I use the website to access information about AAHB and the meeting. The layout and color scheme looks like it needs an update to look fresher but overall, I like the content.*

- *I think that it is a little "behind" in terms of attractiveness and ease of use. It could be spiced up a bit more with cleaner colors, graphics, etc.*
- *Although greatly improved, still seems a little antiquated as far as look and feel. Perhaps a banner at the top that switches on current news/hot topics or even pictures is what is missing???*

#### None

- *None (9)*
- *None at this time.*
- *None. Don't visit that often. When I do, biggest thing for me is easily finding and accessing what I am looking for. Don't care about all the gloss and glitter as long as it is user friendly.*

#### Marketing Suggestions

- *Membership directory should be open to public - recruitment tool (see who is part of us!).*
- *Maybe highlighting the mentoring element (i.e., testimonials), which seems unique to AAHB. It might influence interest among current students or non-members.*

#### Electronic Program

- *The program should include (1) round table topics (2) times, poster locations, and names of poster presenters.*
- *Having the program up earlier. I had to buy tickets before I received the notification about the poster session (including my presentation) and the full program.*

#### Redo

- *Overhaul*
- *It could benefit from a face-lift.*

#### Reorganize

- *The AAHB website could use some editing. It is hard to find information on there. I would suggest making it more clean.*
- *Doesn't get enough attention - static, front page doesn't change much, looks a bit haphazard at times. News items rarely change - top items are still from 2014.*

The next items were asked to learn more about how attendees received information about this year’s Meeting and how to improve marketing efforts for the 2016 AAHB Meeting. Participants were asked to indicate all of the resources where they had heard about this year’s Meeting. As shown in Table 8, the most participants had heard about the meeting through an AAHB email announcement (41%), followed by communication from their professor/mentor (36%), from a colleague (34%), and from the AAHB listserv or website (both 27%).

**Table 8. Where Participants Heard About this Year’s Meeting (n = 99).**

Resource	Number	%
AAHB email announcement	41	41
From my professor/mentor	36	36
From a colleague	34	34
AAHB listserv	27	27
AAHB website	27	27
I was invited to speak	5	5
Via Facebook	3	3
From another listserv	1	1
Via Twitter	1	1
Other: <i>*Past knowledge *I’ve been to every meeting and know that we will have one every year *My professional home *I have a leadership role in the organization *Involved with AAHB *Member, usually go every year *I’ve been attending for years *Regular member/attender</i>	8	8

Participants were next asked to provide suggestions to improve marketing for next year’s AAHB Meeting. The responses from 16 participants are grouped below into themes.

**Distribution Ideas**

- *Send out info to the schools of public health program administrators.*
- *Send out emails through school listservs*
- *Maybe send an email draft that all members could forward to their colleagues and graduate students?*

- *Have campus representatives from doctoral programs relevant to AAHB to inform their peers. APA div. 38 is currently doing this. Students often have access to listservs, and since we're always looking for new opportunities, tend to forward information to each other. I only found out about this meeting because my program's director sent it to the students through our listserv.*
- *Send out direct invites to people publishing in our domains.*

#### Advertise through other Conferences

- *Email conference attendees of other similar conferences like Society of Behavioral Medicine*
- *Should AAHB have a booth at APHA? Great way to get itself promoted.*

#### Meeting Aspects

- *Tell presenters to use less words on PowerPoint, bigger screens to see PowerPoint and shorter presentation so more can present*
- *Presentations have the potential to be of value to much wider audiences than core members. Perhaps there is a way to target a somewhat wider audience for main sessions, leaving organization meetings for members only.*
- *I think this is done pretty well...sometimes it interferes with spring break but the locations usually cater to this so that families can participate. This is ideal if AAHB can keep costs reasonable...guess that eliminates Hawaii...oh well!!!*
- *Kick-off needs to be more than just thanking people. Also, I got somewhat disgusted because everything was running late. Moderators and others need to do a better job of keeping things on time.*
- *More student/junior faculty involvement and recruitment.*
- *Student section*

#### Information to Promote

- *Continue promoting benefits for students.*
- *Include a video like for the one in Arizona!*
- *Branding the Academy as a place for young investigators (not necessarily students) can launch and build their careers and for senior investigators to get energized with new ideas and methods and to help build the careers of the next generation. The size, intimacy, and friendliness of the Academy really lends itself to this model.*

#### Praise

- *Keep doing what you are doing.*

## Suggestions for the Academy and the Conference Planning Committee

Participants were asked to provide any final comments or suggestions they had for the Academy or the conference planning committee. The responses from 33 participants are grouped below into themes.

### Praise

- *Had a very good experience. Enjoyed meeting array of very distinct individuals.*
- *Keep us the great work.*
- *Excellent job!*
- *I love you guys.*
- *Love this conference! Thanks for your hard work!*
- *I had an AMAZING time at my first AAHB conference.*
- *Very positive first time experience as AAHB conference attendee!!!*
- *I enjoyed my first experience with AAHB although it was brief, and I look forward to more!*
- *I enjoyed interacting people at the meeting. A supportive atmosphere.*
- *It's grown very nicely.*
- *But the meeting itself was fantastic. The theme cutting edge - the speakers superb! - and the networking opportunities were great. Keeping poster sessions to one hour and enticing folks with drinks and food works great. There was a good turn out and plenty of interest. Well organized meeting and excellent experience!*

### Speakers / Programming

- *We need some backups in case someone doesn't show up (Tuesday morning).*
- *Provide some opportunities for students/faculty to present. At present, other conferences allow students to participate in oral presentations, which is a better way for students to build research skills. Additionally, oral presentations at national conferences are perceived as more rigorous than posters.*
- *Be careful about the programming - disappointed this year. Didn't have the breadth and depth of expertise of previous years - where the presentations were more comprehensive (here's where this area/field came from, where it is now and where it is going), or prompted real conceptual or theoretical thinking.*
- *PLEASE please please include injury topics in the speaker lineup. You have a whole group of injury people (fellows and long time members too!) who did not attend this year because injury was not in the speaker agenda.*

*These are folks from NIH, CDC, and top universities. Every year the program is dominated by physical activity/obesity and substance use and the injury folks are leaving the academy. I've watched it happen over the past 5 years as injury is less and less a focus. Put injury back in please!*

- *Read and discuss carefully conference feedback but don't be over-reactive to particular comments at the same time. Conference attendance has been stable for many years so something must be working for folks. Maintain continuity of attendees and promotion of networking. Reason many people attend. Don't lose focus of science. This year's program strayed away from core essence of academy.*
- *Screen the workshop activities.*
- *More meeting emphasis on mentoring early career members and first-time attendees.*

#### Conference Set-up

- *Did not like conference room, bad design issues regarding visibility.*
- *Pay more attention to spacing in the common areas.*
- *Hotel MUST ensure bandwidth for presentations. To have sessions on tech and not be able to stream was embarrassing.*
- *The location and the hotel, especially, were really terrible. The room for the talks was a bad set-up and getting around the hotel to just go one floor was a hassle*

#### Cost

- *Price was expensive. Don't know if it was worth it*
- *It was very expensive for students to attend - cost prohibitive*
- *Additionally, the cost of attendance (from my prospective, which is one of a student) was rather high.*
- *Allow multiple registrants in a single online registration "request" (for bringing students) - offer a discount for bringing students, per student, on student registration fees on such "multiple registrations"*

#### Breakfast Roundtables

- *List what the breakfast roundtables will be about and who is sitting there so we can find who we want to network with.*
- *Tell what the breakfast round table topics are in the program.*
- *The tables at breakfast didn't need topics - it was just a great way to meet different folks and talk about the speaker the day before.*

#### Keynote

- *The keynote was provoking and entertaining but 2 hours was too long for something that didn't have any scientific content.*
- *I really liked Jeff Gomez - can't believe you got someone of his caliber. His story-telling work should have a great influence on our health behavior interventions. He also stuck around, went to some sessions, was at the breakfast round-table, and was really interested in what we are doing. We need more speakers like that.*
- *For this later point [prompting real conceptual or theoretical thinking], the exception this year was the keynote (Jeff Gomez) -- unfortunately, I think his talk would have really benefited from a good facilitator (i.e., Larry Green) who could have helped bring Jeff's work and many of our effort together more effectively.*

#### Location / Accommodations

- *This was a great meeting and San Antonio is a nice town - but I like it when I get to go places for AAHB I've never been, and to which no other organization to which I belong will ever go. The hotel folks were great, the facilities were fine - but it is nice to stay at boutique hotels, where no other conferences at meeting at the same time, and at which AAHB comprises a substantial portion of the total number of hotel guests.*
- *Next year's conference may be difficult to get to. I like locations that provide opportunities to get away from the conference hotel--Sawgrass does not appear to be one of those locations.*
- *The Academy can show further support of economies reliant on our patronage by reminding members the importance of tipping your house keepers every morning. While our rooms are not free, the people who make them a place of comfort depend on gestures such as this to survive. Plus, they will give you more soap. ; )*

#### Students

- *It would have been nice to have a student social.*
- *I know there were sincere efforts made to make students feel welcome. However, I felt the conference was not really geared toward students (at least those not currently positioned to be an AAHB member).*
- *As a student, it was definitely more expensive than other conferences I have attended, and I would have liked more information about discounted room rates, etc., if they were available. I am eager to continue attending AAHB in the future, assuming my student budget can handle it! I did, in fact, create a social media hashtag of #bestconferenceever for the event. :)*

#### Meeting Format

- *I really appreciate the format of this meeting. Specifically, I enjoy there being only option as opposed to concurrent breakout sessions.*

- *I like the overall format and schedule of the conference from breakfast roundtables to poster sessions in the evening.*

#### Poster Tours

- *I did not sign up for the poster tours because the number of posters is so small that I can see every poster on my own pace and I didn't see the added value of the tour.*
- *I don't know if poster tours are necessary - having a relaxed and informal opportunity to talk with folks at the posters was plenty.*

#### Schedule

- *Educate attendees about meeting schedule and encourage them to attend all sessions, including Sunday reception*
- *The schedule and opportunity to have time to meet up with folks in the afternoon was perfect.*

#### None

- *None at this time.*
- *None (3)*

## Demographics

Demographic information was provided by 100 participants. The majority of were from a university/college work environment (82%). Eight percent were from a nonprofit organization, 6% from a medical school, 3% from a business/corporation, and 1% from a government agency.

As shown in Table 9, the majority of meeting attendees were not currently AAHB members (45%), followed by full members (32%), affiliate members (11%), Academy Fellows (9%), and other (3%; student, fellow and founding member).

**Table 9. Membership Status of Meeting Attendees (n = 100).**

Membership Status	Number	%
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<i>Not currently a member</i>	45	45%
<i>Affiliate Member (application was required)</i>	11	11%
<i>Full Member (application was required)</i>	32	32%
<i>Academy Fellow (application was required)</i>	9	9%
<i>Other (please specify)</i>	3	3%

Participants were asked to indicate all of their primary areas of research. Table 10 displays the diversity of research interests among meeting attendees. Note that a text box option was not available for respondents to indicate their “Other” area of research.

**Table 10. Primary Research Areas of Meeting Participants (n = 97).**

<b>Research Area</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>%</b>
Physical Activity	24	25%
Social Determinants	22	23%
Obesity	21	22%
Chronic Disease Prevention	20	21%
Tobacco	18	19%
Digital Media	17	18%
Smoking	17	18%
Sexual Health	16	16%
Nutrition	14	14%
Built Environment	13	13%
Alcohol	12	12%
Policy	12	12%
Mental Health	11	11%
Maternal, Infant, and Child Health	10	10%
Injury Prevention	8	8%
Oral Health	0	0%
Other	13	13%

Six conference participants (6%) indicated that they were Hispanic or Latino. Participants were asked to indicate their race by checking all that applied. The majority of the 96 participants who completed this question were white or Caucasian (n = 66, 64%), followed by Asian (n = 15, 15%), black or African American, and American Indian or Alaska Native (n = 2, 2%).

**Table 11. Participant Age Groups**

Age Group	Number	%
18-25	9	9
26-35	38	37
36-45	29	28
46-55	10	10
55-65	9	9
>65	2	2

Gender was reported by 97 participants as female (n = 65, 67%), male (n = 30, 31%), transgender (n = 1, 1%) and other (n = 1, 1%). Participant age groups are shown in Table 11. The largest group of participants were ages 26-35 (n = 38, 37%), followed by those ages 36-45 (n = 29, 28%).

## Points to Consider

### Networking opportunities were the highest rated meeting aspect.

- It is helpful to highlight all of the networking opportunities at the Meeting for first-time attendees
- Leverage networking as a marketing tool – our Meeting is small and it is easy to talk with people.
- The Meeting includes high-level researchers and provides multiple opportunities for intimate access to them; this ability to network with well-known health behavior researchers was the number one reason for attending the meeting.

### AAHB Business Meeting

- To improve attendance at the business meeting it would be helpful to advertise that it is an open business meeting where attendees can learn more about AAHB and its leadership as well as provide feedback.
- Have more announcements about this during the conference.
- Highlight information about the business meeting in pre-conference emails.

### Poster Tours

- The tours were well-received for the first time being offered and attendees provided some suggestions for improvements.
- It may be helpful to get more feedback from those whose posters were on the tours, although two members of the Marketing & Communications Council had posters on the tour and had a positive experience.

## **Research Posters**

- There was a lot of discontent regarding the room layout for the research poster sessions.
- Joanne does plan to go this summer to scout out the available rooms for poster sessions for the 2016 meeting.
- Shipping the poster display boards is costly. Joanne has suggested possibly buying and using tri-fold boards that would set up on top of a table.

## **Eventboard Mobile App**

- The response for the Eventboard Mobile app was mixed. The app was free this year, but we would have to purchase it for use at future conferences.
- If we do decide to purchase the app, we need to do more advertising and provide more instruction about it to increase use.
- It is possible that the app may not be as useful for our meeting with all concurrent sessions as compared to larger meetings that require more scheduling coordination. Is the app worth the cost and the time required to prepare the meeting information using it?

## **Twitter and other Social Media**

- Many conference attendees were not proficient at using Twitter. It would be helpful to provide a short electronic media tutorial. If so, it should be built into the conference schedule (possibly as part of morning announcements).
- There was a positive response to using Twitter for questions. We just need to have a dedicated hashtag and educate attendees more.

## **Students**

- As we begin to promote our student AAHB membership, there are some useful suggestions to do more to improve the conference experience for students.