Patrick Dignan, Basking Ridge, NJ, assumes the role of Chairman of the Preeclampsia Foundation's Board of Directors this month, replacing Leslie Weeks, Mobile, Ala., whose second 3-year term expired last month.

Dignan offered this greeting: "On behalf of the entire Board of Directors - current and past - staff, and volunteers, I would first like to extend a very warm 'thank you' to Leslie Weeks, who has served as Board Chair these past four years. Leslie has served in this capacity during an obviously tumultuous time for our economy in general, and the non-profit sector in particular. Despite the challenging environment, Leslie's leadership, determination and foresight has helped to place the Foundation in a fundamentally stronger position than it was when she took over as Board Chair. We are on relatively firm financial footing, have meaningful corporate sponsorships, significant and recurring fundraising initiatives, and a robust program and services offering. We look forward to her ongoing support and participation.

I first became involved with the Foundation in the summer of 2004, at a seminal gathering in Seattle, which included founders Anne Garrett and Joan Lambert, Medical Board Director Tom Easterling, and many individuals who have since assumed leadership positions within the Foundation, including Leslie, Executive Director Eleni Tsigas, and Carol Hamilton, among others. I had been searching for a few years for some understanding of the etiology and manifestation of this disease. Several years prior, my wife Donna had died from the effects of severe preeclampsia and HELLP Syndrome, several weeks after delivering our (perfectly healthy) twin boys. Shortly following the summer Seattle gathering, I joined the Board of Directors, and have been involved with the Foundation, in various capacities, ever since.

It is really my delight and pleasure to be working with such dedicated people, and I very much look forward to building on the successes and momentum of the past several years, and take the role of Board Chair quite seriously. We have a unique opportunity, a position in the realm of non-profits focused on the health and awareness of expectant mothers and their families at large, that remains so necessary and vital."