



Nevada Psychological Association

NPA News

The Voice of Psychology in Nevada

2019 Spring Newsletter

Upcoming CE Events:

- **Sept 11th—13th, 2019**
DBT Part I
Oct 30th—Nov 1st, 2019
DBT Part II
Alan Fruzzetti Ph.D.
Las Vegas 18 CE Credits ea
- **October 18, 2019**
Developing Expertise in CBT-I
Gregg Jacobs PhD
Reno 6 CE Credits
- **November 15th 2019**
Evidence-Based Assessment and Treatment of Bipolar Disorders in Youth and Young Adults
Eric Youngstrom, PhD
Las Vegas CE Credits



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~ ~ ~ ~ ~ A Message from our President ~ ~ ~ ~ ~

I have the opportunity almost every day to tell people, “Nevada is the place to be for psychologists.” To some, this may sound strange at first. After all, Nevada consistently ranks 51st in the nation on mental health report cards. We rank 47th for psychologists per capita and we have very high rates of death by suicide. We struggle with challenges related to being a state with large rural area and underdeveloped infrastructure. Many of the settings in which you find psychologists, such as educational systems, healthcare systems, and government organizations are underfunded, underdeveloped, or just new to the game here in Nevada, relative to other places. So what’s here for psychologists?



Opportunity. If you can manage to fend off the temptation to become overwhelmed, you will see that Nevada is a state of great opportunity. You’ll see our community of psychologists working hard every day, in so many capacities, to improve the lives of Nevadans. You’ll see the heart of Nevada, which is humble, hard-working, inclusive, innovative, and adaptive. You’ll see NPA, and you’ll share my hope. “Small but mighty.” I can’t imagine a more fitting phrase to describe NPA. As I take the helm to steer the ship, I am grateful for those who built the ship. Each of them, and each of you, have contributed to our successes. NPA and its leaders have earned more than our share of national recognition; we frequently lead the way in advocacy initiatives that are changing how psychology can impact lives. The benefit of building from the ground-up is that you get to decide what you want it to be. We aren’t bogged down by having to undo what has come before. One of the things that I love most about Nevada, is our doors to leadership are wide-open. It’s truly an honor to be a part of an organization that was nationally recognized for engaging ECPs in leadership.

I feel like I am “hitting the ground running” as I begin my term as President. Last year offered ample opportunity to lead many of the successful initiatives that NPA engaged in. We led the opposition to Medicaid’s attempt to require Prior Authorization before the initial session and organized efforts to rebuke efforts to release protected test data in court proceedings. We advanced our issues with insurances’ paneling processes, as insurance companies were called before state legislators to discuss their processes. I was able to provide written and spoken testimony to help defeat legislation that would have required both parents’ consent to provide behavioral health services to children, and author an informational letter to the court in response to member’s attempts to protect psychotherapy notes.

I’m looking forward to the year ahead. We recently met for a full day of strategic planning. The term of our previous strategic plan had ended, so we really had a chance to reflect on where our organization is and where we want it to go. We remained committed to our previous strategic business objectives of providing high quality services to members, developing and supporting leadership, advocating for psychology as a science and profession, and improving our financial stability. I am very happy to announce that we added a fifth objective which is to embed diversity and inclusion into NPA culture. Establishing this as a specific objective will ensure that we thoughtfully integrate consideration of diversity and inclusion into every aspect of NPA. NPA has long valued diversity, inclusion, and social justice and it is essential that we not only “talk the talk”, but also “walk the walk.” We agreed that for NPA to continue being “small, but mighty” we must align all aspects of NPA (Executive Board, Regional Boards, Committees, and Members) with our strategic objectives. There is so much that NPA does every year in line with our strategic plan, and we need to recognize that work and communicate about it effectively.

The meeting also allowed me the chance to share my Presidential Initiatives: 1) establish an 501(c)3 Foundation for NPA, and 2) support leadership through fostering community. The first initiative, if supported, will reorganize NPA. NPA’s charitable efforts (e.g., supporting students, serving the community) will migrate to the Foundation, which allows tax-exempt charitable contributions for those who financially support it. NPA’s advocacy and profession support activities will remain in the existing NPA. The second initiative recognizes the extensive service of NPA’s volunteers. It is incredibly important to me that each and every member of any NPA Board or Committee feel deeply valued and included; I am committed to evolving our organizational culture to do so. I hope that you will join us.

~ Noelle Lefforge Ph.D., 2019/2020 President, Nevada Psychological Association

2018-2019: A Year in Review by Sarah Ahmad, Psy.D., 2018/2019 NPA President

This year marks the end of our three-year Strategic Plan (2016-2019). The Strategic Business Objectives (SBO's), align with NPA's mission and included: improving financial stability, providing high quality services to members, developing effective leaders, and advocating for psychology as a science and a profession. NPA worked diligently throughout the last three years to meet these objectives outlined for our organization.

To improve financial stability, we found ways to reduce operating costs and developed marketing relationships in partnering with other organizations to increase CE attendance and profits. Our membership continues to grow as well and we have steadily increased our number of automatic renewals, which provides needed stability to assure we have a balanced budget every year.

Providing high quality services to members included holding CE events, which also contributed to increasing non-dues revenues. Given the availability of continuing education credits that can now be attained online, we understood the importance of keeping up with this market. Thus, in order to provide our members with an online option via our organization, NPA applied to have our own online CE library and I'm happy to say...we were approved! We look forward to building this online CE library and providing it as a resource to our members.

Our organization has been founded on members dedicated to our field and community. We are grateful to members such as Dr. Louis Mortillaro, who volunteered their time and efforts to help establish and support NPA over the years. It is essential for the longevity of NPA, to continue and develop effective leaders. This year, we were fortunate to have multiple people run for our Board positions. It was great to welcome new members in joining our leadership including Drs. Sara Hunt, Claudia Mejia, and Amy Black. We also had the pleasure of welcoming back those who served in leadership positions in the past, including Drs. Laura Drucker, Daniel Gunnarson and Leanne Hemenway. We continue to encourage members to serve a role in NPA leadership, because there is so much to be done and never enough hands on deck. Please reach out to us and let us know your interest in becoming more involved in leadership, as we are always looking for more volunteers and ways to grow and support our leadership pipeline.

While NPA continues to advocate for psychology as a profession, this year has been especially busy for our Legislative Committee (LC) in serving this function. There were several bills that were associated to mental health issues and were diligently monitored by our LC. Additionally, our members attended the Practice Leadership Conference in D.C. in March, to be cognizant of the topics impacting our field on a national level. They met with our state leaders to lobby for important bills, collaborated with others to learn how to make NPA more effective, and celebrated when our own Dr. Adrianna Wechsler Zimring was awarded with the 2019 Committee of State Leaders' 2019 State Leadership Award.

The role of NPA and serving our mission could not be possible without many people. Most notably, I would like to sincerely thank our Executive Director, Wendi O'Connor, for her efforts and dedication to NPA for nearly 10 years of service. In addition, thank you to our Executive and Regional Board members as well as Committee Chairs and members. Without you, NPA would not be possible. Thank you to all our NPA members as well, who are passionate about our work and support each other by raising your voices on important matters. In closing, I would like to congratulate and thank Dr. Noelle Lefforge, 2019-2020 NPA President, in continuing to lead our organization towards even more growth and success. I am thankful to be part of this organization and excited to see all we will accomplish moving forward.

~Sarah Ahmad, Psy.D.
2018/2019 President, Nevada Psychological Association

2019 Annual Business Meeting—NPA Award Winners

**2019 Legislator of the Year Award:
Senator Marilyn Dondero Loop**

NPA specifically recognized her passion for psychological legislation. Since her earliest days in the Assembly, long before she was elected Senator, she has been an advocate for psychology in Nevada. During the past decade, she has sponsored or co-sponsored 8 individual pieces of legislation – beginning with Autism treatment in 2009 and end of life legislation this session. A small NPA delegation presented her with the award in person on Thursday, May 2nd in Carson City as the Legislative session was still in progress. *From left to right: Dr. Wechsler Zimring, Dr. Lefforge, Senator Dondero Loop, Wendi O'Connor, Dr. Ahmad*



James Mikawa Award for Outstanding Contributions to the Field of Psychology: Dr. Sara Hunt



NPA recognized her efforts to ensure that the UNLV School of Medicine conceptualized mental health as a priority as they developed a practice plan. Her integrated healthcare experience, teaching and leadership are changing how healthcare is delivered in NV. Dr. Hunt was not able to attend: *"It is truly an honor to be nominated and to receive this award. Although to be honest, my Midwest upbringing makes receiving recognition and talking about myself feel painfully awkward. Good thing this is being read to a room full of caring psychologists. While I feel I was just doing my job, it is very meaningful to me to be recognized by my peers who I am in awe of daily. I appreciate all of you for the commitment you make every day to show up and represent all that is good, ethical, and evidence-based about psychology. My sincerest thanks to NPA for this award and for the incredible work this organization does to advocate for our profession, and to UNLV and my colleagues for the awesome support and collaboration."*

NPA Outstanding Advocacy Awards:

NPA awarded Dr. Anthony Papa, Dr. Michelle Paul and Dr. William O'Donohue for their collaborative efforts to initiate and advocate for Senate Bill 162 in the 2017 Legislative Session.



Left to right: Dr. Anthony Papa and Dr. Noelle Lefforge

Dr. O'Donohue was unable to attend:



"I am really honored by this award. Thank you. I want to acknowledge that a lot of others were very helpful in this process particularly Senator Heidi Gansert who really understood the need and advantages of this legislation. This is really is reflective of her commitment to the welfare of Nevadans. Dr. Michelle Paul has done an outstanding job of shepherding this legislation so that it can be implemented. This, I have learned is an amazingly complex and protracted tax and she has displayed patience and astuteness that is admirable--and beyond my abilities. I would also like to acknowledge Charles Duarte of Community Health Alliance for supporting this law, testifying on its behalf, and also helping in implementation. Again, thank you for this recognition; I am honored. "

Dr Paul was unable to attend:



"Hello my friends and colleagues. I'm sorry that I can't be with you to accept this award in person but I appreciate the opportunity to send along a few thoughts in gratitude. In case it bears repeating, this award honors efforts made by several of us to conceive of and pass Senate Bill 162 in the 2017 legislative session. By providing for Medicaid reimbursement to psychologists for the work conducted by their practicum students, interns and postdocs, this bill both increases access to quality psychological care now and builds a psychology workforce pipeline for the future. I want to extend my thanks to Bill O'Donohue and Tony Papa. Without them, the bill would never have been sponsored or drafted. They invited me to assist in crafting and providing testimony to get it passed and I was thrilled to do it. "

Congratulations to our 2019 Student Poster Presentation Winners!

1st Place: Out of Control: Examining How Implicit Theories of Emotion Influence Depression by Martha Zimmermann

2nd Place: Technology Facilitated Dating: An Investigation of Dating Behavior in Female College Students by Dominic Denning

3rd Place: Cultural Humility and Functional Analytic Psychotherapy: An Experimental Case Study by Corey Stanton




NPA
Recognized
the
Hard Work
Of its
Members
at our
2019
Annual
Business
Meeting!



Community Of
Like-Minded
Peers

Programs
Designed For
Psychologists

Workshops &
On-Demand
Webinars

Multiple
Premium
Discounts

Free Expert
Risk Management
Consultations

Total Financial
Protection In
One Location

We Are Here
For You Because
We Are You

When Psychologists Talk, The Trust Listens!

Professional Liability Insurance For ALL Psychologists

With The Trust, you not only get essential malpractice insurance coverage that protects you and your practice; you also get access to an experienced team of professionals you can trust. We understand what it means to provide psychological services in today's environment, and the challenges you face. Our programs are tailored to meet your specific needs and provide you with support and resources to ensure your continued success.

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- Free unlimited expert confidential risk management consultations
- Complimentary unrestricted extended reporting period or 'tail'
- Prior acts when switching from another claims-made policy
- No sublimit for defense of sexual misconduct allegations
- Case review process for adverse claim decisions
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2019 NPA Strategic Planning Meeting—Saturday, May 4th, 2019, Reno, NV

During this year's Strategic Planning Meeting, the general membership was encouraged to attend the morning session where they were presented with a brief overview of the organizational structure of NPA, a review of NPA's current structure, and a short review of the 2016-2019 Strategic Plan and Strategic Business Objectives (SBOs). Members then separated into groups where they brainstormed NPA successes and challenges, where we should channel our energies, what we could do differently or more effectively, and how to make our organization more resilient. We examined the essential functions of NPA and reviewed the 2019/2020 Presidential Initiatives. We also developed a template of "What NPA does" (i.e. NPA's task list) and the Board Members/Committee Chairs involved in each task.



During the afternoon session, the Executive Board reviewed the ideas generated from the morning session, created a Vision statement for NPA, reviewed NPA's task list and discussed and approved SBOs to our 2019-2021 Strategic Plan.

The following were selected by the Executive Board as our 2019-2021 Strategic Business Objectives (SBOs):

SBO#1: Improve Financial Stability

These "NPA tasks" were matched to SBO#1—Organize CE events, ECP and Diversity events, NPA Socials and Winter Mixer, apply for CAPP Grant funds, NPA website, Increase Membership Renewals, Budget/Strategic Planning Meetings

SBO#2: Provide High Quality Services to Members

These "NPA tasks" were matched to SBO#2—Organize CE events, ECP and Diversity events, Regional Socials, Annual Business Meeting & Awards, Member Survey, Social Media, Psychologist Referral Search, NPA listserv, Social Media, NV BOPE collaboration, PAC fundraiser, NPA website, Press requests and statements, responding to member requests

SBO#3: Develop and Support Leadership

These "NPA tasks" were matched to SBO#3—Organize ECP and Diversity events, Student Poster presentations, Awards, NPA listserv, Regional Socials, Social Media, Practice Leadership Conference, Past Presidents Dinner, Strategic Planning Meeting, Annual Business Meeting, Elections, Legislative Retreats

SBO#4: Advocate for Psychology as a Science and Profession

These "NPA tasks" were matched to SBO#4—Organize CE events, ECP and Diversity events, Member Survey, Awards Presentation, Student Poster Presentations, Legislative Retreat, NPA listserv, Social Media, Regional Socials, Press requests and statements, NV BOPE collaboration, Strategic Planning Meeting, Practice Leadership Conference.

SBO#5: Embed Diversity and Inclusion into NPA culture

These "NPA tasks" were matched to SBO#5—Organize CE events, ECP and Diversity events, Member Survey, Awards Presentation, Strategic Planning Meeting, Student Poster Presentations, Legislative Retreat, NPA listserv, Social Media, Regional Socials, Press requests and statements, NV BOPE collaboration, Practice Leadership Conference.



Next month, the Executive Board will review NPA's task list in detail and determine translators for 2019/2020.

Nevada Psychological Association: 2019-2020 Executive Board Members

President, APA Council Rep: Noelle Lefforge, Ph.D. is an Assistant Professor-in-Residence in the Psychology Department at UNLV and the Assistant Director of Clinical Services and Research at The PRACTICE: A UNLV Community Mental Health Training Clinic. She is active in teaching, training, supervision, clinical service delivery, research, mentorship, advocacy, and interprofessional education and practice. Dr. Lefforge is a Certified Group Psychotherapist and integrates many of these roles into the development and dissemination of evidence-based group psychotherapy.



President-Elect: Sara Hunt, Ph.D. completed her Bachelor's in Psychology at the University of Iowa, and received her Doctorate in Psychology from Utah State University. She has worked in a variety of multidisciplinary clinical settings working with child and adult populations. Dr. Hunt's current work with the UNLV Mental and Behavioral Health Training Coalition is focused on addressing the mental and behavioral health workforce shortage in Nevada through a transdisciplinary work group of UNLV faculty members.

Past-President: Sarah Ahmad, Psy.D. is a native of Las Vegas and received her B.A. from UNLV. She earned her doctorate from the University of La Verne in California and returned to her hometown of Las Vegas for a postdoctoral fellowship. Dr Ahmad was licensed in 2013 and opened her own practice in 2016. She conducts assessments, testing, and provides evidenced based services to children, adolescents, and adults with a focus on trauma related cases.



Secretary: Rhiannon Rager, Ph.D. is dually licensed as a psychologist and school psychologist in Nevada. She earned her PhD in Educational Psychology with a specialization in School Psychology from UNLV in 2013. She has worked extensively in the public school system and maintains a private practice specializing in psychological and psycho-educational assessment of children, adolescents and adults.



Treasurer: Rachele Diliberto, Ph.D. is a licensed psychologist at the Boys Town Nevada Behavioral Health Clinic in Las Vegas. She received her doctorate in clinical psychology from UNLV in 2017. She specializes in providing evidence-based care to children and families, through individual and family therapy, and psychodiagnostics evaluations for learning, cognitive and social-emotional concerns.



Diversity Chair: Lauren Chapple, Ph.D. earned her Ph.D. in clinical psychology, as well as dual masters in mental health counseling and in psychology. Her dissertation research, training, and experience has focused on racial and ethnic differences in the experience of trauma, specifically sexual abuse. As a bilingual, first generation Mexican-American individual, much of her work has involved working with Spanish-speaking populations and other minority groups. Dr. Gray's pre-doctoral and post-doctoral training focused on psychological and neuropsychological evaluations, respectively.



ECP Co-Chair, North: Chauncey Parker, Ph.D. In 1991, after 20 years devoted to rock climbing and mountaineering, Dr Parker decided to start his "retirement plan" and go back to school for a degree of some kind. As an undergraduate, he landed in the research labs of William Follette and Steven Hayes at UNR, which led to graduate school at the University of Washington. Dr Parker returned to Nevada and now lives in Truckee, CA, runs a private practice in Reno, but still makes time for climbing, xc-skiing, and mountain biking.



ECP Co-Chair, South: Bree Mullin, Psy.D. was born and raised in Las Vegas, Nevada. In 2003, she earned her bachelor's degree in Psychology from the University of Arizona and in 2011, she earned her doctoral degree in Clinical Psychology from Alliant International University in San Diego, California. She returned to Las Vegas to complete postdoctoral training and provide behavioral health services to the residents of Clark County. Dr. Mullin was licensed in 2013 and now operates a private practice dedicated to providing evidenced-based services to children, adolescents, adults, families, and veterans in clinical & forensic settings.

Campus Representatives: Cody Kaneshiro (UNLV) and Ali Molaie (UNR)

Nevada Psychological Association: 2019-2020 Regional Board Members



Northern Regional President: Laura Drucker, Psy.D. has been licensed as a psychologist in Nevada since 2003. She graduated with a degree in Clinical Psychology from Pepperdine University in 2001. Dr. Drucker works in private practice and specializes in providing outpatient psychotherapy services to children and adolescents. In addition, she consults with a local non-profit that is developing a community behavioral health service program in Reno.

Northern Regional Vice-President: Daniel Gunnarson, Ph.D. is a graduate of the University of Nevada, Reno Clinical Psychology Program. During his career, he has worked in a variety of inpatient and outpatient settings with a wide range of clients. He currently is a Psychologist with the Rural Regional Center in Carson City and on Burning Man's Crisis Intervention Team



Northern Region Treasurer: Leanne Hemenway, Ph.D. is a native Nevadan. Her husband is also a psychologist. They have been married for 46 years and have five children and nine grandchildren. Dr. Hemenway has been a licensed psychologist since 2014 and also a licensed Marriage and Family Therapist since 1989.

Southern Regional President: Tara Borsh Psy.D. is the Director of the Boys Town Behavioral Health Clinic located in Las Vegas. Dr. Borsh specializes in behavioral pediatrics (ages 2-22) and utilizes evidenced-based treatments (E/RP, PCIT, CBT, TF-CBT, ACT, etc). Dr. Borsh provides therapy (individual and family) and psychological evaluations, as well as parent training and education on behavioral health concerns. Dr. Borsh received her Doctorate degree in Clinical Psychology from Midwestern University in Downers Grove, Illinois. Dr. Borsh enjoys working with parenting concerns, anxiety, depression, trauma, ADHD, disruptive behaviors, and elimination disorders.



Southern Regional Vice-President Soseh Esmaeili, Ph.D. obtained her doctorate in Clinical Psychology with an emphasis in Multicultural Studies from CA School of Professional Psychology-San Francisco. She currently practices and is the CEO of Reflections Therapy, a mental health practice located in the Summerlin area of Nevada. Her area of focus includes individual and family psychotherapy with children, adolescents, and adults, as well as completion of psychological testing and assessment. Dr. Esmaeili is also the author if a recently published children's book called 'The Adventures of Smoosi' which focuses on helping children learn how they express their emotions.



Southern Region Secretary: Claudia Mejia, Ph.D. is a bilingual (Spanish-English) licensed psychologist in Nevada and currently the Behavioral Health Program Manager at Volunteers in Medicine of Southern Nevada, where she provides direct clinical services to patients, develops behavioral health programming, and supervises graduate psychology and mental health counseling trainees.



Southern Region Secretary: Amelia Black, Ph.D. is currently a postdoctoral fellow at UNLV's The PRACTICE, where she is pursuing a specialty in group psychotherapy. She completed her doctorate at Brigham Young University and pre-doctoral internship at the Los Angeles County Psychology Internship in Corrections. She is passionate about expanding access to care and has worked with diverse populations in a variety of interdisciplinary and team-based settings, which has taught her the importance of collaboration, self-direction and organization.

APA Council of Representatives Update—Noelle Lefforge, Ph.D.

Many of you may have seen my solicitations for input leading up to the February Council of Representatives meeting as well as my immediate debrief. Here's an even briefer version, complete with my votes as per my commitment to transparency.

- **APA Strategic Plan** - Council voted to adopt APA's strategic plan: <https://www.apa.org/about/apa/strategic-plan/>. The plan was built on a strong belief that a new vision for the association should be co-created. Our more than 118,000 members were invited to provide input into a transformative path forward that addresses the needs and interests of the different segments that make up the field. This three- to five-year strategic plan enables us to focus the association's efforts toward maximizing the impact we can have on complex issues facing the field of psychology and broader society. I voted in favor; the dynamic, inclusive process utilized to generate this plan marks a shift in how APA does business. Motion passed with the votes as follows: 158 yes votes (96.3%), 5 no votes, 1 abstention.
- **Receive the report of the Board of Educational Affairs (BEA) Task Force to Develop a Blueprint for APA Accreditation of Master's Programs in Health Service Psychology (HSP)** - The task force was charged with determining the scope and pathway for accreditation. They determined that scope of accreditation would include accredit stand-alone programs and those that exist within a doctoral program that are sequential, cumulative, and increasing in complexity. Programs will consist of core, foundation competencies within clinical, counseling, and school psychology. The existing CoA will be the accrediting body and it is necessary to ensure representation of relevant expertise in the CoA. I voted in favor of this motion. Motion passed with the votes as follows: 148 yes votes (88.6%), 17 no votes, 2 abstentions. The Task Force to determine the competencies and accreditation standards of HSP master's programs is currently in the nomination process (deadline May 29, 2019: <https://www.coloradopsych.org/assets/site/FINAL%20-%20Call%20for%20Task%20Force%20Members%20%20Matrix.pdf>).
- **Resolution on Physical Discipline of Children by Parents**— Council adopted the *Resolution on Physical Discipline of Children by Parents*: <https://www.apa.org/news/press/releases/2019/02/physical-discipline>. Although there may be some questions regarding the specifics of the science, the science clearly supports the main resolution and psychology is late to joining other professions in putting forth a resolution. We need to remain vigilant to ensure that the resolution is not implemented in culturally insensitive or marginalizing ways This motion passed with 147 yes votes (88.0%), 15 no votes, and 5 abstentions.
- **Clinical Practice Guideline for the Treatment of Depression Across Three Age Cohorts**—Council adopted the *Clinical Practice Guideline for the Treatment of Depression Across Three Age Cohorts* (should be posted to <https://www.apa.org/about/offices/directorates/guidelines/clinical-practice> soon, but currently still here: http://apacustomout.apa.org/commentPracGuidelines/comment.aspx?sitecode=4&_ga=2.251040654.9816717.1558116989-1260836593.1550617649). I voted in favor. APA needs CGPs to have influence in the healthcare system and the guidelines are placed in context with attention to the gaps in the literature. This motion passed with 147 yes votes (88.0%), 15 no votes, and 5 abstentions.

Other APA Initiatives

- **ADVOCACY!** Under the reorganization, APA has more advocacy power than ever. The past year has been successful: APA advocacy helped with DOUBLED federal funding for education in training in psychology for 2019, prevention of ACA repeal, and increased CMS reimbursement to psychologists. APA is dedicated to advocating for psychological science, education, and practice.
- **APA President Rosie Davis** has 2 primary initiatives. First, she is interested in the role psychology has to play in addressing deep poverty in the US (<https://www.apa.org/about/governance/president/deep-poverty-initiative>). Currently, the Deep Poverty Initiative Working Group is being created. Second, she wants to promote understanding the public's understanding of psychology.

The Council meets again August 6-9, corresponding to APA's Annual Convention in Chicago. As the meeting approaches and the agenda is formalized, I will be sending out a poll or two to solicit your input on the key issues. Please keep your eye out for it and weigh-in. You can also email your input anytime: nlefforge@gmail.com; I am also happy to resend a full description of the meeting upon request. I'll be posting my post-report to the listserv at the conclusion of the meeting, so watch for that as well.

~ Noelle Lefforge, Ph.D., APA Council Rep

****AUTOMATIC DUES RENEWAL NOTICE:** The initial term of this Agreement shall be one (1) year commencing as of the date hereof. Thereafter, the term of this Agreement shall automatically renew for successive one (1) year terms unless member provides written notice to NPA central office at least ninety (90) days in advance of the end of the membership year that it does not wish to renew the term of this Agreement.

Full Members: (✓ box below):

(Flat fee dues)

- Full member, 5 years post licensure \$250.00

Please note that 30% of dues is designated for the lobbyist and is not tax deductible. \$15 of your dues payment will go to support your respective region (North or South) and its activities.

Early Career Psychologists (choose 1 and ✓):

- | | |
|---|----------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4 years post-licensing | \$225.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3 years post-licensing | \$200.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2 years post-licensing | \$175.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 year post-licensing | \$150.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Licensing year | \$125.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Post-doc/Unlicensed | \$100.00 |

A. TOTAL: Full Members (left) or ECP (right) flat fee dues: \$ _____

B. Other Membership Categories: *(for those that are neither a Full Members nor an ECPs):*

- Associate/Affiliate/Out-of-State Member \$75.00
Graduate or undergraduate students with an interest in psychology., Please include proof of student status with your application.
- Student Member \$50.00
Graduate or undergraduate students with an interest in psychology., Please include proof of student status with your application.
- Retired Member \$65.00
detailed description available online

C. Additional Donation Opportunities:

- Lobbyist/Legislative Fund \$100.00 or _____ (other donation amount)
Your donation supports our Legislative Committee activities
- Political Action Committee (PAC) \$100.00 or _____ (other donation amount)
Your donation to PAC allows us to support Nevada State Legislators who share our passion and positions. This is NOT tax deductible.
- NPA Student Fund \$100.00 or _____ (other donation amount)
Your donation will help fund Student travel to SLC and Strategic Planning
- NPA Century Fund \$100.00 or _____ (other donation amount)
Your donation supports our Central Office operations, ED and Lobbyist

D. Total of A or B, and C: _____

E. Make Your Payment (choose 1 and ✓):

- Check enclosed, **made payable to NPA** (mail to PO Box 400671, Las Vegas, NV 89140)
- Credit Card Payment (circle one): Visa MasterCard Discover American Express

Card Number: _____ Exp Date: _____

Security Code: _____ (3 numbers on back of card, or 4 numbers on front of AmEx)

Billing Address:

- Home Office Other (fill in info here): _____

Name as it appears on card: _____

Your signature: _____

You can also renew **online** at: www.NVpsychology.org

Or return **by Fax** to: 888.654.0050 or return **by Mail** to: NPA, PO Box 400671, Las Vegas, NV 89140

2019 Legislative Session—A Win for Nevada Psychologists' Insurance Paneling



NPA has been addressing our members' struggles to join insurance panels in Nevada. A couple years ago, we started hearing that many psychologists and mental health professionals were being denied paneling because "the panel is full." We have all wondered how this could be when over 90% of Nevada is designated as mental/behavioral health shortage areas. This issue is particularly near to my heart because I am so involved with behavioral workforce training. I can personally attest to the work many have done in recent years to train and license more quality behavioral health professionals; how can we possibly expect to keep them working in Nevada if they cannot make a living?

Yesterday was a big win for this cause. Governor Sisolak approved SB234, which had unanimously passed through the State Senate and Assembly. SB234 requires health insurance carriers to complete a standardized form when denying paneling to a provider. They must include the reason for denial and provide a copy to both the denied provider and the Nevada Division of Insurance. The Insurance Commissioner must aggregate and publically post the data annually. This legislation will increase awareness of paneling issues among policy makers which should lead to improved accountability.

This legislation was put forth by the Legislative Committee on Healthcare and directly resulted from NPA's efforts. The Committee met on July 17, 2018, and I was there on behalf of NPA to represent the struggles psychologists have faced to become paneled. I also submitted survey data that I had collected through NPA that depicted the nature of the problems. The Legislative Committee on Healthcare was moved to action and submitted this legislation which will require health carriers to be more transparent about their paneling processes.

I know that psychologists and other behavioral healthcare providers still face many barriers to being adequately compensated for their services, and this legislation is just the beginning of meaningful change. I call upon all of our members to remain vigilant and communicative about these issues; now that this law has passed, we need to ensure that it is actually enforced. SB234 requires public input to develop the standardized form, and we hope to involve you in that process – let us know if you are willing to help.

~ Noelle Lefforge, Ph.D., 2019/20 NPA President

¹ <https://www.leg.state.nv.us/App/NELIS/REL/80th2019/Bill/6392/Overview>

Thank You

to the
Committee for the Advancement of Professional Practice (CAPP)
for awarding an Organizational Development Grant of \$12,000 to NPA.

This subsidy helps cover NPA's central office operations and our lobbyist expenses. CAPP continues to recognize the need of assistance by very small State Associations in maintaining central office operations, which is greatly appreciated by NPA.

This grant, made possible from funds collected through the practice assessment of licensed psychologists, is awarded in the spirit of resource sharing



2019 CSL State Leadership Award—awarded to Dr. Adrianna Wechsler Zimring

Adrianna Wechsler Zimring, Ph.D. received the **2019 Committee of State Leaders' (CSL) State Leadership Award** at the 2019 APAPO Practice Leadership |Conference on March 11th, 2019 in Washington D.C. Adrianna was recognized for her tireless service to Nevada's most vulnerable and historically marginalized populations through her various roles in NPA.

Dr. Wechsler Zimring served as NPA President during the tragic events of 1 October, the deadliest shooting in modern American history. We were fortunate to have her at the helm as we organized the mental health community's immediate and effective response. She reminded us all that our response to this catastrophic event will be a marathon, not a sprint. She coordinated with local and national organizations (e.g., local schools, county and state organizations, APA's DRN, American Red Cross, the National Child Traumatic Stress Network). She led the way providing resources to those needed them and keeping us all calm and focused.



Psychologist Adrianna Wechsler Zimring, Ph.D. receives the PLC 2019 Committee of State Leaders' (CSL) State Leadership Award from Travis Colwell, Chair of CSL

Dr. Wechsler Zimring tirelessly advocates for the advancement and protection of mental health services. This year alone, Dr. Wechsler Zimring spearheaded our community's responses to threats to Medicaid mental health accessibility, protection of testing data, confidentiality of therapy records for victims of crime, and psychologists' unique scope of practice to treat psychosis and conduct psychological assessment. More specifically, she helped defeat Medicaid's attempt to change prior authorization requirements from 26 sessions to one. She's been instrumental in protecting the Nevada Board of Psychological Examiners from consolidation into a "super board," and successfully passing into legislation NPA's first bill draft request (corporate practice). She also helped defeat a "bathroom bill" and advocated for a conversion therapy ban in support of our LGBTQIA+ populations.

As our Federal Advocacy Coordinator (FAC), Dr. Wechsler Zimring led NPA's response to immigration policies that separated migrant parents and children. She organized a committee that generated a formal public statement, which was widely circulated in both Spanish and English. This, along with the dissemination of resources for providers and families affected by the separation, were of paramount importance in Nevada, where we saw a high proportion of those detained.

In closing, Dr. Wechsler Zimring's accomplishments reflect that she is a true social justice warrior and an exceptional leader. She embodies NPA's mission and values and we are proud to have her national recognition bring visibility to all the work NPA does on behalf of psychologists and our community.

1 https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.cpapsych.org/resource/resmgr/cp/2018/Spring_2018/Spring_CP_v51_n2_Free.pdf

2 <https://www.apapracticecentral.org/advocacy/state/state-beat/medicaid-nevada-new-jersey>

2019 Practice Leadership Conference—3/9—3/12/19—Delegation Write-Ups

This year's theme was "Advocacy and Leadership." The conference focused on both preparing us for our lobbying visits to Capitol Hill, and also conceptualizing how we can advance psychology to benefit psychology and improve lives. Conference attendees learned more about APA Services Inc. (APASI) which replaced the APA Practice Organization in January of 2019. We also learned about APA's new, consolidated government relations team, as well as APA's efforts to integrate the advocacy efforts across science, education, public interest, and applied communities within APA. Below are some of the session topics I found to be most interesting, or, at least most important.

HIPAA 2019: Overview, New Issues, and Ask the Lawyers

The much anticipated tool **HIPAA Smart** is complete with regard to content, but is still pending release due to a technical hold up. For more info: <https://www.apa.org/education/ce/1370022>

Make sure you are completing your **annual security risk assessment!** If you need some help with this please check out the Security Risk Assessment Tool from HealthIT.gov <https://www.healthit.gov/topic/privacy-security-and-hipaa/security-risk-assessment-tool>

Is your email **encrypted?** HIPAA doesn't require this but it is strongly recommended. Encryption can be the difference between needing to complete a breach notification and not. It's a good idea to stay up to date on encryption resources - do a google!

Business Associate Agreement: Everybody needs one! The Trust has more info here: <https://www.trustinsurance.com/About/FAQ/Helpful-Resources/Business-Associate-Agreement>

Heads up: We may see **changes to HIPAA** after HHS put out an RFI in 2018. It appears that HHS is considering ways to improve coordinated care. HHS is still very early in the process, but it does appear that some of these possible changes could be burdensome to small practitioners. APA has pushed back and asked for a **small practice exception**.

The Master's Programs Issue

As you know from our APA Council Member representing Nevada, Dr. Noelle Lefforge, APA is moving forward with developing a plan to accredit Master's Programs in Health Service Psychology. The task force was charged with determining the pathway for accreditation as well as scope. The task force determined that scope of accreditation would include stand-alone master's programs and master's programs which exist within doctoral programs that are sequential, cumulative, and increasing in complexity. Accredited master's programs will need to consist of core, foundation competencies within clinical, counseling, and school psychology. The existing Committee on Accreditation (CoA) will act as the accrediting body.

The next steps will focus on determining accreditation standards for HSP Master's Programs. APA is moving quickly on this topic. APA recognizes that psychology is a bit late in coming to the table given that there are already other established master's level accrediting organizations in behavioral health.

For additional background on this topic please see: <https://www.apa.org/news/press/releases/2018/07/accrediting-masters-programs>

Lobbying Visits to Capitol Hill

We again raised the need to add psychologists to the Medicare definition of "physician" in order to remove an unnecessary layer of physician supervision and to help patients access psychologists' services. This issue is covered in the fact sheet [Congress Should Pass the Medicare Mental Health Access Act](#) (PDF, 59KB). We requested members of Congress co-sponsor this bill to allow psychologists to practice without unnecessary physician supervision. The impact of current Medicare policy on beneficiary access to services provided by psychologists is emphasized in [Psychologists' Stories on the Need for Medicare Independent Practice Authority](#) (PDF, 42KB).

We also brought a second Medicare bill to bring to our members of Congress and asked for co-sponsorship. The Mental Health Telemedicine Expansion Act looks to ease telemedicine restrictions for Medicare beneficiaries by allowing access to certain psychological services through telemedicine, regardless of where they live. Additionally, the bill allows beneficiaries to access these services from their home as opposed to a qualified "originating site". Additional details for the bill can be found in the factsheet [Congress Should Pass the Mental Health Telemedicine Expansion Act, H.R. 1301](#) (PDF, 60KB).

We also advocated for mental health and substance use disorder coverage. Since 2014, most health plans are required to cover mental health and substance use disorder benefits under the ACA's Essential Health Benefit (EHB) rules. However, changes to federal policy over the past two years have weakened these rules and have increased the number of health plans that are not required to offer these benefits. Therefore, we asked Congress to protect mental health and substance use disorder coverage in Medicaid and private health insurance plans. The factsheet [Congress Should Protect Coverage for Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Treatment](#) (PDF, 66KB) provides additional information on the need to protect these services.

Finally, we raised the issue of the Argosy University closures impacting thousands of student, including doctoral students enrolled in APA-accredited Argosy programs. For more information on this topic, what APA is doing, and to see the information we provided to our representatives on the Hill, please check out: <https://www.apa.org/apags/argosy>

~ Dr. Adrianna Wechsler Zimring, Federal Advocacy Coordinator (FAC), NPA Legislative Chair

2019 Practice Leadership Conference—3/9—3/12/19—Delegation Write-Ups

This was my first experience attending APA's Practice Leadership Conference. I had the privilege of attending this conference as the Nevada Psychological Association's Early Career Psychologist Delegate. Throughout the conference, I was exposed to a variety of issues including leadership, advocacy, diversity, management, and policy. I must admit, I was quite nervous as the conference progressed due to the abundance of material as well as the realization within myself that I did not have a firm grasp on political topics or structures. Having been focused on clinical training and professional issues for the past 10 or 11 years, I have not provided myself with the time or space to identify the immense impact psychologists can have on larger advocacy-related concerns.



As PLC progressed, I began to shift my view from clinical to advocacy and leadership. During the ECP orientation, the delegates were encouraged to reflect on issues within their states that directly impacted ECPs. I was able to collaborate with a number of ECPs from similarly small states and brainstorm ways to increase advocacy for our ECPs as well as increase growth of membership. Throughout the conference, I noticed a pattern of trying to relate the material discussed back to Nevada and NPA. What could we as an organization use? What are our needs? What is realistic to implement? I attended numerous talks including Translating Clinical Science to Enhance Practice: Programs and Policies, Promoting Measurement-Based Care and Quality

Measure Development, Becoming Leaders for Integrated Advocacy Making Use of Transferable Skills, and The Opioid Misuse Crisis and Non-Pharmacological Pain Management. During these specific topics, I learned that the integration of psychologists into different arenas is going to be a major variable in the coming years. Specifically, attending training for the Capital Hill visits was the most eye opening. During the conference, we were provided with training about the following three issues: Medicare Mental Health Access Act (H.R. 884) aka "physician" definition bill, Mental Health Telemedicine Expansion Act (H.R. 1301), and Protecting Coverage for Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Treatment. While preparing for the Hill visits was a bit overwhelming, it reminded me that the things we do as an organization actually are not for us, they are for our patients. PLC was an eye opening experience and highlighted a different area of focus for psychologists, one that extends our roles from clinicians to advocates. I hope to take many aspects of this experience and bring it to NPA over the next few years.

Jordan N. Soper, Psy.D.

Licensed Psychologist

2018/19 NPA Public Education Campaign (PEC) Coordinator

Immigration Workshop

The APA compiled a report on immigration that took approximately two years to complete (a copy of this report can be requested by emailing manuel.paris@yale.edu). Report findings indicate that toxic stress has a detrimental effect on the developing brains of children consistent with other research. As such, interventions with immigrant families must be trauma and research informed. For collaboration to work among psychologists and other providers, there has to be a sense of safety, willingness to admit what we do not know, acknowledge that patients define solutions, and use the report to advocate as it is based on evidence-based findings. Below, several of the collaborating psychologists share their work on both the report and on immigration interventions and research.

Shirley Ann Higuchi, JD spoke about how historically, the United States government has concealed many important parts of history and excluded these from history books. Consequently, it has perpetuated trauma among immigrants. Historically, there has been a misuse of census data. For example, in the past, census data was utilized to "round up Japanese Americans" and in present day, to round up immigrants, of which are mostly Hispanics being targeted. As such, it is essential to advocate as psychologists. Advocacy begins at the legislative level.

Dr. Cristina Muniz de La Pena works with unaccompanied minors in New York. Unaccompanied minors are children who arrive with no parent, documents, and are under 18. Their journey they take is dangerous including exposure to drastic temperature, violence, and multiple types of trauma including neglect and hunger. Most are caught and placed in ICE detention centers. When they are reunified with a family member, they may experience attachment issues as they may not have seen the family member they are placed with in years or are meeting them for the first time. Many children end up in foster care without anyone knowing they were an undocumented/unaccompanied immigrant minor. There is currently no legal counsel for undocumented children and as such, are made to testify themselves. The Terra Firma Model: integrates legal, medical, and mental health services/case management. More information on this program is available at: www.terrafirma.nyc.

2019 Practice Leadership Conference—3/9—3/12/19—Delegation Write-Ups

Dr Alfonso Mercado indicated that currently at the Dilley Detention Center in Texas there are over 5,000 beds for immigrant families under the custody of ICE. The Humanitarian & Refugee center in McAllen TX assists families that have not been monitors. Many of these families and youth are sent to the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) for evaluation with referral questions regarding intellectual disabilities and autism spectrum disorder. However, culturally informed evaluations indicate that these symptoms are better explained by trauma. Currently, there is a need for developing guidelines for psychological evals for immigrants and immigrant groups. Data obtained from these families indicate that trauma screenings for recently immigrated youth (from two Spanish Speaking samples; Mercado 2018) significantly exceeded cut off scores (60%) pre-immigration. The types of traumas reported are as follows:

- Crime related 69.7%
- Natural Disaster 95%
- physical/sexual Abuse 46%

Gary Howell, PsyD explained that SPTAs (i.e., State associations such as NPA) can create partnerships regardless of monetary support to identify key stakeholders including non-psychology groups that can assist immigrant families. SPTA actions can include press releases and using diversity delegates to advocate against social discrimination that is based on race/ethnicity. SPTAs should use data/facts on the impact this has on the psychological functioning of children and families. Some volunteer opportunities include the following:

- www.caraprobono.org
- www.immigrationjustice.us/home
- www.immigrationjustice.us/vounteeropportunity/dilley

Telepsychology & Psypact

Telehealth is comparable, in terms of effectiveness, to in person sessions. Currently, the demand for psychologists is not being met as the need exceeds what is available in terms of services. Telehealth under Medicare requires a patient to receive services at an originating site (not home). For billing purposes, one must use “02” as location place of service. Additionally, beneficiaries must have a substance use disorder and co-occurring diagnosis to receive telehealth services. Other payers use modifier “95” in addition to the CPT code (90837/90834). Nevada, alongside 36 states including Washington DC, mandate telehealth coverage. However, some 3rd party payers limit this to in-network providers.

Psypact allows for interjurisdictional practice across states at a limited level and its purpose is to increase access to patient care through compacts. Essentially, this provides doctoral level providers an E-Passport to provide telehealth services in another State under the compact. For example, seeing a patient from the licensing State but who is attending college out of State. Nevada has adopted into Psypact in addition to several other States including AZ, UT, CO, TX, IL, MO, NE. Current legal issues regarding telehealth include payer policies; scope and HIPPA. Additionally, there are considerations for patient appropriateness. Some considerations include age differences, access to technology (Wi-Fi, device, etc.), documentation, and informed consent. Informed consent should include information/policies pertaining to the following:

- Back up communication (i.e., switching to a landline/email should video conferencing fail)
- Limits to confidentiality
- Not using public Wi-Fi or holding sessions in a public place
- Being a distraction free/private environment

Sandra Gray, Ph.D.
2018/19 NPA Diversity Chair



Northern Region Update



I am happy to be returning to NPA as Northern Region President for 2019-2020 and to be working with Dr. Dan Gunnerson as Vice-President and Dr. Leanne Hemenway as Treasurer. We are hoping to put together a series of opportunities for psychologists in the Reno/Carson area to gather – and have a goal to increase interaction between early career and “later career” psychologists. To that end, we will be working closely with Dr. Chauncey Parker (Northern ECP Rep) to coordinate putting together both social and continuing education events. We will also continue the tradition of hosting our annual Fall Social in September– information will be forthcoming about that event. Please reach out to any of us if you wish to become more involved or have suggestions for ways we can increase involvement and interaction in the northern region.

~ Laura Drucker, Psy.D.

2019/2020 Northern Region President

Diversity Committee Update

The Diversity and Inclusion Committee (D&I) has received positive feedback on instituting NPA's mission statement in a more prominent way! Taking from the current mission to promote "diversity, inclusion, and social justice," the D&I committee plans to focus upon community outreach, visibility, and training. We intend on interacting with the community at events in order to promote stronger relationships between providers and the individuals we serve. We are open to ideas on how to get involved in the community, so please let us know some of your ideas!

Additionally, the D&I committee plans to include training opportunities to help foster a greater understanding of how D&I affects us as clinicians. As with previous years, the committee plans to help psychologists grow in the area of cultural humility, privilege, and bias.

~ Lauren Chapple, Ph.D.

2019/2020 Diversity & Inclusion Committee Chair



Honoring our NPA Members ~ Dr. Catherine Neighbors

Dr. Catherine Neighbors ~ March 6, 1964—April 26, 2019

Catherine was a good friend in our graduate school class, one of the friends you rely on to help you get through. She was independent, funny, elegant, and authentic. She was also kind. I once called her from my job at the campus clinic after I abruptly developed an inner ear problem that meant I couldn't walk without falling over. She came and collected me in a snowstorm, then nursed me at her house until my husband could make it from Tahoe after the blizzard had passed. We were close, but she would have done the same for anyone who needed help. I also loved her independence. We went with our existentialism seminar to a very traditional Soto Zen monastery. Some in the class simply followed along, looking more and more miserable as time passed. Catherine decided she wasn't into it and she wasn't going to pretend. She stayed in her room reading, joined us for meals, and generally pursued her own Zen. I loved her for this, even though we were on opposite ends of the enthusiasm spectrum. Loved her for staying true to herself rather than simply trying to conform.



What I will remember most about her is her courage. She was courageously herself. A slight person physically, no one could bully her away from her values or her truth. She chose a dissertation project focused on the LGBTQ population, and pursued it even in the absence of much interest from faculty, driven by her steadfast commitment to mental health in that community. She was not in grad school to compete, conform, or become anyone other than herself; she was there to follow her vision and help. I will always remember and admire her brave, humane, independent spirit.

Thank you, Catherine.

Love, Elizabeth Gifford, Ph.D.

Catherine Neighbors completed her Psychology Internship at the VA Sierra Nevada Health Care System during the 1999-2000 training year. I had the great fortune to be Psychology Training Director during that time. Prior to entering the internship she also completed practicum training with us. When I first met her, she impressed me as being very studious and serious. In fact, I think I felt a bit intimidated by her! As I came to know her better, I also learned about other aspects of her personality, including her love for nature and her fantastic sense of humor. Catherine was devoted to the profession of psychology and she contributed a great deal to our community. During her time on internship she could always be relied on to do her best and take on extra work if it was needed. All of her supervisors at the VA were impressed with her professionalism and talent. After her internship I remained in touch with her and we socialized as often as possible. I enjoyed hearing about her hiking trips and other travels. Over the past few years I had limited contact with her but whenever we got together we quickly picked up right where we had left off. Her presence in our community will be missed by many and I know we all agree that her time in this world was cut short much too soon. My condolences to her close family and friends.

Valerie Williams, Ph.D.

From left to right, it is Barbara Kohlenberg, Valerie Williams, Joel Schmidt (former VA psychologist who's now in Oakland), Lory Clukey (fellow intern of Catherine's) and Catherine. Photo taken at Dandelion Deli in September, 2000, which would have been when they finished internship (our program was Sept 1 to Aug 31 back then).



I knew and consulted with Dr. Neighbors for many years. She was a deeply caring therapist who blended the best from her behavioral training at UNR with an insight-oriented approach toward helping her clients understand and heal. She was not afraid to challenge orthodoxy, and chose to live her life both professionally and personally (in her own words) "with love, good intentions, responsibility, authenticity, compassion, honesty about my faults, appreciation for my strengths, independence, courage in the face of adversity, and gratitude for every experience because every experience makes me who I am today."

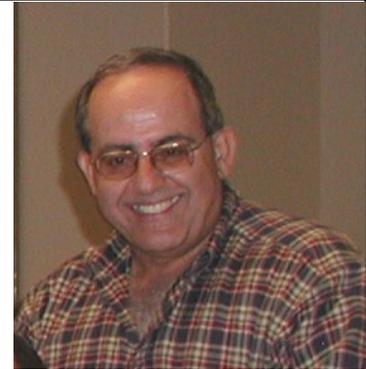
Laura Drucker, Psy.D.

Honoring our NPA Members ~ Dr. Louis "Louie" Mortillaro

Dr. Louis Mortillaro ~ Dec 8, 1944—Oct 14, 2018

Louie represented the profession of psychology in Nevada with passion and enthusiasm. In a state with barely 500 psychologists, Louie is truly one of our fathers. He had a significant hand in creating the foundation of our profession in Nevada. We stand on his shoulders.

He served NPA as President and Legislative Committee Chair. When it was my turn to take on these roles, I could always count on him for encouragement and to support NPA whenever we needed him. Many of us have very fond memories of his hospitality hosting strategic planning meetings at his home and legislative and executive committee meetings in his office. He also served on the Board of Psychological Examiners. In fact, when he was Board President, he personally answered the anxious phone call I made to find out whether I passed the state oral examination. He gave me the relieving news that I had passed. He was enthusiastic and couldn't have been more welcoming as he congratulated me, a stranger at that time, on making it over this final hurdle. I try to emulate that spirit in my role as Board President today.



Later, I traveled with him to APA State Leadership Conferences in DC. During these times, he was generous with his time, advice, and even paid to upgrade me and another colleague, to First Class seats so we could all sit together and talk shop. He sure could talk and was easy to talk to! That was the fastest flight to the east coast I've ever taken. More recently, he was very supportive of UNLV's training program, generously giving an annual donation to the PRACTICE to support our psychological assessment and testing clinic. He always had my back and I knew that I could count on him to be a champion for all things mental health and psychology. Louie also knew how to enjoy life and was an overall *interested* human being. Interested in you, interested in people, interested in learning and exploring. I'm so sad that he's gone. Gone too soon.
Michelle Paul, Ph.D.

I always looked forward to seeing Louie Mortillaro on my many trips to the south over the years. He was invariably thoughtful and funny when we served as oral examiners with the Board and at NSPA (NPA) activities. I was glad to run into him at one of the NPA conferences within the last year. I ditto everything said about him in the chain so far. I will add a couple of pictures from two events in Las Vegas, one or two at Louie's home. I hope nobody will be offended if they see themselves in the pics. You were all younger there!!!!



To a real mensch and great psychologist. Thanks for being on the planet with us for a while.

Richard Baldo, Ph.D

Dr. Mortillaro receiving the 2013 Outstanding Advocacy Award at NPA Annual Business Meeting

Dr. Mortillaro represented the best in us not only as psychologists, but as human beings: kindness, warmth, generosity, dedication, devotion, commitment and loyalty. You will be greatly missed, my dearest colleague and good friend! Till we meet again, in our Heavenly Home, Rest In Peace.

Patricia Barrera, Ph.D.

Louie, I just became aware while visiting here in Canada of what is your untimely and certainly all too early passing. Unexpected and a loss for those of us who have been a friend and colleague here with you in Las Vegas; now going on some 50 years from your SIIS days to the niche, reputation and prominence you've carved out as a private practitioner. Louie has supported the profession of psychology. He has been a competent, respected clinician and forensic examiner, a model and/or mentor, a talented collaborator for his fellow psychologists. Louie, you will be sorely missed Old Buddy; RIP! You've lived a rewarding life and I know you will be remembered with warmth and a sense of affection by all of us.

Marv A. Glovinsky, Ph.D.

Louie will be greatly missed in the psychology community. I am a better psychologist from knowing and working along side him in advocacy. RIP Louie. Lisa Linning, Ph.D.

Saddened to hear of Lous passing. He will be missed. He could fill a room with laughter. He was kind and generous. God Bless him and may he Rest In Peace. -Phil Colosimo, Las Vegas

What Does the Collapse of Argosy University Tell Us About the State of Graduate Education in Psychology?



Morgan T. Sammons, Ph.D., ABPP

In the past several weeks we have seen the sudden collapse of one of the largest professional schools of psychology in the country, Argosy University (many of whose programs were previously known as the American Schools of Professional Psychology). The troubles of Argosy and its parent corporation, Dream Center Educational Holdings, have been well known since the previous owner, Educational Development Management Corporation, sold the for-profit chain a year ago. The new owners, affiliated with an evangelical religious group, had no background in running large educational systems, and several Argosy campuses and other Dream programs had over the past few months closed. But on March 8, the Dream Center announced the precipitous closure of all Argosy University programs and a number of other graduate and undergraduate programs. Several thousand graduate psychology students were immediately affected in the middle of an academic year, with uncertain prospects for transfer of credits or enrollment in other institutions. While the end of Argosy is unfolding as I write (as of now Argosy is still attempting to find a buyer for some campuses and remains under receivership), the current situation is that these students are out of a program in the middle of a semester for which they had paid tuition, likely out of a degree, and left saddled with often very large student loan balances. Will these students be able to transfer their credits or be accepted into other accredited programs? Will their chances at competitive predoctoral internships be affected? We simply do not know, and uncertainty adds to the trauma these students have already experienced. But it is almost certain that a reasonable number of graduate students will have their educational trajectories permanently disrupted.

The response of organized psychology to the Argosy situation has been heartening. APA has contacted representatives of the Department of Education and members of Congress to ensure that Dream Center discharges its obligations to Argosy students. State psychological associations have mobilized in support of students, and some accredited programs have signaled their willingness to accept transfer students from Argosy. The Register has set up a no-fee transcript banking system for affected students and graduates who are understandably concerned about the future availability of their transcripts and other educational documentation from Argosy.

Despite these efforts, the fact of the matter is that the future careers of a large number of prospective psychologists are suddenly on very uncertain footing. While many of these students will go on to transfer to other programs and complete a degree, some will not, having exhausted their financial aid eligibility at Argosy (which, according to published reports, fraudulently used federal student aid monies to pay staff rather than credit students' accounts). This has implications not only for graduate education but for the future workforce of practicing psychologists as well. It also provides us an opportunity to critically examine the current state of graduate education in psychology, with an eye towards the role of professional schools.

Almost 40 years ago, the eminent psychologist Paul Meehl visited the question of graduate education in psychology, and wryly proposed his famous "ceramics fallacy." The fallacy that designers of doctoral psychology programs succumbed to, accused Meehl, was that more classes are always better. "A good course in ceramics never hurt anybody," as he put it. Indeed, the 1970s birth of the professional psychology schools and the PsyD degree was motivated in large part by excessively lengthy graduate programs that were in large part divorced from the world of professional practice. In the 1970s in California, traditional clinical psychology programs produced fewer than 20 graduates a year statewide, an absurdly low number. If insufficient numbers of psychologists enter the healthcare delivery marketplace, we are unable to have a positive effect on how mental health services are delivered.

Prior to the advent of professional schools, curricula were dominated by lengthy sequences in statistics and research methods. Courses in personality theory abounded (most such theories have since been, if not definitively squelched, left to expire quietly in some dusty corner of academe), but courses in applied psychopathology were vanishingly rare. Psychometric theory was the cornerstone of assessment sequences, applied testing courses were generally limited to two courses—one each in intellectual and personality assessment. The dissertation reigned as the most formidable obstacle to graduation, while doing double duty as the most time consuming and possibly least clinically relevant requirement imposed on doctoral students. Coursework in intervention was generally limited to one theory course, although practical and the predoctoral internship were usually in place.

We must candidly ask ourselves how much progress we have made since curricula similar to the one just referenced dominated graduate psychology education, and the candid answer is not much. The dissertation or a variant thereof is still a universal requirement, so much so that it is often enshrined in state law defining the education of psychologists. Lengthy sequences in research methods and statistics are still common, even among programs that purport to focus on training clinicians. It is true that applied psychopathology courses have in many programs taken the place of, or at least coexist alongside, personality theory courses, but academic instruction in psychopathology is usually limited to

Column by Morgan T. Sammons, Ph.D., ABPP (continued)

one course. We are reluctantly and often in the face of massive faculty resistance making our curricula a bit more clinically pertinent, but overall progress is slow.

Much curricular innovation has come from professional schools. In their early days, professional schools focused on the development of curricula that were more clinically focused and time limited than traditional doctoral education. Some of these innovations were adopted by traditional programs but many were not. Over time, the curricula of professional schools grew to resemble more closely those of traditional schools, with a few notable exceptions (more clinical intervention courses, an abbreviated research methods and statistics sequence, a research project rather than a dissertation).

Professional schools also placed an early emphasis on diversity—both in the recruitment of diverse students who were historically underrepresented in traditional programs and their focus on interventions for diverse populations. It is in this area that the professional schools achieved their greatest success and have had the most lasting and positive influence on the profession.

Their shortcomings are many. Professional schools lack the subsidies afforded to land-grant institutions or the endowments of established elite private universities. Tuition is often expensive and many students graduate with ruinous amounts of debt. Being entirely tuition dependent, professional schools must admit large class sizes in order to operate. An undergraduate psychology major is often not required, though some schools mandate “bridging” courses for nontraditional majors. Several professional schools, like the Argosy system, are for-profit, and tuition dollars (shamefully in my mind) support corporate investors and not enhanced education. For-profit institutions often engage in aggressive recruiting, leading to the admission of graduate students who may not be suitable for the profession. Although most professional schools are APA accredited and conform to the same standards as traditional programs, some are not. Such programs produce graduates with uncertain education, high levels of debt and limited career prospects.

Mean medical school debt in the United States approaches \$200,000. Mean graduate psychology debt does not lag far behind, though the pay differential between the two professions is significant. Medical school consists of two years of basic sciences and two years of clinical instruction. Usually, a single, low-credit course in medical statistics (often focusing on how to read and analyze a five-part journal article) is the only exposure to applied research methods a medical student receives. Medical students who have found a calling in research often tack an additional year on to their education, during which time a PhD is earned. Although most medical students complete a premedical science curriculum, the percentage of nontraditional matriculants is growing and, like psychology, medicine is becoming a female-dominated profession. Clinical medical education has its drawbacks but is unquestionably the most influential form of healthcare training in the United States. It is high time that graduate psychology education learn from our medical colleagues. If medical students can learn the basic sciences that underlie their profession in two years, there is no reason that graduate psychology students cannot do the same.

At present, it is fair to say that professional schools are seeking a new identity. Accreditation has minimized the curricular differences with traditional programs. The once near-exclusive focus on diversity has been adopted wholesale by the profession. What should the new *raison d'être* for professional schools be?

First, and perhaps most importantly, professional schools can ensure an adequate pipeline of appropriately trained clinicians entering the field. A recent Health Resources and Services Administration analysis of future psychologist needs estimated a potential shortage of almost 15,000 psychologists by 2030. Of high importance is the HRSA current and projected shortage of psychiatrists: 21,000 adult psychiatrists by 2030, with a current shortage of 18,000, not to mention shortages in child psychiatry. Professional schools have been the predominant educator of psychologists seeking education in order to prescribe. If the number of states allowing prescriptive authority is expanded, psychologists can easily supplement this critical shortage of psychiatric providers. This is a clear need professional schools can address. Further, the mental health delivery system is changing. Specialty mental health care is giving way to integrated care models with mental health services provided in primary care settings. Current graduate curricula are simply inadequate in preparing graduates to work in this environment. Professional schools have the flexibility to adopt focused curricula that will prepare the next generation of psychologists to work side by side other healthcare providers.

Argosy University, in spite of the acknowledged high quality of many of its graduates, has shown us what is wrong with the current professional school system. But rather than abandoning this model, we should work closely with credible professional programs to maximize their strengths and ensure an adequate, well-trained cohort of future psychologists.

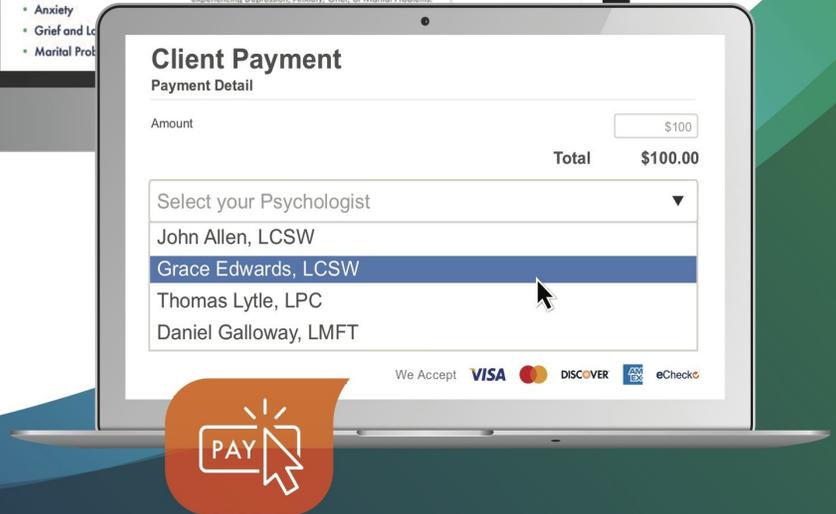
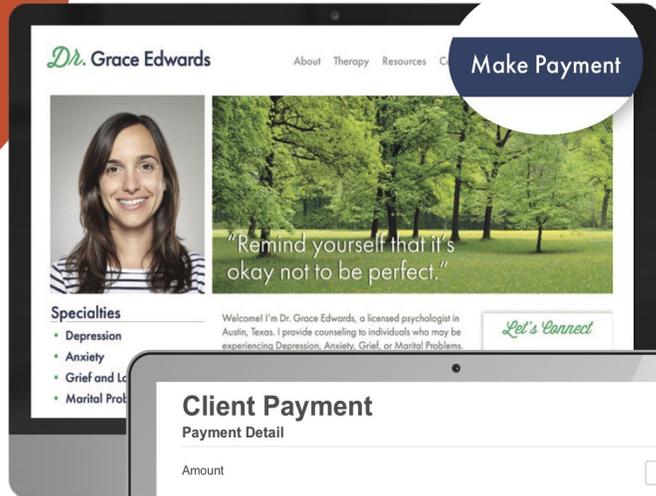
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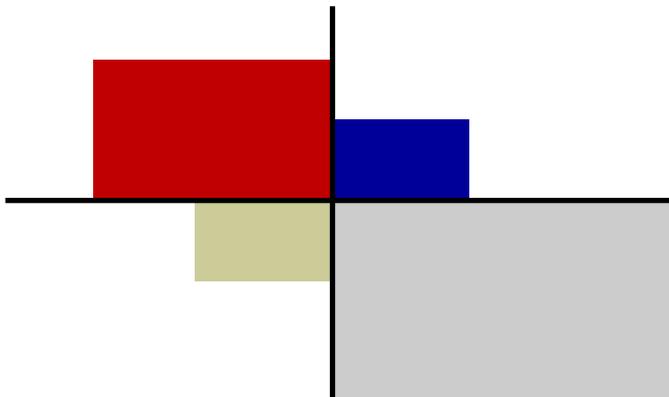
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Advocating for Psychologists in Nevada

The mission of the Nevada Psychological Association (NPA) is to advance and represent psychology as a science and a profession, as well as to serve the professional needs of its membership and the community.

To become a member, complete the Membership application in the center spread of this newsletter, or join online: www.NVPsychology.org/join

NPA Committee Involvement:

Legislative: Advocates for psychology and psychologists by participating in the development of legislation and policies relating to mental and behavioral health services in Nevada.

Continuing Education: Responsible for the planning and execution of 4-6 trainings each year, including the Annual Conference.

Diversity: Seeks to promote diversity and diversity related issues in Nevada.

Early Career Psychologists: Connects psychologists in the beginning stages of professional development monthly in order to collaborate, network, and discuss issues regarding the practice of psychology.

Public Education: Utilizes APA created messages to promote mental health through public meetings, outreach, and in all forms of media.

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Alan E Fruzzetti, PhD,

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Eric Youngstrom, PhD

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