

Incoming President's Address
Psychologists in Public Service
APA Division 18

Edmund J. Nightingale, Ph.D., ABPP

Public Service Psychologists, it is a distinct honor and pleasure to begin my term as President of the APA Division which represents your professional and scientific interests. Let me begin by acknowledging once again our departing officers: [Dr Dolly Sadow, our dedicated Past-President; Dr. Kathy Harowski, our talented and persistent President, and Dr. Michael Neale, our indefatigable Secretary-Treasurer. Also our Division Chairs: Dr. Patricia Alexander (Community & State Hospital); Dr. Robert Morgan (Criminal Justice); Dr. Scott Allen (Police & Public Safety); Dr. Connie Hunt (Psychologists in Indian Country), and Dr. Robert Zeiss (Veterans Affairs). Others rotating off Executive Committee Assignments include Dr. Linda Bodie who has so ably led our conference programming over the last two years; Monica Roy, our able Student Representative; and Dr. Tim Lawler who has served as co-editor of the Newsletter. Each of these folks has given generously and productively to the life of our Division.

I am delighted to recognize our new Executive Committee: Dr. Harowski, now Past-President; Dr. Tim Lawler, President-elect; and Dr. Gil Sanders, our Secretary/Treasurer; Dr. Kathleen McNamara & Dr. Walter Penk, Council Representatives; John Mandracchia, our Student Representative; Dr. William Deal (Community and State Mental Health); Dr. Jennifer Boothby (Criminal Justice); Dr. Lorraine Green (Police & Public Safety); Dr. Lisa Thomas (Psychologists in Indian Country); and Dr. Brian Pilgrim (Veterans Affairs). At -large Members: Dr. Douglas Olson will take over as our Convention Program Chair; Dr. Dawn Ciszewski as Education cluster Chair in collaboration with Dr. Scott Allen (Continuing Education); Dr. ; Dr. Bill Safarjan will continue as Membership Cluster Chair, ably assisted by Dr. Bret Moore (Membership Chair) and Dr. Joe Alford (Fellows Chair); Our Editorial and Publications Group; Dr. Pat DeLeon, editor of *Psychological Services* and his talented staff of associate editors (Drs. Leon Greene, Shelia Brandt, Jill Oliviera-Bray, & Morgan Sammons); Dr. Jacqueline Wall, our capable News letter editor; Dr. Melissa Rempfer Advertising Coordinator; Our Web-Master Kellie Condon; and our intrepid Liaisons: Dr. Steve Nissenbaum (APA Public Policy), Ann Klee (Early Career Psychologists) and Dr. Chris Loftus (CAPP Integration Committee).

Welcome to the Challenges of our 62nd year. As I have noted in my last two Newsletter articles, our Division, like many others is significantly challenged by demographics. Many psychologists who joined public service in federal, state, and community agencies during the era of building the Great Society are retired or soon contemplating retirement.

"The year 1979 saw the high water mark for membership in our Division, with 1,461 Members. As of 2005 we had 983 Members, of whom 33 were non-APA Members.

Just as critical is the aging of our membership (average age = 55.6 for Members, 67.0 for Fellows, and 58.8 for Affiliates). Just under two-thirds of our Affiliates are female, with the proportions reversed for the regular Members (65% male). Females make up only 18% of our current Fellows' roster. Across all categories of membership we are about 80% Caucasian with other identified ethnic groups ranging from negligible to nearly three percent. [The figures presented in our last Newsletter show some improvement for 2006, but a breakdown by age and other demographics for last year was unavailable as of this writing.] In short, we are typically a graying, male organization which serves very ethnically and gender diverse constituencies. We have a critical need to reach out both to women and minorities of all ages, and also to younger cohorts of males if we are to survive and serve over the coming decades. As we think about recruitment, it is useful to know that nearly 30% of psychologists who join APA are just five years or more beyond graduation. One-third of Early Career Psychologists (less than seven years in the field) are over 40. Sixty – two percent of these E C P ' s are women, 68% are health service providers, and 70% belong to no Divisions. Hence the largest pool of potential applicants would be among early career female psychologists, over forty, relatively new to APA, and working in

public service healthcare settings. That said, a full court press is required across all ethnic and chronologic divides. We need to be especially attentive to recruiting folks as diverse as the clientele we serve in our agencies and departments."

Our mission, if we are to remain a vibrant contributing Division will be to mirror the profession and to promote the mirroring of our clientele by the profession. We will do this in many ways, but it is critical that we identify the needs of these new psychologists and move to assist them with these issues.

Hence the four Presidential Initiatives which I have set forth as a program for my term and for years to come in the near term:

(1) • **Grow the Division 18 Membership** through collaboration among our Diversity Committee, our new Mentoring Program, and the Membership Committee, Military Psychologists, and Early Career Psychologists, and by personally contacting new members of APA who are likely candidates. Each of these groups needs to know that Division 18 can add value to their professional lives. **Dr. Bret Moore**, our Membership Chair will coordinate this effort, assisted by **Dr. Chris Loftus**, and **Monica Roy**, and **Dr. Beret Skroch**.

(2) • **Implement a Training Consultation Group** in support of Public Service sites seeking to develop internships in public service institutions working with underserved groups. As of now, I still need a volunteer to take the lead on forming this group, preferably a psychologist with a background as a director of an APA accredited training program or with APA CoA site visitor experience.

(3) • **Coordination with the ECP Clearing House for matching qualified and motivated newly graduated psychologists** with public service sites in medically underserved communities (qualifying for Federal tuition forgiveness). **Dr. Chris Loftus** has answered the call to lead this effort.

(4) • **The formation of a new section of Division 18 to address the needs of Public Service Research Psychologists.** Program evaluators might also seek a home in this Section of the Division. This body might also offer to serve other sections within the Division, eventually forming a nidus of members willing to support a Grant-writing Mentorship program for Public Service sites which are new to seeking government or nonprofit funds in support of clinical and/or research initiatives. **Dr. Walter Penk** has volunteered to head up this task group and so far has recruited **Drs. Dawne Vogt**, **Gerald Goldstein**, and **Bret Moore** to join him. We need representatives of Sections other than VA. The symposia and poster sessions suggest that our bench is deep across all sections. We invite you to join in recruiting for the proposed new section.

I invite your participation in one or more of these initiatives. Public Service Psychologists are talented, motivated, and intrepid. Together, we will get the job done.