

2002

Executive Committee of the Teachers of Psychology in Secondary Schools (TOPSS)

2002 Annual Report

In 2002, TOPSS developed several initiatives that included the development and production of unit lesson plans, the launching of Psychology Awareness in Secondary Schools, collaborations with the Science Directorate and the Esther Katz Rosen Center for Gifted Education Policy, offering workshops and insightful programs for high school teachers of psychology, recognizing outstanding high school students of psychology, and furthering relations with college faculty. Most significantly, TOPSS celebrated its 10th Anniversary to commemorate ten years of providing resources and services to high school psychology instructors.

Unit Lesson Plans

- A signature product of TOPSS, unit lesson plans provide guidance for teachers in developing a curriculum in psychology and enable teachers to teach a specific area within the discipline of psychology. In 2002, TOPSS developed two new unit lesson plans: *Positive Psychology* and *Stress, Coping, and Health Promotion*. These unit lesson plans will be disseminated to TOPSS members in 2003.

Psychology Awareness in Secondary Schools

- At its August 2002 meeting, the Council of Representatives passed a resolution as an official endorsement of the Psychology Awareness Initiative in Secondary Schools. The official recognition of this initiative enables TOPSS to implement awareness of psychology in the schools by promoting relevant programs and activities through its web site, a monthly electronic mailing to TOPSS members, and through a network of state coordinators. Additionally, relevant news and articles are published in the quarterly *Psychology Teacher Network (PTN)* newsletter.

Collaborations with APA and APF Program Centers

- Through the Office of Precollege and Undergraduate Education Programs, TOPSS worked with the Science Directorate in promoting Exploring Behavior Week (EBW). Additionally, several TOPSS members have implemented EBW as an opportunity for their students to present and educate middle school students about psychology.

TOPSS collaborated with the Esther Katz Rosen Center for Gifted Education Policy on the development and dissemination of information on two cutting edge projects: Young Scholars Social Science Summit and the Pinnacle Scholars Project. These projects encourage participation of gifted students who have a keen interest in psychology.



TOPSS Workshops for High School Teachers

- TOPSS sponsored four workshops in 2002. Two workshops were offered in collaboration with the Rocky Mountain Psychological Association (RMPA) and the Northeast Conference for Teachers of Psychology (NECTOP). TOPSS also collaborated with the College Board and co-sponsored a workshop for teachers of AP Psychology which took place at Belmont University in Nashville, Tennessee. A fourth workshop was offered and held at APA Headquarters in Washington, DC. These workshops, featuring college and high school faculty who present new and relevant information that enhance teaching and learning of psychology in the classroom, provided professional development opportunities for teachers.

Recognizing High School Teachers and Students of Psychology

- In 2002 TOPSS recognized five outstanding teachers for its Excellence in Teaching Award: William Cofrin, Pinkerton Academy, Derry, NH; Amy Fineburg, Homewood High School, Birmingham, AL; Charles Grenier, James Bennett High School, Salisbury, MD; Faye Johnson, Paint Branch High School, Burtonsville, MD; and Terri Lindenberg, Lake Park High School, Roselle, IL.
- Through the generosity of the American Psychological Foundation (APF), TOPSS recognized high school students and awarded scholarships for submitting outstanding essays and research papers.

Three students were recognized as the 2002 APF/TOPSScholars for submitting winning essays: Gretchen Sisson, Senior, North Penn High School, Lansdale, PA; David Miller, Senior, South River High School, Edgewater, MD; and Bryan F. Read, Senior, St. Paul's School for Girls, Brooklandville, MD. Each winner received \$1,000 scholarships and the privilege to travel to the APA Convention in Chicago (for which APF provided travel expenses for the students and their chaperones).

Four students were awarded scholarships for submitting quality research papers for the APF/TOPSS Excellence in High School Student Research Awards: Stephanie Ruth Rudolph (1st Place), George W. Hewlett High School, Hewlett, NY; Allison B. Pinchasick (2nd Place), Roslyn High School, Roslyn Heights, NY; Monica Arduini (3rd Place), Roslyn High School, Roslyn Heights, NY; and Stacey Levine (4th Place), Lawrence High School, Cedarhurst, NY. Scholarships in amounts of \$1,500 (1st place), \$1,000 (2nd place), \$500 (3rd place), and \$250 (4th place) were awarded.

Collaborations with College Faculty

Through guidance and consultation provided by Drs. Randy Smith, Ouachita Baptist University, Arkadelphia, AR, and Stephen Chew, Samford University, Birmingham,

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TOPSS 10th Anniversary Celebration

AL, the TOPSS Executive Committee continues to strengthen relations with 2-year and 4-year college faculty. TOPSS especially collaborated with Division 2 in the areas of developing workshops for teachers, publications, and other resources for teaching psychology in secondary schools. Most notably, Dr. Frank Keefe, Duke University, the incoming president of Division 38 (Health Psychology), provided expert review on a draft outline of the unit lesson plan on *Stress, Coping and Health Promotion*.

TOPSS launched its 10th anniversary with a celebration at the APA Convention in Chicago. Presidential Commendations were awarded to Drs. Ludy T. Benjamin, Jr., Cynthia Baum, and Charles D. Spielberger, for their outstanding contributions and integral roles in establishing TOPSS. Invited addresses presented by Drs. Charles Brewer, Diane Halpern, Robert Sternberg, Richard Miller, and Joseph Palladino enhanced TOPSS convention programming.