

Executive Committee of the Teachers of Psychology in Secondary Schools (TOPSS) 2004 Annual Report

In 2004, TOPSS developed several initiatives that included the production and development of unit lesson plans, the creation of pilot minority recruitment projects, collaborations with the Cornell Institute for Research on Children and other groups, offering workshops and programs for high school psychology teachers, recognizing outstanding high school students of psychology, revising the APA National Standards for the Teaching of High School Psychology, and sponsoring invited addresses at the APA Convention.

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 February 2004, a new unit lesson plan on *Treatment of Psychological Disorders* was distributed to TOPSS members. Development of other lesson plans continued throughout the year. A lesson plan on *Social Psychology* is set to be distributed in the Spring of 2005, and lesson plans on *Stress, Coping, and Health Promotion; Research Methods; I/O Psychology;* and others are in development.

Integrating Psychology at Science Fairs Initiative

- The TOPSS Executive Committee continued an initiative supported by the APA Board of Directors and Board of Educational Affairs (BEA) on integrating psychology at science fairs:
 - a) A manual designed to assist teachers in guiding their students to conduct psychological research and to submit projects at local, regional, and national science fairs was completed. *Conducting Psychological Research for Science Fairs: A Teacher's Guide and Resource Manual* was printed in late 2004. The manual will be distributed to TOPSS affiliates in early 2005. The manual will be available on the TOPSS website.
 - b) APA and TOPSS collaborated with the Science Service Organization to sponsor awards recognizing outstanding research in psychology at regional fairs affiliated with the Intel International Science and Engineering Fair (ISEF) during the Spring of 2004.

APA also continued to sponsor special awards at the Intel International Science and Engineering Fair (ISEF), held in May 2004.

Minority Recruitment Pilot Project

- Under the leadership of TOPSS Chair Debra Park, PT@CC Chair Bob Johnson, and APA Past President Richard Suinn, pilot programs were developed in New Jersey and California aimed at recruiting minority high school students into the field of psychology. The programs are designed to facilitate meetings with minority high school students and minority two- and four-year college students and other local minority psychologists to learn about the discipline of psychology. This program will encourage students to consider careers in psychology.

Collaborations internal and external to APA

- TOPSS collaborated with the Cornell Institute for Research on Children (CIRC) in finding high school teachers to participate in *Thinking Like a Scientist*, a CIRC program designed to train students to think critically and to reason using the scientific method about problems in daily life. Other collaborations with TOPSS and CIRC will be considered.
- TOPSS collaborated with the Esther Katz Rosen Center for Gifted Education Policy on identifying outstanding high school students to participate in the Young Scholars Social Science Summit. This program encouraged participation of gifted students who have a keen interest in psychology.

- TOPSS collaborated with the College Board, which oversees AP Psychology, by allowing articles from the *Psychology Teacher Network* to be posted to the College Board website. A link to the College Board website has been placed on the TOPSS website.
- TOPSS had liaisons on both the APA Coalition on Psychology in Schools and Education and on the APA Working Group for the Certification of High School Psychology. Both groups aim to enhance the presence of psychology in education and education in psychology.

TOPSS Workshops for High School Teachers

- TOPSS sponsored teaching workshops or sessions at the following regional and national conferences: Society for Industrial Organizational Psychology Conference; Southwestern Psychological Association Conference; Best Practices for Teaching Introductory Psychology; Texas Council for the Social Sciences Conference; and National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS). Full-day workshops were offered in Birmingham, AL (Alabama Teachers of Psychology at Secondary Schools) and in Akron, OH (Integrating the Psychology Exhibition into the Classroom). Participants included high school teachers of psychology and community college psychology teachers. Workshop topics covered issues including teaching I/O psychology, psychology awareness, teaching psychology as a science, and psychology and diversity.
- The APA Education Directorate and TOPSS, with generous support from the APA Membership Office, purchased an exhibit booth at the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) conference in Baltimore, MD. The booth offered APA and TOPSS great visibility to the 4100 teachers attending the conference and reinforced the importance of psychology programming at NCSS.

Recognizing High School Teachers and Students of Psychology

- TOPSS recognized one outstanding teacher in 2004 with the Excellence in Teaching Award. Viviana Mendoza of the American Cooperative School in La Paz, Bolivia received the 2004 award.
- In 2004 TOPSS recognized high school students and awarded scholarships to those who submitted outstanding essays and research papers. Funding for these awards was generously provided by the American Psychological Foundation (APF).

Three students were recognized as the 2004 APF/TOPSS Scholars: Jennifer Ledon, Michael Krop Senior High School, Miami, FL; Erik Paulson, Sun Prairie High School, Sun Prairie, WI; and Linda Bravman, Walt Whitman High School, Bethesda, MD. Each winner received a \$1,000 scholarship.

Four students received APF/TOPSS Excellence in High School Student Research Awards: Anuraag Suhrid Parikh (First Place), Roslyn High School, Roslyn, NY; Michael Sloyer (Second Place), Roslyn High School, Roslyn, NY; Samuel Neill (Third Place), Roslyn High School, Roslyn, NY; and Allyson M. Goldberg (Fourth Place), Croton-Harmon High School, Croton-on-Hudson, NY. Scholarships in amounts of \$1,500 (1st place), \$1,000 (2nd place), \$500 (3rd place) and \$250 (4th place) were awarded.

- TOPSS offered Outstanding Student in Psychology Certificates to all TOPSS affiliates in the Spring of 2004, so that teachers could recognize outstanding student achievement in their classrooms. Certificates were also placed on the TOPSS website for the convenience of teachers. A listing of student awardees was posted to the TOPSS website.

APA National Standards for the Teaching of High School Psychology

- The revision of the National Standards continued in 2004. The State of Alabama adopted a course of study based on the National Standards, to go into effect during the 2005-2006 academic year.

TOPSS Invited Addresses at the APA Convention in Honolulu, Hawaii

- TOPSS sponsored four invited addresses focusing on gender and multicultural Issues. Presentations were given by Drs. Harold Takooshian, Lynn H. Collins, Marie L. Miville, and Justin (Doug) McDonald.

Membership Outreach

- Membership outreach and retention was a high priority for TOPSS. TOPSS began a network of Regional Coordinators to strengthen communication with TOPSS members in various regions of the country, including Canada and Latin America. Ten regions were determined and letters were sent to the TOPSS affiliate membership to encourage applicants to seek open positions. Funding will be available to encourage outreach in various regions.
- TOPSS began to strategically look at communications with affiliate members, including ensuring monthly email contact with affiliate members through listserv communication.