

**COMMITTEE ON PSYCHOLOGY AND AIDS (COPA)
ANNUAL REPORT 2004**

Prepared by: Maureen E. Lyon, Ph.D., ABPP, Chair

2002 Committee Members:

Geri R. Donenberg, Ph. D.**
Dena Gray*
Bianca Guzman, Ph. D.
Karen S. Ingersoll, Ph.D.**
Maureen Lyon, Ph.D., ABPP, . (chair)
David Martin, Ph. D.
Jeffrey T. Parsons, Ph. D.
Mary Jane Rotheram, Ph.D*.
Javier Salazar***

Staff Liaison:

John Anderson, Ph.D.

**Resigned from the committee during this term due to concerns of being over-committed.*

***Dr. Donenberg joined the committee to replace Dr. Rotheram.*

**** Javier Salazar joined the committee to replace Dena Gray.*

The mission of the Committee on Psychology and AIDS (COPA) is to guide the development and implementation of the American Psychological Association's organizational response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic. .

COPA conducts monthly, one-hour conference calls to discuss the committee's activities. Members of COPA held a face-to-face meeting on March 16-28, 2004, during the Spring 2004 consolidated meetings. This year we had the opportunity to meet again in the Fall of 2004 from October 1-3, 2004, during the Fall 2004 consolidated meetings. In addition, members of COPA regularly communicate with each other via e-mails and additional phone calls in order to make progress on the committee's various initiatives.

During the past year, COPA performed a variety of consultative functions and it developed and implemented numerous projects. These projects are briefly summarized below in terms of general areas of COPA's mission:

1. Provide Direction and Oversight for Policy and Advocacy Activities Related to HIV/AIDS:

COPA members held periodic meetings with Public Policy Office (PPO) staff to receive updates on important legislative issues. COPA members provided written and oral feedback to the staff of PPO on policy initiatives associated with HIV/AIDS. In May of 2004, COPA members partnered with staff of PPO to conduct an advocacy campaign with selected members of Congress and their staff. Each COPA member met with his/her Congressperson or Senator, or members of their staff, to advocate for an increase in appropriations for the Ryan White Health Care Act. COPA members established a relationship with members of Congress and their staff for future contacts related to federal policy decision-making concerning the HIV/AIDS policy.

APA HIV/AIDS Congressional Fellowship.

Members of COPA explored ways to recruit more people to apply for the fellowship. Members distributed information about the fellowship to multiple listservs and contacted potential students, student groups, and colleagues to encourage qualified individuals to apply. Members discussed marketing this

opportunity as being a compatible endeavor to an academic career and to show how this will fit into students' goals of obtaining an academic career (based on feedback from past fellows).

2. Advise APA Staff and Establish Liaisons with Governance Groups and Organizations Outside of APA Regarding HIV/AIDS Issues:

Cross-Cutting Issues

COPA provided feedback to other committees and boards regarding various cross-cutting issues including the resolution on the APA Ban on Department of Defense Advertising in APA Publications, Infusing the Guidelines on Multicultural Education, Training, Research, Practice, and Organizational Change, Enhancing Diversity within APA Governance and Staffing, and Draft Report of the Children and Adolescent Task Force of the Ad Hoc Committee on End-of-Life Issues. COPA established liaisons with a variety of government agencies and COPA routinely provides recommendations to those liaisons regarding HIV/AIDS issues.

Consultation to Office on AIDS

COPA provided feedback to Office on AIDS staff regarding the effective development and management of federally-funded training and technical assistance programs (i.e., the HOPE Program, funded by the Center for Mental Health Services and the BSSV Program funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) administered through the Office on AIDS. COPA members have also provided technical assistance with respect to the development of the Office on AIDS website. In addition, COPA members have contributed articles to the Office on AIDS newsletter entitled, *Psychology and AIDS Exchange*, and they have served as guest editors of special editions of the *Psychology and AIDS Exchange*. For example, Dr. Guzman has taken the lead in developing a special issue of this publication on the role of poverty and HIV prevention from a psychological perspective. Dr. Parsons has taken the lead in developing a special issue on using the Internet to decrease HIV risk among sex industry workers and other target populations.

3. Formulate New APA Initiatives and Policies to Meet the Continually Changing Challenges Posed by the Epidemic.

The *Resolution on HIV Prevention Strategies Involving Legal Access to Sterile Injection Equipment* was adopted by the Council of Representatives at its meeting of February 2004. COPA is actively in promoting collaborations with various advocacy groups involved with needle exchange and legal access to syringe ejection equipment in order to advance these types of evidence-based interventions. Members of COPA are currently developing a new policy resolution addressing a broad array of harm reduction approaches.

COPA developed a policy resolution entitled, the *Resolution in Favor of Empirically Supported Sex Education and HIV Prevention Programs for Adolescents*. The Council of Representatives will review this resolution at its meeting of February 2005. At its meeting of December 2004, the Board of Directors recommended approval in principle pending modifications made in consultation with Rhea Faberman, Henry Tomes, and COPA.

4. Improve Psychology Education in the Area of HIV/AIDS and Educate Psychologists and Society at-Large About the Roles Psychologists Can Play in the HIV/AIDS Epidemic

Graduate School Survey

COPA members conducted a survey of graduate students entering internship to assess their HIV-related training experiences. The survey data has been analyzed and is being prepared for publication.

Leadership Awards in Psychology and AIDS

To honor and further encourage the contributions of psychologists to HIV/AIDS, COPA initiated leadership awards for distinguished and emerging leaders in the field who have shown excellence in research, practice, policy, or education. Currently, COPA members are developing an additional award to recognize important work by non-psychologists.

Educational Pipeline for Ethnic Minority Researchers

Members of COPA have an interest in increasing the number of ethnic-minority students who pursue careers in psychology with a focus on HIV/AIDS, as well as the number of ethnic-minority psychologists who conduct HIV/AIDS-related research. During the Spring and Fall meetings of 2004, members of COPA met with Dr. Kim Nickerson from the APA Minority Fellowship Program. Following these discussions, several Internet-based information tools to assist minority students in psychology who are interested in pursuing careers in HIV/AIDS are being developed.

AIDS in Africa

Members of the committee discussed a variety of possible initiatives for linking APA, national psychological associations in Africa, and psychologist researchers with community-based organizations involved with fighting HIV/AIDS in Africa. Funding for these potential initiatives continue to be investigated.