

The APA Board of Educational Affairs (BEA)

**Award in Support of Conferences and Workshops
on Graduate and Postgraduate Education and Training in Psychology
Application**

BEA will award a total of \$10,000 per year in conference grants to multiple awardees; typical grant funding is \$2000 per conference/workshop. Awards must support organizations or groups of psychologists planning conferences and workshops intended to enhance the quality of education for faculty and/or supervisors who then will use the knowledge to train students, interns, and/or postdoctoral fellows. Preference will be given to groups or organizations that have not been awarded a Graduate and Postgraduate Education & Training grant in the past two years.

How to Apply:

Complete the information below, and address the criteria found on the next page. Send proposals [electronically](#) and postmarked by September 1st, 2014 to:

*Jan-Sheri Morris
Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Education
Education Directorate
American Psychological Association*

Please complete the following information, and address the criteria listed on the following page:

1. Title and Date(s) of the Conference or Workshop:

Veterans Affairs Psychology Leadership Conference (VAPLC)
May 19-22, 2015

2. Name(s) of group organizing the Conference or Workshop:

Association of Veterans Affairs Psychologist Leaders (AVAPL), American Psychological Association (APA) Division 18: Psychologists in Public Service, American Psychological Association

3. Name, email and phone number of contact person for proposal:

- a. Name:** Amee B. Patel
- b. Email:** amee.patel4@va.gov
- c. Phone:** 281-224-3686

Proposals will be evaluated using the following criteria (please limit your response to 200 words for each of the following):

- **Goals and objectives**

The clarity and nature of the conference or workshop goals and objectives and how they will enhance the training of faculty and supervisors of graduate students, interns, and/or postdoctoral fellows in psychology.

The first VA Psychology Leadership Conference (VAPLC) in 1998 was a response to the impact on VA Psychology of a major reorganization within the Veterans Health Administration (VHA). VA psychologists were demoralized; organized VA Psychology operated in survival mode. Efforts were diverted to preserving a professional identity. Consequently, the goal was to have VA psychologists regain a sense of control. The objective was advocacy, allowing Psychology to hold its rightful place in Veterans' healthcare. With each successive VAPLC, proactive efforts primarily focused on high quality psychological services. Psychology shifted from survival mode to adding value. Selected content each year supports that value-added objective, while the goal remains controlling our professional identity and demonstrating leadership in healthcare.

Workshop/panel content is central to VA and Psychology (e.g., integrated care, chronic pain, recovery, diversity, violence). Keynotes/plenary sessions address issues about which attendees must be prepared as they demonstrate Psychology's value at their facilities. Whether by virtue of Interns, Residents, and Early Career Psychologists being present, or the majority of leaders returning to a training program and/or supervisory roles, the VAPLC clearly fits the grant's purpose – to enhance the education of supervisors/faculty, who then use the knowledge to improve learning opportunities for their trainees.

- **Leadership**

The qualifications of the person(s) identified to plan and lead the conference or workshop, relative to the topic of focus. Included in the qualifications should be evidence of national or regional leadership (e.g., publication of scholarly works related to education and training, participation in past workshops, etc...)

The VAPLC planning committee consists of leaders from AVAPL, APA, and Division 18, with a strong presence from past conference chairs. Due to space constraints, we cannot highlight each member; however, selected members include:

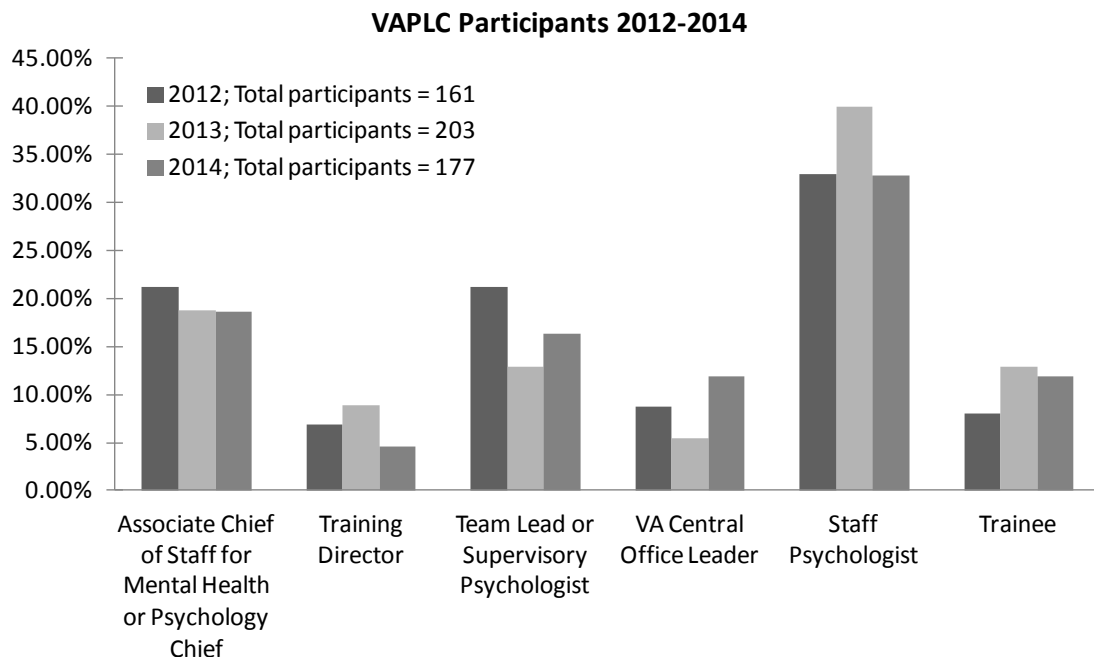
- Samuel Wan, Ph.D., Assistant Director of Postdoctoral Training at the San Francisco VA Medical Center (VAMC)
 - 2014-2015 VAPLC Program Chair
 - 2014 APA Presidential Citation recipient
- Russell Lemle, Ph.D., Psychology Chief at the San Francisco VA Medical Center (VAMC)
 - Founder of the VAPLC and 1998-2003 VAPLC Program Chair
 - 2005 APA Presidential Citation recipient
- Kathleen McNamara, Ph.D., Lead Psychologist at VA Pacific Islands
 - 2005-2006 AVAPL President
 - Chair and 2-term member of the APA Board of Educational Affairs
 - APA Board of Directors member
 - 10-year Director of Internship Training at VA Pacific Islands
- Lisa Kearney, Ph.D., Senior Consultant for National Mental Health Technical Assistance for the VA Office of Mental Health Operations
 - 2008-2011 VAPLC Program Chair
 - Former Psychology Chief and Director of Training, San Antonio VAMC
- Heather Kelly, Ph.D., Lead Psychologist, Military & Veterans' Policy, APA Science Directorate
 - Director of the APA Executive Branch Science Fellowship Program
 - 2014 Patrick DeLeon Advocacy Award recipient

- **Participants**

The qualifications of conference or workshop participants relative to the topic of focus, including their potential for implementing outcomes of the conference or workshop toward enhancing graduate education.

Recent data from the VA Office of Academic Affiliations shows that VHA funds 111 psychology internship programs, encompassing 598 intern positions; and 67 postdoctoral fellowship programs, with a total of 349 positions. Moreover, over 50% of all psychologists have had some training in the VA setting. From these data, it is apparent that most VA psychologists interact with or supervise psychology trainees.

Participants of the VAPLC include training directors, VA psychology leaders, psychologists, and psychology trainees. Training directors have an essential role in supervising trainees and developing internship and postdoctoral fellowship program curricula. Psychology Chiefs and Associate Chiefs of Staff for Mental Health affect psychology training both directly as faculty supervisors and indirectly as service chiefs leading faculty supervisors. Likewise, Team Leads and Supervisory Psychologists serve as supervisors and manage programs that serve as internship and fellowship rotations or tracks. Many Staff Psychologists serve or will serve as clinical or research supervisors. As approximately 70% of VA psychologists trained in the VA, we expect that a large proportion of current trainees will become VA psychologists; thus, their involvement allows for training of future VA supervisors. Below, we present participant data for the past three conferences.



- **Impact**

The estimated or potential impact of the conference or workshop in terms of the diffusion of new ideas resulting from its outcomes in the education community appropriate to the proposal's focus.

VHA is one of the largest psychology training sites in the nation, housing almost 20% of all psychology internship positions. As a large government entity, VHA operates differently than other settings, which do not have extensive federal restrictions, performance measures, and operational procedures. Moreover, VHA hospitals and clinics have varying local procedures and psychology presence, which affects how psychology training is conducted. Consequently,

providing supervision within VHA is a unique skill and hinges upon opportunities for psychologists involved with training to provide support for and learn from each other. The VAPLC directly meets this need by creating a community of VA psychologists and psychology trainees that allows for open discussion of issues that impact training in research and service provision. As the participation of trainees has increased in recent years, the VAPLC also provides a forum for discussion of relevant issues among both supervisors and trainees across VA sites, allowing for sharing of innovative ideas to enhance training and discussion of obstacles/barriers and possible solutions. Moreover, establishing this community allows for the diffusion of education that participants then disseminate at VAs nationwide. The mission and impact of this conference is critical to maintaining high standards for VA training and education.

- **Budget**

The clarity and completeness of the conference or workshop budget, how realistic it is, and how the grant funds are to be used to offset expenses incurred (e.g., travel, registration, speaker fees).

Changes in government regulations related to attending conferences resulted in fewer training directors attending the 2014 VAPLC. Participation of training directors is key to the goal of the VAPLC enhancing VA training. If awarded, grant funds will be applied toward: (a) registration fees for three VA training directors, (b) two psychology trainee scholarships, and (c) defraying the total conference costs (see table below for amounts).

The table below outlines the 2014 VAPLC budget, with a notation for use of the grant funds. The reduced attendance in 2014 versus 2013 resulted from uncertainties regarding the new VA travel policy. Registration is anticipated to improve since adjustments were made to the original policy. As the budget indicates, the VAPLC is well-managed. The Planning Committee holds responsibility for all aspects of the Conference, including budget-related decisions. The decisions of that group remain consistent with the goal that the VAPLC is a venue for focusing on the value added by Psychology to the VA's mission. It is not intended that any sponsoring organization will make a profit, but each accepts responsibility for the viability of the Conference.

Grant funds will support the overall conference and the increased participation by training directors and trainees.

2014 Participants	Number	Application of grant funds (\$2000 total)
• Paid registrants	163	
• Invited speakers/guests (waived fee)	14	(3 x \$250.00 = \$750.00)
2014 Costs	Dollars	
• AV/posters/equipment	\$6,362.25	
• Food/beverage	\$30,853.78	
• Trainee scholarships	\$600.00	(2 x \$300.00 = \$600.00)
• Nametags/supplies/workshop	\$3,277.59	
• Special events/awards/speaker travel	\$6,469.68	
2014 Income	Dollars	
• Registration fee x 163	\$41,900.00	
• Special event fee x 35	\$2,625.00	
• Exhibitor x 2	\$1,400.00	
• Workshop fee x 42	\$3,190.00	
2014 Overall Costs/Income	Dollars	
• Total expenses	\$47,563.30	(\$650.00)
• Total income	\$47,715.00	