

Title: Psychology and LGBTQ+ State Legislative Advocacy 2022

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Ron Schlittler: Hello, everyone. As you come on into the meeting we'll get started here in a minute or so.

[silence]

Okay. I think we can go ahead and get started and go and drop the cover slide. Hi there. Hello and welcome to today's webinar, *Psychology, and LGBTQ+ Legislate Advocacy 2022: Resources for Grassroots and State-Level Advocacy*. I'm Ron Schlittler. I'm the Assistant Director of the Sexual Orientation and Gender Diversity Portfolio here at the American Psychological Association. We have more than 885 registrants today, and we're very pleased to have those of you who are able to join us live.

The session is being recorded and will be shared with everyone who registered within about a week. You are welcome to submit questions at any time or comments by using the questions button. There will be a brief survey after the webinar that we hope you will take a few minutes to complete to let us know how we did and how we can improve. We will also have two polls today. The first will be in a couple of minutes to assess where folks are in terms of your sense of confidence and confidence to engage in advocacy regarding state legislation. Then we'll have another one near the end to reassess.

One other note, APA recently instituted a strategy to promote a culture of healthy and productive meetings and to improve everyone's wellbeing. Central to that strategy is to avoid back-to-back meetings with no time in between so by ending meetings a few minutes early. Therefore, this webinar will be scheduled for an hour and a half. We will strive to give you back the last 10 minutes. You can learn more about this strategy with a link to meetings with purpose that will be provided toward the end of the webinar. Now with that, I'll hand it over to my co-host Kim Skerven. Kim?

Kim Skerven: Hi, everyone. I'm Kim Skerven. I am Co-chair of the Public Policy Committee for the Society for Psychology of Sexual Orientation and Gender Diversity. Sorry about that. We're also known as APAs Division 44 and Dr. Katie Trada is my co-chair. She's going to be helping with some of the behind-the-scenes things going on today in the presentation, and also with your questions during the discussion time.

I also want to reiterate how pleased we are with the high level of interest in today's webinar. It really certainly speaks to the importance of this topic. Today's program is going to include a few things. First of all, we're going to have an update on the state of LGBTQ+-related legislative activity around the country, by Kate Oakley of the Human Rights Campaign. Then after that, we're going to hear from Dr. Rosemary Esseks with the Nebraska Psychological Association and Dr. Megan Mooney with the Texas Psychological Association. They're going to be sharing some of their experiences with advocacy in action in their respective states.

Ron: This will be followed by an introduction to advocacy skills and opportunities by Doris Parfaite-Claude from the APA Advocacy Office. We'll wrap up the presentation with an overview of the web-based advocacy resources by Sergio Dominguez, myself, and Katie. This content was developed in partnership with the APA Sexual Orientation and Gender Diversity Portfolio, the APA Division 44 Public Policy Committee, and the Advocacy Office with updates by Sergio for our 2022 content.

We will then conclude with some time for discussion and question and answers **[unintelligible 00:05:49]**. I'd also like to acknowledge the staff at APAs office of membership engagement for providing the amazing production and promotional support for today's webinar. We sure could do it without them. Now with that, we'll run the first poll to gauge your assessment of your own confidence and confidence in engaging with advocacy at the state level.

We'll give this just a few minutes to run or a minute, basically not a few minutes. We don't need a whole lot of time. Coming in pretty good. This is good. Good. Well, it looks like from what I'm seeing is the numbers come in that there's this falling a little bit into that. I've got some confidence and competence, but I sure could use the gain a little bit more. Any thoughts, Kim?

Kim: It's a room to grow, is what I'm seeing. It's wonderful. Perfect. All right. Now I'm going to turn it over to Kate Oakley. She is the State Legislative Director and Senior Counsel at the Human Rights Campaign. She's going to help us understand what's happening around the country this year with legislation that is affecting LGBTQ+ people and communities. I'll turn it over to you, Kate.

Kate Oakley: Hello, everyone. I'm going to just quickly do run through a few slides. We're not going to do too many things here, but first of all, thank you so much for having me. My name is Kate Oakley. I'm the State Legislative Director and Senior Counsel at HRC, which means that I'm a policy attorney. Policy is my shtick and I also help oversee HRC's extensive state legislative program where we're working in virtually every state against literally hundreds of bills as you'll see in just a second.

Occasionally, four bills too, although these days not so many, four and more against, unfortunately. This is just for a little bit of context, what the state legislation has looked like on LGBTQ issues in the last few years, so that purple line up on top that's how many good bills have been introduced? How many pro-equality bills have been introduced? The red line is how many end-high equality bills have been introduced.

Then those bars on the bottom show how many of those bills in fact passed? The purple is how many good bills and again, the red is how many bad bills. You could see that there was a period of time where we had a lot more good bills introduced a pretty steady number of bad bills introduced and not a ton of action on that bad bill side. Then starting in 2015, things really exploded and then starting in 2020, we had a secondary explosion, which we continue to be in right now. That secondary explosion has really been driven by attacks on transgender youths. In 2020, we set a record for 79 anti-transgender bills introduced across the country.

We then more than doubled that number, or just about doubled that number in 2021 with 149 anti-transgender bills introduced. This is not anti LGBTQ, this is anti-

transgender. These specifically we're looking at trans kids playing sports, trans kids being able to receive gender-affirming medical care and even in some cases, bathrooms. That was all a precursor, unfortunately, to what we've been seeing this year in 2022.

This year, we're tracking 565 bills across the country, about 132 of those are support. These are all estimates. I know they look like specific numbers, but they change constantly so consider them please all to be undercounts and rough numbers for the purposes of our conversation. More than 300 bills that we oppose, and we're opposing bills all across the country. Of those, about 126 specifically are targeting transgender folks and in particular are doing that through the healthcare bands and the sports bands.

We're also seeing a huge uptick in bills that are discriminating against LGBTQ youth in education. As of this precise moment, we have two bad bills that have already been signed into law. Iowa and South Dakota anti-trans sport bans have been signed into law. We have a good bill that was signed into law in New Jersey, which is modernizing their HIV criminalization law. Then we have five bills as of this moment that-- It's actually six bills because this has changed since I made this slide this morning.

We now have six bills that are in front of governors to be signed. In Florida, we have the "Don't say Gay or Trans bill" which you may have heard about. It's been getting a lot of press, as well as the quote "Stop woke act" which is now also in front of the governor after having been passed through this Senate this afternoon. There's a sports bill for Indiana which is in front of the governor for his signature.

We also have a curriculum censorship bill in South Dakota waiting for governor Noem's signature, and anti-trans sport ban in Utah that we believe will be vetoed, and also Avilla in Wisconsin that would allow school districts to refuse to use students' chosen name and pronouns. Again, the governor is expected to veto that bill as well. I see that folks are maybe a little bit new to legislative advocacy. My presentation portion here will be wrapping up just in a second, but I will be on to answer questions for folks who have them.

I do want to encourage you, even if you don't think of yourself as a professional legislative person, one of the things that I think is really important in terms of advocacy for LGBTQ folks is, just speak to what you know. You don't have to know everything about everything. A lot of these issues are complex, the legislative process can be complex. I promise you the legislators who are purporting to be experts on these bills are not experts on these bills.

People who are actual experts absolutely need to be part of these conversations. Even if you're speaking to just a small area of expertise, please understand that you know stuff the legislators don't know, and that you can be really helpful in terms of contributing to that conversation. There are lots of different ways that you can get engaged and we can talk about ways that-- I can hook you up with HRC products to stay engaged about what's happening in the states.

One of the things that I just really want to reiterate is that, just showing it up for the community is a really big deal. One thing that, in particular, we've been thinking a lot about particularly as things have been developing in Texas in a way, I'm sure that folks have heard, we're really concerned about what it means for some of these families to step into the limelight and share their stories.

To be able to be there to support them, to be able to be there and take some of the pressure off them, that is incredibly important. Some of the states that we are the most concerned about in this moment in addition to the states that were on that previous slide are Alabama and Idaho, both of which are considering passing gender-affirming bans on gender-affirming medical care that would actually inflict felony penalties on providers and in Idaho's case also parents. We are also very concerned about a list of other states including Arizona, Ohio that are also considering that kind of legislation, as well as some states that are continuing to consider anti-transport bills and other things.

I'm happy to answer questions, but I do want to just lay out that what's happening now in the states is an all-out attack, particularly on transgender youth. It's our third year of trans youth really being under the microscope and the seventh year of the LGBTQ community fighting really hard in the states. Even as we're talking about good developments happening at the federal level, we cannot stop fighting at the states. The states is where our opposition is bringing the fight to us, and so we have to continue to be really engaged there. I'm delighted to be here. I'm such a proud partner with you all and happy to answer questions if there are any. Ron, with that, I send it back to you.

Ron: Great, Kate. Thank you for that important if alarming and [unintelligible 00:15:06] interview, [chuckles] and thank you for agreeing to stay with us for the rest of the program and join the discussion time. I'd like now to invite doctors Rosemary Esseks, and Megan Mooney to share with us some of their experiences engaging in advocacy over at least several years now in their own states. Rosemary, do you like to get us started?

Rosemary Esseks: Yes, I'm Rose Esseks. I'm with the Nebraska State Psychological Association. As was mentioned, you don't have to be a professional advocate. I'm here to represent unprofessional advocacy. Sorry, that's probably more non-professional advocacy. I'm just a member of my state association. I don't have a title. I just married into the state association in 1997.

Small state associations like a small high school, everybody does everything. I first got involved with advocacy with reproductive rights. Things tend to come up pretty quickly. A bill gets proposed, it's in the news, isn't time for the board to meet, so there's an email that goes around with board members saying, "Gee, we ought to speak out against this. Who could speak? Well, Rose teaches a class on that, right? Dan, would you ask rose?" Yes, I don't have a title, I don't even have a last name. I'm just Rose. Would you write something?

I got involved in LGBTQ advocacy when a close friend passed away in the middle of a fight against a particularly boneheaded conscience clause. What will tend to happen is, I hear about something on the radio, I ask the board via email, "Could I

present testimony or could I write a letter to the editor?" I hate to say this in front of Megan who's had a different experience, but we don't have a lot of opposition or not a lot of formal opposition. It's the planes, there's not a lot of us, so it's passive-aggressive opposition, but people don't say much to your face. I'll write testimony or letters to the editor at night. It's a solicit input from Ron, who's been very helpful.

Send a draft out to the board. The board says, "Fine, go ahead. Do it." I have drafts on several issues that I tweak as the situation calls for, expanding rights protection to cover sexual orientation and gender identity, school district efforts to be more inclusive for non-binary kids, and most recently, efforts to ban conversion therapy. Obviously, my testimony focuses on the mental health implications of whether people do or do not feel supported by their communities.

In my clinical job, LGBTQ outreach is a part of suicide prevention, so I tend to lean pretty heavily on that. Then I testify if I can. My clinical employer is very supportive of LGBTQ rights, but not supportive of me doing anything other than working for them. If it's on one of my teaching days, I can testify in person, if it's not, then we can submit written testimony, or as I mentioned, letters to the editor. Most recently, I got somebody to testify on my behalf.

Most recent thing was a Lincoln City Council measure proposing to ban conversion therapy for minors. I heard about it on the news, ask the board, "Can we be in support?" Board said, "Sure." I approached the city council member who proposed it and said, "Would you the state association to support you?" He said, "Oh, yes, that would be nice." I wrote my testimony, couldn't actually testify at the meeting, but Evan MacCracken, undergraduate student who helped me with previous testimony, was willing to testify and we won that one, which just boggled the mind.

Yes, statewide lost, but it won within the City of Lincoln. Again, you don't have to be full-time, just do what you can, help where you can. Every now and then it occurs to me, "Gee, is this really how laws get made input by with doofuses like me?" Yes, that is how long laws get made. That explains a bit about our system of government. That's the news from Nebraska.

Megan Mooney: Thanks, Rose. Rose and I were comparing notes the other day and we're interested in all the different ways that we can do advocacy at our state levels. Hi, everybody, I'm Megan Mooney. My pronouns are she, her and hers. I am the past president of the Texas Psychological Association and one of our federal advocacy coordinators coordinating with APA. My journey is an interesting one in terms of all my different advocacy hats and my journey to a little bit more spotlight on me at the moment here in Texas because as Kate referenced a little bit ago, Texas is a tough state for our LGBTQ+ community and has been for a number of years.

My advocacy work started within TPA actually of helping to make sure that our board was aware of things like the Amicus brief and supportive marriage equality at a national level. Then making sure that as anti-LGBTQ bills were starting to come through more and more through the Texas legislature that we were paying attention to that. Really, we need to keep this lens of discriminatory legislation is a problem for all people, whether we're talking about for us as psychologists, for the clients we serve or for our greater communities.

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I am, by trade a child and adolescent psychologist and so I'm focused in particular on LGBTQ+ young people. I'm also a trauma specialist through the National Child Traumatic Stress Network. That particular intersection of my interest is what makes me very passionate about legislation that seeks to harm young people and their families. One of the things that I really wanted to highlight for folks today is that we have to show up because if we don't, somebody else will be there.

Either it will be people trying to seek to harm our communities, harm our children, or give bad information. That's been one of my most valuable experiences and testifying at the Texas legislature over a number of years now is, sitting and watching from the gallery, what other people are saying about my community and about my clients. I've really learned that we have to be present. We have to be there to speak up about psychology and science and facts and mental health and how this relates to protecting rights for people because other people will be there and will cite either information or blatantly discriminatory, transphobic, and homophobic information.

As Kate referenced, our legislators are not experts on these things. They are relying on us to be there and to provide information. Similarly, families are watching, families that we don't even know are watching from galleries, are watching online, are watching media reports. One of the ways that we can get good information out there so that families know there are psychologists and other mental health professionals out there protecting their rights and advocating for their mental health and wellbeing.

One particular example of that, that I wanted to share is that in our most recent Texas legislative session, there were an outstanding, outrageous number of anti-trans and anti-LGBTQ bills filed. Many of which sought to ban gender-affirming care in a variety of ways. One of which would've been by labeling it as child abuse in our state law. I was there to testify against that bill on behalf of the Texas Psychological Association.

It was important that I was, and as I was watching from the gallery, I heard other mental health professionals there licensed in the State of Texas talking to our legislators and giving bad information, giving outdated information that was 30 or 40 years old about transgender healthcare and about really frankly pathologizing trans people. It was important then that I stood up representing the actual profession of psychology in a formal role and giving current data, current science and talking about from a trauma focus provider what true child abuse is and how that contrasts significantly to what gender-affirming care is, which promotes the mental health and wellbeing of young people.

I really do want to emphasize it is important that we stand up, that we are there, that we are present. It does not have to be at the legislature if you can't make it in person like Rose was referencing sometimes she cannot be there in person, but writing letters, making phone calls.

It does matter when we are constituents and we take the time to write to our representatives and senators as a constituent and as a psychologist and a professional and tell them what science and data says and tell them about their other constituents and their mental health and wellbeing. I would encourage each of you to find your way to share your voice, share your message, and to speak up on behalf of

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our LGBTQ+ community, and sharing the importance of mental healthcare for our community. Thank you.

Ron: Thank you, Rose and Megan, it's really super to have your on-the-ground experience here to help inspire everybody to know that look, it's just a matter of figuring out how to get involved and getting started. We're now going to turn it over to Doris Parfaite-Claude, APAs Director for Grassroots Engagement, who will walk us through ways to engage with policymakers and make compelling cases to them.

Doris Parfaite-Claude: Thank you all. Indeed very nice to meet you. Glad to be here today. I joined APA about seven or eight months ago to help with our grassroots efforts. Let me see if I can share my screen. As Kim mentioned, I'm going to be talking about how to engage and advocacy overall. Excuse me. I have to minimize the window here. There we go. Let's live in with how to engage. We're going to cover today and what support you can expect, and then breakdown types of action by the time they take and the effect they have on lawmakers.

Now, in the poll that we took earlier today, a lot of you express a lot certain amount, wanting a certain amount of help with your advocacy. I want to start reassuring you that no matter the issue, you are not alone. Organizations and coalitions have resources that you can use like the ones that served you and broad will be discussing coming up next. Organizations also have lobby and experts like Kate to guide you through the policy process, no matter your level of experience. In the next slides, we'll start by going over quick ways to engage and end with high-value actions. You can get a sense of how to best use your time when you're advocating.

If you're just beginning as an advocate, action alerts in social media are easy ways to get involved. One drawback is that these actions are often impersonal because many rely on pre-written messages. Officials treat these actions like a temperature check, the more touches they get, the hotter they think an issue is, and the more they pay attention in case it comes up during election season. By engaging, you help increase the temperature. Activities like meetings or events are the next level up because they put your humanity in the forefront.

They help dialogue, they help officials put a face to an issue, and it gives them a chance to dialogue back with you. This will make them more likely to compromise with you naturally, these activities are more time-consuming, but they are very impactful. Finally, group activities like joint meetings or letters are very effective by getting policymakers' attention. Kate also mentioned testifying. They know how hard it is to find common ground amongst groups. It's why you have that diversity of voices matters. Elected officials also see value in connecting to groups you not usually engage with, but this takes more experience to conduct successfully.

Now that you have a bit more context on what engagement means. I have two main points. One, your reasons for caring about an issue might be different from your officials. Take time to research them in advance and find common ground. Maybe they have a family member who's affected by the issue you're advocating on, or you did research on an issue that's important to them.

Two, your advocacy will not exist in a vacuum. Turning to organizations and coalitions is how you get politics such as political climate and opportunities to act. Now that we've covered ways to get your foot in the door, let's shift to making a compelling case. A pitch is just the beginning of a conversation. It's easy to feel as if each engagement you have with lawmakers is your only shot at weighing them, but you don't have to throw a bunch of facts at them in one go trust that you'll be able to educate them over time.

Policy change is a lengthy process with many chances for follow-up. When you foster through a conversation, policymakers will be more willing to meet you again, even if they hold opposing beliefs. Let's talk about how to get the conversation started. Before you contact officials start thinking about the effect you want to have. It seems counterintuitive to focus on emotions when making a policy ask, but it's a good to organize your information.

For example, if you want to create a sense of wonder on a program, focus on uplifting anecdotes, you can rely on one page just to run out the information later, but your pitch is about creating a human connection. The tips on this slide help you pick the direction you want to go in. Now we're going to shift and talk about how to stay on track once you have that conversation going. You want to keep things short.

You might only have a few minutes to make your case while meeting in a hallway, you want to be brief to share the upfront and then expand if you have the chance. We have an appendix at the end of these slides with more guidelines on this length. Officials and their staff have limited bandwidth because they receive many competing demands so you want to keep things simple. You might be meeting with early career staff in their 20s. They will not have expertise in the issue so you don't want to overwhelm them with technical information.

Finally, concrete means giving specific examples, be there about yourself, a patient or your community, anecdotes make a talking point come alive. Next, we'll run through examples of different pictures that use these guidelines. The scripts are also in the appendix because they work well as email templates. In this next examples, you would jump into your pitch after introducing yourself and stating your purpose

[start of video playback]

Speaker: During the pandemic, I've been able to support more patients by leveraging remote technology. That's because at the start of COVID-19, the government instituted increased flexibility around telehealth. For example, for the last two years, I've been able to offer phone meetings without having to require an in-person follow-up. This has made a huge difference for a lot of people. For example, one of my patients as a health worker, struggling with everything she's seen during the pandemic.

Her schedule is hectic and she barely has time to meet much less travel back and forth to and from my office. I saw you worked as a nurse before running for her office. I'm sure you understand what that schedule can be like. Being able to call in from wherever she is means she doesn't have to sacrifice her wellbeing for her

patients. Unfortunately, once the pandemic ends, many of these regulatory flexibilities will go away unless Congress acts.

Of course, my patient will continue to have very long shifts after the pandemic ends, especially since her hospital is now short-staffed. She told me that if we have to go back to meeting in person, she would not be able to get help as often as she needs it. We need more flexibility to meet patients like her where they are. Bill would help by making the temporary changes in regulations permanent. Over 15 national organizations support this bill, including APA. I'd be very happy to share a copy of the letter with you that would be helpful. Would you be interested in co-sponsoring this legislation?

[end of video playback]

This example shows how you can draw policy maker into your world and incorporate facts that you learned about them. It could be used when you're trying to prevent or mitigate unwelcome policies because it focuses on life consequences. This example from the contrary shows how you can encourage policymakers to embrace change.

[start of video playback]

Speaker: I am one of two psychologists in my clinic who speaks Spanish and we are desperately struggling to meet the needs of clients who do not speak English. It is heartbreaking to see our waiting list grow because we do not have enough staff to schedule appointments, not having more diversities, having real-life implications for patients. When patients have to describe their challenges in a language they're not fluent in, might miss a key nuance for detail, that could affect the diagnosis and next steps we take.

This legislation can help by creating more diverse pipelines into psychology. In my clinic alone, one more Spanish-speaking psychology would reduce our waiting list by 20%. That means fewer families struggling with hunger because a parent is getting the treatment they need to stay in the workforce. More students in this district would be able to stay in school because [unintelligible 00:32:09] conditions would be identified before developing into a crisis. What are your thoughts on introducing this legislation?

[end of video playback]

This example encourages change by creating a sense of what is versus what could be in terms of officials their role in creating a brighter future. Some of you are representing it by officials who hold a more influential role. This sample pitch focuses on the policy makers' importance.

[start of video playback]

Speaker: We are really facing mental health crises among youth in our state. Recently, I started seeing a teenage girl who struggling with depression, even just a request a meeting with me. She struggled with months of self-doubt. She didn't know who asked for help, how to get it. She couldn't rely on her parents to help navigate the process. Every day she was at risk for self-harm. I was grateful that I was able to

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start seeing her when I did, but many adolescents in our state are not getting the help they need in time.

In fact, we've seen a significant increase in the rate of teen suicide. We're coming to you because as chairman of the senate finance committee, you're in a unique position to work with your colleagues on a solution. Here's a list of policies developed by the American Psychological Association, with support from several other organizations to help address mental health. We would love your support to turn this into a reality. It would have a huge impact on our state in helping youth get the support they need. Are these policies something that you would consider supporting?

[end of video playback]

Good **[unintelligible 00:33:31]** for this pitch are chairs of key committees or officials who officially own an issue in their delegation. You may need their support to get your proposal off the ground. This pitch gives them a sense of buy-in. Advocacy can also mean serving as an ambassador for a program research or policy. In this case, describing your own career path or personal experience is very effective.

[start of video playback]

Speaker: I first became interested in helping people in my senior year of high school. A friend was having a really tough time after his parents divorced, but I could see how talking about it made him feel better. That sense of connection and helpfulness drove me to take an intro to psychology class in college. From there on out I knew I had found my career, but a Ph.D. could mean a decade of balancing school with life in general and accruing a huge amount of debt.

I had to pay my own way through the entirety of my studies. The psychology entry grants program made a huge difference for me during that time, it gave paid training opportunities so I could build on my knowledge while earning a living that helped me get past a big barrier to entry. I now lead a program that helps 1500 people in rural communities every year. There are plenty like me who could make a difference in people's lives. If they could only benefit a program such as this one. This program now desperately needs funding. Do you think your office would be willing to support its renewal?

[end of video playback]

Policymakers love hearing real-life examples. They use them in speeches or to convince colleagues to co-sponsor bill. Our examples of focus on personal or client experiences, but you can use your ties to local institutes to establish your credentials and this is our final example of a pitch.

[start pf video playback]

Speaker: The hospital that I work at is the single largest employer for North County and the only hospital within reach of the Northeast and Northwest counties. This year alone, we supported 300 patients experiencing a mental health crisis. Unfortunately, this has taken a huge toll on our staff. Many are burnt out and many have left. If we

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cannot recruit more staff, we might have to close the program entirely. This document lists two solutions that would help us both recruit and retain new staff. With these policies, we can keep helping these 300 people and maybe even take on more patients. Would you be able to support these bills?

[end of video playback]

This going to pitch works because policymakers want to check the pulse of their communities by explaining the reach of your organization in their constituency. You can build trust. If you follow up often, they might start relying on your insights. These examples give you a sense of what information you might need before engaging with officials. That's why I'm reasserting the point about organizations that I made earlier in the presentation. I hope these examples also show how irreplaceable you are.

Your insights in your experiences provide counter in a way no one else can. If all of this has given you energy, we have an opportunity for you to practice. The advocacy office is collecting stories on youth mental health needs. We are looking for examples. We can give to **[unintelligible 00:36:24]** officials when they ask for them, you can practice writing your insights on the youth mental health crisis in a pitch format and submit them through the link portal. Advocacy is like a muscle.

The more you exercise it, the stronger it gets. I hope you'll stay in touch for the APA advocacy office. We've included the slide so you know how to engage with us in the future. These slides will be available after the event, so you'll have access to the links. Now I'll turn it over to Sergio Dominguez who will talk about their work to help update APA's web-based resources for 2022. Thank you again for having me here.

Sergio Dominguez: Thank you so much, Doris, for sharing with us all some, I think really tangible steps that we can take to making positive social change. I feel super excited to now begin to share with you all some web-based resources for advocacy and activism. My name is Sergio Dominguez and I use they/them pronouns. I am a queer trans multiracial Latina doctoral student in counseling psychology at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

I am also **[unintelligible 00:37:32]** which is a Nawa-specific two-spirit identity. I'm currently located on occupied **[unintelligible 00:37:39]**. I want to acknowledge, honor and tribute to **[unintelligible 00:37:47]** people's past and present. I also want to invite us all in this space together to continue working toward paying reparations to local native populations.

During the fall 2021 semester, I took a course on mental consultation in health service psychology, and as part of that course, Dr. Mindy Thompson supervised my consultation work with APA through which I updated information on the web-based advocacy resources, web pages to reflect information and languaging that we hope will be useful for 2022, and additionally, I revamped background information and talking points to more clearly be intersectional in nature attendings specifically to ableist, adultist and anti-black underpinnings of ongoing clear and trans policy and legislation issues.

At the end of my pro bono work with APA, I provided several recommendations and future directions for this work. These include conducting program evaluation to understand the specific tangible impact that the web pages have on grassroots, state level, and federal level advocacy and policy issues. As well as to understand and to strategize how to expand our audience impact as it relates to the web pages. Additionally, I recommend continued expansion of the web pages to include additional topics impacting LGBTQ+ communities.

Some specific ideas that I have for topics include sex work and sex work to criminalization, immigration, and am silence seeking processes, substance use, and substance use to criminalization, housing and access to housing, access to and retention of disability-related resources and benefits, and honestly many, many others. This is only the tip of the iceberg. Now, since I have the mic, I also want to take the opportunity to invite APA to continue supporting citizen psychologists and psychologists activists which can be accomplished through sponsoring skills-building workshops, such as this one. To increase accessibility, particularly for multiply marginalized psychologists. I recommend that these workshops offer continuing education credits, that they be free of charge, that they be hosted outside of business hours. That they continue to be hosted virtually, that they be recorded and available to participants indefinitely. That they include a closed captioning and audio transcription.

I also want to invite APA to offer specific guidance regard the roles psychologists may take in activism and advocacy. Including, but not limited to APA guidelines for activism and advocacy for psychologists as well as ethical guidelines for engaging in activism and advocacy. Then finally, I want to invite APA to create and enact ethical and legal protections for psychologists engaging in activism and advocacy. Now, some of these recommendations that I have come up with also mirror recommendations that some colleagues and I provide in a recent article that we wrote for the *American Psychologist*.

I am pacing some links to some of that work in the chat and you all can check it out there. Ultimately my hope is that these recommendations will serve as a step for psychology and for APA to continue working toward making a positive impact on critical asocial issues. With that Ron and Katy, I would really love it if you all would walk us through an overview of these web-based advocacy resources.

Ron: Thank you, Sergio. It was a real pleasure to work with you on this. Your timing when you were available and your particular areas of interest were just such a perfect match for right when we needed it to get content updated, as we headed into 2020. As Katy's outlined, this has been growing over the past few years. When we entered 2021 we had background content that was relevant at the time. Clearly, 2021 brought us to a different [inaudible 00:42:24] place by 2022.

Having you be able to help us with that when you were able to help us with that really put us in place to enter 2022 well prepared. We're putting the link to the state advocacy resources in the chat while Katy shares her screen and we will start with an overview of how the resources are structured. First, we have this lovely banner and as we scroll down a little bit below that, go ahead on a bit further you'll see that

we've got different topic tiles. Don't [unintelligible 00:43:01] hold that there for the moment.

You see that we've got a topic that deals with bans on sexual orientation change efforts. There's a tile on the criminalization of affirmative care. There's a tile on religious freedom so-called in terms of basically ways that folks can opt-out of providing equal services. There is one on trans youth in sports. There is one on universal bathrooms where bathrooms no longer have just the boy and the girl on the front. That we recognize that restrooms need to be available to not only trans-folks but people that have kids, people that are assisting elderly people.

There's a whole lot of reasons why a universal approach to restrooms is useful. Then the new resource for this year is the one that you see their next which is interestingly, you'll see these are all marked as either favorable or unfavorable. This particular one can go either way. It's about LGBT-inclusive curriculum be it across everything from mathematics and history to sex education. As we're seeing in Florida in particular right now, this is really salient and depends. At different times along the way we've seen efforts to enact policies that would require inclusive education.

Then we also see the pendulum swing the other way. Then scrolling down a bit further, there are a handful of resources about engaging and advocacy. Following on the resources you shared, here's a really great article written by Kevin Nadal that really spells out the role of psychologists in advocating for social justice while maintaining their professional responsibilities and ethical boundaries. Below that, there's a really excellent handbook on how psychologists can engage in advocacy.

It was written by representatives from. I believe it at least four different APA divisions and with a CODAPAR grant. It really does a wonderful job of explaining how and why psychologists can get involved with advocacy and the unique and important voice they bring. The next two items are some brief advocacy sheets from the Texas Psychological Association that summarize some of these more extended resources. I saw a question about some of this on the chat. Scrolling back up and looking at the right-hand column, you'll find a list of important information and networking resources.

If you want to find out what your state association may be doing to help and how you can help, there's a link to find out how to access your state associations. If you want to track what's happening state by state, you can use the Freedom for All Americans tracker. That way you can go in and check your own state or what's going on nationally with trends with LGBT-related legislation. A little further down the Equality Federation link can help you connect with your state's leading advocacy networks. The Equality Federation, there's Equality Florida, for example, that I know is doing remarkable work right now with everything they're facing.

They've been working for years to create networks, across interests, across business. Those are really a wonderful way to plug in and figure out how you can bring the unique voice of your own as a constituent as well as a psychologist and see where that fits in the broader strategy. Among the links a little further down is the one to the HRC page laws and legislation which also is a great way to get updates

on what's going on. We're not going to go all over all of these links, but invite you to visit the site and explore them.

Next, we're going to take a look at how the content is organized in the specific issue tiles. Since the efforts to ban affirmative care with trans minors is such a hot issue right now, we'll take a look at that as a sample. Katy, if you'll click on through that one. There's some minor variations in how some of the content is presented on these pages, but this will give you the idea. As you click through and scroll down you'll see it begins with a background section that provides overview and context for the issue.

We then move down to a section of recommended discussion points that can be used for helping write letters or testimony, or for use and visits with lawmakers and their staff. Now leaning on what psychology can specifically bring, each of these discussion points includes one or more citations grounded in science. You can consider what talking points. As you consider what discussion points to emphasize be mindful of the overall coalition messaging strategies and your specific audience.

Then scrolling down a little further, the reference list is provided from everything that's listed in the discussion points. Then continuing down, you'll find a range of issue-specific resources from APA and other respected sources. Starting with other sources we're going to soon have a PDF version of this page, somewhat abbreviated that will be available to be printed out that can be shared with lawmakers when visiting in person. Then finally scrolling back up, you see in this section, to the right high right side column there's more related resources.

In this instance, it starts with an op-ed by last year's APA president, Jennifer Kelly talking about the importance of a science-based perspective on deciding what's appropriate for care for minors. This is followed by various articles and examples of advocacy, in this case, from the Arkansas Psychological Association. We'll leave it to you to explore the other sections, but that gives you an idea of how to navigate [inaudible 00:49:35] pages and what you will find. We now hand back over to Kim.

Kim: All right. Thanks, Ron, Katy for that overview. I'd like to thank all of our presenters at this point for everything that you've shared with us and our audience today. Thanks, everyone for being able to stay for the next segment. We're going to transition now over into the Q&A and use the remainder of our time to dig deeper with our presenters and respond to any questions that you might have. You can ask a question of a specific presenter or to the panel, to just respond as they wish.

We, again, want to end about 10 minutes early to give you a break between meetings. It looks like we have maybe about a half hour or so. I will ask Katy then what do you have for us?

Katy Tretta: Hi everyone. I am Katy Tretta. My pronouns are she, her, hers and I live on Chumashian's [unintelligible 00:50:36] land. I'm here in the lovely state of California. I am happy to moderate your questions and answers. We got quite a few in the chat. Thank you for that. I am going to direct some of them to somebody specifically or leave them up to all of our panelists. Some of them overlap quite a bit.

Some of them might be a little more pointed. Thank you, everybody, for all of your questions.

We might not get to all of them, but they're all wonderful. First I'd like to point a question to Cate, about what are the important things to say and not to say? Particularly when talking are trying to legislate to a conservative legislator, this person specifically asks. I'd also like, Megan and Rose, to follow up with that as well.

Catheryn: Well, yes, I mean, I'll start by saying that, even legislators who are conservative have a reason that they ran for office. Now sometimes I know that it's really hard and you look at some of these politicians and you think like, just truly, what on earth could we possibly have in common? I am not going to tell you that you can find common ground with every single one of these people because truly some of them you will not. It is a really good place to start and establishing that connection.

That doesn't matter if they're conservative or liberal, right? They're there for a reason. I do want to emphasize and I thought that this was a really well done Doris's presentation, that there are so many different ways that you can engage from the 15 seconds to the multiple days. What I would recommend is if you're going to do anything more than the 15 seconds, spend 30 seconds googling the person and just find out what it is that they say they care about. If they say that they cared deeply about the three blocks and where they grew up.

Or like they cared deeply about X or Y, whatever, find a way that you can try to connect with them about something that you care about that overlaps with them. That doesn't matter, conservative, liberal, whatever. That just is across the board. That said, you're obviously going to have a different message depending on who you're going to talk to. That's part of the point, is you want to have a personal conversation and a personal connection with someone so that you can help take them from where they are and move them, maybe just a couple clicks down the road.

What does that mean in practice? One of the things that I love to hear from mental health professionals when folks are testifying, is really clarifying the many stresses. I'm going to talk about trans kids just because of folks that have been the most attached during this live session. When you talk about how there are all of these really negative mental health outcomes for trans youth, as a result of all of the different pressure to just really differentiate. It's not that trans youth are born feeling depressed and anxious necessarily.

It's that all of the transphobia that we're throwing at them that is coming at them from every different direction is making them depressed and anxious. That may sound really obvious to this group, but there are people out there who just fundamentally believe that trans kids are broken. Getting into that narrative and saying like, no trans kids are great. It's the transphobia that's breaking things. That is a really helpful thing to say. I think Megan mentioned this as well, but like the messenger matters so much.

To come from the standpoint that you all are coming from, I would say, think about two audiences. If you're providing live testimony, think about the legislator that you're

trying to convince and what is going to resonate with them. Then also think about the trans kid five rows back in the room, or streaming at home. See if you can include messages for both of them. Trans kids are great and you're going to have a great life and you are wonderful. Everything that these people are saying about you is wrong.

Also, everything that people are saying about trans kids is wrong because actually, it's not the kids that are the problem. It is the transphobia that they're set on. I think those things are really helpful and just it is really different. Each of these bills is really hard. I could like layout specific talking points for each of the bills and it does change. If you are working with an advocacy group-- and Ron did a great job of listing out who some of the players are in these states. If you're working with an advocacy group, they can give you talking points on the bill.

You don't need to be a legislative expert. I just really want to emphasize that you do not need to be an expert on analyzing policy in order to have a really important role in this conversation. Someone else can give you the talking points and then you can go in and say, this is how these talking points work from my perspective. I am an expert on X, Y, and Z. I care about this issue because of ABC and then deliver the talking points that work the best for you. Please don't feel intimidated like this. This actually should be a fairly easy entry point.

No matter what the bill is, whether it's a conservative legislature or a liberal one. Frankly, we need you with the conservative ones, even if they are scary, that's where we need you the most.

Katy: Megan, do you want, want to talk on this real quick?

Megan: Yes. I'll just echo the point that Cate made about looking at who your audience is and seeing what are their interest areas. One of the ways that I'm able to talk, even in a conservative state like Texas, is through a trauma-informed care lens. Texas for a number of years has had a bunch of different trauma-focused kind of initiatives, legislatively statewide. I also am a trauma-focused provider and researcher and therapist, that is my lens and my entrance point to talk about the disproportionate rates of trauma that impact LGBTQ+ kids, and then how that impacts mental health.

I think about messaging to more conservative folks, they're concerned about fiscal responsibility. I can talk about the utilization of emergency rooms and hospitals and criminal justice systems as opposed to preventative mental health care. It's thinking about what are those messages that resonate with your audience and just tailoring your message to that? The good news is mental health really isn't a partisan issue. That is one of the great ways that we as psychologists do have the ability to talk with anybody, either side of the aisle.

Is because mental health, everybody knows somebody who has some kind of mental health struggle and so relating to it at that personal level, which is what we are best at and best trained to do is a great avenue to talk with any audience.

Katy: Rose, do you have anything to add?

Rose: Yes, I would agree with that, that we stay in our lane. Our purpose is to represent psychology and the scientific side of psychology. Of course, there are always people can represent themselves as psychologists and they're not in step with the rest of the field. Yes, so our lane is improving mental health and reducing risk of suicide and it would be hard to find any kind of politician who's going to be in favor of more mental illness and in favor of suicide. I've practiced in this state for almost 30 years. This is a very conservative state I've taught in this state for 18 years.

Most of that time teaching human sexuality, which is a required course. I'm used to the students sitting in the back with the arm folded, but again, I just stay in my lane. Somebody mentioned avoiding the jargon, which I think is a good idea. I'm very good at just draining blood out of the language and saying, people tend to have better mental health outcomes when they feel supported by their communities and people generally, aren't going to argue with that. Of course, what I want to is there's a special place in health for people who score cheap political points off the back of trans kids, but I say that when I get home.

Megan: Oh, that's fantastic, Rose. I love it. I have a question for Sergio there was a couple of students on the chat, which is great to see. How could young activists, clinical studies students, counseling, what have you been more involved at the federal or state level? Several people indicated that they are students and are looking to get more involved. Sergio, what would you recommend?

Sergio: I so appreciate this question and also feel just generally very enthused about the fact that there are students in this room because we literally are the future of psychology. It makes me so incredibly pleased to know that there are so many activists that are coming up. Will someday hold these positions of power and hopefully create so much change in our field and in this organization because I think it's time. I think these organizations, the field is ready.

I think to that end, one of the things that I did notice as a question, was I think particularly around holding marginalized identities and multiple marginalized identities. I think to that end, it feels important to name the fact that so much of my activism and advocacy actually is stuff that I will never get credit for. It's stuff that in general in the broad population will not see because for me it is a lot safer to move silently. For me it is a lot safer to instead have my CIS people, my straight people, my white people on speed dial and say, "Hey, there's this thing that just came up, I need you to do something about it.

I'm going to need receipts. I'm going to need to know what exactly it is that you did and to have proof that you did this thing. "I think to that end, really being in community and being in community with allies feel super important because the fact of the matter is that I'm a trans person of color. If I show up to like a random thing where there could be opposition, where there could be violence, there is a high likelihood that I could get murdered. I think to that end, it feels really important for me to preserve my physical and my mental wellbeing.

If something were to happen to me, then it would have so many ripples, particularly around the queer and trans miners that I'm working with and the affirming care that

I'm providing for them. For me, it's really important to self-preserve and to view my self-preservation as a radical act of defiance toward these systems that frankly don't want us here and frankly don't want us to be existing. Calling my white people and being like, "Hey, do this thing," or the straight or the CIS people that I know are on my team.

Calling them and having them showing up to protests or showing up to spaces that frankly I would not have access to. It also feels important to name the fact that as a student, we don't have the same amount of power and privilege that faculty members would have or that full members of APA might have. To that end, I also want to invite the students on the call or the multiple marginalized people on the call to do a lot of coalesce-building. There is, I think a lot of strength in numbers.

I think that it feels very different to come up to a faculty member or to departments, academic systems as one person versus as a group of people who want to create some meaningful change. To that end, coalescence building, plugging into communities. In general, getting plugged into spaces such as this one and doing work such as the work that I've done that will have ripples and will ripple out. Where we do get these platforms to be able to say the things that we want to say and to have these be calls to action. Activism and advocacy can look as so much more than just hitting the streets.

Hitting the streets is important, contacting lawmakers and legislators is really important and showing up in person to do these things is important. The behind-the-scenes work is equally important. I think sometimes whenever we don't hold as my privilege as some of the people around us doing that behind-the-scenes work can be so important and can still make really beautiful change. I feel genuinely pleased and proud that I do get to do this work even if my name won't get attached to all this work because I don't need that.

I don't need for people broadly or what not to get to know me or to know my name. For me what's important is for my communities to know me. I want to invite particularly graduate students and multiply marginalized folks. If your communities know you, you're all set. You're doing something.

Katy: Great. Thank you, Sergio. I think this is a good question for Doris. There was some of multiple questions related to this of what's the best way to determine which type of advocacy to use. You laid out some different really quick ones versus longer contacts, increasing the temperature. Which is the best way to determine the best strategy for advocacy in any situation. I know it's really vague but I thought you might be able to hit on that, Doris.

Doris: Absolutely. There's different ways that you can get around to it. If you're basically just starting out and you're trying to get a sense of what works for you, start with the lighter stuff and then have somebody come with you. Do something more elaborate. If it's your first time meeting with a lawmaker, you don't have to go in it solo. There's organizations that will be doing Hill Days. They'll be doing outreach. Join in, sit around, listen and see what works for you and speak up when you're ready.

Again as Cate said, you don't need to be a policy expert. You're the expert in you. You're expert in your life and that's what they need to hear. Lawmakers want to hear from their constituents. They want to know what's happening in the real world and you are the real world very much. Start small, give a sense of what you're comfortable with and then start joining onto group activities. Eventually, you'll have the resources and the supports to be able to go in and go solo.

Katy: Excellent. While I'm coming up with our next question, I'd also say join your local state association. I bet you Megan and Rose would both say that a lot of state advocacy, your psychological association has an advocacy center and they do Hill Days and things like that. That was one of the big questions in the tab. As we're wrapping up, we have about 10 more minutes to answer questions. Cate, there was a lot of questions about how to get that weekly stakeholder report. Could you just tell us how to do that real quick?

Cathryn: Sure. You can send me an e-mail and I can get you hooked up with it. My e-mail address is my name, catherine.oakley@hrc.org. It's Cathryn.oakley@hrc.org. I'll make sure that you get added to our list. The other thing that you could do is we also tweet our "terrible 10" each week. You can see the 10 states where the things are bubbling up to the worst. If you follow HRC on Twitter, you'll see those. We usually do them, I think Monday or Tuesday. Those are out there. I can type it into the chat as well. Then also you can always follow me on Twitter. I'm always uplifting all of the stuff that's happening in the states too.

Katy: Great. Thanks, Cate. A couple of people have asked and I think Megan and Rose can talk about this. As multiple identities of we're psychologists, we're advocacy people. There's some ethical questions about that too in the chat in Q&A of how is it better for us come forward as constituents as psychologists. Like Sergio recommended sometimes this affects me individually or this affects my child or my loved one. How is best to navigate these multiple identities and these multiple professional personal roles. Megan and Rose, how do you both do that?

Megan: I'd say yes. Yes to all because all of our identities matter in our advocacy work. First thing just from a practical standpoint, for those who work in agencies, in hospitals, and academic settings. You're going to have government affairs people representing those groups that you're going to have to coordinate with when you do advocacy. Making sure that you're not representing your organization if you don't have the authority to do so. That's a really important part just to put out there.

If you are not given the authority to represent, say, your university, then you need to as part of your advocacy say, "I'm representing myself," and then you choose. Do you want to be talking about your personal experiences? Do you want to say, I am a licensed psychologist and a mother, parent, sibling, whatever. I think again that's where your audience matters and who you're talking to. I'll also just be frank is that safety matters. Sergio highlighted that well. That matters for those of us in states that are conservative.

Where there are attacks currently ongoing towards parents, psychologists, and community members who are speaking out and protecting kids. You do want to be mindful of safety risks for yourself and also self-care is an important part of

advocacy. That's something we talked about the other day. Preparing for this is that especially when we hold marginalized and minoritized identities and are doing advocacy, that it is so important to be sure that you've got your supports behind you that are helping you take care of yourself to do this work.

Figuring out which lens, which role, which title you use. Also, consider what is best for you as a person to be able to sustain this in the long run.

Katy: What about you, Rose anything else to add?

Rose: Yes. I would say, yes it does. It would depend whether or not you check on with your employer. I work for the university and they're very comfortable with me doing advocacy. My clinical employer has said, just don't ask because then we'd have to get it approved by the office of approving whatever it is you do on your off-hours. I just don't do it their time, but I do know what the policies are and I know it doesn't violate the policies.

When I do advocacy, it's always as a part of my state association because my state association shares a brain, which is very handy. Again, there's not that many of us and we all know each other grad school. Megan's association, it sounds like you have more diversity of opinion for again, the bloodless language there. If you can represent your state association, then that's useful because then it's just not one random psychologist. Again, even though I know the advocacy, I do, it doesn't violate any policies at my place of work.

There's still the issue that a client could recognize me and say, "Gee, what were you doing saying that thing?" I have a bit of cover, because I could always say, "Hey, it's what the state association told me to do." It's never happened because people really don't pay attention, but it could at some point. There is the issue of your name may not end up on it. When I've written letters to editor, it's never my name. It's the name of the president of our state association, but I enjoy it. It's like dingdong ditching people, right?

Nobody knows that you were actually behind it. It is something to consider and everybody's situation will vary.

Katy: Absolutely. We have just a few minutes left. I want to thank everybody who submitted questions. There were more than we weren't able to get to. I want to encourage you. Most of our contact information should be on the slides that you'll get, feel free to reach out to individuals if you have questions for them. If not, reach out to Ron, me, or Kim and we are happy to direct you as well and, Doris as well. Those of us who are more linked to APA directly. I'm going to post the second poll and have you guys take a second?

Guys, I'm sorry. I keep using "guys" I'm from California. Y'all I need to start saying "y'all". I apologize for my gendered language. Seeing as we increase, see how everybody is. Oh, I can see it and it's very exciting. Just a few more seconds.

Kim: I can't see it, Katy.

Katy: I'll post in one second.

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Kim: It's I want to see the numbers ticking.

Katy: I know it's like---

Kim: I like game shows.

Katy: It's like the price is right at the moment.

Ron: You're such a [unintelligible 01:12:57] for this portion, but that's okay. I think just to finish.

Katy: I know. Next time, Ron we'll have *Jeopardy* music. Okay, here we go. Oh, it's so exciting, Ron and Kim. Yay.

Ron: Awesome. Oh wow. Who doesn't like instant gratification?

Katy: That was like the most exciting part of my week right here. I love it.

Kim: That's fantastic.

Ron: This is really great.

Kim: Thanks to everybody for participating in the poll. This is great.

Katy: Ron, you going to wrap us up?

Ron: Kim you're up next there?

Kim: Yes, absolutely. Thanks. I think, Katy just let us in, into the poll, which was awesome, but just to thank everybody. Thank you, Katy, for navigating the questions. Thanks to the presenters and to everybody for engaging and participating. We really hope you found this webinar informative and helpful, whether you're just getting started on your advocacy journey or you consider yourself more seasoned in this work. We're really, very appreciative for everyone who joined us today.

Ron: Great. I'm about to post in the chat. Let me just do it right now. Well, here it is. This is what I promised early on. It is the Meeting with a Purpose that APA has adopted. Particularly with this idea of ending a meeting a few minutes early so everybody has time to take care of themselves in between. I must tell you while this was scheduled to end at five o'clock, we're going to end 10 minutes early, at least. I have a meeting that starts right at five o'clock. I'm personally grateful for this. That brings us to the end of our time.

Once again, we want to thank everyone involved in today's webinar and to all of you who took the time to join us. We hope you found it informative and useful, and that you feel better prepared to engage in advocacy and LGBT issues in your state. From the polls, I think we can all feel pretty good that you feel like you're in a much better spot. This has been our pleasure to develop these resources for you. We look forward to your thoughts on how they can be expanded and improved upon.

Please visit the pages after today's program to give them a closer read. You'll also soon receive an e-mail with information on the opportunity to practice your pitches through the Youth Mental Health Storytelling portal. Lastly, before we go as noted at the beginning, once the webinar closes, you'll be given an opportunity to respond to a brief survey. We look forward to your thoughts about today's presentation. We would greatly appreciate your feedback as we work to continue to develop additional resources.

With that, thanks again and best wishes for empowering and impactful adventures and advocacy. Thank you.

Kim: Thanks, everybody.

[01:16:17] [END OF AUDIO]