CONA Welcomes New Members

CONA welcomes its two newest members, Adam M. Brickman, PhD, and Neil H. Charness, PhD, who began three-year terms in January.

Dr. Charness is the William G. Chase Professor of Psychology at Florida State University and Dr. Brickman is an Assistant Professor of Neuropsychology at the Taub Institute for Research on Alzheimer's Disease & the Aging Brain at Columbia University. They join Chandra Mehrotra, PhD (Chair), Patricia A. Areán, PhD, Sara Honn Qualls, PhD (Chair-elect), and Dolores Gallagher Thompson, PhD, ABPP as 2010 CONA. Thank you to Merla Arnold, RN, PhD and Lee Hyer, PhD who completed their terms on CONA in 2009!

CONA Spring 2010 Meeting

CONA held its first meeting of the year on March 19th-21st. At the meeting, CONA met with a number of guests to advocate for the incorporation of aging issues onto their agendas. Guests included: APA President Carol Goodheart, EdD; APA President Elect Melba Vasquez, PhD; Board of Directors member; Nadine Kaslow, PhD; Steve Breckler, PhD, Executive Director, Science Directorate; Katherine Nordal, PhD, Executive Director, Professional Practice; Catherine Grus, PhD, Associate Executive Director, Professional Education and Training; Nina Levitt, EdD, Associate Executive Director, APA Government Relations, Diane Elmore, PhD, MPH, Senior Legislative Federal Affairs Officer, Public Interest Government Relations Office; and
Patricia Kobor MS, Senior Science Policy Analyst, Science Government Relations Office. For example, CONA offered support for President-elect Vasquez’s Presidential Initiative on Reducing bias, discrimination and prejudice against people whose social identities are marginalized in U.S. society and requested consideration of issues of bias, discrimination and prejudice against older adults. During discussions with Dr. Nordal, CONA raised the importance of APA advocacy around Medicare funding for services for family caregivers if the patient is absent.

Another of CONA’s tasks during the Consolidated Meetings is to provide input on APA Cross-Cutting Agenda items that are working their way through the governance structure to become APA policy. At this meeting, CONA: supported adoption of the Guidelines for Psychological Practice in Health Care Delivery Systems and commended the originators for their incorporation of CONA’s additions specific to older adults; supported adoption of the Guidelines for the Psychological Evaluations in Child Protection Matters again noting the incorporation of CONA’s suggestion to recognize that children don’t exist solely in nuclear families and that family systems (including grandparents as caregivers) need to be considered; and provided input to the AAAS and Human Rights Coalition along the themes of providing easier public access to scientific research, providing a telecommunications infrastructure so that telehealth can flourish as a way of providing better access to healthcare services, and the importance of monitoring the extent to which scientists are harassed by their governments.

CONA will focus its attention on three priorities for 2010: (1) continued work on its Priming the Geropsychology Pipeline Project targeting early career psychologists to increase their interest in work with older adults, (2) development of a matrix that highlights evidence-based integrated health care models for older adults to support CONA’s continued work in this area and to inform public policy efforts as integrated health care is a component of health reform, and (3) conduct an audit of evidence-based practices for work with multicultural older adults. This could lead to future efforts related to graduate training, continuing education, and the development of a research agenda related to Multicultural Competency in Geropsychology.

**APA Presidential Task Force on Caregivers**

Work continues on the web-based *Family Caregiver Briefcase for Psychologists*. The Briefcase will include sections on Key Issues and Opportunities, Psychologist Roles and Profiles, Helping Caregivers in Practice Settings (e.g. assessment tools and interventions), Doing Caregiver Research, Advocating for Caregivers, Teaching about Caregiving, and FAQs. Briefcase segments will be available for review at the Convention.

Also at Convention, a Presidential Symposium will be held (see next section of this newsletter for details) and an APA Presidential Citation will be presented to Rosalynn Carter at the Opening Session. Fifteen Divisions, including Divisions 20 and 38 will be offering programming related to caregiving and older adults. All caregiving offerings will be marked with a special caregiver logo in the Convention program and a booklet on these caregiving sessions will be developed and distributed.

Dr. Goodheart has brought needed attention to caregiving in multiple venues this year, including the California Psychological Association Meeting, where she convened a panel presentation of experts including Kathleen Kelly, MPA, Executive Director, Family Caregiver Alliance, Bob Knight, PhD, Associate Dean, Davis School of Gerontology and Sherry Snelling, Senior Director of Evercare and Chairman of the Board for the National Alliance for Caregiving.
APA 2010 Convention

The 9th annual CONA Conversation Hour will be held on Friday, August 13th from 5:30-6:45pm. This year’s topic is: Caregiving: What Scientists and Practitioners Want to Hear from Each Other. Bring the questions you have always wanted to ask your colleagues who work in a sphere different from yours. Scientists – what have you always wanted to hear practitioners discuss about their professional work with caregivers? Practitioners – What have you wanted to hear scientists tell about caregiving risks, processes, or intervention? Come prepared to listen and share, in an effort to truly cross-fertilize an important field that is highlighted this year by the Presidential theme.

The 2010 CONA Award for the Advancement of Psychology and Aging will also be presented during the CONA Conversation Hour. Refreshments will be served!

The APA Presidential Symposium, Serving Family Caregivers in your Community: Opportunities, Roles, and Resources for Psychologists will be held on Saturday, August 14th 2:00-3:50 pm. Presidential Task Force members, Andrea Patenaude, PhD (chair), Martha Crowther, PhD, MPH, Timothy Elliott PhD, ABPP, William Haley, PhD, Barry Jacobs, PsyD, Sara Honn Qualls, PhD and Carol Goodheart, EdD will be presenting.

A Division 20 sponsored symposium, Cognitive Decline among Older Adults: Can Something Be Done? with presentations by Christopher Hertzog, PhD, Leon Hyer, PhD, and George Rebok, PhD and chaired by Chandra Mehrotra, PhD will be held Saturday, August 14th from 10:00-10:50.

A poster session, coordinated by CONA chair, Chandra Mehrotra, PhD and sponsored by Division 45, Strengthening multicultural competencies in geropsychology is scheduled for Friday, August 13 at 12:00 noon.

On Friday, August 13th from 3:00-3:50, Health Care Reform: Implications for Psychology and Diverse Populations will be presented by Diane Elmore, PhD, MPH, APA Public Interest Government Relations Office and Nina Levitt, EdD, APA Education Government Relations Office. James Bray, PhD, APA Past-President will serve as discussant.

CONA will once again offer its all day preconference CE workshop, What Psychologists Should Know About Working with Older Adults, on Wednesday, August 11th. This workshop will increase the competencies of psychologists interested in working with older adults, their families, and their caregivers by drawing upon the burgeoning psychological literature on the accurate psychological assessment and effective treatment of older adults. Presenters for the workshop are: Merla Arnold, RN, PhD, Leon Hyer, PhD, ABPP, Peter Lichtenberg, PhD, ABPP, and Margaret Norris, PhD.

This year, a new half-day CE workshop, Psychological Assessment of Decision-Making Capacity of Older Adults, will be offered by ABA/APA Capacity Assessment in Older Adults Working Group members on Sunday, August 15th from 8:00-11:50 am. (See the ABA/APA Capacity Assessment Section of this newsletter for more information).

The booklet, Convention Sessions on Aging Issues, will be distributed to newsletter subscribers prior to Convention.
ABA/APA Capacity Assessment in Older Adults Project

Work continues to distribute the three capacity assessment handbooks broadly. As of March 2010, approximately 5,000 hard copies of *Assessment of Older Adults with Diminished Capacity: A Handbook for Psychologists* (2008) have been distributed. The capacity handbook series has had great impact both nationally and internationally. U.S. state courts in Connecticut, Colorado, Maine, Utah, Vermont and Virginia have used the content of the handbooks and modified the model forms for their courts. In Australia, the New South Wales’ *Practical Guide for Solicitors: When a client’s capacity is in doubt* includes components of the handbooks in the appendices. The handbooks have also been widely linked from organizations’ websites including the National Center on Elder Abuse, Administration on Aging, NIH Alzheimer’s page, and the American Society on Aging.

In March of this year, The Financial Industry Regulatory Authority (FINRA) released its new e-learning course on Senior investor Issues: Diminished Decisional Capacity for its 600,000 financial planners. Working Group members, Drs. Jennifer Moye and Daniel Marson assisted FINRA in this effort, and APA and ABA granted permission for portions of the Lawyer’s handbook to be excerpted. An acknowledgment of the Working Group’s efforts is prominent at the outset of the course and cited throughout.

At the APA Convention, Working Group members, Drs. Stacey Wood and Aida Saldivar along with forensic psychologist, Susan Bernatz, PhD and Dan Krauss, JD, PhD, former Chair of the APA Committee on Legal Issues will offer a new, half-day CE workshop, *Psychological Assessment of Decision-Making Capacity of Older Adults*, on Sunday, August 15th from 8:00-11:50 am. This workshop will draw upon the ABA/APA Handbook for Psychologists to provide a theoretical framework and practical information regarding how to design and conduct capacity examinations for older adults in a variety of settings, and how to work effectively with lawyers and courts.

The Task Force to Update the Guidelines for the Evaluation of Dementia and Age-related Cognitive Decline

The Task Force charged with updating these 1998 Guidelines has completed development of the draft of the update. Comments from APA Boards and Committees are currently being compiled. After revisions to address issues raised, the document will be vetted by APA groups including the Board of Professional Affairs, the Committee on Professional Practice and Standards Standards, and the Office of General Council. A 90-day public comment period will then begin. It is expected that the Guidelines will go to the Board of Directors for their approval this December and to the Council of Representatives for adoption in February 2011.

Task Force members are: Glenn Smith, PhD (Chair), Cameron Camp, PhD, Susan Cooley, PhD, Hector Gonzalez, PhD, Paula Hartman-Stein, PhD, Asenath LaRue, PhD, Nancy Pachana, PhD, and Antonette Zeiss, PhD.
The Council of Professional Geropsychology Training Programs Update

The Council of Professional Geropsychology Training Programs (CoPGTP) continues to grow in membership and activity. There are currently 29 member programs - 12 doctoral programs, 14 internship and/or postdoctoral programs, and 3 post-licensure training programs. The CoPGTP website has a number of useful training resources, including the Pikes Peak Geropsychology Knowledge and Skill Assessment Tool, which offers a structured way to evaluate development of the geropsychology practice competencies in a student, or in oneself. The website has a list of recommended training resources associated with each of the Pikes Peak geropsychology competencies.

This past year, CoPGPT sponsored a web-based survey to evaluate the utility and validity of the assessment tool for self-evaluation purposes; we plan to present the study results at the APA meeting in August. We are excited to have recently initiated an award for innovative geropsychology training, which aims to recognize excellent training programs as well as to identify training efforts that could be shared with/replicated across programs. CoPGTP also plans to announce, later this spring, a request for proposals to fund small research projects related to geropsychology training. CoPGTP was accepted as a member of the Council of Chairs of Training Councils (CCTC) this past year, so now has a seat at the table for discussing critical issues for doctoral level training in professional psychology. Michele Karel, CoPGTP Chair, attended the CCTC meeting in Washington, DC, in March. Finally, the geropsychology specialty application was submitted to APA’s Commission for the Recognition of Specialties and Proficiencies in Professional Psychology (CRSPPP), and the public comment period has recently closed. We all look forward to hearing news about review of the application. The CoPGTP annual meeting and dinner will be held at the APA conference in San Diego, exact date/place TBA.

CoPGTP Board members: Chair - Michele Karel; Past-Chair- Greg Hinrichsen; Chair-Elect - Dan Segal; Secretary - Janet Yang; Treasurer - Sara Qualls. Members at large for: graduate training - Sue Whitbourne; internship training - Andrew Heck; postdoctoral training - Lee Hyer; post-licensure training - Joe Casciani.

Please don’t hesitate to contact CoPGTP Chair Michele Karel (Michele.Karel@va.gov) with any questions about the organization, or to inquire whether your program might consider joining the Training Council. We are eager to expand CoPGTP membership!
Aging Policy Update: APA Helps to Secure Funding for a New IOM Geriatric Mental Health Workforce Study

Diane L. Elmore, PhD, MPH, Acting Associate Executive Director for the Public Interest Government Relations Office Director, APA Congressional Fellowship Program, Public Interest Government Relations Office and Kathleen M. Van Dyk, BA, Public Interest Policy Graduate Student Intern

In April 2008, the Institute of Medicine (IOM) released a report entitled, “Retooling for an Aging America: Building the Health Care Workforce.” Within this report, the IOM outlined the projected health care needs of the growing and increasingly diverse aging population, and articulated some significant professional workforce shortages. Recommendations within the report included bolstering overall competence in geriatric care and increasing the number of specialists prepared to work with older adults. However, the study contained a striking omission: the featured professions failed to substantively recognize psychology and provided only a cursory discussion of the significant geriatric mental health workforce crisis. This exclusion occurred despite earlier outreach by APA to IOM, urging the inclusion of a geropsychologist on the study committee and encouraging specific attention to geriatric mental health workforce issues.

The APA Public Interest Government Relations Office (PI-GRO) worked in collaboration with the APA Office on Aging to bring this oversight to the attention of the IOM. In September 2008, APA’s CEO, Dr. Norman Anderson, sent a letter to the IOM which outlined the essential role and valuable contributions of psychologists in our health care system and underscored the importance of recognizing psychology and addressing mental and behavioral health workforce issues. In conjunction with our outreach to the IOM, PI-GRO staff worked with the American Association for Geriatric Psychiatry, the National Association of Social Workers, and the American Psychiatric Association to encourage key members of Congress to commission and support a follow-up study focused specifically on geriatric mental health workforce issues to complement the initial IOM report.

Following a year-long advocacy campaign, the decisive efforts of APA yielded significant positive results. APA, along with partner organizations, successfully worked with Representatives Rosa DeLauro (D-CT) and Patrick Kennedy (D-RI) to designate $900,000 in the report language that accompanied the Fiscal Year 2010 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act (H.R. 3293) to fund an IOM study focused on the geriatric mental health workforce. Specifically, this study will provide 1) a systematic and trend analysis of the current and projected mental and behavioral health care needs of the American people, particularly for aging and growing ethnic populations; and 2) policy recommendations for achieving a competent and well-trained mental health workforce to address those needs. This new study will serve as a welcome companion to the 2008 IOM report.

IOM studies are often a powerful public policy resource. The results of the upcoming study can serve as an important tool to ensure that our nation has a psychology and mental health workforce that is competently prepared to meet the needs of our rapidly changing population. Over the last several months, PI-GRO, along with representatives of other key mental health organizations, have been working with leaders from the Department of Health and Human Services and the IOM to discuss the implementation of the upcoming study and identify ways in which APA and our members can serve as resources.
In the News

Self-esteem Declines Sharply Among Older Adults While Middle-Aged Are Most Confident
Self-esteem is more likely to decline over the human lifespan, according to a new study in the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*. Higher income and better health help maintain self-esteem.

Caregiving: What’s APA got to do with it?
APA President Carol Goodheart, EdD believes APA can prepare all psychologists to recognize and reduce the stresses on family caregivers across the life span. Her APA Presidential Task Force on Caregivers is developing a Family Caregiver Briefcase for Psychologists that will be available on the APA web site.

Bob Knight, PhD receives the 2009 CONA Award for the Advancement of Psychology and Aging
The award recognizes his extraordinary leadership across the domains of education, practice, organizational development and research in clinical geropsychology. Knight’s career as a scientist-practitioner has shaped the field of geropsychology and the organizations that support it. He served on the APA Committee on Aging from 2000 to 2002 and as its chair in 2001.

Steven Zarit, PhD receives the Gerontological Society of America’s s Distinguished Career Contribution to Gerontology Award
Dr. Zarit was one of the first researchers to study the burden of dementia patients on family caregivers, and he has shown that psychological measures can help predict the onset of disability in old age. Zarit has also developed clinical models aimed at improving health care and living conditions for older adults. He served on the 1997 Ad Hoc Committee on the Issues of the Older Adult, and as the first chair of the APA Committee on Aging in 1998 and again in 1999.

Integrated care is nothing new for these psychologists
Antonette Zeiss, PhD, deputy chief consultant for mental health services at the VA’s Central Office in Washington, D.C. provides an overview of the VA’s work beginning in the early 1980s to incorporate inter-disciplinary care into geriatric health services. Sharmin Ladhani, PsyD describes her work in one of Wheaton Franciscan Healthcare (Racine, Wis.) long-term care facilities.

APA advocacy for Health Care Reform
Efforts helped to ensure that key provisions favorable to psychology remained in the health-care reform bill. Efforts included offering support for geriatric health-care work force development.
Resources

The APA Office of Continuing Education offers a variety of credit-earning opportunities including independent study programs utilizing DVDs, books and online multimedia presentations (as part of the APA Online Academy) including *What Psychologists Should Know about Working with Older Adults*, and a ten module offering on *End of Life Issues for the Mental Health Provider*.

Stanford Geriatric Education Center is offering monthly Webinars focusing on ethnicity and the dementias through June 2010. Individual offerings include Assessment of Dementia and Caregiving for Hmong American Elders, Filipino American Elders, and Vietnamese Americans

Concept Healthcare, LLC is offering a 1.5 hr. teleconference on May 21st on the subject of psychotropic medications in nursing homes, presented by Dr. Susan Margolis, a psychiatric nurse practitioner. Other upcoming teleconferences are listed on the website.

*Legal Guide for the Seriously Ill*, developed by the American Bar Association Commission on Law and Aging and the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization, provides information on several steps to consider if facing serious illness or injury. Specifically, this guide explains “seven key steps” in short and simple terms and provides tips and resource links that give detailed information and guidance.

**CALL FOR NOMINATIONS: CONA Award for the Advancement of Psychology and Aging**

The Committee on Aging (CONA) of the American Psychological Association invites nominations, including self-nominations, for its award for the Advancement of Psychology and Aging. This award for outstanding achievement is presented annually to recognize psychologists and friends of psychology who have made significant contributions to the mission of CONA. The mission of CONA is to pursue the following goals:

Science: Provide strong and visible advocacy for a scientific agenda on aging to policymakers and private and public funding agencies.

Practice: Promote the practice of psychology by advocating policies that enhance the availability and reimbursement of health and mental health services to older adults and their families.

Public Interest: Promote the application of psychological knowledge to the well-being of older people, with special attention to the influences of gender, ethnicity, culture, sexual orientation, and family in science, practice, and policy relating to older adults.

Policy: Contribute to the formulation and support of public policies and associated regulations that promote optimal development of older adults, facilitate psychological practice with older persons, and expand scientific understanding of adult development and aging.

Education: Promote inclusion of knowledge about adult development and aging in all levels of education, including continuing education, training programs, and professional development of psychologists.
Public Affairs: Develop and disseminate information concerning the scientific findings and practice issues about older adults to psychologists, other professionals, policymakers, and the public.

APA: Serve as a visible focus for the coordination of information among groups within APA that address aging issues and offer consultation to relevant APA boards, committees, divisions, state associations, and directorates; also ensure that older members of APA receive the appropriate attention of the association.

Successful candidates will have made significant contributions in one or more of the areas of the CONA Mission stated above. All nominations must include current curriculum vitae of the candidate and three letters of reference. Reference letters should indicate the categories in which the candidate has made contributions related to aging (Science, Practice, Policy, Education, Public Interest, Public Affairs, and APA). Additionally, letters should address the nominee’s leadership activities, contributions, and scope of influence that advance knowledge for and about older adults and aging issues, foster understanding of older adult’s lives, and improve the status of older adults.

Nominations are solicited by CONA on a yearly basis with a June 30th deadline for receipt of nominations. The award is presented at the APA Convention. Prior recipients of the CONA Award for Psychology and Aging were the following:

- 2003 Norman Abeles, PhD
- 2004 George Niederehe, PhD
- 2005 Margaret Gatz, PhD
- 2006 Antonette Zeiss, PhD
- 2007 Martha Storandt, PhD
- 2008 Gregory Hinrichsen, PhD
- 2009 Bob Knight, PhD

Send nominations and supporting materials to Deborah DiGilio at ddigilio@apa.org.

Call for Nominations to the APA Committee on Aging

The Committee on Aging (CONA) is accepting nominations, including self-nominations, for two new members. CONA is the chief committee within the APA governance structure charged with addressing aging concerns. CONA seeks full members of APA with specialization in aging issues to serve a three-year term beginning January 2011 and ending December 2013.

CONA, a six-member Committee, places priority on maintaining representation within the Committee's membership that reflects the diversity of psychology and society, including (a) individuals with experience in research, clinical training and practice, policy and advocacy, and education; (b) early- and mid-career psychologists and those who are retired or employed less than full time; and (c) diversity with respect to ethnicity, culture, age, gender, ability, sexual orientation, and geographic location.

CONA's mission is to advance psychology as a science and profession and as a means of promoting health and human welfare by ensuring that older adults, especially the growing numbers of older women and members of minority groups, receive the attention of the Association.
Its goals include:

- provide leadership for a scientific agenda on aging,
- advocate for policies that enhance availability and reimbursement of health and mental health services to older adults and their families,
- contribute to the formulation and support of public policies that promote optimal development of older adults, facilitate psychological practice with older persons, and expand scientific understanding of adult development and aging,
- promote inclusion of knowledge about adult development and aging in all levels of education,
- develop and disseminate information concerning the scientific findings and practice issues about older adults,
- serve as a visible focus for the coordination of information among groups within APA that address aging issues and offer consultation to relevant APA boards, committees, divisions, state associations, and directorates, and
- ensure that older members of APA receive appropriate attention from the Association.

Selected candidates are required to attend two committee meetings each year in Washington, DC, with expenses reimbursed by the APA. The Committee will meet on March 25-27 and September 22-24, 2011; March 30-April 1 and October 5-7, 2012; and March 15-17 and September 20-22, 2013. Members are encouraged to attend a CONA meeting held during the APA Convention at their own expense. CONA is a working committee with ongoing time sensitive and consuming projects that require members' attention. Members are expected to participate in frequent email discussions and bi-monthly conference calls, work on Committee priorities between meetings, provide consultation to the Director of the APA Office on Aging, and participate in policy advocacy activities.

Nomination materials should include a current curriculum vitae and a letter from the nominee indicating their commitment to serve on CONA and highlighting specific competencies, interests, and potential contributions to the work of CONA. Letters of support from other APA governance groups and divisions, state psychological associations, or other organizations are desirable but not required. Prior applicants are encouraged to reapply.

**Nominations and supporting materials should be sent by September 1, 2010 to:** Deborah DiGilio, Director of the Office on Aging, American Psychological Association at ddigilio@apa.org.
Aging at APA

The Office on Aging works to promote aging issues within APA, among its members, other professionals, policy makers and the public. The Office strives to bring psychological knowledge to bear on issues that affect the health and well-being of older adults and their families. Deborah DiGilio is its Director; Susie Hwang is the Administrative Coordinator.

The Committee on Aging (CONA) is a six-member committee of psychologists with substantive professional expertise in geropsychology who are selected to serve three-year terms. CONA works toward the optimal development of older adults, expanded scientific understanding of adult development and aging, and the delivery of appropriate psychological services to older persons. Current members are: Merla Arnold, PhD, RN (Chair), Chandra Mehrotra, PhD (Chair-Elect), Patricia Areán, PhD, Lee Hyer, PhD, ABPP, Dolores Gallagher Thompson, PhD, ABPP, and Sara H. Qualls, PhD.

Public Interest Government Relations Office works on aging policy issues at the federal level. Diane Elmore, PhD, MPH is the Senior Legislative and Federal Affairs Officer who manages a policy portfolio that includes aging issues. She is also the Director of the APA Congressional Fellowship Program.

APA Division 20 (Adult Development & Aging) is concerned with the study of psychological development and change throughout the adult years. Their website includes resources for educators and students, information about graduate programs for students interested in pursuing this field, publications, conference information, and links to other sites.

APA Division 12-Section II (Society of Clinical Geropsychology) is devoted to research, training, and the provision of psychological services for older adults. Their website includes information on training opportunities for students and professionals including clinical psychology internships, postdoctoral fellowship opportunities, and continuing education offerings, and research funding and job information.

*To subscribe to this thrice-yearly, electronic newsletter, please send an email to Lacie M. Green at lgreen@apa.org*