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WVPA in 2015: A great time to get more involved!

It is with great pleasure that I write this message about the recent accomplishments of the West Virginia Psychological Association (WVPA) and the upcoming goals of the organization. Throughout the past year as President-Elect, I was continually impressed by the energy, enthusiasm and support of our members from all over the state of West Virginia. I want to thank our 2014 president Dr. Marty Boone for modeling that enthusiasm and also for his leadership and guidance throughout the year. I also want to express my gratitude to the WVPA board of directors for their continued guidance, their innovative ideas and their unyielding passion for psychology. Our organization, much like the science and practice of psychology, continues to evolve and grow. This next year promises to be another great one filled with opportunities for more organizational strides and personal involvement in your state psychological association. I would like to start with a recap of recent major accomplish-

ments in our organization and follow it up with goals for 2015.

With the assistance of WVPA's Dr. Jeffery Hammond and Dr. Marty Amerikaner, the West Virginia University School of Medicine - Eastern Division has started a doctoral internship and will matriculate psychology interns in July of this year. This is a great step forward in training opportunities for our state and will create more access to psychologists working in medical settings. Furthermore, since this is the capstone of their training, it is anticipated that some of these interns will stay in the

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The end of that four-letter word (s--w)!

By WVPA Executive Director Diane Slaughter, CAE, APR, Fellow PRSA

Welcome, Spring! It's about time you got here!

I am more than glad to see the end of "that white stuff" on the ground (it was still on the ground in Maryland when I came back from Washington, DC).

More than the daffodils are blooming, though, especially in the West Virginia Psychological Association (WVPA).

Dues renewals stand at 95.5% of budget, notwithstanding that a number of members are paying lower dues under our new structure! With the addition of new membership categories, we are providing benefits to our current and soon-to-be current members by providing the services they need to maintain the highest levels of knowledge and professional standards.

Your association is also working hard to manage your money responsibly. We are pleased to announce receipt of an organizational development grant from the American Psychological Association Practice Organization (APAPO) in the amount of \$14,500.

Our students were recognized for their outstanding work at the APA's State Leadership Conference, and they aren't stopping now! They've added a poster session for the Spring

Event and are making additional plans for students throughout the year. (You'll see this picture three times in this issue!) This is an outstanding achievement for our students across the state! You'll read more about our students throughout this issue.



Please remember that members of WVPA enjoy a wide range of benefits, including:

- top quality continuing education opportunities through an APA-approved sponsor;
- web-based referral program;
- legislative advocacy;
- access to colleagues via subscription listservs;
- extensive on-line membership directory;
- Spring CE Event;
- Fall CE Conference;
- networking and practice building opportunities;
- involvement on WVPA committees;
- newsletter with quality and timely information regarding the profession;
- public outreach highlighting psychology and what psychologists do;
- exciting career connections;

and

- deeply discounted rates for WVPA events.

If you haven't yet joined the West Virginia Psychological Association, please take this opportunity to join this vibrant professional community representing psychology! Please encourage a friend, peer, colleague or co-worker to join WVPA this year!

I look forward to seeing you in May!

Diane Slaughter



WVPA BEACON

is published four times a year by the
West Virginia Psychological Association, Inc.
Scott Fields, PhD, President
Diane Slaughter CAE APR, Executive Director
Jack Berkeley, PsyD, Editor
PO Box 58058
Charleston, WV 25358-0058

WVPA reserves the right to determine suitability of advertisements and content. Correspondence regarding subscriptions and changes of address should be directed to:

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PO Box 58058, Charleston, WV 25358
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Under the dome: Legislative update

By Frank Hartman, Hartman Mullins, LLC

The 2015 Legislative Session was historic as the Republican party held a majority of seats in both the House of Delegates and Senate for the first time in 83 years in West Virginia. The new leadership delivered a fast-paced, albeit disorganized, session that followed-through on many campaign promises. Tort reform and modest education reform were the primary noteworthy accomplishments of the new leadership. Of interest to the West Virginia Psychological Association were reforms to the juvenile justice system stemming from the recommendations to the juvenile justice task force and the elimination of a licensure for social workers employed by the Department of Health and Human Resources.

Below please find a synopsis of relevant bills as well as a link to the enrolled version of those bills:

SB 262 – Transferring the Children’s Health Insurance Program and Children’s Health Insurance Agency from Department of Administration to the Department of Health and Human Resources. No substantive changes were made to the program or program eligibility, only a change in which department will administer the program.
http://www.legis.state.wv.us/Bill_Status/bills_text.

[cfm?billdoc=sb262%20enr.htm&yr=2015&sesstype=RS&i=262](http://www.legis.state.wv.us/cfm?billdoc=sb262%20enr.htm&yr=2015&sesstype=RS&i=262)

SB 274 - Allows flexibility to the Department of Health and Human Resources in complying with federal mandates under the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families program. Specifically, the bill changes the DHHR’s monitoring capabilities to ensure appropriate assistance is provided to those individuals who qualify and need help with education, training, and identifying avenues to employment.

http://www.legis.state.wv.us/Bill_Status/bills_text.

[cfm?billdoc=SB274%20SUB1%20enr.htm&yr=2015&sesstype=RS&i=274](http://www.legis.state.wv.us/cfm?billdoc=SB274%20SUB1%20enr.htm&yr=2015&sesstype=RS&i=274)

SB 295 – Establishes an appeal process for decisions issued by the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources Board of Review and the Bureau for Medical Services. Appeals shall be filed with the circuit court of Kanawha County, West Virginia, or the circuit court in the county in which the petitioner resides or does business and shall be determined under the clearly wrong, abuse of discretion standards.

http://www.legis.state.wv.us/Bill_Status/bills_text.

[cfm?billdoc=sb295%20enr.htm&yr=2015&sesstype=RS&i=295](http://www.legis.state.wv.us/cfm?billdoc=sb295%20enr.htm&yr=2015&sesstype=RS&i=295)

SB 370 – Reorganization of the Governor’s Commit-

tee on Crime, Delinquency and Corrections. The bill also expands the authority of the committee



to include the power to propose legislation and legislative rules.

http://www.legis.state.wv.us/Bill_Status/bills_text.

[cfm?billdoc=sb370%20enr.htm&yr=2015&sesstype=RS&i=370](http://www.legis.state.wv.us/cfm?billdoc=sb370%20enr.htm&yr=2015&sesstype=RS&i=370)

SB 393 – The bill is a product of the Governor’s Juvenile Justice Task force that met during the interim sessions. Among other things the bill:

- places truancy diversion specialists in all 55 counties to provide early intervention services to those children who need them most;
- introduces a two-step diversion process that expands community-based alternatives prior to the filing of a juvenile petition for a status offense or a misdemeanor;
- expands youth reporting centers across the state to

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News from the State Leadership Conference

WVPA Federal Advocacy Coordinator Dr. Jessica Luzier

While I was unable to travel to Washington, DC, this year for the State Leadership Conference, our delegation did an outstanding job under the leadership of Emily Selby-Nelson, PsyD. Drs. Scott Fields, Jeff Boggess, Sarah Jarvis and Neal Morris, as well as Alyssa Frye and Executive

Director Diane Slaughter comprised our delegation.

The messages we delivered focused on Medicare issues affecting psychologists, including: the Sustainable Growth Rate; psychologist payments in Medicare; independent practice of psychologists in all Medicare treatment settings; and electronic health records incentive

payments.

We enjoyed personal meetings with Senator Capito and Congressman Jenkins, as well as health care assistants for Senator Manchin and Congressmen McKinley and Mooney.



During our visit to Capitol Hill, we met with Senator Shelley Capito (white suit both photos). The meeting included, from left, Drs. Neal Morris and Jeff Boggess, Alyssa Frye, Senator Capito, Drs. Sarah Jarvis, Scott Fields, Emily Selby-Nelson and Diane Slaughter.



While we were unable to meet with Senator Manchin, Dr. Boggess (right) and others were able to share our messages.



We were able to visit with newly-elected Congressman Jenkins (left) and staff for Congressmen Mooney (below left) and Congressman McKinley (below).



Presentation of the APAGS Award to the West Virginia Psychological Association was our highlight! Flanked by APA volunteers are, from left, Sarah Jarvis, Alyssa Frye, Scott Fields and Emily Selby-Nelson. Center stage are the plaque and the \$1500 check!



News From the State Leadership Conference

Emily Selby-Nelson, PsyD, WVPA CECF Chair

I'm excited to share that advocacy representatives from WVPA had another positive experience at the APA State Leadership Conference (SLC) in Washington, D.C. this past March. This year, Dr. Scott Fields, Dr. Jeff Boggess, Dr. Sarah Jarvis, Dr. Neil Morris, Allyssa Frye, and I represented the West Virginia delegation, along with Executive Director Diane Slaughter.



West Virginia SLC delegation, from left, Dr. Jeff Boggess, Dr. Scott Fields, Dr. Emily Selby-Nelson, Dr. Sarah Jarvis and Alyssa Frye.

The theme of SLC 2015 was "Practice Innovation." Dr. Katherine Nordal and Dr. Jason Hwang gave the keynote addresses at the conference. They summarized alternative practice models in psychology that have evolved from recent develop-

ments in policy (e.g., the Affordable Care Act), technology, and clinical innovation. SLC's programming sought to equip attendees with the tools needed to guide our SPTA members to evaluate and advance innovations that will propel the practice of psychology into an effective role in these rapidly evolving times, and continue to define psychology within and outside of the evolving health care system.

Attendance at SLC culminates in the opportunity to lobby on Capitol Hill and meet with members of our Congressional delegation representing our patients/clients, practices, and profession. As mentioned by Dr. Luzier, our four topics of concern regarding Medicare and the Hi-Tech act were addressed on our day of lobbying. You may be asking, "How can I get involved and stay informed in federal issues of importance to psychologists?" Three ways come to mind. First, if you'd like to inquire about attending SLC in the future or would like to join the Federal Advocacy Committee, send an email to Jessica.luzier@gmail.com. Second, join the APA Practice Organization, and respond to the Information and Action Alerts routinely disseminated. This is the easiest and most practical way to make an impact with

our legislators on a grassroots level. Sending an email in the Capwiz system takes less than 30 seconds!

Third, donate to the APAPAC. Donations are accepted through www.apapopac.org. Being involved in advocacy can round out your professional identity as a psychologist and give you a sense of partnership in the "big picture" of what psychology can provide to patients, the health system, and communities at large.



Dr. Emily Selby-Nelson and Scott Fields begin to look like Washington insiders as they rush up the stairs to clear security before their next meeting with a member of the West Virginia Congressional delegation.



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The founding fathers

One of the foundations of President Obama's Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA) is the active encouragement of patient-centered, data-based interprofessional (i.e., interdisciplinary) integrated care models to be established within comprehensive systems of care, such as Accountable Care Organizations (ACOs) and Patient-Centered Medical Homes. In many ways, the envisioned clinical structures are very similar to President Nixon's HMOs and President Clinton's Managed Care initiatives, of which organized psychology has historically been less than supportive. The ACA provides for a priority on preventive care and eliminating traditional barriers to receiving mental health and behavioral health care. The all-important psychosocial-cultural-economic gradient of care is to be systematically encouraged. We would suggest, however, that in order to successfully function (if not thrive) within this exciting evolving environment, it would be very helpful for our educators and clinicians to become intimately familiar with the training, orientation, and clinical skills of the other health care professions – not to mention developing a public health perspective.

Under the leadership of visionary APA Past President

Nadine Kaslow, the Council of Representatives voted last year to encourage psychology's training programs to affirmatively embrace Competency-Based training. In 2007, Nadine opined: "Professional psychology is moving towards competency-based models with attention to competency-based education, training, and credentialing." In 2009, six national schools of health professions education associations formed the Interprofessional Education Collaborative (IPEC) in order to promote and encourage efforts to advance substantive interprofessional learning experiences with the goal of preparing future clinicians for the team-based care of patients. The IPEC collaborative partners are the American Association of Colleges of Nursing, the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine, the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy, the American Dental Education Association, the Association of American Medical Colleges, and the Association of Schools and Programs of Public Health. APA cannot be one of the core groups as it is not an association of schools/programs; nevertheless, the Education Directorate has been working closely with IPEC.

From a health policy perspective, it is significant that

Former APA President Pat DeLeon, PhD

whereas one of the required competencies for our colleagues in nursing is Health Policy



(including teaching their next generation how to become actively involved in the political process), this is not the case for psychology's training programs. In fact, a review of psychology's literature found very few training programs offering any relevant courses or "hands-on" training experiences. The one notable exception is APA's Congressional (and now also Executive) Fellowship program which celebrated its 40th anniversary last year, having provided this transformative experience for 119 colleagues.

The former Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives Tip O'Neill noted that "All politics is local." Described slightly differently by former APA Congressional Fellow Neil Kirschner: "More often than not, research findings in the legislative arena are only valued if consistent with conclusions based upon the more salient political factors.... If I've learned anything on the Hill, it is the importance of political advocacy if you desire a change in

Founding fathers
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provide programs to children at home instead of through out-of-home placements;

- introduces evidence-based services and pilot programs to support restorative justice programs, substance abuse recovery services, mental health programs and family therapies.

http://www.legis.state.wv.us/Bill_Status/bills_text.cfm?billdoc=SB393%20SUB1%20enr.htm&yr=2015&sesstype=RS&i=393

http://www.legis.state.wv.us/Bill_Status/bills_text.cfm?billdoc=SB393%20SUB1%20enr.htm&yr=2015&sesstype=RS&i=393

http://www.legis.state.wv.us/Bill_Status/bills_text.cfm?billdoc=SB393%20SUB1%20enr.htm&yr=2015&sesstype=RS&i=393

SB 559 – Removes the licensure requirement for social workers employed by the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources. DHHR employees with “sufficient standards of qualification, education, training and experience” will be added to a list of others exempted from licensure, including social service administration directors, those holding licenses in other fields, such as physicians, and students and interns studying social work courses, among others.

http://www.legis.state.wv.us/Bill_Status/bills_text.cfm?billdoc=sb559%20enr.htm&yr=2015&sesstype=RS&i=559

http://www.legis.state.wv.us/Bill_Status/bills_text.cfm?billdoc=sb559%20enr.htm&yr=2015&sesstype=RS&i=559

HB 2200 – A complete revision, rearrangement, consolidation and recodification of Chapter 49 relating to child welfare and juvenile disposition.

http://www.legis.state.wv.us/Bill_Status/bills_text.cfm?billdoc=hb2200%20enr.htm&yr=2015&sesstype=RS&i=2200

http://www.legis.state.wv.us/Bill_Status/bills_text.cfm?billdoc=hb2200%20enr.htm&yr=2015&sesstype=RS&i=2200

HB 2527 – Creation of a Task Force on the Prevention of Sexual Abuse of Children within the Center for Professional Development. It is named after child sexual abuse survivor, Erin Merryn. The task force is to develop recommendations and proposals for statutory changes, state education policy, and methods to foster cooperation among state agencies, local government, schools and community efforts to prevent child sexual abuse in West Virginia. Additionally, in a last minute amendment, the bill also includes the provisions of HB 2257, the bill of rights for children in foster care. Under those provisions and child in foster care would have an independent cause of action if the stated goals of the foster care system in the State were not met.

http://www.legis.state.wv.us/Bill_Status/bills_text.cfm?billdoc=HB2527%20SUB%20ENR.htm&yr=2015&sesstype=RS&i=2527

http://www.legis.state.wv.us/Bill_Status/bills_text.cfm?billdoc=HB2527%20SUB%20ENR.htm&yr=2015&sesstype=RS&i=2527

HB 2535 - Expanding the number of people who are trained in suicide prevention in order to maximize the possibility that at risk children and adults can be saved. School personnel from middle school through college will not only be trained, they will provide children and young adults with suicide prevention information, facilitate discussion about preventing

suicide and make mental health resources available. Licensed medical professionals will be required to obtain education in suicide prevention as part of their licensing process.

http://www.legis.state.wv.us/Bill_Status/bills_text.cfm?billdoc=hb2535%20enr.htm&yr=2015&sesstype=RS&i=2535

http://www.legis.state.wv.us/Bill_Status/bills_text.cfm?billdoc=hb2535%20enr.htm&yr=2015&sesstype=RS&i=2535

HB 2550 – The bill increases the number of unexcused absences from five to ten of a student before action may be taken against the parent, guardian or custodian of the student.

http://www.legis.state.wv.us/Bill_Status/bills_text.cfm?billdoc=HB2550%20SUB%20ENR.htm&yr=2015&sesstype=RS&i=2550

http://www.legis.state.wv.us/Bill_Status/bills_text.cfm?billdoc=HB2550%20SUB%20ENR.htm&yr=2015&sesstype=RS&i=2550

HB 2595 - The purpose of this bill is to eliminate out-of-state health care facilities and providers from the definition of “affected persons” and from consideration by the state agency in determining whether to issue a certificate of need for development of a healthcare facility within this state.

http://www.legis.state.wv.us/Bill_Status/bills_text.cfm?billdoc=hb2595%20ENR.htm&yr=2015&sesstype=RS&i=2595

http://www.legis.state.wv.us/Bill_Status/bills_text.cfm?billdoc=hb2595%20ENR.htm&yr=2015&sesstype=RS&i=2595

HB 2880 - Creating a pilot program to assist participants in addressing dependence on opioids, by maintaining abstinence from the use of those substances and reducing recidivism.

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Welcoming a future member...

Jessica Luzier, PhD, and husband Chris are delighted to announce the arrival of a future member of the West Virginia Psychological Association.

Quinn David Luzier arrived

Wednesday, March 25, at 5:37 a.m. This earlier riser weighed in at 7 lbs. 3 oz. and measuring 20.5 inches.

Luzier is Federal Advocacy Coordinator for WVPA and

reports, "So far so good!" The family couldn't be more thrilled to welcome baby Quinn.



And bidding farewell to two friends...

Susan Leep-Bartram-Monroe, 57, of Lakeland, Fla., passed away December 21, 2014, at her residence. Susan's life ended early when she was killed in a tragic murder/suicide at the hands of her husband, James Monroe. Susan was born in Huntington, W.Va., on May 22, 1957.

She attended Marshall University and graduated with an M.A. in Psychology and opened her own practice. Susan was a gifted pianist, gardener and avid reader. She was a loving mother, sister and friend and was always kind and supportive. She was truly loved.

She is survived by her pride and joy, daughter Brittany Bartram; sisters, Rebecca (John) Welker and Sally Leep; step-

mother, Nami Leep; stepsiblings, Angela (Ryan) Herbst and Perry Sandlin; and nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by her parents, Dorothy and Ray W. Leep. A private memorial service was held in West Virginia for close friends and family. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to Gideon's International or Branchesdvs.org for domestic violence victims.

See more at: <http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/herald-dispatch/obituary.aspx?pid=173731032#sthash.vYN5aFSy.dpuf>

Carl Thomas, PhD, born on March 30, 1934, passed away on Wednesday, March 25, 2015. A resident of Lewisburg, he held West

Virginia license 279.

He is survived by his wife Rita.

A celebration of his life took place March 30, 2015, and contributions may be made in his memory to: Lewisburg United Methodist Church; Peyton Hospice House, Fairlea, WV; Guiding Eyes Organization for the Blind or the North Share Animal Organization.

"On a purely personal note, Carl called to welcome me to the West Virginia Psychological Association when I succeeded Jimelle Rumberg in October 2006," according the WVPA Executive Director Diane Slaughter. "In 30 years of association work, a member never called to welcome me to an organization. He was a very special gentleman who will be missed."

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state and work as psychologists after finishing internship. WVU-Eastern Division has been awarded seed funding from the American Psychological Association (APA) to aid in getting the internship process started in its first year of training. We wish WVU-Eastern Division well in this new educational endeavor and thank all who had a hand in turning this idea into a reality.

Speaking of education, WVPA has long valued psychology student involvement and has made a push in recent years to get more student attendance at conferences and attract more students as members. The belief is twofold, that our students greatly benefit from the advantages of membership and that our organization grows stronger for years to come with student involvement. Last year, WVPA was awarded an honorable mention for the 2014 American Psychological Association of Graduate Students (APAGS) Award due to years of ongoing commitment to student involvement. On the heels of that honor, I am proud to announce that WVPA was just named the 2015 APAGS Award recipient for an Outstanding State, Provincial, and Territorial Association (SPTA) of the Year. That means that of the 60 affiliated SPTAs throughout North America, WVPA was ranked number one for “superior performance

in promoting graduate student development, involvement, and joint APAGS/SPTA membership.” Ms. Alyssa Frye, a Marshall University graduate student who serves as both our WVPA Student Representative and as the APAGS State Advocacy Coordinator, was instrumental in submitting the application with me and helping WVPA win this award. The national recognition that this award entails and the \$1500 prize will be used to further enhance student involvement in our organization furthering our membership and mentorship goals. WVPA, and specifically Ms. Frye, were recognized at a reception in Washington, DC for the APAGS award at the APA State Leadership Conference in March 2015. I hope others will join me in giving a heartfelt congratulations to Ms. Frye for a job well done!

While 2015 is off to a grand beginning, we all know that it’s not how you start, it’s how you finish that counts. While other priorities and goals will likely emerge, here is a brief version of WVPA goals for the year to come.

1) Membership

Target: Increase membership by 25% in 2015

- a) Students – WVPA board and members speak at graduate schools and work with Colleges and Universities Committee on other student involvement strategies. Utilize APAGS Award money

to offset student costs at our Fall Conference.

- b) Previous members - Work with our Membership Committee, Board of Directors and current members on calls or emails to previous members. Get some first-hand data on why former members left WVPA.
- c) New psychologists in state – Roll up the “welcome wagon” with letters to introduce ourselves and information about joining WVPA.
- d) Current members – Work with our Membership Committee and Board of Directors to call and email current members with opportunities to discuss what we can do to better serve them.

Our top priority for 2015 remains increasing our membership. Over the past few years, our board of directors has worked tirelessly to increase our membership categories and make it easier for students, early career psychologists, and academic psychologists to join our organization. Visit the website, take a look at the updated categories and see why it is easier than ever for a colleague to join WVPA. Of note, students can now join our organization for a low price, get deeply discounted rates to our two yearly conferences and participate in our yearly poster presentations complete with awards for the first,

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second and third place posters. Also of note, Early Career Psychologists are now defined as 10 years removed from the date of their terminal degree in psychology. Whether you are in your 30th year of being a psychologist or your 30th day of training to be a psychologist, WVPA would love to have you on board.

2) Legislative

Target: Build momentum for a Sequence of Training (SOT) bill as it applies to doctoral psychology candidates within the next 1-2 years

- a) WVPA – Continue to discuss the proposal with WVPA and WVPA board of directors who recently approved this as legislative goal for the year 2015.
- b) WVAPP – Continue to talk with members/leadership about the proposal and field any questions or concerns that they might have.
- c) Psychology BoE – Continue to talk with our WV Board of Examiners of Psychologists about the proposal and discuss any questions or concerns that they might have.
- d) Doctoral Psychology Graduate Schools in WV – Garner ideas and/or support from Marshall University Psy.D. Program and West Virginia University Ph.D. Programs in Clinical and Counseling

Psychology.

Proposed by WVPA's Federal Advocacy Coordinator, Dr. Jessica Luzier, with my assistance, this proposal is based on the successful SOT bill that passed several years ago in Ohio. This proposal, approved by WVPA's Board of Directors (see attachment or website for full details) would recognize changes that have taken place in the education and training of doctoral psychologists over the past few decades. The proposal would allow for clinical hours completed by doctoral candidates prior to graduation to count toward licensure once the doctoral degree is attained and all other pertinent requirements are met. This would level the playing field for new doctoral psychologists in the state as in Ohio, Maryland, Kentucky and nine other states that have all adopted versions of this SOT proposal. If achieved, we believe this change in training would result in more psychologists staying in the state after graduation and particularly more staying to work in rural underserved areas as those areas could then offer student loan forgiveness to newly graduated doctoral applicants.

3) Outreach

Target: Continue to have WVPA members and board members "give psychology away" to worthy causes and team up with like-minded organizations to reach our goals of better serving and informing

the public on health and mental health issues.

This initiative was started by Dr. Marty Boone, our immediate past president at WVPA. The idea was that WVPA members would make themselves available to work on community based mental health and health projects. Several projects are ongoing including but not limited to Dr. Pamela Dean and the aforementioned Dr. Boone's work on "Concussion Protocols in Sports," and Dr. Jennifer Hancock and Dr. Alicia Smith's important work on a "Rural Youth Wellness." In short, we will continue to serve our communities with evidence-based projects to help improve wellness in our state.

Speaking of being informative, I cannot end this message without highlighting one of the greatest benefits of WVPA membership: Attending our annual conferences and gathering a lot of information at a reduced rate. President-elect Dr. Jeff Boggess is working hard to build an outstanding lineup of presentations for our Spring CE Event in Charleston on May 15th (see more information on page). Dr. Boggess plans to showcase the talents of our practicing psychologist colleagues from around the state so that we can learn evidence-based techniques from experts working in our own backyard. In addition, the

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conference is sure to provide engaging and timely training opportunities for our psychology graduate students. Graduate students and Early Career Psychologists repeatedly comment about not only the quality of the presenters at our conferences, but also the invaluable networking that transpires with our members during our annual meetings. I hope you plan to be a part of that positive synergy. In other words, we would love to see you in Charleston on May 15th!

In closing, I will refer to the title of this message. It is indeed a great time to get more involved in WVPA. I wrote a lot in this message about growing membership and that is vitally important. However, the lifeblood of WVPA is our outstanding members. We need you to stay engaged in our organization, to use your talents to serve on committees, at conferences, at lobby days, during times of practice-based crises and to stay involved with your colleagues. If this organization grows, it is because of you. If

you have suggestions for ways that we could improve WVPA, I speak on behalf of the Board of Directors when I say contact me or any of us. We are here to serve you and we look forward to seeing you and hearing from you throughout the year.

Warm regards,



Scott A. Fields, PhD
2015 WVPA President

Make plans now to join your colleagues and friends at the WVPA Fall Conference

Commitment
to **E**xcellence
in Psychological Services

October 2-4, 2015
Waterfront Place Hotel, Morgantown

Founding fathers

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public policy.” Having personally served on the U.S. Senate staff for 38+ years, I would suggest that the key to effective advocacy is developing quality personal relationships with one’s elected officials and their staff over a prolonged period of time. The most common professional background of elected officials has consistently been law, followed by business. Most obtain their health care knowledge from personal or family experiences or through the popular media. To assume they are aware of the nuances of health care or of the extent of psychology’s training and thus potential contributions, would be extremely naïve.

To become an effective advocate for one’s cause (including for one’s profession) one must be present, possess patience and persistence, and be committed to the long haul. It is definitely helpful to develop an appreciation for how one’s legislative or administrative agenda fits into a larger societal context. Has the time arrived for the changes you desire and are there any natural allies for what you propose? What, for example, might be the priorities of the newly elected Republican controlled Congress? The ACA currently places much of the responsibility for implementation of the broad underlying statute at the local and state level. Unfortunately, as drafted,

psychology is not expressly enumerated under the ACO or Medical Home provisions of the law, although the clinical services psychology could provide are clearly possible if local administrators or policy makers so desire. Similarly, the details of the various state Medicaid programs (which form the underlying basis for the ACA’s expansion of health coverage for 32 million Americans) are also determined at the state level, where once again, unfortunately, psychology has generally been silent.

When meeting with one’s elected officials and/or their staff, visits to their home office, especially during a Congressional recess, can be highly productive. Those colleagues who are fortunate to be invited to the APA Practice Directorate’s exciting annual State Leadership Conferences, will receive “hands-on” training regarding psychology’s national agendas, as well as experience “mock-visits” with an elected one. However, as the former Speaker of the House noted, local is best. To arrange such a meeting, simply call their local offices. One does not need detailed briefing materials or a comprehensive agenda. Their job is to make you comfortable. If requested, APA will provide background information as well as their legislative priorities. Professor John Linton knows the APA governance and can be an excellent advisor, as can your State Association. Be-

ing present is the most important ingredient.

Congress is organized every two years within a committee/subcommittee structure with those elected gravitating to areas that personally interest them. Your job is to explore how they can be most helpful to your broader agenda, based upon their committee assignments. When I think of West Virginia psychology, I warmly reflect upon the tireless dedication of Tom Stein. Psychology’s successful inclusion in Medicare was a prolonged journey, significantly influenced by Tom’s vision and dedication. For over a decade, I could see Tom’s colorful map of West Virginia – highlighting the accessibility of psychology – on Senator Rockefeller’s wall. Psychology’s true Medicare champion. Aloha.

Under the dome

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The program offers medication-based treatment to drug offenders who are currently incarcerated or who are on parole or work release.

http://www.legis.state.wv.us/Bill_Status/bills_text

[cfm?billdoc=HB2880%20ENR%202](http://www.legis.state.wv.us/Bill_Status/bills_text.cfm?billdoc=HB2880%20ENR%202).

[htm&yr=2015&sesstype=RS&i=2880](http://www.legis.state.wv.us/Bill_Status/bills_text.cfm?billdoc=HB2880%20ENR%202)

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