

WINTER 2025

WVPA NEWSLETTER

THANK YOU FOR AN EXCEPTIONAL YEAR!

2025 brought outreach, advocacy, collaboration, and transitions that expanded our connections with community partners, amplified our voice as an organization, and increased our visibility. Thank you to our administrative team, our Board and Committee members, and all WVPA members and friends!



THERE ARE MANY WAYS TO GET INVOLVED IN 2026

Want to join in the good work WVPA does throughout the year? There are many ways to join our outreach, advocacy, and member support. Committee membership, workshop presentations, and holding governance positions are all fantastic ways to connect, network, and build your CV!

PLANNING AHEAD

RENEW YOUR
MEMBERSHIP
FOR 2026

JOIN A
COMMITTEE AND
GET INVOLVED!

PRESENT A
WORKSHOP!

Happy Holidays

WE CAN'T WAIT TO SEE YOU ALL IN THE NEW YEAR!

2025 YEAR IN REVIEW

When I campaigned for WVPA President back in Fall 2023, I ran on a platform of increasing WVPA's advocacy on behalf of our profession and the communities we serve, especially our most vulnerable community members impacted by declining access to healthcare and legislative/policy changes that amplify health care disparities. I am so very proud of the incredible work our team did this year to answer that call.

We started strong in the legislative session, increasing the number of state house visits from WVPA members, including our graduate student members, increasing the number of lobby day events, and collaborating with community partners with shared missions. Throughout the 60 days of the legislative session, this included: providing in-person testimony re: psychological science in hearings in both the Senate and House of Delegates concerning specific legislation; providing information and consultation to legislators via telephone; conducting approximately one dozen in-person advocacy meetings with lawmakers; participating in 3 lobby days at the Capitol; joining NASW in providing written testimony on key legislation; and submitting written testimony on key legislation on behalf of WVPA. We also supported allied organizations advocating for shared missions, through our co-sponsorship of Recovery Day at the Capitol (WVAPP) and the Fairness WV Gala.

We similarly engaged in collaborative advocacy around proposed administrative rules changes concerning licensure eligibility during the summer. Our President and Secretary met with several academic and clinical stakeholders to discuss concerns. WVPA supported effective communication of comments/concerns during the open comment period. Finally, WVPA partnered with the WV Board of Examiners to host an open townhall for licensed psychologists throughout the state during our Fall Conference. Our strong partnership with multiple stakeholders facilitated collaborative dialogue in furtherance of our shared goals and ongoing excellence in psychological services in our state.

WVPA also continued our exemplary record of high-quality professional development opportunities to further equip the dedicated psychologists in our state to meet the evolving needs of our communities, while also providing cost-effective, accessible CE to satisfy licensure requirements. We hosted two webinars focusing on diversity and inclusion in addition to our Fall Conference, which offered expert workshops on a wide range of topics across 17 sessions for 24 total CE. During our Fall Conference, we also had the distinct privilege to recognize psychologists (and psychologist-in-training) who demonstrate remarkable advocacy and community service, both in West Virginia and nationally. We look forward to continuing to grow our online presence and the utility of our online resources in the years ahead – a process that started with a much-needed overhaul of our website this year.

Thank you all for making this an incredible year! It has been a tremendous honor to serve as President in 2025 and I am very excited to see how WVPA continues to grow and serve our communities in the years ahead.

~ Chantel Weisenmuller, PhD

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE TO WVPA

DR. URECKI

"This is a bittersweet time as I will be transitioning off the board. I had been involved as a member of WVPA since 2018 where I started as an early career psychologist. In 2021, I was one of the recipients of the WVPA's Emerging Leadership Program where I was able to partner with a current board member not only be included in board meetings to learn the process, but also gave me a chance to work on a research project for the state. I was able to bring Mental Health First Aid to many local community groups and first responders as a result, one of my favorite opportunities of my career.

In 2023, I became President-Elect, becoming the youngest member to have been elected in this position. During 2023, my primary responsibility was as the conference chair of the fall and spring conferences. This was my opportunity to provide a new approach with the conferences to focus in collaboration with other partners, inviting new speakers locally and outside of the state, and connect with various disciplines. I also wanted to ensure we leaned into what it means to be a psychologist working in a rural state as we are often asked to know a little about a lot of areas to best serve our clients who have limited access to specialty care. This opportunity also paved the way to be able to engage our students more in conferences and events by providing free attendance and virtual options for students in more remote areas of WV. In executive leadership, I able to attend the APA Practice Leadership Conference for two years in my role in executive leadership to build connections with other SPTAs and vote on the matters that affect our national organization. On the local network, I was able to develop collaborations with great community partners to enhance the reach of our programming. To name a few, we were able to partner with Project ECHO, WVU, Marshall, VA, and Cabin Creek Health Systems (especially with AHEC Immersion program). In 2024, I became President for this amazing organization and was able to engage more directly with advocacy efforts in a challenging time for WV. This was kickstarted from the trainings we brought from APA and our lobbyist. I worked alongside each of you to speak out both locally and nationally to support our most vulnerable citizens. From countless email correspondences and quick turnarounds to send letters to our local leaders, it was a true honor. In 2025, I not only moved to Cleveland, but was honored to still be able to remain on in my role as Past-President to support the organization as an exiting board member and see the incredible leaders, both new and returning, take the helm and continue to move this organization forward in servant leadership to our state and future generations.

While this was a long three years of hard work alongside some of the most passionate advocates for the state, I would not change anything about it. This was an opportunity for growth both for me professionally and personally, and it has most certainly set me up for success. I do encourage all to take a chance to serve within your state organizations, no matter what level of career or experience you have. I have so much gratitude and appreciation for this organization who took a chance on me, even as a brand new early career psychologist, to allow me the opportunity to provide service to this organization and my home. Thank you." ~Dr. Chava Urecki



THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE TO WVPA

DR. CAUDILL

Dr. Caudill has accepted a new professional role in Kentucky at UK King's Daughters as an Outpatient Behavioral Health Psychologist and is stepping away from her position as 2026 President of WVPA. We are grateful for her work with WVPA and wish her all the best in all her future endeavors!

President-Elect, Dr. Christianne Connelly, will serve as acting President in 2026.



“Having grown up in Appalachia in northeastern Kentucky and being a graduate of the Marshall University Doctor of Psychology program, West Virginia and the Huntington area have played such an important role in my professional growth and development. For nearly nine years, I had the opportunity to provide mental health services in West Virginia while also training and supervising future psychologists in the state. For the past few years, I have had the privilege of serving in two positions with WVPA, first as Secretary for three years and most recently as President-Elect. My time in these positions has reminded me of how important it is to remain connected to other professionals who share my interests and passion for improving the lives of all Appalachians, whether they be in West Virginia, Kentucky, or any other Appalachian region. My time working and learning in the Mountain State has shaped who I am personally and professionally. It has been an honor to serve as a WVPA officer and I will fondly remember my time in West Virginia as I continue in my new professional role back in my home in the Bluegrass State.”

~ Dr. Allissa Caudill

GET INVOLVED IN 2026!

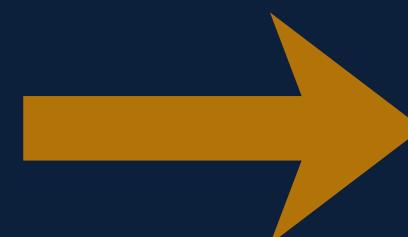
JOIN A COMMITTEE TODAY

DO YOU ENJOY
ADVOCACY?



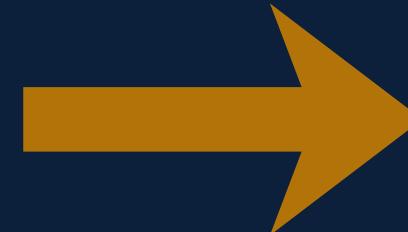
JOIN THE STATE OR
FEDERAL ADVOCACY
COMMITTEE!

DO YOU ENJOY
NETWORKING?



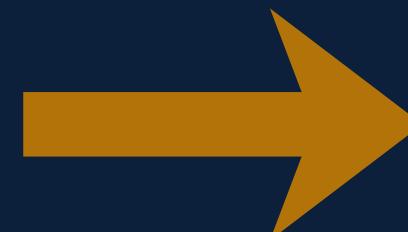
JOIN THE
MEMBERSHIP
COMMITTEE!

DO YOU WANT
TO SUPPORT
COLLEAGUES?



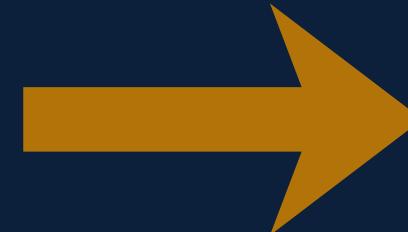
JOIN THE
COLLEAGUE
ASSISTANCE
COMMITTEE!

DO YOU ENJOY
SOCIAL MEDIA OR
MARKETING?



JOIN THE
COMMUNICATIONS
COMMITTEE!

WANT TO HELP
PLAN
WORKSHOPS?



JOIN THE
CONFERENCE
COMMITTEE!

JOIN THE BOARD!

HOW DO I RUN FOR OFFICE?

It's easy to run for a WVPA position! We enthusiastically welcome self-nominations. You can submit a nomination any time - elections are held in the Fall for positions starting the following January 1. The Board service year runs January 1 - December 31 and positions have different terms. You don't need to have prior experience in governance - you only need to be a WVPA member and committed to our Mission.

Send an email to info@wvpsychology.org specifying the position you would like to run for (self-nominations). If you are nominating someone else, please check with them first to be sure that they are interested - then send us their name and contact information so we can follow-up.

Prepare a brief (one-paragraph is perfect!) candidate statement introducing yourself and why you want to run for that position. We are happy to provide examples if you have writer's block.

Elections will be announced via listserv in the Fall and are open for 30 days - members vote by following the election link to make their choices.

POSITIONS OPEN FOR ELECTION IN 2026

**REPRESENTATIVE
AT-LARGE
(2 YEARS)**

**REPRESENTATIVE
AT-LARGE: EARLY
CAREER (2 YEARS)**

**TREASURER
(3 YEARS)**

**PRESIDENT-
ELECT
(3 YEARS)***

* President Elect is a 3-year commitment, with a transition to President in Year 2 and Past-President in Year 3.

THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS

We can't do what we do without the partnership and collaboration of groups with shared missions and dedication to the well-being of communities in the Mountain State.

AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

The American Psychological Association provides meaningful support and mentorship to our group as we advocate for psychological well-being and the needs of WV psychologists. We are very grateful to APA for essential financial support in the form of grants, including the 2025 APA Small State Association Grant (\$5000) and their support of the annual WVPA-APA Citizen Psychologist Award program (\$1000).

WV BOARD OF EXAMINERS OF PSYCHOLOGISTS

WVBEP partnered with WVPA to share their expertise in a professional development workshop at the 2025 Fall Conference, providing key insights into and understanding of common ethical and professional decision-making challenges in our state. We also appreciate the opportunity to collaborate with WVBEP to present the town hall discussing the proposed administrative rules changes during the conference.

WV PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

There are many needs facing our communities and legislative advocacy is an important pathway for increasing access to needed healthcare resources throughout the state. Joining our voices and presence with allied organizations helps amplify our messages and effectively communicate the scope and impact of issues. We thank WV Association of Addiction and Prevention Professionals, National Association of Social Workers -WV, and WV Behavioral Health Providers Association for their partnership and collaboration in advocacy for effective, evidence-based, accessible behavioral healthcare throughout WV.