From the President
Brett Kloos,
kloos@mailbox.sc.edu,
University of South Carolina

Community Research, Action, and Reflection
Over this past year, I have attended several celebrations that encouraged people to share stories of accomplishment and to look forward to future events: graduations, milestone birthdays, new jobs, moving. At most of these events, people shared pictures, and if time allowed, they shared stories about how things have changed over the years. I was struck at how these celebrations provided opportunities to reconnect for friends moving in different directions, to reflect upon and to critique lessons learned, and to encourage those planning for new adventures.

SCRA is entering a period of anniversaries that are worthy of celebration, reflection, and that can be used for organizing new developments in the field. It is approaching 10 years since the first international community psychology conference was organized by Irma Serrano Garcia and colleagues at the Universidad de Puerto Rico in 2006. It will soon be 30 years since Jean Ann Linney and colleagues organized SCRA’s first biennial conference in Columbia, SC. It has been 40 years since Emory Cowen was invited to write the first community psychology focused chapter for the Annual Review of Psychology earning respect for a newly organized group of scholars and practitioners identifying themselves as community psychologists. This coming May will be the 50th anniversary of the Swampscott Conference that many point to as the key organizing moment for community psychology in the U.S. I would like to use this column to start a dialogue sharing our snapshots of accomplishments, reflect on lessons learned, critique where we need to do better, and anticipate of the new developments emerging for our field.

Over the past year, SCRA members have spent considerable time working to create new ways to share information. We have been developing capacity to use social media, a new website, webinars to lift up examples of community action and research that can educate others about our fields and to encourage the development of community psychology. This coming year we want to use these platforms to share more broadly and facilitate discussion and dialogue. While these media tools can encourage sharing information and successes, not all pictures of ourselves are pretty or lead us toward sentimentality. Some images need to be mirrors that we hold up to ourselves and help mobilize or re dedicate ourselves to change. I am particularly hopeful that these media can encourage dialogue and sharing multiple views of community psychology, SCRA, and where we can take the field.

The Swampscott Conference “on the Education of Psychologists for Community Mental Health” was instrumental in searching for new goals and new roles that psychologists might play in working toward social change, addressing inequities, and challenging oppression. The conference’s vision and energy have inspired many people to search for new ways of doing research, new goals for action, and roles for training. However, as several commentators have argued (e.g. Mulvey, 2005; Watts, 2005; Olson, 2005), psychologists were coming to ongoing social movements late in the game in 1965 U.S. Those who were privileged to be invited to the first conference were overwhelmingly male, White, and connected to respected institutions. While we have made progress in becoming more inclusive, it has been slower than many expected and clearly work remains. As a field, we have been making efforts to gather stories and snapshots of events leading to Swampscott. We need to lift up more accounts of those who were not at this particular conference table, but have been and are instrumental in the development of the different branches of community psychology we have today. In the spirit of dialogue, I share some of
the examples of expanding community psychology that I’ve seen this past year that were likely not imagined by those who attended that formative conference.

Although community psychology still works for visibility in North American psychology, it is notable that three community psychologists were recognized at the 2014 APA Conference for their contributions to psychology over their careers. Lonnie Snowden was given the APA Public Interest Award for lifetime contributions to improve mental health policy. His talk focused on economic policy interventions for African American families living in poverty. Tom Wolff was recognized for his promotion of community psychology practice with the APA Award for Distinguished Contributions to Independent Practice. Gary Melton received the APA Senior Career Award for Distinguished Contributions to Psychology in the Public Interest for work on promoting individual, family, and community-level well-being in a variety of settings. As demonstrated by these awards or a review of our journals, the range of topics studied by community psychologists has expanded greatly over the years.

Where community psychologists do their work has also expanded. A growing number of community psychologists have leadership positions in academic, agency, non-profit, and practice settings. Community psychologists are helping to shape priorities for innovation and intervention through positions in grant making foundations. For example, Judith Meyers is the President of the Children’s Fund of Connecticut and Vivian Tseng is a Vice President for Program at the William T. Grant Foundation. Similarly, an increasing number of community psychologists are serving as academic leaders. Holly Angelique at Penn State Harrisburg, Susan McMahon at DePaul University, Beth Shinn at Vanderbilt, Emilie Smith at the University of Georgia are Department Chairs. Some have served in academic administration as Associate Deans (e.g., Anita Davis, Rhodes College; Anne Brodksy UMBC), Deans (e.g., Jean Ann Linney, Villanova) or Provost (Ana Mari Cauce U of WA), Certainly balancing administrative roles with values of the field can be challenging, but having community psychologists in these roles also creates opportunities to advance the field.

Community psychologists also are leading organizations with enormous budgets and responsibility for changing systems. Arthur C. Evans Jr, Ph.D. is the Commissioner of Philadelphia’s Department of Behavioral Health and Intellectual Disability Services (DBHIDS) with a $1 billion operating budget. Rich Jenkins is a program officer at Prevention Research Branch at NIDA. Caryn Blitz is Senior Program Analyst in the Office of the Commissioner, Administration on Children, Youth & Families, at the US Department of Health and Human Services. Rebecca Buchanan is the Division Chief in the Bureau of International Labor Affairs at U.S. Department of Labor. Bill Neigher is the Vice President for System Development and Chief Strategy Officer for Atlantic Health Systems.

Would the people who organized the Division of Community Psychology in 1967 recognize what has become the Society for Community Research and Action? We now have enough activity to require an Administrative Director, Victoria Scott, who has been invaluable in guiding initiatives and helping plan the transition in our volunteer committee members from year to year. Our operating budget, income, and expenses have become much more complicated and these new financial realities challenge the role of a volunteer treasurer to meet our organizational needs. SCRA gives a range of awards and honors fellows (get your nominations in now!). We have a variety of interest groups not envisioned 50 years ago (e.g., Aging, Community Action, Community Health, Early Career, Environment and Justice, LGBT Concerns, Organizational Studies, Rural, School Intervention, Self-Help, & Mutual Support). We have several committees that are integral for the development of SCRA initiatives (e.g., Committee on Cultural, Ethnic, and Racial Affairs; Committee on Women; International Committee, Professional Development Committee; Public
Policy Committee) and two councils that engage members in core activities of community action, research, and training (e.g., Council of Education Programs; Community Psychology Practice Council). I encourage you to look at the resources that these groups have on our website (www.scra27.org) and consider getting involved by contacting the chair of group in which you are interested.

Finally, the persons attending the Swampscott conference would have had no way of anticipating how we are communicating with each other. We all owe a great deal of thanks to an energetic and creative group of people have helped us launch our social media presence, create our new website, and webinar capabilities this past year, including Lindsey Zimmerman, Ashley Anglin, Gina Cardazone, Jean Hill, Carlos Luis, Taylor Scott, Olya Belyaev-Glantsman, and Sarah Callahan. We still have more work to do. If you have an interest in helping SCRA build its social media capabilities, please contact Victoria Scott at vscott@scra.org.

At the risk of mixing too many metaphors, these snapshots that I’ve collected of SCRA over the past year document many ways of doing community psychology and many ways to contribute. SCRA as an organization is not the same as the “field of community psychology” nor does it subsume all “community research and action”. Community psychology is much bigger than SCRA. Yet, we have important roles in promotion of the field and collaborations with other disciplines and community partners. Limitations in space and time do not allow sharing here of many more images of contributions that SCRA members are making to community psychology or the issues that we are working through. Please share your vision for the field and examples of good work through Facebook (SCRA27), Twitter (#SCRA), our Website resources, by submitting articles to The Community Psychologist and American Journal of Community Psychology, and at the Upcoming Biennial Convention in Lowell, Massachusetts, USA on June 25-28, 2015. Find information about the conference and a call for proposals on our website: www.scra27.org. I hope you join in the dialogue!

References

From the Editors
Gregor V. Sarkisian and Sylvie Taylor, Antioch University Los Angeles

We would like to extend a warm welcome SCRA’s incoming President, Bret Kloos. As we usher in the fall, also welcome new TCP Column Editors, Melissa Strompolis for Public Policy and Meagan Sweeney for Student Issues. Thank you to departing Public Policy Editors Doug Perkins, Ken Maton for your dedication to bringing important policy issues to the attention of our readership. Thank you to departing Student Issues Column Editor, Danielle Kohfeldt, for her commitment to giving voice to student members of SCRA. It has been a pleasure to work with all of you.

In this issue of the TCP we are excited to share the impact SCRA and community psychology are having on multiple fronts. From the local and global reach of the mini grants offered through the Practice Council, to the development of undergraduate opportunities for students to receive training in community psychology, to the momentum of the policy committee in strengthening the capacity of SCRA to engage more effectively in the public policy arena, to the applications of action research in the U.S. and globally, we are an active community! We hope that you will find the content of this issue both informative and inspiring. Sylvie and Gregor

Community Mini Grants: A Progress Report

Report prepared by Kyrah K. Brown, ky.brown36@gmail.com, and Jasmine Douglas, jxdouglas@wichita.edu, SCRA Practice Council

Since 2011, the SCRA Community Mini Grants program (see Hakim, Landon & Becker-Klein, 2013 for historical overview) has funded 37 meaningful small-scale projects in multiple countries. Based on the success of the Mini Grants, the Executive Committee recently agreed to expand funding for the 2014 grant year. As a result, the total number of $1,200 awards granted each year has increased from ten to fifteen. The impact of the SCRA Community Mini Grants has been significant; and the Practice Council is proud to be able to offer the Mini Grants on behalf of SCRA and its members. Each year, we make an effort to not only evaluate project success but also evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of the Mini Grants from an administrative perspective. Thus, the purpose of this report is to provide an update on the Cycle 4 (2014) grant cycle and to share some of the recent quality improvement activities that have taken place. We also revisit earlier recommendations to gauge our progress in strengthening the Mini Grants program.

2014 Mini Grant Award Funding Update

So far, a total of seven $1,200 grants were awarded out of 19 applications received (see Appendix A for project descriptions). Funded projects have addressed a variety of topics focused on reducing child labor, the mental health needs of gay, lesbian, bisexual, trans, intersexed and queer (LGBTIQ) people, college students, African immigrants, racial justice, homelessness, and youth.
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Nelson Portillo,
Universidad Centroamericana (UCA)
UNITED KINGDOM & REPUBLIC OF IRELAND Judy Lovett,
UCD Geary Institute

INTEREST GROUPS* AGING The Aging Interest Group focuses on the productive role of aging in the community and the prevention of mental health problems in the elderly.
Chair: Andrew Hostetter, andrew_hostetter@uml.edu
CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES The Children, Youth & Families Interest Group facilitates the interests of child and adolescent development in high risk contexts, especially the effect of urban poverty and community structures on child and family development.
Chair: Brad Olson, bradley Olson@nlu.edu
COMMUNITY HEALTH The Community Health Interest Group focuses on health promotion, disease prevention, and health delivery services as they relate to the community.
Chair: Venetia M. Bat–Ambrus, criollav@hotmail.com
Chair: Dori Freedman, dalf96@case.edu;
David Lounsbery, david.lounsbury@einstein.yu.edu
DISABILITIES The Disabilities Interest Group promotes understanding of the depth and diversity of disabilities issues in the community that are ready for research and action, and influences community psychologists’ involvement in policy and practices that enhance self-determination, personal choice, and full inclusion in the community for people with disabilities.
Co-Chairs: Open
EARLY CAREER The ECIG focuses on developing and enhancing the skills of early career community psychologists (less than seven years of experience post terminal degree) by creating opportunities for mentorship, networking, and leadership within the SCRA organization.
Co-Chairs: Michèle Schlehofer, mmschlehofer@salisbury; Marnie Lien, lienoldwestbury@gmail.com
ENVIRONMENT & JUSTICE The Environment & Justice Interest Group focuses on research and action related to global climate change and environmental degradation. With a focus on environmental justice, particularly how environmental change affects and often perpetuates social inequality, this group explores the role community psychology can and should play in understanding in these urgent changes to our ecology.
Chair: Laura Kali Corlew, lkcorlew.uch@gmail.com; Allison Eady, alisonneady@gmail.com
INDEPENDENT The Indigenous Interest Group is hosted by the Australian, New Zealand and Pacific branch of the Society for Community Research and Action. The aims of this group are interrelated. Firstly, it wants to support SCRA members who are conducting indigenous research by providing a forum for the exchange of ideas, literature and experience. This will assist the Group’s more specific focus which is to utilize our combined resources more effectively to conduct strengths-based praxis towards raising public awareness of the plight of indigenous people and addressing the social justice issues they face in oppressive dominant societies.
Co-chairs: Open
LESGIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, & TRANSGENDER (LGBT) The LGBT Interest Group increases awareness of the need for community research and action related to issues that impact LGBT people, and serves as a mechanism for communication, collaboration, and support among community psychologists who are either interested in research/service/policy related to LGBT people and communities, and/or who identify as LGBT.
Co-Chairs: Richard Jenkins, jenkirin@mail.nih.gov;
Maria Valente, valent6@msu.edu
NEW GRADUATE PROGRAMS The mission of New Graduate Programs Group is to support and strengthen new graduate education programs of the SCRA nationally and internationally.
Co-Chairs: Tiffeny R. Jimenez, tiffeny.jimenez@nl.edu
ORGANIZATION STUDIES The Organization Studies Interest Group is a community of scholars interested in community psychology themes (e.g., empowerment, ecological analysis, prevention, sense of community) in organizational contexts, and in importing organization studies concepts, methods, models, and theories into community psychology.
Co-Chairs: Kimberly Bess, kimberly.d.bess@vanderbilt.edu;
Neil Boya, neilboyd@bucknell.edu
PREVENTION & PROMOTION The Prevention & Promotion Interest Group seeks to enhance development of prevention and promotion research, foster active dialogue about critical conceptual and methodological action and implementation issues, and promote rapid dissemination and discussion of new developments and findings in the field.
Co-Chairs: Annie Flynn, aflynn1@depaul.edu;
Toshi Sasa, tsasa303@gmail.com
RURAL The Rural Interest Group is devoted to highlighting issues of the rural environment that are important in psychological research, service, and teaching.
Co-Chairs: Susana Helms, helms@dgph.hawaii.edu
SCHOOL INTERVENTION The School Intervention Interest Group addresses theories, methods, knowledge base, and setting factors pertaining to prevention and health promotion in school.
Co-Chairs: Melissa Maras, maras@missouri.edu;
Joni W. Splett, splett@mailbox.sc.edu
SELF-HELP/ MUTUAL SUPPORT The Self-Help/Mutual Support Interest Group is an international organization of researchers, self-help leaders, and policy makers that promotes research and action related to self-help groups and organizations.
Chair: Greg Townley, gtownley@pdx.edu

*Last updated 06/10/14
job development. The majority of funded projects were community-based interventions (N=4), followed by integrated interventions (N=2) and research oriented (N=1). Also, three students, three practitioners and one faculty member were awarded. Although the majority of projects were based in the United States, there were two international projects from Peru and Australia.

Quality Improvement Activities & Future Recommendations

In addition to providing an update summary for the grants awarded this year, it is also important to share our recent strides in quality improvement for the Mini Grants Program. In 2013, the Mini Grants leadership team decided that it would be especially important to evaluate the effectiveness of our internal processes (e.g., review process) and address any identified areas of improvement. In consequence, several steps have been taken to strengthen the Mini Grants program.

This year we addressed two (of five) recommendations proposed by Hakim et al. (2013). The first recommendation was to convene Mini Grant leadership and current reviewers to reexamine the goals and application processes. In February 2014, a Mini Grant teleconference was held to accomplish this goal. Some of the major decisions included (a) maintaining the current goals and criteria, (b) implementing an administrative pre-screening for incapable proposals to enhance reviewer efficiency, and (c) creating a system by which we could ensure that grant funding is available throughout the year and prevent the issue of running out of funding later in the grant year.

The second recommendation was concerning outreach to community psychology practitioners. In Mini Grant Cycle 1 (2011-2012), the majority of grant applicants came from SCRA members (including students) who were academic settings (Johnson-Hakim et al., 2013). To date, our data (based on 30 projects funded from 2011 to 2013) indicate that a little over a third of our funded applicants are SCRA members who work in community settings. Although, there has been a small increase in the number of practitioners who apply for funding, there is still additional work to do to ensure a balance.

Another major step for improvement has been the creation of a system for reviewer recruitment, training, and communication. In response to the growing number of prospective reviewers, a set of requirements were created to ensure that the quality, integrity and accountability of the Mini Grants program was maintained. Also, a formal Mini Grant reviewer training guide was created and a Training webinar/teleconference was held to enhance reviewer knowledge of and comfort with the Mini Grant application and review process. Finally, reviewer check-in calls have been implemented to keep an open line of communication with reviewers and Mini Grant leadership.

Although, we have been making considerable progress in strengthening the Mini Grants program, there are additional next steps that will guide our future work:

- At the midpoint of each project, reach out to grantees to provide any necessary support; connect grantees with SCRA members who can be resources to them (Hakim et al., 2013).
- Provided guided support and material to help grantees explain the field of community psychology to their...
partners/recipients/communities (Hakim et al., 2013); one way we’ve thought about doing this is providing the value proposition as well as connecting applicants to material from the SCRA website.

- Continue to connect grantees and community partners with the Practice Council and SCRA as a whole through formal opportunities to share their work (e.g., Global Journal of Community Psychology Practice) (Hakim et al., 2013).
- Reach out to community psychology practitioners as well as practitioners from the global community; and continue to encourage international SCRA members to apply for funding.

**Conclusion**

Through the financial support of the Executive Committee and the administrative support of the Practice Council, the Community Mini Grants has helped SCRA members make meaningful change in their communities across the globe. There is, however, room for improvement and development as the Mini Grants moves forward. Some of those initial steps have involved institutionalizing changes related to the internal application and review process. It is also recognized that continued focus on external processes concerning outreach to new audiences and finding ways to facilitate sustainable relationships between SCRA and communities is needed.

**Invitation to Apply**

The call for applications is still open for the 2014 grant year and the Mini Grant team would like to encourage you to apply. The deadline for submission is Saturday, November 1, 2014. Please visit http://www.scra27.org/what-we-do/practice/community-mini-grants/ to submit an online pre-application.

- **Mini Grant Criteria**
- Addresses a time sensitive community need or opportunity
- Has potential for successful implementation and meaningful impact within one-year grant period
- Has significant community involvement and active community partners
- Aligns with SCRA vision, mission, principles and goals

If you have additional questions about the SCRA Community Mini Grants please email scracommunitygrants@gmail.com.

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**Appendix A**


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grantee Info</th>
<th>Project Title</th>
<th>Project Summary</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Isidro M. Jariego</td>
<td>Kick-off meeting: transfer community fit of best practices for reduction of child labor from Barranquilla (Colombia) to Lima (Peru).</td>
<td>“Educate Me First” is an intervention for reducing child labor, compound by educational and personal development activities. It is an evidence-based program that has shown to be effective in different countries, and was implemented in Colombia by a coalition of Colombian and American organizations. Now the continuity of the project depends on the collaboration between Universidad de Sevilla (Spain) and Universidad del Norte (Barranquilla, Colombia), mainly based in the participation of students, as well as informal and community resources. This course we plan to transfer the program to Peru: the mini grant will serve to prepare the transference of the programa to this new context, summing up the experience of Colombia and adapting the activities to the new context in Peru.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Faculty Member</td>
<td>LGBTIQ website for mental health consumers, careers and community</td>
<td>To create a website specifically targeting the mental health needs of gay, lesbian, bisexual, trans*, intersexed and queer (LGBTIQ) people. The website will provide referrals to local services based in Melbourne, but also provide a hub for information, networking, activism and education that could be accessed by anyone, and relevant to people anywhere interested in LGBTIQ issues.</td>
<td>Australia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community-Based Intervention</td>
<td>College Student Extra-Curricular Involvement in an Intensive Immersion Program: An Outcome Evaluation</td>
<td>This research is important because it provides insight into the impact over time of a type of intensive, social justice oriented type of extra-curricular involvement during college that has an immersion component (a one-week overnight camp). A comparison group of students who participate in other similar (cancer related) but less intensive (non-immersion) extra-curricular activities will be used (e.g., Relay for Life, Colleges Against Cancer). Findings hold promise to better understand the impact of social-justice immersion experiences on college students, and will also help Camp Kesem improve and develop programming to increase the positive impact they have on undergraduate student volunteers.</td>
<td>US</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rachel Suffrin</td>
<td>Healing and Rebuilding Our Communities: A Community Based response to Trauma, Promoting Resilience in African Immigrant and Refugee communities resettled in New Hampshire</td>
<td>Funding would support the implementation of a Healing and Rebuilding Our Communities (HROC) training with the African immigrant community in New Hampshire. Developed in Rwanda, HROC is a grass roots approach to understanding and addressing the impact of trauma on individuals, families and communities. HROC engages participants in a process of exploring their own experience of trauma, attending to grief and loss, gaining tools for building trust and building capacity to support the ongoing journey of healing from complex and collective trauma. HROC accesses knowledge and resources from participants, nurturing resilience and culturally based understanding of healing and well-being.</td>
<td>US</td>
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If you are a community practitioner, make sure you are included in the Connect to a Practitioner resource, and if you are interested in getting involved, but haven’t yet had the chance, a great way to begin is by joining a committee or interest group. From the beginning, it has been our goal for the website to be a platform for spreading the word about community psychology and expanding the work that we do in and with our communities. Overall, we hope you find the new website to be attractive, informative, and easy-to-navigate. With this new site, we look forward to supporting the difficult work of addressing health disparities by explicitly focusing on systemic racism.

### Table: Project Summaries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grantee Info</th>
<th>Project Title</th>
<th>Project Summary</th>
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</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tom Wolff Practitioner Community-Based Intervention</td>
<td>The New England Racial Justice and Health Equity Collaborative</td>
<td>The New England Racial Justice and Health Equity Collaborative is an action and learning network across 12 communities in three states. All these communities are working on racial justice and health equity. They had a history of working together as part of the Boston Public Health Commission’s CDC funded Center for Excellence which supported New England communities New England to initiate health equity efforts. In 2012, after the funding ended the communities continue to meet quarterly to support and advance the work of addressing health disparities by explicitly focusing on systemic racism.</td>
<td>US</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corinna West Student Integrated Intervention</td>
<td>Poetry for Personal Power Infrastructure Development</td>
<td>Poetry for Personal Power is a social inclusion campaign using Hip-Hop, spoken word poetry, and job development for young artists. We sponsor youth-led arts events to share that 1) everyone goes through adversity, 2) the best way through is to talk to people who have been there before, and 3) find what gives your personal power. Our theme of overcoming adversity breaks through the fear of “mental health” discussions since everyone has struggled. Our message shows youth that all types of adversity have a simple but not easy path through to the other side.</td>
<td>US</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Molly Brown Practitioner Research-Oriented</td>
<td>Evaluating New Haven’s Roll Out of Coordinated Access to Housing for Individuals who are Homeless</td>
<td>The city of New Haven plans to administer the Vulnerability Index-Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (VI-SPDAT) to 500 individuals experiencing homelessness. This measure was developed to guide efficient allocation of housing resources according to one’s need. Although the VI-SPDAT’s use is widespread and it underwent extensive development, the psychometric properties require further study given its implications for policy. A target sample of 200 individuals receiving a housing intervention based on VI-SPDAT score will be administered a series of additional measures that will be used to test the VI-SPDAT’s validity. Re-administration of measures and housing outcomes will be collected at 6-month follow-up. Three main goals are identified for the proposed research. First, the study will evaluate the validity of the VI-SPDAT to determine its utility for prioritizing housing to individuals who are homeless with varying housing support needs. Second, this study will examine the interaction of personal (e.g., self-efficacy, disability) and social (e.g., social support) factors with VI-SPDAT scores on housing outcomes at 6-month follow-up. Findings might suggest that prioritization of housing should be based on multiple dimensions, as opposed to vulnerability alone. Finally, 6-month housing outcomes will be tracked. Relationships between housing type, VI-SPDAT scores, and self-report measures will be assessed.</td>
<td>US</td>
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### Education Connection

*Edited by Carie Forden*

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While many universities have undergraduate courses in community psychology, few offer community psychology degrees, concentrations or certificates. Most students have to attend graduate school to learn about community psychology beyond the introductory course. In this column, three programs describe their efforts to offer more in-depth training in community psychology to undergraduate students. Perhaps it may inspire your program to do the same?

As early as 1970, Jim Kelly outlined his vision about the training of Community Psychologists. Kelly believed that this training needed to occur early in their undergraduate and graduate studies in order to help prepare them for the ecologically rich but complicated tasks of community work. Today, several higher educational institutions in the US have undergraduate programs in Community Psychology. This article focuses on three such programs at the following settings: DePaul University, Wichita State University, and Portland State University. To better prepare their graduates for work in Community Psychology related fields, these programs allow their students to apply their Community Psychology knowledge in real-world settings and, thereby, bridge the gap between the classroom and community. We hope the following descriptions of these programs inspire others to consider the creation of undergraduate Community Psychology programs and thus, help actualize Jim Kelly’s vision of training our students in Community Psychology early in their academic careers.
DePaul University’s Undergraduate Concentration in Community
Written by Olya Glantsman, glantsman@gmail.com, and Leonard A. Jason, ljason@depaul.edu

After having taken Chris Keys’ Introductory Community Psychology course in 2005, an undergraduate student asked him why DePaul University did not offer an undergraduate concentration in Community Psychology. This request prompted a discussion during several of the graduate program’s Community Psychology faculty meetings, and our faculty agreed to create a new undergraduate Community Psychology concentration. Our graduate program in Community Psychology had been created in the early 2000s. Because at that time, we did not have a faculty member who could allocate enough time toward developing a proposal and curriculum, which would need to gain approval within the larger Psychology Department and University, the first author, who was at that time a third-year graduate student, offered to take the lead on drafting these materials.

The program’s application form was modeled after DePaul’s long-running Human Services concentration, which had been developed in the early 1980s (Jason, 1984). Comments from current psychology students as well as recent graduates about their reaction to the creation of the new Community Psychology undergraduate concentration were included with the application.

In addition to the existing Introduction to Community Psychology course (PSY354), we proposed creating 3 new courses including an Advanced Community Psychology course (PSY356 – Principles of Field Research and Action; offered in the spring of the junior year) and a two quarter Internship sequence (PSY359 – Field Work Research and Action; offered in the fall and winter of the senior year). The goals of our program included the following:

• Providing unique training in community psychology, emphasizing prevention of mental and physical problems, program evaluation, and consultation.
• Providing students with educational and practical skills as community advocates of social justice and empowerment.
• Actively illustrating the relevance of academic work in an applied setting.
• Providing an opportunity to apply concepts and ideas learned in the classroom to a work setting.
• Assisting students in developing and/or applying valuable technical communication and interpersonal skills in a work environment.
• Strengthening students’ confidence in their abilities to function effectively in a professional setting.
• Enhancing students’ employability in their chosen field by providing them with work experience in that field.

With approval from our Psychology Department as well as the University, our program officially began in the Fall of 2006. A description of the concentration for the psychology department’s website was created, and the Community Psychology concentration was advertised by the Psychology advisor as well as class visits to Introduction to Psychology and Introduction to Community Psychology courses.

Students could apply to the Community Psychology concentration in the winter of 2007 and the first PSY356 course (taken by 19 students) was taught in the spring of 2007. Spring 2008 was the first graduating year for the concentration with 18 graduates of the program. Since then, 100 students have graduated with a Community Psychology concentration. Furthermore, since the beginning of the program, the interest for the Introductory Community Psychology course has grown so much that it is now offered every quarter, including during the summer. Because of the popularity of this course, we have also recently introduced it in an online format.

After taking two Community Psychology courses by the end of their junior year, students select an internship for their senior year. Students select a setting that best fits their future careers whether it is a research project at a university or a not for profit organization. Upon completion, many of the students ask the instructors to write them letters of recommendation, which includes highlighting their concentration and how the values of the field, and their acquired skills fit the student’s career goals. Many of our students are able to find entry jobs in mental and physical health care fields, and many enter graduate programs in a variety of fields including Community Psychology. Finally, having taken at least 3 courses together, many students remain friends and colleagues, and these social networks are one of the most salient and enduring aspects of their undergraduate education in Community Psychology.

Reference

Experience and Exposure: Undergraduates’ Involvement in Community Psychology
Written by Jamie LoCurto, jilocurto@wichita.edu, Rhonda K. Lewis, Rhonda.lewis@wichita.edu, and Greg Meissen, greg.meissen@wichita.edu, Wichita State University

Wichita State University has seen many changes within the campus over the last year. The appointment of a new President has led to structural, program, and academic shifts that, in time and with hope, will grow our University into an even more competitive and enriching environment. One of the main emphases of our new President is to diversify undergraduate academics by allowing students to engage in more research and community-oriented work. This important shift will allow our undergraduates to expand their knowledge by gaining real-world, hands-
on experience as well as learn how to conduct research and meaningful work “outside the laboratory”.

The Community Psychology Program at Wichita State was already one step ahead of this progression by offering undergraduates an opportunity to receive a Certificate in Community Psychology. This was started by Rhonda Lewis and Greg Meissen after hearing about other successful programs being conducted at universities at the 2007 Biennial Conference on Community Research & Action in Pasadena. After learning about how beneficial this could be, they immediately took steps to include it as part of the curriculum and since 2008, it has been growing stronger with eight students receiving their Community Psychology Certificate.

This Certificate Program has four goals: (1) Enhance academic and experiential education to work in community settings; (2) Enhance academic and experiential education to prepare for graduate work in community psychology; (3) Exposure to active Community Psychologists in academic and community settings; and (4) Research experience in community settings working with Community Psychologists. To accomplish these goals with a balance of vision and practicality, the requirements of the program consist of students taking five courses; four of these are regularly offered classes including Social Psychology, Community Psychology, Psychological Statistics, and Research Methods, while the fifth is a Fieldwork in Psychology class. It is here that students can apply the knowledge gained from their classroom experiences and use it to work on community-based issues within local organizations. This practice allows undergraduates to learn, very early, the rewards and real-world issues associated with community-level work.

Although Wichita State has been successful in our adoption of the Community Psychology Certificate program, we hope to see it grow over the years as the need for community-engaged student experience is important regarding career preparation and continuing education in Community Psychology at the graduate level.

We hope to continue this beneficial opportunity to students and adapt to the growing needs of our undergraduate population and our community.

The Portland State University Community Psychology Undergraduate Certificate
Written by Greg Townley, gtownley@pdx.edu, Eric Mankowski, mankowski@pdx.edu, and Keith Kaufman, Kaufman@pdx.edu

The Portland State University (PSU) Community Psychology (CP) Undergraduate Certificate has grown out of ongoing efforts to clarify and better articulate specialization pathways within our undergraduate curriculum. Currently, our curriculum allows students to explore psychology broadly with informal suggestions for focusing on specific areas of psychology that interest them. While this flexibility has merit, students may not be as prepared or as competitive for employment opportunities and graduate education in more specialized areas of psychology.

With this in mind, we reached out to Greg Meissen at Wichita State University and Bernadette Sanchez at Depaul University in fall 2012 to seek suggestions and guidance as we began to develop a CP certificate program. Based on these conversations, as well as regular meetings with faculty in other areas of our department regarding the scope of the certificate requirements, we developed the PSU Community Psychology Undergraduate Certificate in spring 2013. We are now in the process of finalizing the certificate program and aim to implement it in fall 2014.

The primary goals of the PSU CP Undergraduate Certificate are as follows: 1) to develop knowledge and skills in the theory and practice of community psychology; 2) to increase understanding of the place of community psychology in the history and scope of the discipline; 3) to facilitate work and employment opportunities in community settings; 4) to realize social justice through sustained research and action partnerships with community members and organizations; and 5) to prepare interested students for graduate study in community psychology. In total, the certificate consists of five courses (20 credits). All students are required to take a community psychology survey course and a two-term senior capstone course focused on applying CP principles in field-based settings. In addition to these required courses, students have some flexibility to select two additional courses from four CP-related course clusters (Individual Psychology, Social and Group Dynamics, Developmental Processes, and Human Diversity). Alternatively, they may complete additional CP research or fieldwork supervised by program faculty to fulfill the remaining credit hours.

As we move toward implementation, certain key questions remain: What are the demands for our certificate from students, employers, and graduate programs? What are best practices for evaluating the quality and effectiveness of our certificate? Should there be a systematic selection/application process or should the certificate be open to any interested students? What kinds of additional advising might students need or desire both before enrolling in the certificate program and during their study in the program? What are creative solutions to staffing practica and research involvement given limited resources (e.g., faculty time)? What are the positive benefits or undesired consequences of codifying undergraduate CP programs across universities? Is there an added value and capacity for implementing a graduate certificate or non-thesis MA program in CP? We appreciate the knowledge already gained from colleagues on these questions during the symposium on undergraduate CP programs at the 2013 SCRA Biennial. We imagine the experiences that our colleagues share in this timely article will shed additional light.

The Education Connection is a column addressing issues in the teaching and learning of community psychology. If you would like to contribute an article, please contact Carie Forden, cforden@aucegypt.edu.
Living Community Psychology
Written by Gloria Levin

“Living Community Psychology” highlights a community psychologist through an in-depth interview that is intended to depict both personal and professional aspects of the featured individual. The intent is to personalize Community Psychology (CP) as it is lived by its diverse practitioners.

For this installment, we profile a community psychologist who has long and ably served the profession. Widely recognized for her promotion of gender and ethnic diversity through her advocacy, research and teaching, learn how she came to that mission.

Meg Bond, PhD
Professor, University of Massachusetts Lowell, MA, 
Meg_Bond@uml.edu

Meg was born in Pasadena, CA, the third of 4 children, to an attorney and a stay at home mom. Undoubtedly, her parents’ community involvement and commitment to social diversity influenced her greatly. While growing up, her father George, a skilled problem solver, was engaged in community boards and with the public school system. He was active in city-wide efforts at school integration and resultant busing issues. He had grown up on a farm but had a business orientation. Always a hard worker, when he was still in high school, he and his mother founded a business, Bond’s Ice Cream, which was well known in northern New Jersey. Meg’s mother, Winnie, was born in Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) where her father worked for the YMCA to promote community development through youth involvement in sports. After age 5, Winnie grew up in Mt Vernon, NY, where she was valedictorian of her high school class.

Her parents met as scholarship students at Swarthmore College during World War II. Winnie came to Quaker-affiliated Swarthmore as a Quaker, but George Bond was a non-Quaker. When selecting a church for their family, they eventually negotiated the difference by affiliating with the Pasadena Presbyterian Church, chosen because of the minister’s commitment to community service. Both parents were very bright and well read. After graduation, her father served in the Navy, and her mother entered a Radcliffe College certificate program in personnel management. During that year, she was placed in a practicum at a factory, working on an assembly line so as to learn about work life from the inside. Winnie’s cohort was among the first women to break through the glass ceiling. However, she never worked for a paycheck, instead raising four children.

Meg’s sister was the oldest by seven years, followed by a brother, Meg four years later, and a second brother two years younger. Although raised in a Caucasian neighborhood, Meg attended local secondary schools which were both economically- and racially-mixed. Her high school’s student body included about 40% African Americans, 40% Caucasians, and the rest were primarily Japanese and Mexican. Thus, she was in a racial minority throughout much of her schooling. Her parents were very committed to public education and wanted their children to experience a diverse environment. In fact, the theme of Meg’s 1970 salutatorian speech was the value of being in a diverse school setting, foreshadowing her later career focus.

She tried to do it all in high school, academically and socially. She was involved in student government, a leader in several clubs, on the homecoming court and a cheerleader, actively involved in many diverse roles. Although Meg was a straight-A student, she attributed that accomplishment to hard work rather than natural brilliance. The Bond children all knew they were destined for college. “My big family rebellion was to go to Stanford rather than to Swarthmore which was attended by my parents and both brothers.”

At Stanford, she had the rude awakening of lacking an adequate academic grounding, struggling at first. Having gone to an urban public school, she found herself behind her private school classmates. “But I finally figured it out, with a lot of hard work.” She eventually declared as a psychology major but had no concept that she could ever obtain a PhD in that field. “I still lacked confidence in my abilities.” Her plan was to work after college and then go to law school.

By sheer happenstance, in the fall of her senior year, a friend jolted her by asking about her applications to psychology graduate schools. She had never given it a thought. “My thinking was so simplistic at the time. I wanted to be a lawyer so I could help people. Psychologists help people. Ergo, maybe I should be a psychologist.” Last minute, she scrambled to apply to clinical psychology programs, assuming that was the only route in psychology to “helping.” Her applications must have revealed her lack of focus because, although she graduated from Stanford with distinction, she was rejected from all but one program—the University of Oregon. And she had only applied there because they imposed no application fee. Happily, Oregon’s offer included four years of funding, “so I thought, what the hell, I accept!”

Meg betrayed her lack of serious intent during orientation to graduate school, when she asked (the source of later teasing by her classmates): “Can I take physical education and can I take a leave of absence?”

Her grades at Oregon were strong, but, having come to graduate school straight from college, she came to believe that she lacked the kind of focus and life experience, at age 22, to take on the serious responsibilities of a clinical psychologist. Her only jobs had been temporary summer jobs. “It hit me like a ton of bricks. It felt almost unethical, feeling I needed more life experience before advising others about their lives.”

After her second year, she took a two-year leave of absence. In 1976, dropping out of school was more common than it is today. She obtained a terminal master’s degree but left
herself the option to return, which she fully intended. She moved to Colorado, first working as a counselor at Planned Parenthood and then as a counselor at a residential treatment center for adolescent girls.

Meg acknowledges the irony of having left school on account of not feeling competent to do clinical work, yet ending up working in two difficult clinical situations. She explains, however, that she was not working as a traditional clinician, was part of a team, had supervision available from an experienced staff and joined a feminist therapy network in Denver. “I felt capable because I was operating more within my realm of experience.” While in Colorado, she was politically active, helping to organize a conference in Denver on feminist therapy.

After two years in Colorado, her University gave her an ultimatum: Return now or lose your funding. She was ready to resume school, aiming to be a child clinician “because that’s what women did.” Happily, the psychology faculty had changed in the interim, “from mostly squabbling, middle aged white men who could not get along with each other,” to a more community focused approach. Her first advisor was Lonnie Snowden and, upon her return, she took Jim Kelly’s Social Adaptation course that involved an in-depth, community-based project – developing a curriculum on preventing sexism. She strongly resonated with the community approach as a way to merge her political instincts with her education. “This was a degree that would work for me,” she thought. She became a communityclinical student, with an emphasis on social system change. As a teaching assistant to an organizational psychologist, she helped design a course in systems change.

Meg returned to Denver, to the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center, for her clinical internship, 1981-2. Although it was advertised as having a community component, it instead was a traditional clinical, mostly psychoanalytic, placement. This exposed her to a whole new world; however, Meg found much value from the internship. She found it useful to a community psychologist to pay serious attention to microdynamic interactions with others, especially from analyzing, line by line, tapes of her therapy sessions. Meg maintains her licensure as a clinical psychologist to this day, although she does not practice.

Her dissertation was based on a comparative case study design, comparing women’s social networks in Junior League chapters with those among members of boards of directors of feminist, battered women’s shelters. The methodological reputation of her dissertation advisor, Robyn Dawes, a highly-regarded experimental social psychologist, lent needed credibility to her argument that her design was the most appropriate for the questions she was addressing.

Meg moved to Chicago after her internship, where she collected two more organizational cases for her dissertation, and was employed full time by the state-funded Illinois Institute for Developmental Disabilities (IIDD), affiliated with the University of Illinois/Chicago. She was successively supervised by two community psychologists, Cary Cherniss and Chris Keys. Her team provided organizational development consultation and management training to DD agencies all over Illinois. Although she operated as a practitioner there, the Institute gave her access to the resources needed to finish her dissertation. She obtained her Ph.D. in 1983. Following completion of her dissertation, she became active, eventually serving as president for two years, on the board of a feminist shelter that had been part of her study.

During her six years in Chicago, she became increasingly active in SCRA. From 1983-7, she co-chaired the Women’s Committee, first with Jean Linney and then with Anne D’Ercole. Building on prior committee work, to identify barriers to women’s professional development, they learned that 25% of women SCRA members surveyed reported being sexually harassed when they were graduate students. “The issue got a lot of traction within the field,” she remembers. “Women came to understand they were not alone, and men leaders were challenged to pay more attention to these concerns.”

While the prospect of pursuing an academic career had never occurred to her, Meg very much enjoyed adjunct teaching and research, having experienced the social relevance of research when working on the issue of sexual harassment. In 1989, Meg married and moved with her husband to Boston, where they both worked for a private psychiatric hospital. However, she was turned off by the hospital’s lack of a true community oriented approach and left to teach at Lesley College, a teaching college for women which valued her practical experience.

At the time of her interview at Lesley, she was newly pregnant with her first child, daughter Arlyn. Once her pregnancy became obvious, the College dropped the full time job offer to half time, claiming a “misunderstanding.” (“Always get the offer in writing, before you tell them you are pregnant,” she advises.) She taught in the management and human services departments. However, her position was abruptly cut from the budget while she was on maternity leave, leaving her with an infant but no job.

Fortunately, the University of Massachusetts, Lowell (UML) announced an opening for an assistant professor in community psychology at the exact time she arrived on the job market, late in the traditional hiring season. The fit was good from the start, and Meg has now been there for 26 years, rising to Full Professor. Along the way, she had a second child, Erik.

In 1998, the Dean asked Meg and economist Jean Pyle to co-direct the university’s Center for Women and Work (CWW), upon the death of its founder. When Jean retired, Meg became the sole director of the Center, assisted by a multi-disciplinary leadership team. CWW has grown into a vibrant research center which focuses on gendered conditions of work. (See www.uml.edu/Research/Centers/CWW). CWW raises most of its own funds through contracts and grants and recently received a few large grants, one from the National Science Foundation to promote women in academic STEM careers.

Meg’s primary position is as a Professor in the Psychology Department,
now teaching 2 courses per semester, and engaged in multiple research projects which continue to focus on gender and race/ethnicity, always with an applied focus. She was brought into one of her longest term projects with a manufacturing firm by one of her prior students. She applied a community psychology perspective in this organizational consultation with the firm, as captured in an ecological case study that she published as a book, Workplace Chemistry: Promoting Diversity through Organizational Change (2007).

Although she finds UML to be a “great fit for applied scholarship,” she was desirous of energizing experiences outside of her own workplace. She affiliated with and has taken sabbaticals at Brandeis University’s Women’s Studies Research Center which she cites as a model – “an amazingly supportive community of scholars and activists.” There, she is a Resident Scholar where she interacts with a wide range of approximately 60 colleagues.

Meg has been a continual stalwart for SCRA, serving several terms on SCRA’s Executive Committee and multiple terms on journal editorial boards. In addition to membership on and chairing of multiple working committees and task forces over the years, she was elected SCRA’s Member at Large (1988-91), Secretary (1992-95), and President (1997-98), all the while advocating for greater diversity within SCRA. In 2009, Meg was awarded SCRA’s ethnic minority mentoring award. She currently chairs SCRA’s Publications Committee.

She has served in similar leadership positions for SPSSI and APA. Meg is actively involved in APA governance, including representing SCRA on APA’s Council of Representatives. She served as chair of the APA Committee on Women and is currently on the APA Board for the Advancement of Psychology in the Public Interest (BAPPI). More recently, APA invited Meg and her long-time colleagues, Chris Keys and Irma Serrano-Garcia, to co-edit a handbook of community psychology which will include a daunting 63 chapters.

Meg’s vita is thick with her publications, conference presentations, consultations, community advisory boards, trainings and evaluations. Her main areas of expertise include diversity within workplaces and professions, workplace climate, feminist issues, collaboration and empowerment. But her overall philosophy can be found in her invited presidential address at the 1998 APA annual meeting, “Gender, race, and class in organizational contexts.” She describes her approach to advocacy as “connected disruption,” grounded in her belief that “in order to advocate for change, it helps to both respect and establish a connection with those you hope to nudge in a different direction. You can respect someone even if you feel they are terribly misguided. And establishing connection helps to enable the kind of disruption that change involves.”

When asked how she keeps organized and focused, given her large number of responsibilities, Meg explains her time management system, based on creating “abundant lists and re-organizing them constantly. Every year, I start a new notebook in which I prioritize, and continually reprioritize, a running list of tasks. I could spend my whole day answering emails if I didn’t stay focused on setting priorities.”

High on her list of priorities is her involvement with her children. Mirroring her parents’ example, the Madsen-Bonds chose to live in a liberal, diverse community, Cambridge, MA. Like her parents, she was active in her community’s school system. Like her own high school experience, her children were an ethnic minority in their high school. And like her, what her children lacked in academic grounding in high school, they more than gained in life lessons about the broader world. “I figured that they could always catch up academically, but they could never duplicate in adulthood their diverse educational experience.”

Arlyn lives near Meg (close enough to exercise together at the same gym), having gone to school in Chile and taught with Teach for America in a Mexican immigrant community in Chicago. She has a master’s degree and is an ESL specialist in a public school in Lawrence, MA. Erik spent a semester in Rwanda due to his interest in international conflict situations. He recently graduated from Carleton College and now works in their theater department. Meg’s parents are both deceased. Her siblings’ paths are diverse – a teacher and child-care provider, a class action attorney and a poet.

Join Meg in Lowell, Massachusetts in June 2015 to engage in “connected disruption” at SCRA’s biennial conference ★

Public Policy
Edited by Ken Maton, maton@umbc.edu, Doug Perkins, d.perkins@vanderbilt.edu, and Melissa Strompolis, mstrompolis@gmail.com

The Public Policy Section for this Fall edition of TCP begins with an article by three graduate students, Laura Kurzban, Sara Buckingham, and Tahira Mahdi, describing their experience at the recent Advocacy Day sponsored by SCRA, SPSSI and APA Public Interest. Next, Doug Perkins and Rebecca Rodrigues present the new policy call-to-action listserv Wiggio.com, the rationale for its development, and how you can subscribe to it. Doug Perkins then provides a brief overview of the policy-focused symposium session organized for the Fifth International Community Psychology Conference in Fortaleza, Brazil, and plans for a future special issue on public policy in global context. Finally, incoming Chair of the Policy Committee Melissa Strompolis, describes several key goals for the upcoming year, and encourages applications to the Policy Committee small grants program (description included).
Call for Grant Proposals: SCRA Public Policy Initiative

To encourage, promote and support public policy work by its members to benefit communities, the Society for Community Research and Action (SCRA) has initiated a small grants program. Proposals may address a wide variety of public policy issues, affecting communities at the local, state, national or international levels. Projects may take many forms but preference will be given to collaborative projects and those that increase the capacity of SCRA and its members to engage in effective and innovative policy work. All applications will be subject to blind review.

Who may apply?

Anyone may apply, though the lead applicant on the proposal must be a SCRA member. Collaborative projects and partnerships with community organizations are strongly encouraged.

What is the maximum grant?

The maximum request is $5,000 each with a minimum of 3 awards expected to be granted during a funding cycle. The Review Committee will determine the number and amount of the awards.

What is the deadline for proposals and timeframe for completion?

All grant requests must be received by NOVEMBER 21. The Review Committee expects to notify all applicants of final decisions by DECEMBER 19. The expectation is that all projects will be completed within two years of funding approval. Recipients must complete and submit brief (1-2 pages) status reports to the Review Committee on January 1 and June 1 of each year until the project is completed. The status report form can be accessed from the policy section of the SCRA website or requested from mstrompolis@gmail.com.

Recipients must also submit a final project summary report within one month of project completion. Project summaries should be narrative reports that include a brief overview of the project and the related policy issue, project partners, policy impact, results, a description of how funds were used and suggestions for further SCRA or community engagement around the issue.

What are the specific standards and criteria upon which Proposals will be evaluated?

No activities may result in a violation of SCRA's 501(C)(3) status or its by-laws. Proposals will be evaluated based on how well they:

• address a current public policy issue of importance to the community of interest
• connect to community psychology (CP)
• address a policy area where CP has a contribution to make
• demonstrate the potential to establish or build upon relationships with other +organizations and their resources
• demonstrate potential to have a successful impact
• increase capacity of communities/groups, to influence public policy
• increase capacity of SCRA, to influence public policy
• articulate an appropriate budget that effectively supports the proposed activities and ensures accountability of expenditures
• includes a plan for dissemination of results or outcome, such as including, but not limited to, publication in AJCP or TCP, Biennial and/or APA Conference presentations or dissemination to other relevant publications and stakeholders

How will the grant funding be disbursed?

Generally, recipients will be awarded 25% upon the start of the project, with the balance spread over the duration of the grant, after receipt of the status reports due January 1, June 1 each year. All applicants shall include a timetable with deliverables, as appropriate, and may propose other timing with justification.

Filing Process

Requests shall include a cover letter and a Grant Proposal (5-10 pages) with all identifying information removed for blind review, in Word document format, sent to: mstrompolis@gmail.com by NOVEMBER 21.

How can further information be obtained?

See the SCRA Policy Connection webpage at http://www.scra27.org/policy and look in the section titled SCRA Policy Grants for basic info and examples of last years’ successful grant awardees.

Finally, any questions may be directed to mstrompolis@gmail.com
SCRA Public Policy Practicum

If you are interested in being considered for a practicum experience with the SCRA Public Policy Committee (hours negotiable) this Fall and/or next Spring, please read, complete and email the application which can be accessed from http://www.scra27.org/what-we-do/policy/additional-resources/ or http://www.scra27.org/policy along with your curriculum vitae or resume to trompolis@gmail.com:

- for a Fall, or Fall and Spring, practicum by Friday, August 8th
- for a Spring practicum by Friday, December 12th

Advocacy Training Day 2014: Participant Perspectives and Advocacy Tips
Laura Kurzban, laura.kurzban@gmail.com, University of South Carolina, Sara Buckingham sara.l.buckingham@umbc.edu and Tahira Mahdi, tahira1@umbc.edu
University of Maryland, Baltimore County

On August 6, 2014 SCRA joined with SPSSI and the Public Interest Directorate of APA to host Advocacy Day in Washington, DC. Advocacy Day provided training in the morning on how to lobby for legislation and an opportunity to practice these skills during afternoon Capitol Hill visits. Advocacy Day focused on The FAMILY Act. The Family and Medical Insurance Leave Act (The FAMILY Act) is paid family medical leave legislation that would provide workers up to 12 weeks of partial income (66% of monthly wages) when an employee takes time off following the birth or adoption of a new baby or because of a personal or familial serious medical condition. More information on this legislation can be found here: http://psychologybenefits.org/2014/03/05/paid-family-medical-leave/

Our experience at Advocacy Day was enlightening, educative, fun, invigorating, productive, and empowering. The first hour of the day was truly enlightening as leaders of our field discussed their roles as advocates, how often data surprisingly minimally influences policy, and how powerful personal stories can be. The training was then educative, as Dr. Roberta Downing (APA) provided information about The Family Act and its numerous benefits, Christopher Kush (Soapbox Consulting) informed us about the intricacies of advocating and holding meetings with legislative offices and others led role-plays to provide preparation for possible opposition to the legislation. The training emphasized that it is possible to have fun while advocating for a good cause – and it was fun. As we left the training to head to our respective meetings, we were invigorated by the numerous psychologists, students, and affiliates who work to see that our research strengthens our society and directly benefits our people. The meetings with legislative offices were productive – many of our Senators and Representatives’ offices were unaware of the legislation, though they supported its principles, and several others were elated to have a positive meeting in which we could thank each other for our support of this legislation, and establish strong relationships through which we can continue to advocate for beneficial social policies. Finally, the day was empowering, as we found a network of passionate, informed colleagues who are working to make our research positively impact our country. As Daniel Levinson suitably contends, “No one person can accomplish much if they don’t work with others.” Many thanks go to SCRA, SPSSI, and APA for providing the knowledge, tools, skills, and network to help us grow as effective advocates.

Here are some specific suggestions shared at the training which may be useful to anyone interested in advocating for legislation:

- Social media are incredibly important to spreading your message! Using Twitter – and incorporating the hashtag symbol (#), re-Tweeting messages, using @reply to respond to others on Twitter – as well as posting pictures and status updating on Facebook are the norm in advocating and gathering support for legislation. Social media allowed us to demonstrate the potential of our field by simultaneously showing our presence at the Capitol, raising awareness on an important policy issue, and advocating for policy change. Due to social media, our fellow students, families, and friends experienced our advocacy work. As a result, Advocacy Day exploded with meaning that resonated beyond the borders of APA and relevant professional networks.
- Use the Hook, Line, & Sinker format to briefly and effectively lobby for your legislation. Hook – state where you are from and the district where you vote by giving your local address. Line – provide information on the legislation and why you support it. Sinker – clearly ask your Senator or Representative to co-sponsor the legislation.
- Personal or anecdotal information on the need for the proposed legislation and its potential impact on others combined with data that support your stance are powerful methods of persuasion. It is important to find personally authentic ways to advocate. Either data-based or personally-driven information will work well when they are delivered in ways that naturally support your style of oral communication.
- It is important to view any concerns voiced about your legislation as interest, rather than defeat, and an opportunity to advocate. The morning training provided a chance to role-play responses to varied concerns that might be voiced during a visit. Recognizing and responding to “pushback” gracefully means listening, understanding concerns and directly addressing them, and then re-iterating your support for the legislation.
- If the congressional representative supports the legislation or has already co-sponsored it – that’s...
The APA Public Interest Directorate
August 6, 2014 Advocacy Day training. Hook, Line, and Sinker: parts of a Congressional meeting. Use this format to advocate briefly and effectively for legislation during your visit with Congressional representatives and staff.

The APA Public Interest Directorate Government Relations Office is happy to provide information to psychologists who are interested in using their knowledge to advocate for federal policy (http://www.apa.org/about/gr/pi/index.aspx). They also host opportunities for current students interested in policy work such as the Public Interest Policy Internship for graduate students as well as a Congressional Fellowship Program. Further information about these opportunities can be found at www.apa.org/about/gr/fellows. To find more information on the training, view #PsychontheHill #FamilyAct, or see a “storified” version of Advocacy Day at storify.com/APAPublicInt/psychonthehill-50-psychologists-and-students-push.

Policy in Global Context: Symposium Session and Future Special Issue
Written by Doug Perkins, Vanderbilt University

A symposium was organized by Doug Perkins, representing the SCRA Public Policy Committee, for the Fifth International Community Psychology Conference in Fortaleza, Brazil, September 3-6, 2014. The symposium was titled “Public Policy and Community Psychology: Methods of Training, Research and Practice in Different Global Regions.” The other two presenters are Irma Serrano-García (University of Puerto Rico) and Manuel García-Ramírez (University of Seville, Spain). The symposium explores how community psychology in Caribbean Latin America, Spain, and the United States can address the specific challenges of increasing both the frequency and the impact of our policy work. Each presenter will focus on graduate or professional training for policy work, theory and/or research on policy issues or policy engagement, and examples of advocacy practice or interventions for policy change. They will each discuss some of their own work and also that of other community psychologists or students in their respective countries. Policy targets may vary from local to provincial to national to international. The symposium follows up on a similar one held at the last International Conference on Community Psychology in Barcelona in 2012 (with different presenters than the current one), which led to a special issue of the Global Journal of Community Psychology Practice on international policy work (edited by Ken Maton). The 2014 symposium may lead to a similar special issue that would be open not only to the three presenters but other authors from other countries as well. If interested in contributing to a future issue on policy work in community psychology around the world, please contact d.perkins@vanderbilt.edu

2014 - 2015 Policy Committee Goals
Written by Melissa Strompolis, UNC-Charlotte

The SCRA Policy Committee has made great strides in the past several years including advocacy campaigns, policy statements, rapid response proposals, coordination with interest groups, and policy and advocacy mini-grants (see below to apply!). This progress was not without meaningful leadership, especially from the Policy Committees co-chairs, Doug Perkins (Vanderbilt University), and Ken Maton (University of Maryland, Baltimore County), and prior chair Judah Viola (National Louis University). For the past year, Doug and Ken sustained the interest and momentum of the Policy Committee and attracted many new members to the committee. Doug and Ken also supported the creation of the mass incarceration task force lead by Brad Olson (National Louis University). Additionally, for the first time, Doug and Ken supervised two Policy Committee Practicum students, J’Vonnah Maryman (Wichita State University) and Taylor Bishop Scott (UNC-Charlotte). On behalf of the SCRA Policy Committee and membership, I would like to thank Doug and Ken for their leadership, progress, and continued support of policy and advocacy activities within SCRA.

In the coming year, the Policy Committee has several goals for improving SCRA’s ability to engage in policy and advocacy:

• Increase visibility among the SCRA community: The SCRA Practice Committee has successfully attracted and maintained active membership on the committee and the Policy Committee has the ability to model that success. This includes
simple steps such as monthly conference call reminders, updates on policy and advocacy activities, and communicating the Policy Committee’s goals for the coming year on the SCRA listserv.

- Sustaining and creating meaningful opportunities for students: The Policy Committee practicum provided two outstanding graduate students with direct policy and advocacy experience, to be continued this year with two new students, Lynn Liao (DePaul University) and Rebecca Rodriguez (Georgia State University). Both students will be assisting the Policy Committee with general activities and the mass incarceration task force. In addition to the practicum experience, the Policy Committee will create other opportunities for students to learn about policy and advocacy. Outgoing practicum student J’Vonnah Maryman collected important information from SCRA students regarding policy and advocacy needs and interests. This information underscored the need to provide students with policy and advocacy learning and engagement opportunities. Currently, the Policy Committee is working with APA to sponsor policy and advocacy webinars for students, and SCRA has a policy webinar planned for September 19.

- Hiring a full-time SCRA Policy Director: In Fabricio Balcazar’s Winter 2014 TCP column, he stated “I argue that we can no longer afford to be passive observers in the current political climate” (pg. 2). The Policy Committee agrees with Fabricio, and knows that when it comes to policy and advocacy, we can do better. But as the old adage goes, if it’s worth doing, it’s worth paying for. Policy and advocacy, done effectively, require the time and energy that comes from a full-time, paid policy staff position. To increase SCRAs engagement with policy and advocacy, collaborate with other divisions and organizations, and have a real and lasting effect in the policy and advocacy realm, SCRA needs to hire a Policy Director. In this year’s budget, the Policy Committee will include a full-time, paid Policy Director position and will advocate to the Executive Committee about the great need for this position.

Community Psychology Research in Action

The following three articles explore different applications of community psychology research sharing a common theme of action research. Julia Halamova shares recent developments of community psychology research in Slovakia. Nyla Whitehead, Leonard Jason, and LaVome Robinson share insights on utilizing existing community resources in community research and intervention. And, Jamie Vela shares results from a study on the perceptions of members of a social justice and social advocacy organization to better understand voluntary social action advocacy through the lens of grounded theory.

Community Psychology in Slovakia

Written by Julia Halamova, julia.halamova@gmail.com
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Community Psychology in Slovakia is clearly underdeveloped in comparison to other countries. Despite the absence of a professional community psychology organisation and academic training (neither undergraduate nor graduate program in community psychology), there are some separate projects on community psychology. A lot of work, that in different countries is called community psychology is simply not labelled so here, what causes some difficulties in an overall objective evaluation of the situation. There have been quite many psychologists working in the area traditionally considered to be community psychology, nevertheless, only avery few of them would call themselves community psychologists. Most of them come from and are trained in social or clinical psychology, in a similar way as it is in some other countries. The areas of Slovak community psychology contributions could be sorted out into five broader groups, which are as follows: (1) sense of community, (2) community as such, (3) ethnicity, (4) migration and (5) action-oriented research.

1) Sense of community

In one of my studies (Halamová, 2001a) I suggest that there is an important relationship between the two theoretical approaches of McMillan, Chavis (1986) and Peck (1987) about sense of community. Also empirical support was found about existence of common base of psychological sense of community in various groups (in this case involving the religious people, scouts, working class, and student groups) and different contexts. Other research study (Halamová, 2001b) deals with the impacts of international workshops primarily focused on building strong sense of community between participants based on the theory of Peck (1987). A significant improvement was confirmed concerning self-actualisation of the participants not only after the workshop but also three months afterwards. The qualitative research study (Halamová, Timulak, Adamovová, 2013) aimed to deepen understanding of the subjective experience of building community during the workshops. The participants typically came to the workshop with the desire to grow, with interest in community and its application in their...
everyday life, and some current personal problems. Sharing, appreciation and authenticity were the core elements of psychological sense of community for the participants. In all analysed cases, there was a feeling of empowerment as a consequence of attendance to the workshop.

A few research studies were dealing with influence of social-psychological training on sense of community among university students. The results of these studies (e.g. Zaťková, Popelková, 2006; Hamranová, 2004) showed that the participation in social-psychological training programs has significantly increased general sense of community, and also its dimensions “mission” and “reciprocal responsibility” measured by The Perceived Sense of Community Scale PSCS (Chertok, 1999 translated by Halamová, 2001c).

(2) Community

Naništová (e.g. 1998) surveyed population of the inhabitants from the region of Orava in Slovakia. The author interviewed those forty years after their forced departure from the region because a dam was constructed in an area in which they had lived before for many years. By using the factor analysis the five factors of the attachment to place of birth were uncovered (rootedness, place dependence, traditionalism, nostalgia for place (homesickness), and loss of place). The dimensions to great extent supported the theoretically defined dimensions.

Naništová and Halamová (e.g. 2012) have also analysed the specifics of the preferences of personally important places in adolescents. The sample of students consisted of graduation classes from all over Slovakia. Qualitative analysis of graduation essays entitled, “The place where I always love to return” showed 11 categories of personally significant places. Subsequent statistical analysis showed significant differences in place attachment with regard to gender, study profiling and also depending on the individual regions of Slovakia.

(3) Ethnicity

The contemporary Slovak Republic is one of the most heterogeneous countries in Europe. Multiethnic character is evident in at least 20% of “non-Slovak” population. The most prevalent minority is Hungarian and the second one is Roma minority. Relationship of the Slovaks to both of those minorities is quite difficult and causing serious concerns. Roma problematic was analysed by Lisá (2009a, 2009b). The research findings show that belonging to community for Romas predicts subjective quality of life: positive attitude towards life, self-esteem, emotional habitual well-being, and satisfaction with community. The concept of community in Roma students (Lisá, 2009a) is characterized by the presence of positive emotional attachments and relationships. Comparing to Non-Roma adolescents, Roma adolescents preferred more actual place of living before dreamed place of living and experienced more intensively their relationship towards people from their territorial community. The research study of Popper, Szeghy and Šarkozy (2009) was part of bigger project in which seven countries from Europe exploited the same methodology in order to compare the situations concerning Roma population in different countries in Europe. Results of the research shows unequal status of the Roma population compared to the majority population mainly in education, housing, employment and health care.

(4) Migration

Slovakia has along history of massive migration. For example, only in America and Canada, more than 2.2 million people have claimed Slovak descent (Počty a odhady, 2013), which is a huge number in comparison to 5 million Slovaks living in Slovakia. During the history, most Slovaks have immigrated for economic reasons. During communist regime, it was also for political reasons.

After joining the European Union in 2004, Ireland was one of the most preferred destinations for the Slovak emigrants. The research of Lášticová, Petrájanošová (2013a) and Petrájanošová, Lášticová (2010) investigates the role of social innovations (operationalized as social institutions that migrants create to improve their everyday life in the host country) in the process of community building in Slovak migrants in Ireland. According to their data analyses, social innovations are successful and sustainable especially if: 1) they are based on real need of the community, 2) they are taking place in the context of existing systems, and 3) there is a favourable environment in the host country for their implementation.

(5) Community action-oriented research

There are a few examples of community action research in Slovakia. One of them is dealing with protracted relationship and communication problems in a religious convent (Halamová, Adamovová, 2010). Comparing data before and after the realisation of the project, statistically significant increases have been observed in sense of community and social atmosphere.

Conclusion

Over the past 20 years, Slovak community researchers have made some contributions in selected areas of community psychology. However there are a sizable number of psychologists in practice who operate without any academic affiliation in the field of community psychology. Unfortunately, their work is largely unpublished and so it is not included in this paper. For example, a lot of work has been done for community development by non-governmental and non-profit organization PDCS Partners for Democratic Change, such as creation of conciliation commissions in some Slovakian towns, Roma Integration Program, Young Women Promoting Peace, Equality and Diversity, Public participation and European citizenship etc.

The future of community psychology in Slovakia consists in a more active and more successful process of elaborating and promoting better social policy in the country. It requires stronger cooperation between researchers, psychologists in practice, and politicians with the goal to assess the problematic situations, to apply the gained knowledge to create social interventions that aim to foster well-being for individuals and communities by changing environments. These interventions, afterwards, should be professionally evaluated and the acquired benefits sustained in a continuing development of various communities in
In December 2014, the first conference “Community psychology in Slovakia” is planned at Comenius University in Bratislava. The specific goal of the conference is to establish a network of professionals interested in the area of community psychology.

**Literature**


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**Procuring Resources within the Community to Help Fund Research**

Written by Nyla Whitehead, nyla.whitehead@gmail.com, Leonard A. Jason, ljason@depaul.edu, and LaVome Robinson, lrobinso@depaul.edu, Depaul University

Psychologists who work with community groups and organizations often need external resources to support their collaborations and interventions (Jason, 2013). Many secure funding from federal grants (Grove, 2004), while others secure funds from private foundations (Chao, 2009). There are a number of articles providing useful instructions on how to apply for grants to obtain these needed resources (Grove, 2004; Cleary, Walter, & Hunt, 2006). However, federal funding is limited with government cut-backs, so there is a need to find additional ways to secure resources from non-traditional sources. As such, this paper describes how a current group researching violence intervention and prevention was able to find funding that was not provided by a federal grant.

Our team of investigators has been working with the issue of violence in Chicago for a number of years. Violence has been identified as a public health concern for young people throughout the United States, from fights and bullying in schools to shootings and gang activity in neighborhoods. Homicide is the leading cause of death for African-American youth, ages 10-24, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (Heron, 2013). Our study is focusing on preventing violence among urban African-American youth. The intervention is a culturally sensitive, group-delivered program to teach adolescents how to cope with stress and avoid aggression.

Often, prevention programs are aimed at younger students, or interventions happen when they are older, after violence has already happened. This new program involves 15 prevention sessions that are timed to help ninth-graders during a pivotal point in their development. Our project,
which is funded by the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, will involve Chicago youth at 5 high schools, some of the students will participate in the new prevention program, and others will receive existing services at the school-based health centers. The program is designed to be transportable and easy for teachers to use. Over the past year, our team has been piloting the violence prevention intervention for youth within the Chicago Public Schools (CPS). As an incentive for our participants who were offering us feedback on our proposed culturally-tailored intervention, we needed to locate food to be provided to about 20 children each week for about 15 weeks. This lunch was a reward to the youth for providing us feedback for helping make our program culturally sensitive, before we were to launch it in multiple schools the following year. Our group felt that it was a needed component to thank the youth for their contributions to our program, so we sought the food at local sources.

We began the process of providing food by contacting our institution’s Office of Development to understand the protocol by which we could solicit and receive donations and appropriate charitable donations tax deductible forms, as we are a 501(c)3 non-profit institution. Each organization has different rules and guidelines in terms of donations received, and we felt that it was best to discuss such issues early on in the project with these university personnel.

Given permission and guidelines for requesting the donations, the next important factor was the school policies relating to the types of food that could be offered to youth in the Chicago Public Schools. These guidelines were designed to meet the United States Department of Agriculture Gold Standard of The Healthier US School Challenge (Chicago, 2014). A full list of these criteria can be found at www.fns.gov (2014). In short, we wanted to be able to provide healthy foods that were approved by the school district, including fruit, vegetable, grain, meat or soy protein, and dairy or bottled water.

Understanding the types of food that were approved for children in the public schools, our next task was to identify where we could solicit the food options that best fit these school requirements. The schools were located in two neighborhoods of low socio-economic status with limited availability of healthy food sources. We then decided to solicit food vendors in more advantaged neighborhoods that were closest to the schools, which offered healthier options.

Once potential food vendors were identified and listed with their addresses and their phone numbers, a “cold-calling” method was employed to request their help. Each phone call began with introducing ourselves, asking for a manager, and expressing that we were calling to see if they would have time to speak with us about a community initiative. Most often, our calls were welcomed. During our phone conversation, we talked about our institution’s guiding principles of community service and how this was connected with our current research project that is designed to reduce violence among our youth within the Chicago Public Schools. We then mentioned that we were teaching youth skills to reduce violence and that lunch was being provided for all 20 youth over the 15 weeks project. We explained the food guidelines briefly and ended with an invitation for the potential vendor to help in any way they wished.

We learned that a larger group of business owners or managers were eager to help than we expected. This may be due in part that we were able to communicate the pertinence of our project concerning violence among the youth in Chicago. Such severe violence has garnered national attention and is a shared concern for community stakeholders in Chicago. Our team’s work aimed to address this issue and local business owners were thankful for this initiative. As such, the vendors we contacted were willing to contribute to a cause greatly needed. We simply stated our project design and its significance to one of Chicago’s prevalent perils. We then allowed the business managers to decide how they would partner with us in this community initiative by donating food based on their resources and budgets. The types of donations varied from one-time item contributions, recurring scheduled assistance, and dollar amount payments or gift cards. Our six weeks of identifying and soliciting food vendors resulted in saving more than an estimated $2,000. Thank you cards were sent to those who agreed to donate.

In preparation for timely delivery of fresh food, we gave a courtesy call one week prior to the donation pick-up time as well as a 24-hour notice of the order and pick-up time. Scheduling was also crucial as each meal was comprised of food from different vendors. For example, a restaurant might be offering sandwiches which included dairy, grain, meat, and vegetable, but a local grocery store might be donating fruit or water. It was very common to make trips to multiple stores and outlets in order to be able to offer a whole meal to the youth. Organization and planning was key to successful implementation of the food incentives for our program. Providing food seemed to be a relevant incentive as our participants were thankful that it sustained them through an unusually longer school day.

From beginning with obtaining approval from our university officials and finding nutrition guidelines to serving the first sandwich, the process of finding food was an adventure. In this project, we learned to think outside the norms and to be creative in securing resources for our community collaborations. In our efforts, we learned that many people are willing to help these types of community initiatives. Business owners and managers from chain retailers, franchises, or privately-owned suppliers appreciate contributing to the greater good of the community. Whether it is through volunteer work, direct funding, or gifts in kind, these business leaders can have an opportunity to be involved in their community and may be able to count such donations towards their taxes.

Recruiting help from civic stakeholders is another venue through which partnerships can be created. Doing so can lead to future collaboration between psychologists and various community resources,
and we will be re-contacting these vendors once our larger preventive intervention is launched next year. Also, this can facilitate interconnectedness and can foster the mobilization of resources within that community. Jim Kelly (2006) endorses this type of community engagement. He expressed that identifying latent resources in the community is often necessary for the success of a community-based prevention program, and it serves as a reservoir against succumbing to harmful events during the implementation of the program. Finding and mobilizing communal resources is protective to the community as well as beneficial to any intervention and prevention project.

References


Direct Community Action Organization: A Rhode Island Case Study
Written by Jamie Vela, Jamie.e.vela@gmail.com

This study reports an empirical investigation of motivations, backgrounds, social justice beliefs, and efficacy perceptions of twelve current members of a direct community action organization. Two investigators conducted thirty to sixty minute face-to-face interviews. N-Vivo was used to analyze the data to reveal themes in the narratives and responses, and grounded theory procedures were followed. Respondents revealed details of their involvement with the George Wiley Center and offered insight about social action and social justice advocacy. This case study, attempts to illuminate the role of voluntary direct social action advocacy.

The George Wiley Center (GWC) is an organization that advocates for social and economic justice in Rhode Island since 1981. This is a direct action community organization that works with underserved families. The primary aim of the (GWC) from its inception has been to work toward the reduction of poverty and social injustice. As a grassroots organization that takes direct action, the (GWC) engages in what has been called aggressive social change, as opposed to aggressive social work (Couto, 1998). That is, the (GWC) does not provide services, rather it enables psycho-political empowerment among its members and others in the community and advocates for reform of public policies and programs as well as initiating new policies (Perlman, 1976).

Sample
A total of 15 members comprise the (GWC) board were asked to participate in this case study, and twelve board members (80%) agreed to participate. Participants included seven women and five men who ranged in age from mid-40s to mid-80s. Nine participants were long serving board members, with tenures of 10-15 years or more, but three were more recent recruits, serving respectively 7, 5, and 2 years. All

![Figure 1: Emergent categories derived from grounded theory analysis of interview data](image-url)
members had college degrees and nearly half held advanced or professional degrees.

Results

Figure 1 provides a graphic display of the results and the three phases of the coding process. The first phase of coding identified 21 open codes, e.g., “Social Justice”, “Active Involvement”, “Passive Involvement” and “Community Involvement.” that reflected the values and actions the (GWC) board members discussed in their interviews. Within the second phase of axial coding, the 21 codes were examined for relationships and clustered into 5 categories: “Support of Human Rights”, “Individual Characteristics”, “Affiliation”, “Value System of Organization” and “Catalyst for the Community”. In the last phase of selective coding, the 5 categories were synthesized into 3 final themes: “Individual Values”, “Organizational Structure and Values,” and “Social Advocacy”.

Discussion

Interviews were conducted with twelve participants. The interviews were distilled to twenty-one common themes, then collapsed into five and ultimately three categories. These overarching major themes were identified as: “Individual Values”, “Organizational Structure and Values,” and “Social Advocacy”. Over all, many respondents’ statements reverberated with attributes identified in a recent concept analysis of social justice (Buettner-Schmidt & Lobo, 2011): 1) fairness; 2) equity in distribution of resources; 3) just institutions; 4) equity in human development and 5) sufficiency of well-being.

The board members interviewed for this study expressed pride over their “wins” which have been considerable over the years. Here the concept of “small wins” is instructive (Lott & Webster, 2006; Weick, 1984). Weick proposed that small wins, more easily attainable than larger ones, serve to support the organizations working for them, provide more immediate rewards, encourage continued efforts, and can lead to greater accomplishments when coordinated with small wins made by others elsewhere. The continued efforts of the (GWC) have produced many “small wins” as well as some larger ones on a state level, and can thus serve as a meaningful illustration of sustaining board commitment and what community activism can accomplish. This case study can help inform the work of similar community groups.

References


rECOnnecting to our Roots: An Unconferred Eco Journey
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Each year, when it is time to pack up and head to another Ecological Community Psychology (Eco) conference, our faculty reflect on their own Eco experiences. The vision of Eco we pieced together from these scattered stories seemed very different from the Ecos we experienced over the past few years. Ecos of the past involved campfires and lore of a man in green tights dubbed “Eco Man.” This is a stark contrast from today, which centers around PowerPoint presentations and networking events. This left us with many questions... Were past Ecos really that different than the ones we experience today? If so, what happened to take them in their current direction?

And finally, was there any way we could get a little of that past Eco spirit back into the Eco we were about to host while balancing people’s expectations of what Ecos have come to mean? To answer these questions we set out to collect stories from long-time Eco attendees throughout our region. As we gathered these stories, we were thrilled to hear of a rich history of Eco that very much matched our vision for our own upcoming Southeastern Eco at North Carolina State University. Below are some of the emergent themes we found to be most thought-provoking from the histories we collected as well as variant reactions to our attempts to reconnect to these elements by hosting an unconferenced Eco. These data were collected in a post-conference debriefing both in-person and through an online survey.

A counterculture conference for a counterculture discipline. Community Psychology was born during a time of social change. Our founders sought a discipline in which psychologists could be participant-driven, politically active, social change agents. Traditionally, Community Psychology has walked the fine line of being a sub discipline of a traditional academic discipline while trying to run counter to it. Eco was created out of a need for like-minded psychologists, to come together to have a place to refresh themselves from the stress often caused by walking this tightrope. Eco conferences were created to be a space where faculty and graduate students could generate ideas, present research and build community, free of the constraints often felt in academic settings.

Consistent with this purpose, the 2013 Southeastern Eco conference sought to create an environment that fostered collaboration and connection. In addition to the unconference format with topic-based discussion groups rather than traditional presentations, the location of Eco in a natural setting differentiated it from recent previous Ecos in more traditional academic settings. One participant noted that their favorite component of the conferences was the countercultural nature, stating “I have been to a lot of conferences
all over the country and beyond, and this one definitely has risen to the top as the newest learning experience of all!” This participant’s reaction illustrates a consensus from 2013 SE Eco participants, stating a preference for this return to the culture of Eco's-past that emphasizes open collaboration and relationship building.

**A place where “I don’t know” is ok.**
One of our major goals for the 2013 SE Eco was to create “a place where ‘I don’t know’ is okay.” Many of the Eco stories we collected from faculty in our region stressed that Eco had once been a place that unformed ideas were welcome rather than a place where one had to come with a polished presentation and finished research product. Having a place to share these partially formed ideas is important for those of us who are already in touch with the phenomenon of imposter syndrome (Brems, Baldwin, Davis, & Namyniu, 1994), already second-guessing any uncertainty or sign of “failure” in our work. We are fortunate as community-and ecologically-minded academicians to be in a discipline that allows for introspection and the identification of such issues as low academic self-confidence. Too often though, there is a disconnect between what we know about this lack of confidence and how we can mitigate its effect on the budding scholar.

By coming together with scholars at various stages in their career, and realizing all of us experience uncertainty, we can come closer to embracing this uncertainty as a necessary component of scholarship rather than an isolating deficit. One way to allow for this transgenerational sharing and vulnerability is through low-key and informal conferences like the Ecos of the past. We strove to provide a space where it was acceptable not to arrive having all of the answers to the theoretical and practical questions in one’s field. We sought to provide a venue that welcomed brainstorming sessions and sharing of projects gone wrong. Recognizing Eco as a supportive and semi-scripted environment, students can fine tune skills needed for traditional academic conferences.

**Informal interactions leading to lasting relationships.** Faculty members and past Eco conference attendees consistently mentioned the ability to network with others in the field, building lasting relationships both as colleagues and oftentimes career-long friends. This year’s Eco not only provided participants the opportunity to make professional connections, but to build lasting relationships through informal interactions in a non-academic and “elemental” environment. Instead of comfy hotel beds, attendees found themselves sleeping in rustic cabin bunk beds with other attendees. Catered meals were replaced with community meals eaten in a dining room of long tables followed by s’mores shared around a campfire. This camp-like setting forced attendees together for the duration of the weekend rather than dispersing to different places in the evenings, and provided opportunities to form ties with attendees from other schools--both students and faculty--in non-threatening, informal settings. Participants left the conference with not only renewed excitement as community psychologists or an extra line on their CV, but also with new Facebook friends and Twitter followers. These connections are furthered via social networking updates and the building of mutual friends or discovering shared interests. These ties, created initially from less formal, less professional interactions such as sharing a cabin or chatting about various interests around a campfire have the opportunity to extend far beyond the brief time at Eco, providing attendees the opportunity to form lasting relationships with others attendees over the years.

**Organically emerging topics rather than highly structured sessions.**
Another emergent theme was the value of organic idea-sharing versus lecture or presentation-based sessions. Dr. Jim Cook, a faculty member at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, observed that the structure of Eco has become more formal over the years, emphasizing finished products over developing ideas. North Carolina State University’s Dr. Kwesi Brookins added that one of the best aspects of past Ecos was the opportunity for attendees with varying levels of knowledge and experience to contribute to the development of a not-yet-realized idea in small but meaningful ways. Whether these contributions took place around a campfire or while washing dishes after a communal meal, creating a space for people to interact in ways that feel natural, supportive, and friendly seemed paramount in our efforts to reconnect with the spirit of former Ecos.

In order to ignite the passions of those attending Eco this year and to foster emergent ideas, we realized that rather than guessing which topics might elicit the best response, we had to trust the participatory process by which we abide and allow sessions to evolve on-site. Using an unconference grid, attendees were able to propose and/or support twenty-one unique sessions. Participants reported positive reactions to this more informal structure, with one responding that their favorite aspect of 2013 SE Eco was “Definitely the unconference culture. It made relationship building and organic learning so much easier and more fun.” This response is reflected in other noteworthy phrases such as “great conversations and exchanges of knowledge” and “a deeper understanding of topics covered in sessions.”

Our decision to plan an unconference for the 2103 Southeastern Ecological Community Psychology conference was not an easy one or one taken lightly. In the end, we were drawn to the idea of reconnecting to the roots which have set our field apart over the years. As we have moved to legitimize ourselves with more traditional sub disciplines in psychology, we appear to have lost some of our spirit. This unconference format was our attempt to bring some of this spirit back into our region. In the end, throughout the weekend we felt the spirit of community psychology that our founders must have felt during the field’s inception at the Swamscott conference. The weekend was buzzing with passion, ideas, and connection, and as a team we felt proud to bring this energy back. Although implementing a counterculture conference may receive pushback, it is consistent with the counterculture nature of Community Psychology and fosters genuine collaboration and
connection for passionate Community Psychologists. We challenge each region to find ways to breathe life into Ecos of their own regions. An unconference is one way to do this, but is certainly not the only way. We hope future Eco conferences will continue to emphasize the spirit of community psychology and our roots. Perhaps Eco Man will make a comeback if we continue to resurrect our founding spirit. If you would like more information on implementing an unconference please contact se.eco.2013@gmail.com or find us on Facebook.

Reference

Regional Update Fall
Edited by Regina Langhout,
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This quarter, which marks the beginning of the academic year, brings some changes in leadership. We have one Regional Coordinator cycling off of this position: Nathan Todd from DePaul University, who has been representing the Midwest region of the U.S. Thanks for your work for SCRA, Todd! Of course, this means we have a new Midwest Regional Coordinator. Olya Glantsman, also from DePaul, has taken the position. Welcome Olya! We also have a new regional coordinator in the West region of the U.S.: Emma Ogley-Oliver at Marymount California University. Welcome to you, Emma! I’m happy to report that Mary Ivers, from University College Dublin, is filling in for Judy Lovett while she is on leave. Mary is the current International Regional Coordinator for Northern Ireland. Also, I’m excited to tell you that we have an International Regional Coordinator in a new county: Julia Halamova is at Comenius University in Slovakia. It’s really exciting to see SCRA being represented in new places in the world! Welcome Julia! Finally, if you are wondering how to stay connected with colleagues who are not within easy driving distance, check out the work happening in the Southeast US region.

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News from Slovakia
Written by Julia Halamova

Call for Submissions: There will be opportunity for Community Psychologists to attend a conference on December 2nd, 2014 in Bratislava, Slovakia, Middle Europe. The theme is: “Community psychology in Slovakia.” The specific goal of the conference is to establish community psychology in the region and create a network of professionals interested in the field. For more information about the conference, please contact Julia Halamova from Comenius University at julia.halamova@gmail.com. It would be great if anybody from SCRA could attend and give an opening lecture on community psychology. Because there is no budget to pay for travel expenses, this offer will work for those who will be in the nearby area during the conference.

Southeast Region, U.S.
Regional Coordinators
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Sarah L. Desmarais, sdesmarais@ncsu.edu, North Carolina State University
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Student Regional Coordinators
Natalie Kivell, n.kivell@umiami.edu, University of Miami
Alexander Ojeda, aojeda@email.sc.edu, University of South Carolina
Candylon Rade, cbrade@ncsu.edu, North Carolina State University
Nashaly Rodriguez, rrodriguez12@student.gsu.edu, Georgia State University

News from the Southeast
ECO Conference Update: Written by Alex Ojeda

The 2014 Southeast Eco Conference, hosted by the University of South Carolina, will be held at Hickory Knob State Park in McCormick, South Carolina on October 10-12. Please visit http://www.scra27.org/event/regional-conferences/southeast-eco-conference/ for more details about proposal submissions, conference registration, scheduled activities, and lodging options.
Building our SE community:
The story of our pilot year
Written by Natalie Kivell and Candalyn Rade

Based on an innovative session at the SE ECO Conference in 2013 in North Carolina, folks from around the SE Region have begun implementing an action plan aimed at building a strong community within and across the programs in the region. While it is easy to form relationships and collaborate with colleagues during an ECO conference, it becomes more difficult to continue developing the sense of community throughout the year. SCRA Student representatives from the University of Miami (UM) and North Carolina State University (NCSU), Natalie Kivell and Candalyn Rade, partnered to keep the lines of communication open between their institutions over this past year. Much work and brainstorming has occurred in order to build the necessary infrastructure to keep us connected and learning from each other. Some successes we have seen include co-hosting sessions within our respective institutions on topics of shared interest and using creative and technological ways to share our learning and discussions across institutions. Additionally, a group of students at NCSU have been brainstorming the technological side and are currently developing an on-line platform. These innovations will allow students and faculty in the SE region to dialogue, share, and learn together. It is our hope to broaden this initiative in 2014-2015 to include the rest of our SE SCRA partner institutions. If you would like more information, or have ideas regarding how we can keep the momentum going, please contact Natalie Kivell at nkivell@umiami.edu, or Candalyn Rade at cbrade@ncsu.edu.

News from the Southwest
Written by Emma Ogley-Oliver and Eylin Palamaro Musnell

Greetings from the Southwest U.S. Region. This update includes news from our region.

Susan Wolfe will be teaching the course “Issues in Mental Health and Mental Illness” to Master’s level public health students at the University of Texas Health Science Center this fall.

We continue to work toward organizing members from our vast geographical region. We will begin to meet for standing monthly conference calls this fall, with the hope of moving toward a video conferencing platform in the next few months. If you are interested in joining our monthly calls, we would love to hear from you!

Please contact Eylin Palamaro Munsell, epalamar@asu.edu.

Rocky Mountain/Southwest Region
Regional Coordinators
Jessica Goodkind, jgoodkin@unm.edu, University of New Mexico
Eylin Palamaro Munsell, epalamar@asu.edu, Arizona State University
Student Coordinator
Brittney Weber, Brittney.Weber@asu.edu, Arizona State University

News from the Northeast
Written by Suzanne Phillips and Bronwyn Hunter

Believe it or not, planning has begun for the 2015 Eastern Psychological Association (EPA) meeting in Philadelphia, to be held March 5 – 7, 2015. Please send any ideas/suggestions for themes or programming ideas to bronwyn.hunter@yale.edu. Paper, poster, and symposium submissions, even to the EPA SCRA program, go through www.easternpsychological.org. If you are interested in serving as a reviewer, please contact Suzanne Phillips at sphillips@ccshn.edu.

Please note that Suzanne has a new e-mail – and a new job! She is now Institutional Researcher at White Mountains Community College, a rural school in northern NH. This has been a terrific opportunity to enter community psychology practice.

Calling all graduate students! We are looking for a graduate student representative to join our team to provide regional leadership and guidance to the processes of membership development, activities, and communication. If you are interested in serving as a graduate-student representative, please contact Suzanne Phillips at sphillips@ccnh.edu.

Northeast Region, U.S.
Regional Coordinators
Michelle Ronayne, michelle.ronayne@gmail.com, Nova Psychiatric Services
Suzanne Phillips, sphillips@ccnh.edu, Community College System of NH
Bronwyn Hunter, bronwyn.hunter@yale.edu, Yale University, The Consultation Center
steps of community participation and mobilization to collect and analyze data and ultimately create community-driven recommendations to inform Lake County policy decisions.

Lake County stakeholders will have a voice in the development of the Happiness Index Project (HIP) via the Community Advisory Group (CAG). Specifically, the CAG will provide a setting to discuss community views and concerns about collecting county-wide data, as well as developing and implementing socially and culturally relevant policy recommendations. The CAG is made up of diverse community members to reflect the diverse interests in Lake County. In the fall, they will develop inter-rater agreement for preliminary data collected at a HIP town hall meeting in March.

The HIP CAG will spend the remainder of the year reviewing literature and assessment tools about well-being, happiness, and quality of life and collecting and analyzing data in preparation to develop, implement, and evaluate recommendations in 2015. The CAG will meet monthly and represents a crucial component of the project to gain meaningful input from all Lake County residents and develop a useful tool for future Lake County planning. Please feel free to contact Dr. Emma Ogley-Oliver at MCU (eogleyoliver@marymountcalifornia.edu) to learn more about this PAR project.

News from the Bay Area
Written by Erin Ellison

The Bay Area Community Psychology and Intervention Group consists of community psychologists, clinical psychologists, public health researchers, community workers, and colleagues from other fields with interests in community-based research and action. We meet twice a year. All students, faculty, practitioners, and community members with interests in community-based research and interventions are welcome in this group. We usually have two brief informal presentations, along with time to network, connect, and informally check in about issues and ideas from our work. Our next meeting will be in Berkeley this fall. If you are interested in becoming part of this network, please contact Erin Ellison (eellison@ucsc.edu) and Aran Watson (aran@rysecenter.org).

Midwest Region, U.S.
Regional Coordinators
August Hoffman, August.Hoffman@metrostate.edu, Metropolitan State University
Luciano Berardi, lberardi@depaul.edu, DePaul University
Olya Glantsman, oglantsman@gmail.com, DePaul University

News from the Midwest
Written by August Hoffman, Luciano Berardi, and Olya Glantsman

Welcoming a New Regional Coordinator
We want to welcome Olya Glantsman who has joined August Hoffman and Luciano Berardi as a new Midwest Coordinator for the 2014-2015 year. Olya Glantsman holds a doctoral degree in community psychology and is currently a visiting professor at DePaul University. Dr. Glantsman’s research interests include improving academic settings for students and faculty, and substance abuse prevention and recovery. For future announcements or information for inclusion in future Midwest updates, please send information to Olya Glantsman at oglantsman@gmail.com.

Upcoming Events
It’s hard to believe but it is already time to begin thinking about the 2014 Midwest Ecological-Community Psychology Conference. This year marks the 27th annual meeting. It will be held in Lisle (a Chicago, IL suburb) and will be sponsored by current students from the National Louis University’s graduate program in Community Psychology. For more information, please visit the website at: http://Midwesteco2014.

It’s not too early to begin making plans for the 2015 Chicago, MPA conference. This year the conference will be held on April 30 – May 2,
2015 at the Palmer House. Additional information and a call for proposals will be forthcoming on the SCRA list serve. For more information about the MPA conference (e.g., lodging, fees, eligibility) please visit the MPA website at: http://midwesternpsych.org

Community Garden News

Students from Metropolitan State University and educational partner Inver Hills Community College have raised over 100 lbs. of fresh vegetables and fruit that are donated to local food shelters and charities. The Inver Hills – Metropolitan State University fruit tree orchard was started three years ago and continues to produce healthy apple snacks for community members. Over 50 trees were planted with 16 different species. Students from both institutions maintain the orchard and pick the fruit that is donated to the food shelters. Students from both institutions are currently planning a fruit tree planting project in Detroit, Michigan either in the Fall 2014 or Spring 2015. For more information or to volunteer, please contact either August Hoffman from Metropolitan State University (August.Hoffman@metrostate.edu) or Barb Curchack from Inver Hills Community College (bcurcha@inverhills.mnscu.edu).

RURAL INTEREST GROUP
Edited by Susana Helm

The Rural IG column highlights rural resources as well as the work of community psychologist and colleagues in their rural environments. Please send submissions to me (HelmS@dop.hawaii.edu). This is a great opportunity for students to share their preliminary thesis/dissertation work, or insights gained in rural community internships. For this issue we have a brief report authored by Teresa Padgett, a student at Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College.

RURAL RESOURCES

The National Association for Rural Mental Health announced that its 41st Annual Conference will be held in Honolulu next summer (Hyatt Regency Waikiki, July 30-August 2, 2015). Proposals are accepted online at the conference website: www.narmh.org. Please contact me if you are interested in submitting a coordinated SCRA Rural Interest Group activity – paper session, workshop, or roundtable.

Focus areas include: child/adolescent, compact migrant issues, culture based deliveries, forensic/correctional, geriatric, research, substance abuse, systemic infrastructure, trauma informed care, veterans, and other topics.

The proposal submission deadline is December 1, 2014 or until the agenda is filled. According to the website: Proposals should draw upon current research, promising practices and/or model programs or systems solutions that offer application for rural communities. Proposals should indicate how consumer input, diversity and cross-cultural issues are represented and appreciated. Program presentations should contain explicit details regarding the target population(s) served, the context in which services are delivered, and demonstrate effective outcomes. In addition, successful proposals also will demonstrate content and presentation clarity.

BRIEF REPORT: Food Sovereignty

Teresa D. Padgett

As a senior in the Rural Studies Program at Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College (http://www.abac.edu/academics/rural-studies), I would like to share some of my academic experiences that are shaping my professional development.

I founded Students for Ethical and Eco-friendly Developments in Sustainability (SEEDS) in the spring 2014 and spent my summer working at the Georgia Museum of Agriculture for the internship requirement of my concentration (see photos). During my internship, I learned about rural communities during the late Victorian era 1870-1910. This opportunity gave me a hands-on experience in subsistence farming and the changes that occurred with the rise of progressive farming, or growing crops to sell, instead of survival of the family. The Historical Village at the Georgia Museum of Agriculture (http://www.abac.edu/museum) provided me with a microcosm of how the effects of the separation of people and the environment and their place in the ecosystem create food insecurity. I plan to research the details and effects of this disconnect in regard to food sovereignty versus food security with the goal of the research becoming a book.

The concept of food sovereignty is not a common topic in the discussions within the rural studies program on poverty. But I believe food sovereignty is key to understanding the root of the issue of poor health among rural populations and the cornerstone of any sustainable solution. The term
“food sovereignty” was created by Via Campesina, an international movement formed in 1993 by small and mid-size producers, farm workers, rural women and indigenous communities in the Americas, Africa, India, Asia and Europe. The organization has 148 groups that advocate family-farm-based sustainable agriculture (Via Campesina, no date; no author, 2005). Food sovereignty was defined further at the Forum for Food Sovereignty in Selinque, Mali in February 2007. It is the right to food that is produced by sustainable and eco-friendly means that is healthy and culturally appropriate. It gives people the right to define their food and agricultural systems (Maryam Rahmanian, 2014). Food Sovereignty has been and continues to be greatly affected by colonization and global trade. On the other hand, food insecurity has created a disconnection between people and their food sources.

Peter Rosset, a foods rights activist, agro-ecologist, and rural development specialist, believes food sovereignty goes beyond the concept of food security. Food security is the process of ensuring everyone has something to eat daily, but it does nothing to show the importance of understanding where food comes from or how it’s produced. Rosset (2000) has stated, “The concept of food security and the Green Revolution produced more food but world hunger continues because it did not address the problems of access. It failed to alter the highly concentrated distribution of economic power” (see also USDA, n.d.). The Green Revolution started when agronomist S. Cecil Salmon helped assess issues with wheat plants while studying Japan’s post war agricultural problems. The research continued in the 1960s and 1970s under the leadership of Norman Borlaug, who was called the “Father of the Green Revolution.” Borlaug is credited with initiating the development of high-yield grains, expanding irrigation, improving management and distributing hybrid seed, synthetic fertilizers and pesticides (Dowsell, 2009). [insert Michael Bartelfield image]

In researching food sovereignty, it seems the current food production model is feeding the problem, not providing a solution. The current model shifts the economy away from local markets which change the sovereignty of food as defined by Via Campesina. Local markets create a network of sustainability within a community. The shift from buying local to global on such a mass scale causes small farms and rural areas to be unable to compete with cheap, subsidized food products. When producers become dependent, the local culture is disrupted, the local eco-system is changed, and a cycle of dependency is perpetuated (Agriculture at the Crossroads Global Report, 2009). Food sovereignty creates a sustainable foundation for changing the livelihoods of those who live in poverty. Pimbert (2009), from the International Institute for Environment and Development, says the foundation for sound incomes and economies ensure proper nutrition, protection of the eco-systems, and respect of culture through food systems. Local food systems create stability within an area, a country, and the world.

I took HIS 3280 Farms, Factories and Food in the spring of 2014, taught by Dr. Russell Pryor. In studying the banana trade and food production during World War II, we became aware that most people never think about the connection within food systems or the people that support their families growing bananas, or that most of those farmers live in poverty. Many people who live in poverty are food producers. We also examined the various food models of the United States, England, Germany, Russia and Japan. For example, in The Taste of War, Lizzie Collingham (2011) argued that food insecurity was at the heart of the war. Accordingly, Germany and Japan feared they couldn’t produce enough food to feed their cities so they sought to obtain more land in order to feed their citizens. On the other hand, Ally countries had achieved success in terms of food security. Great Britain had implemented free trade and the importation of large quantities of food to feed their urban areas, while the United States had the advantage of enough land to produce plenty of food to feed its citizens, as well as for export. Germany and Japan did not wish to be dependent on Britain or the United States as their food source, but rather pursued self-sufficiency and independence in the world market.

A similar fear of food insecurity in rural areas exists at a local community level, and not only at the macro-international level. Many rural areas are associated with farming, but the modern food production model has changed the practices of how people are fed. Global trade is a very important component contributing to the disconnection between people and their food sources. Increasingly, food is imported instead of locally grown. As agricultural economies move from local subsistence farming to farming for cash crops - whether voluntarily, like the citizens of the Historical Village at the Georgia Museum of Agriculture, through past colonization, or market changes due to global trade, there are changes in the important connections between people and food. We lose touch with where food comes from. We don’t think past the aisles in the grocery store.

My future research is designed to find a viable solution to address issues concerning poverty in the rural areas, and will include a brief history of colonization and global markets of the past and their effects on the local people. I will address the question of the current food production model and
how it contributes to poverty. Although rural areas differ greatly in their characteristics, universally they all have the same problem, just as urban areas have the same problem. Poverty is a common link between these areas of study, and I believe developing an understanding of food sovereignty and putting in to practice the concepts it involves is the solution for changing the lives for those who live in poverty.

References


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**Self Help and Mutual Support**

*Edited by Greg Townley and Alicia Lucksted*

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**A Database to Tap, for Finding or Starting Self-Help Groups**

*Written by Ed Madara,* [ed@selfhelpgroups.org](mailto:ed@selfhelpgroups.org)

Mrs. Zakia Shabazz started the first “United Parents Against Lead” self-help group more than 10 years ago in Richmond, VA, after her daughter’s son had been poisoned by lead. Since then she has helped others start seven more UPAL groups in other parts of the country. John Fugazzie started *Neighbors-helplining-Neighbors in 2011* with other job hunters at a local public library that offered computer access and a librarian trained in job search resources – now members of a dozen other Neighbors’ groups meet at similar libraries to set weekly goals and report back the next week. A free keyword-searchable database of these and over 1,200 other national, international, online and model mutual support self-help (i.e., member-run) groups is available online at our American Self-Help Group Clearinghouse website at [www.mentalhelp.net/selfhelp](http://www.mentalhelp.net/selfhelp).

The peer-run support groups listed there cover a broad spectrum of life challenges, transitions and/or adversities - to include almost every illness, disability, addiction, loss of a loved one, parenting situation, caregiver concern, abuse experience, or any one of hundreds of other stressful life situations. The organizations reporting community support groups are checked periodically to ensure that their groups are indeed focused on mutual help; composed of peers who share a common life experience; are member-run; and are voluntary, non-profit organizations.

The peer-run support groups listed there cover a broad spectrum of life challenges, transitions and/or adversities - to include almost every illness, disability, addiction, loss of a loved one, parenting situation, caregiver concern, abuse experience, or any one of hundreds of other stressful life situations. The organizations reporting community support groups are checked periodically to ensure that their groups are indeed focused on mutual help; composed of peers who share a common life experience; are member-run; and are voluntary, non-profit organizations.

Searching the American database can be helpful for identifying local community support groups, since it can link you directly or to the website of a national and international group, most of which provide a listing of all their local groups. Most importantly, if there is no group available in one’s local area, the national, international and model self-help group organizations listed provide free or low-cost how-to materials and consultation to assist those interested in starting new local groups. Similarly the American website also includes self-help group resource centers around the country and the world, which also provide details on independent local support groups, as well as assistance to individuals who are seeking help to start a new local group in their area.

Our American Self-Help Group Clearinghouse was officially started in 1990, as a sister service of our New Jersey Self-Help Group Clearinghouse which had been started ten years earlier at Saint Clare’s Behavioral Health Services in northwest New Jersey. The American program sought to simply make available to those people outside New Jersey, the existing national, international, online and model group database that had been used by the New Jersey Clearinghouse for the decade before. Our purpose in developing these clearinghouse programs has been to help increase the awareness, utilization, understanding and development of mutual support groups as empowering, freely-accessible, cost-effective, and healing resources.

Access to the American database was first provided through a helpline, the publication of seven editions of the guide, *The Self-Help Group Sourcebook,* and the distribution of a software database retrieval and documentation system called “MASHnet” which was used by 18 other self-help group centers in the U.S. and Canada. In the mid 90’s, our staff worked with psychologist Dr. John Grohol, in providing presentations with him at conferences on the power and potential of online support groups. John became the founder of one of the leading websites for mutual support groups, the forums at “Psych Central.” We are most grateful that he kindly created a keyword-software program and arranged for free server space, which continues today as our keyword-searchable “Self-Help Sourcebook Online” database.

Just as experienced members of
self-help groups serve as inspiring positive role models for new members, the availability of an established model or national self-help group for a particular issue can truly encourage people to take that first step to join with others in starting a similar group in their area. When we first started the NJ Clearinghouse, we were receiving a significant number of requests for support groups from families who had lost a loved one to suicide. But there were no support groups anywhere at that time – either self-help or professional; and people expressed reluctance to try starting a first group. With research, we found a Survivors Of Suicide self-help group in Ohio, and in response to our request, the group kindly sent us a sample flyer, newsletter, and a newspaper article explaining how family members had joined together to start the group. With subsequent requests, we offered to mail copies of the Ohio materials to callers, along with our handout on how to start a self-help group, not by oneself, but with others in a shared leadership approach. One woman called back in tears, saying how she now realized how her effort to start a mutual support group could give meaning to what initially she saw as the meaningless death of her son. Over the years, we have had additional requests that have caused us to search for any specific community self-help group model that might exist, and in many cases, upon being found were, replicated or adapted into different communities in NJ. Never underestimate the value of a good story to encourage a person to replicate that model.

We have provided consultation to individuals outside New Jersey in their development of several national self-help group organizations, helping them with issues most important to them, such as publicity, networking them with websites and organizations that could promote increased awareness of their group, helping them to focus on members’ felt needs, the need for shared leadership, and especially the need to promote a true sense of ownership on the part of members for their group. Many of the national groups we’ve helped start have been illness-related, like those for Grave’s Disease, Post-Polio Syndrome, Miller-Nager Syndrome, Treacher-Collins Syndrome, Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome, Pallister-Killian Syndrome, Pseudotumor Cerebri, and Carpal Tunnel Syndrome.

Through this work and our discussions with many leaders of health-related national self-help organizations, we believe that that the vast majority of health advocacy organizations in the United States have had their roots in self-help groups – an interesting subject for future research. It was Marjorie Guthrie, the wife of the folksinger Woody Guthrie, who pulled families together to start what became the Huntington’s disease Society in 1967. She said her one regret was that no professional had encouraged her 10 years earlier to bring together families, when her husband Woody was first diagnosed with Huntington’s, adding that if one had, “We would be a decade further down the road in terms of research by now.”

One key, empowering question that any caring professional can ask of someone who is requesting a support group that is determined to not yet exist, is “Would you possibly be interested in joining with others to help start such a mutual support group?” When our paid staff or a volunteer asks that question, they know the answer will most often be “no.” But a small yet very significant number of people who expressed possible interest, and have gone on to indeed start that group. When we surveyed a hundred individuals, whom we had assisted in their getting groups started, regarding what was the most important help they received from our Clearinghouse, we were surprised that it wasn’t the how-to materials we had provided, nor the linkages we gave them for national or model groups, but rather the ongoing support we gave in reassuring them that they could indeed start the group.

In terms of online mutual support networks, in addition to the website message boards, email discussion groups, and chat rooms, there’s increased use of both open and closed Facebook pages. With ever-expanding forms of new social media appearing, we can anticipate more options in the near future. Among a few of the online groups available are: Twinless Twins bereavement support for the surviving twin after the death of their sibling; “Hope for Two” pregnant women with cancer mutual support network, started after two pregnant women happened to meet in the waiting room of their oncologist’s office in Buffalo; and the Conduct Disorders Parent Message Board for parents of children with conduct disorder, oppositional defiance disorder, or intermittent explosive disorder. Please see our website for links to these and many others: www.mentalhelp.net/selfhelp.

We would be most grateful for leads on any especially helpful national, international, model or online mutual support groups that colleagues may be willing to kindly share.

References

Student Issues
Edited by Chuck Sepers and Meagan Sweeney

Fall Update
Congratulations to Meagan Sweeney, winner of the 2014 National Student Representative (NSR) election. To learn more about her, be sure to find her self-introduction below. We as NSRs serve overlapping 2-year terms as voting members of the SCRA Executive Committee. The primary role of the NSRs is to advocate for the needs of our student members, as well as highlight available opportunities (e.g., funding, professional development, etc.).

To that end, there are a number of new and exciting changes that should ultimately serve to enhance your student membership. Those with a keen eye will have already noticed that the SCRA website (scra27.org) has undergone a dramatic facelift and with it, a new student page (http://scra27.org/who-we-are/students/). The website will serve as a central location outlining student
resources and upcoming and ongoing opportunities, including listserv instructions, conference dates, and funding opportunities. Please check this page frequently for updates. Along with the new website, there is also a new NSR email address: StudentReps@scra27.org. The new website format is fantastic—well organized, visually appealing, and packed full of helpful resources. I strongly encourage everyone to check it out.

There are other exciting new changes that affect students this year. This year SCRA has been working with a social media consultant to enhance the content of our online communications and to grow our online communities. Additionally, a new eNewsletter will feature highlights from SCRA publications in the coming months, including the American Journal of Community Psychology, The Community Psychologist, the SCRA book series, SCRA-sponsored conferences, as well as featured colleagues and their work.

We will be looking for new submissions for the Student Issues column for the spring issue due November 15th deadline. If you have a paper you would like to share, we strongly encourage you to submit it to StudentReps@scra27.org. Submissions are limited to five double-spaced pages. Check scra27.org for full details.

We also want to thank Danielle Kohfeldt for her years of service to SCRA as NSR. We wish Dr. Kohfeldt the best as begins teaching Community Psychology at Bridgewater State University this fall. Good luck Danielle!

A Self-Introduction from Our New National Student Representative Meagan Sweeney

I was born and raised in New York City, one of the most diverse places in the world. Walking three blocks in my neighborhood involves meeting people of countless ethnicities, religions, and cultures.

I received a scholarship to SUNY Stony Brook Honors College for my undergraduate degree, and completed research on the effect of anxiety on working memory, specifically inhibition. While I enjoyed my lab and my work, I learned that I did not want to do work only in a laboratory setting. Later, I attended Teachers College, Columbia University and assisted in a study on the effects of prejudiced experiences on risk taking behaviors, especially in the LGBT community. It was the more hands-on role I had been looking for. Currently I am in the Clinical/Community Ph.D. program at The George Washington University, where our theme is the prevention of behavioral, emotional, and physical problems and the promotion of health in diverse urban communities. I am working on the behaviors and emotions surrounding emergency preparedness, with the idea that emergency preparedness prevents anxiety and distress after a natural or man-made disaster.

I have a strong background in community psychology, both in action and in research. From five until eighteen, I was a Girl Scout. I took part in countless community outreach events, such as bake sales, fundraisers, and beautification projects. These values stayed with me throughout high school and college, where community service was a daily part of my life, from participating in blood drives to volunteering at a suicide and crisis hotline that served the local community. After graduating from Stony Brook, I set aside a year for service, working for the American Red Cross as an AmeriCorps Volunteer. My position was Community Outreach Coordinator, in charge of the borough of Brooklyn. I reached out to every non-profit organization I could in order to give presentations on emergency preparedness. I am pretty sure I entered every library, PTA group, Civic Association, and Community Center that existed in Brooklyn to deliver my message. I also delivered programs on basic first aid, water safety, and hygiene to children in public schools.

Now as a first year graduate student, I am combining my research skills and background in outreach. I am collaborating with the Red Cross to evaluate the effectiveness of the very presentations I used to deliver. No longitudinal study has investigated whether or not people actually go home and use the information from Red Cross presentations to become more prepared. We are also interested in understanding demographic and psychological factors that influence who becomes prepared and who doesn’t.

As the National Student Representative, I welcome the opportunity to edit submissions to The Community Psychologist, judge awards, assist with Biennial planning, and help with social media outlets. I would like focus on SCRA student outreach initiatives, and encourage greater student involvement. I will promote advocacy and outreach events to the student population as a way to increase their involvement and empowerment in community psychology and SCRA.
Call for Nominations

Nominations (self or others) are now being accepted for the next Editor of The Community Psychologist (TCP).

This newsletter is an outlet for timely and innovative work related to community psychology education, research and practice. It includes brief reports and reflections on the practice of community research and action, as well as updates and announcements of interest to members. Regular features include columns on children, youth and families, community action, community action research network, community health, community practitioner, community student, cultural and racial affairs, disabilities action, education connection, international, lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender, living community psychology, prevention and promotion, regional, rural issues, school intervention, student issues, women’s issues, and book reviews. The Editor-elect will be expected to work with the current Editor in spring 2015, and become Editor for three years starting in July, 2015.

The Editor will need scientific, editorial, interpersonal, and organizational abilities. He or she will advise potential authors of the relevance of their proposed work to the TCP, as well as work with section editors in the development of their material. The Editor may also solicit individual articles or sets of related articles on topics of special interest to TCP readers. The TCP editor will also help coordinate the new SCRA email Newsletter. SCRA provides financial support for an Associate Editor and Production Editor. The TCP Editor is an ex-officio member of the SCRA Executive Committee, as well as a member of the SCRA Publications Committee.

For information about the current TCP operations, please go to http://www.scra27.org/publications/tcp to see current and past issues.

Questions about this position may be addressed to the SCRA Publications Committee Chair: Meg Bond; Department of Psychology, 113 Wilder Street, Suite 300, University of Massachusetts Lowell, Lowell, MA 01854. Email: Meg_Bond@uml.edu

If you are interested, please submit a vita, a statement of interest no longer than 1 page, and the names of 2 references to Meg_Bond@uml.edu, and include the words “TCP Editorial Search” in the subject line.

First review of the nominations will begin December 1, 2014.
ABOUT The Community Psychologist

The Community Psychologist is published four times a year to provide information to members of the SOCIETY FOR COMMUNITY RESEARCH AND ACTION. A fifth Membership Directory issue is published approximately every three years. Opinions expressed in The Community Psychologist are those of individual authors and do not necessarily reflect official positions taken by SCRA. Materials that appear in The Community Psychologist may be reproduced for educational and training purposes. Citation of source is appreciated.

TO SUBMIT COPY TO The Community Psychologist

Articles, columns, features, Letters to the Editor, and announcements should be submitted as Word attachments in an e-mail message to Sylvie Taylor and Gregor V. Sarkisian at TCP@scra27.org or by postal mail to the editors: c/o Antioch University, 400 Corporate Pointe, Culver City, CA, 90230-7615. Authors should adhere to the following guidelines when submitting materials:

- **Length:** Five pages, double-spaced
- **Images:** Images are highly recommended, but please limit to two images per article. Images should be higher than 300 dpi. Photo image files straight from the camera are acceptable. If images need to be scanned, please scan them at 300 dpi and save them as JPEGs. Submit the image(s) as a separate file. Please note that images will be in black and white when published.
- **Margins:** 1” margins on all four sides
- **Text:** Times New Roman, 12-point font
- **Alignment:** All text should be aligned to the left (including titles).
- **Color:** Make sure that all text (including links, e-mails, etc.) are set in standard black.
- **Punctuation Spacing:** Per APA guidelines, make sure that there is only one space after periods, question marks, etc.
- **Graphs & Tables:** These should be in separate Word documents (one for each table/graphs if multiple). Convert all text in the graph into the consistent font and font size.
- **Footnotes:** Footnotes should be placed at the end of the article as regular text (do not use Word footnote function).
- **References:** Follow APA guidelines. These should also be justified to the left with a hanging indent of .25”.
- **Headers/Footers:** Do not use headers and footers.
- **Long quotes:** Follow APA guidelines for quoted materials.
- **Preferred email:** Please provide an email address for all authors so that readers can contact you directly and for you to be notified of commentary posted on the SCRA website in reference to your submission.

UPCOMING DEADLINES:

SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION:
The Community Psychologist and the American Journal of Community Psychology are mailed to all SCRA members. To join SCRA and receive these publications, send membership dues to SCRA (Div 27), 4440 PGA Blvd., #600, Palm Beach Gardens, FL 33410. Membership dues are $30 for student members, $75 for United States members, $60 for international members, and $15 for senior members (must be 65 or over, retired, and a member of SCRA/Division 27 for 25 years; senior members will receive TCP but not AJCP). The membership application is in each edition of The Community Psychologist.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS:
Address changes may be made online through the SCRA website <www.scra27.org>. Address changes may also be sent to SCRA(Div 27), 4440 PGA Blvd., #600, Palm Beach Gardens, FL 33410. Email: <office@scra27.org>. APA members should also send changes to the APA Central Office, Data Processing Manager for revision of the APA mailing lists, 750 First St., NE, Washington, DC 20002-4422.
Society for Community Research & Action
Membership Application

Membership Contact Information:
First Name: ___________________  Last Name: ___________________
Address line 1: ___________________
Address line 2: ___________________
Address line 3: ___________________
City, State, Postal Code: ___________________  Country: ___________________
Telephone: ___________________  Email: ___________________
Academic or Institutional Affiliation: ___________________
Primary Job Title: ___________________
Secondary Job Title: ___________________

*** Please complete the following information ***

APA Membership Status: ____ Not an APA member
____ Fellow  ____ Member  ____ Associate  ____ Student  ____ Lifetime Member
APA Member Number (if known): ____________

Please indicate any Interest Groups or Committees you would like to join:
____ Aging  ____ Organization Studies
____ Children & Youth  ____ Prevention & Promotion
____ Community Action  ____ Rural
____ Community Health  ____ School Intervention
____ Cultural & Racial Affairs Committee  ____ Self-Help & Mutual Support
____ Disabilities  ____ Social Policy Committee
____ Interdisciplinary Committee  ____ Environmental Justice
____ International Committee  ____ Women’s Committee
____ Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgender Concerns  ____ Indigenous
____ Council of Education Programs  ____ Council for Community Psychology Practice

May we include your name and contact information in the SCRA Directory?  ____ Yes  ____ No

The following questions are OPTIONAL; however, this information helps us better serve our members.
Sex:  ____ Female  ____ Male

Race/Ethnicity (check all that apply)
____ Native American, Alaskan Native or Native Hawaiian
____ Asian or Pacific Islander
____ Black/African American
____ Hispanic/Latino
____ White/Caucasian
____ Other: ___________________

Do you wish us to indicate in the database that you identify with a sexual minority group (e.g., lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgender)?  ____ Yes  ____ No

Do you wish us to indicate in the database that you are a person with a disability?  ____ Yes  ____ No

What year did you graduate?  ____________
Membership dues enclosed (please write in amount):

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<th>Membership Type</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tr>
<td>United States Member</td>
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<td>International Member</td>
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<td>Senior Member—must be 65 or over, retired, and a member of SCRA/Div 27 for 20 years</td>
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Please consider supporting the following SCRA Initiatives by contributing to the following funds

- **SCRA Student Initiatives Fund**: Your contribution will help support student initiatives, e.g., conference travel awards, poster presentation awards, and the mentoring initiative. If most members gave $10, this fund would gain $10,000 for student initiatives this year.
  - 5.00
  - 10.00
  - 15.00

- **SCRA International Travel Grants Fund**: Your contribution will help bring international members to the Biennial Conferences. If most members gave $10, this fund would gain $10,000 to support international travel to future Biennials.
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**TOTAL** $_______  __________

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Name on Card: __________________________________________
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Security Code: __________

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Expiration Date: _____ / _____
  month / year

Please send form and credit card payment information or check to:
SCRA (Div 27), 4440 PGA Blvd #600, Palm Beach Gardens, FL 33410.
Name on Card
Annual membership is based on a calendar year, January 1st through December 31st. One year’s dues are payable in full with application.
Those joining in November or December will be extended through December 31 of the following year.

Thank you for your support of the **Society for Community Research & Action**
We were invited by the TCP editors to share reflections on our early days in the field of community psychology as part of the 50th anniversary history series. We are senior members of the field who are feminists and have worked on issues of importance to women since graduate school.

**What was Community Psychology (CP) like when you were in graduate school?**

**Stephanie:** I began graduate school in 1973 at U of Michigan; the Community program began a few years later when Jim Kelly came to Michigan. White males dominated community psychology in the 1970s and 1980s, most with clinical psychology backgrounds. There are wonderful video interviews online with these men reminiscing about the early days of the field (https://vimeo.com/channels/554219). Only 5 women appear in these videos: Marie Jahoda, was interviewed individually, and 4 feminists, only 2 of whom were community psychologists, were interviewed together. The remaining 18 interviews are all with males. That tells you the state of the field at that time. (Barbara Dohrenwend, a major contributor in CP’s early days, died in 1982, long before the interviews were taped in 1996.)

During orientation before grad school began, a professor infuriated me by saying that female graduate students drop out or leave to get married before they get their PhD. degrees. Every time I felt like quitting graduate school, I remembered his words and was determined to prove him wrong. I tell my students to watch “Mad Men” if they want to get an idea of what life was like for women at that time, although there were a few terrific women on the faculty at Michigan, such as Elizabeth Douvan, who were great role models. Most of the women in CP at that time were grad students who were heavily influenced by feminism and demanded that the field change.

Today the situation is dramatically different. Females now outnumber males as members of SCRA, although awards (e.g., Distinguished Publication Awards) still go overwhelmingly to males (Riger, forthcoming).

**Anne:** In 1973 I began doctoral work at City University of New York with funding from the National Institute of Mental Health to pursue “urban psychology” in a subprogram led by Barbara Dohrenwend and Mort Bard. They were wonderful role models who encouraged collaboration, critical thinking, and community engagement. (Though I didn’t know it then, men held most leadership positions in CP, received most awards, and were the authors of most publications.)

In 1975 I attended the Austin Conference. My experience in small groups was exhilarating. I was shocked by sexist language and jokes in keynote addresses, all by men, and disappointed women’s issues were not mentioned. I raised concerns that were dismissed (Mulvey, 2008). Barbara encouraged me to seek leadership roles and integrate feminism into CP. I became the Division 27 national student representative. Since there wasn’t much interest in women’s issues, I asked to be liaison to the Society for the Psychology of Women (Div. 35). This helped gain support for feminist initiatives. I credit Barbara’s mentoring with staying in CP.

**How did you integrate feminism with Community Psychology?**

**Anne:** Participating in consciousness-raising (CR) and grassroots feminist organizing within the context of the larger women’s liberation movement made my desire for safe, equitable and loving communities seem possible. Connecting the personal and political, trusting lived experiences, and working for feminist change, I experienced hopefulness, possibility, and community. I immediately recognized that CP was compatible with feminism.

I wanted to know why feminism wasn’t visible and valued in CP. I outlined an analysis the week after finishing my dissertation, but it took almost 10 years and encouragement from Barbara and several feminists in CP, mostly students, to finish (Mulvey, 1988). I’ve continued to integrate material from grassroots women’s activism, feminist scholarship, and women studies. I’ve collaborated with women and girls of diverse cultures and circumstances to create small projects and settings where we share stories and work to strengthen ourselves and our communities. Longing for just and loving communities continues to be at the heart of my work and commitment to feminism and CP.

**Stephanie:** The topics I investigate – violence and discrimination against women – were stimulated by feminism,
as it was feminists who highlighted these as social problems worthy of study. Furthermore, feminism has always been concerned with context, as is community psychology. They share a common outlook, considering social structural causes of individuals’ problems as in the famous feminist phrase “the personal is political.” Furthermore, both community psychology and feminism value social justice and social change, and both are critical of traditional psychology. Feminism adds to community psychology a focus on gender as well as other aspects of identity, such as race and sexual orientation, that intersect to affect people’s experience. Together, feminism and community psychology enable a rich analysis of pressing social problems.

References

2015 Biennial

The 2015 Biennial will be a landmark event in more ways than one. Perhaps most importantly, it will provide an opportunity to celebrate and reflect on 50 years of community psychology, as it will commemorate the 1965 foundational gathering in Swampscott, Massachusetts. Fortuitously, it also coincides with the 35th anniversary of the launching of the Master’s Program in Community Social Psychology (CSP) at the University of Massachusetts Lowell, which is just up the road from Swampscott. Accordingly, the title of the 2015 SCRA Biennial at UMass Lowell is “Celebrating 50 Years of Community Psychology,” with the theme, “Innovation, Diversity, and Sustainability: Bridging Past and Future.”

In addition to the typical format of symposia, workshops, roundtable discussions, and poster sessions, we will offer a stream of activities related to community engagement, including:

• Sessions hosted at local community organizations
• Tours and “open houses” at local social service agencies
• An open-air concert in conjunction with an annual concert series at an historic downtown venue
• A “night on the town” that will feature discounts at local restaurants and businesses, open galleries displaying local art, and other events highlighting the wonderful history and diversity of our city

We look forward to welcoming you to Lowell! Keep your eyes posted for the call for proposals.