From the President
Jean Hill
New Mexico Highlands University

The Present and Future of SCRA
SCRA has undergone some significant changes in the last few years. I would like to take this time to review some of those changes, describe what is happening in SCRA today, and explore what we can all expect from SCRA in the future. I will start with the development of our current AJCP contract in 2009. That contract resulted in a significant increase in revenue for SCRA, revenue that will continue through 2015. This event made it clear that SCRA would need to adopt a long-range approach to managing our resources, developing strategic initiatives, and structuring our organization to support those initiatives. A brief summary of our efforts in each of these areas follows.

Managing Our Resources
Two years ago the Executive Committee (EC) formed an investment committee with two goals: to ensure that our revenues were invested in accordance with the values of our organization, and to develop a plan to support the long-term financial health of SCRA. I discussed our progress on that first goal in my winter TCP column. The second goal is of particular concern because of indications that our income from AJCP royalties could drop significantly in the next few years (due to the uncertain nature of the publishing industry). In order to prepare for that possibility, the EC decided at this year’s mid-winter meeting that it was appropriate and prudent to maintain a significant amount of our resources in long-term investments, with the goal of being able to provide on-going income from the profit on those investments if/when our royalty income drops. Our goal is to ensure that initiatives we begin now can be maintained even in the face of a decline in royalty income.

While ensuring that SCRA will continue to have adequate financial resources in the future is an important task, ensuring that we spend that money wisely and in accordance with our mission and values is arguably even more important. So along with our improved finances came an increased urgency to develop a strategic plan that would effectively guide the use of that money.

Developing Strategic Initiatives
Strategic planning and the implementation of strategic initiatives have been the focus of the last several SCRA presidents. In the past three years SCRA strategic planning has been based upon four focus areas: Strengthening Our Academic Programs, Gaining Greater Visibility, Increasing Our Impact, and Supporting Our Member’s Professional Development (see Cook, 2012 and O’Connor, 2011 for a description of the focus areas and related goals). The EC spent a significant portion of the 2012 mid-winter meeting developing action steps related to each of those focus areas, and that work has directed much of our efforts for the past year.

Many members of SCRA were involved in our visibility campaign last fall, the development of which was a specific goal under the Visibility focus area. The result was four planning documents, related to increasing our membership and enhancing the services we provide our members, enhancing collaborations with other organizations, increasing the visibility of SCRA and community psychology in the public sphere, and internal communications within SCRA.

The result of all of this is that we now have four identified focus areas for our work with numerous goals and action steps. What we do not have, at least not yet, is
Structuring Our Organization

From the beginning of this process there has been agreement that our organizational structure did not provide sufficient support for the efforts of our members. SCRA relies almost completely upon volunteers, and our volunteers tend to be very busy people, with multiple competing priorities. To respond to this, the EC decided to use some of our resources to hire a part-time Executive Director to help advance the mission of SCRA. Bob Cohen filled that position and during his six months with SCRA he has successfully continued to work on our strategic plan, energize our membership, and form collaborative relationships with organizations outside of SCRA.

Bob also provided the EC with an assessment of some alternative approaches we might take to re-organizing our administrative structure. After a discussion of those alternatives we agreed that an Administrative Director was a more appropriate position for our needs than an Executive Director. This person will be responsible for assuming many of the day-to-day activities of running the organization, as well as providing active support for our committees and interest groups. As I write this, we are already in the process of reviewing several applicants for that position.

Action Versus Planning

My experience throughout this process is that the EC has been faced with somewhat competing desires. We knew we needed a strong strategic plan in place but we also had many well-developed action steps that were ready for implementation. The result has been a parallel process of implementing actions based upon a plan that was still being developed. A brief list of those activities, all of which are directly based upon elements of our nascent strategic plan, includes:

- Increased support for the activities of the Practice Council, the Council for Education Programs, and the Public Policy Committee, including the development of community psychology practice competencies, mini-grant programs, a consultation program for education programs desiring to improve their training in practice competencies, and the generation of SCRA policy positions.
- The development of a new website that will be in place this summer and which will include several features, such as a searchable membership directory, that directly address several action steps in our not-yet-complete strategic plan.
- Several changes to our membership categories and dues structure which are designed to help expand our membership.
- The beginning of collaborative relationships with a number of like-minded organizations, including the planning of a “mini-conference” at the Biennial focused on collaborative projects.

Next Steps

Currently we are working on a comprehensive strategic planning document that will be organized around the four focus areas, list goals under each of those areas, and describe action steps for each of those goals. That document will then be available for comments and suggested revisions by the SCRA membership. One of the challenges in this task will be to identify specific components of SCRA that will be responsible for implementing each action step. While the ownership for many of the action steps is clear, it is quite probable that this process will identify gaps in our structure. For example, we have action steps related to identifying additional sources of revenue for SCRA and
creating a mechanism for providing professional training on the community psychology practice competencies. There is no logical “home” for these initiatives in our current committee structure so the development of new committees will likely be necessary.

Things are moving fast in SCRA. I hope to see you all at the Biennial in Miami in June. Come to the open forum with the Executive Committee members to hear more about what is happening at SCRA and to give us your input. In the meantime, we will continue to provide updates through the listserv. If you hear of an initiative you would like to join, please do volunteer. The progress we are making is only possible because of the efforts of our members.

In the President’s column of the Winter 2013 issue of The Community Psychologist, when discussing SCRA expenses, I referred to “costs related to the AJCP editor position.” I would like to clarify that none of these costs involve payment to the AJCP editor. The editorship of AJCP is a volunteer position and no salary is paid.

Jean

References

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

Greetings! The Spring issue brings a fresh new look to TCP. In support of SCRA’s larger initiative to bring greater visibility to our organization, we have worked closely with our Production Editors at Baker’s Printing to update and redesign the cover of TCP to incorporate the SCRA logo. Beginning with this issue, the PDF version of TCP will be in full color. We hope that these changes are a welcome addition to our readership, and we would appreciate any feedback you may have (thecommunitypsychologist@gmail.com).

In this issue, Jim Dalton and Susan Wolfe have teamed up to bring us a joint column of the Education Connection and The Community Practitioner featuring Competencies for Policy Analysis, Development and Advocacy. The Public Policy column features results of a survey of SCRA’s
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The Aging Interest Group focuses on the productive role of aging in the community and the prevention of mental health problems in the elderly.
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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: Richard N. Roberts, (435) 797-3346

COMMUNITY ACTION
The Community Action Interest Group explores the roles and contributions of people working in applied community psychology settings.
Chair: Bradley Olson, (773) 325-4771
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COMMUNITY HEALTH
The Community Health Interest Group focuses on health promotion, disability prevention, and health care service delivery issues as they relate to the community.
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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: Kendra Liljenquist, kliljenquist@bu.edu;
Erin Stack, erinestack@gmail.com

ENVIRONMENT & JUSTICE
The Environment & Justice Interest Group is focused 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 these urgent changes to our ecology.
Chair: Courte Voorhees, (505) 306-7323

INDEPENDENT
The Indigenous Interest Group is a community of scholars who are 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.
Chair: Neil Boyd, (717) 512-3970
Boyd@Lycoming.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: Monica Adams, madams8@dePaul.edu;
Derek Griffith, derekmg@umich.edu

RURAL
The Rural Interest Group is devoted to highlighting issues of the rural environment that are important in psychological research, service, and teaching.
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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: Paul Flaspohler, flaspopd@muohio.edu;
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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: Louis Brown, ldb12@psu.edu
Bob was a gentleman from Idaho with Chicago roots, NIMH experience and an enduring Nashville presence. Bob appreciated how fragile and valuable community can be. We visited what was an old Eastern European neighborhood in Chicago just south of Humboldt Park where his father lived. We ate in a Hungarian restaurant with food close to that of his Czech heritage. That neighborhood is no longer Eastern European; and now, less than a decade later, the restaurant is out of business. In Idaho, as a boy Bob observed how close the farming community was. Each farm family helped their neighbors harvest their crops thereby building a strong sense of community. Then after the Second World War, the men came home, the economy improved and many families purchased harvesting machinery that did most of the work. The first year after these purchases the farm families gathered and helped each other out just as they had for decades. The men taught each other how to use the new equipment to conduct the harvest. The women cooked, baked and fed the hungry workers; everyone felt more connected. Yet the next year each family harvested much more on their own. With modern harvesting machinery, lots of extra physical labor was no longer needed. The community building had to happen in other ways if it happened at all. In short, Bob saw communities be built, and he saw them disband. He was a linchpin who built and sustained communities for community psychology.

Bob contributed soaring ideas, remarkable persistence and organizational wisdom to life and, fortunately for those of us who are his colleagues, to the field of community psychology. He helped Jim Kelly establish a presence for community psychology at NIMH in the early 1960s. I remember being awed when I first heard Bob speak in the late 1970s. He was giving his presidential address to Division 27 at the APA Convention. Ideas poured from his mouth, a waterfall of insight. His early papers on transactional ecological community psychology, on the third position and later on innovative ways to construe consultation enlivened the field. Bob was a scholar's scholar who stretched our conceptual range. By thinking big, he challenged us to join him on a higher intellectual plane. On occasion Bob displayed his passion memorably inspiring us all. His presentation commenting on the life of Martín-Baró at the Interamerican Congress of Psychology in 1991 in Costa Rica was riveting as Bob communicated his profound respect and feeling of loss following Martín-Baró's assassination in Guatemala. Bob was at the center of the community psychology doctoral program at George Peabody College and later at Peabody Vanderbilt. It is noteworthy that Vanderbilt has sustained and strengthened its community psychology doctoral program since Bob's retirement! Succession realized!

Bob linked community psychologists in many ways. He pioneered an international perspective through his connection with and support of the field in Latin America and elsewhere for many years. Bob served with distinction as the editor of the Journal of Community Psychology. At his address on the occasion of receiving the Distinguished Contribution
to Theory and Research in Community Psychology, Bob reintroduced Jim Kelly’s idea of a Woods Hole experience for community psychologists from many places. Woods Hole was a term for a time and place for being and working together, doing good work, building community and developing insights. For almost two decades Bob has been encouraging work in this area. The nature of the field today is such that the variety of conferences that have developed over the last 35 plus years provides some of this connection and support. Bob understood this and was a regular participant in the Midwestern Eco Community Psychology Conferences, the Midwestern Psychological Association’s Community Psychology Fridays at its Annual Meetings, the SCRA Biennials and the Interamerican Congress of Psychology meetings, among others. Bob also was a force in the two Chicago Conferences on Community Research sponsored by DePaul and UIC. His insights and enthusiasm enriched us all.

For the first Chicago Conference we had the good fortune of having Bob stay with us. We asked Daniel, our then 5 year old, to move in with his brother for a few nights and give Bob his room. Bob had some understanding of the interpersonal dynamics involved in having a stranger come into your room and sleep in your bed, a much better understanding than either of Dan’s parents had. He came into Dan’s room, talked with him and told him how much he appreciated Dan loaning him his room. When he left, Dan found a little model car on his bed. Dan was delighted since he liked cars almost as much as Bob. Another time Bob and I were at a conference sharing a room. Bob left a tip and a note for the maid in Spanish about how nice it was to have such a clean room. Bob was most caring and thoughtful.

He understood the fragility and value of community psychology and did his best to link us together. He built strong and sustainable communities for community psychology in Nashville, JCP, professional conferences and in his relationships. Bob was supportive and respectful of me, a wonderful colleague and friend. I miss him and am richer as a community psychologist and as a human being for having known him. Rest in peace, good friend.

Use the link below for a scrap book honoring Bob Newbrough:
http://www.scra27.org/wiki/robertnewbrougharemembrance

Joint Column: Education Connection and The Community Practitioner

Competencies for Policy Analysis, Development and Advocacy
Edited by Jim Dalton and Susan Wolfe

In this joint column, we again address competencies for community psychology practice. Four authors address key skills for Public Policy Analysis, Development and Advocacy. Their reflections skillfully portray significant experiences and important lessons learned. Our final essay, by Al Ratcliffe, ends with a call for your ideas about that. We may ask you to write an essay for a future joint column!

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Critical Competencies in Community Psychology: Listening Closely and Paraphrasing with Concision, Clarity, and Cultural Competence
Written by María Félix-Ortiz, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, Texas

My friend Jerry took me along to the Texas State Capitol to visit with legislators about preserving mental health funding. Unfortunately, one legislator was “in session” and unavailable to meet with our group. Jerry was unfazed, and remained prepared as we proceeded with other visits. As luck would have it, the legislator stepped into our elevator as we were leaving. Jerry immediately greeted him and launched into a 30 second overview of our three main points for legislators. As the elevator door opened, Jerry finished his “pitch,” and thanked the legislator for his attention. I was completely stunned and impressed. Jerry had met the demands of that “run-to-meeting” culture by being concise and clear in communicating what we needed from the legislature. In this short piece, I discuss how listening closely and paraphrasing with concision and clarity are important community psychology competencies I’ve used in community organizing and advocacy, public policy development and analysis, and in information dissemination and building awareness.
about an issue.

**Community Organizing and Advocacy**

I stumbled into advocacy work when I wrote a weekly newspaper column. Friends from NAMI wrote and alerted me to the threatened closure of our local state hospital, and asked me to discuss the need for a state hospital and mental health care funding in my column. At the time, Texas was 46th in per capita mental health funding. The desperation of the situation was mirrored by letters I received. I attended various community meetings to hear more about people's experiences in the mental health system. In listening closely, I was able to identify recurrent themes across the stories. I found relevant statistics to validate and "paraphrase" the stories into a "core story," and into language understood by policymakers (Brownson, Royer, Ewing, & McBride, 2006; Shonkoff & Bales, 2011).

The result was a "fact sheet," a compilation of attention-getting statistics arranged into an easy-to-read page of talking points organized into bullets, each related to the title, and one impactful figure; references were on the reverse (see for example, Brownson et al., 2006). Legislators consider thousands of bills during a session so any tool used in this work must be brief, clear, and appeal to "common sense" (American Public Health Association [APHA], 2013; Shonkoff & Bales, 2011).

Listening closely was always important. I organized a task force of local social service and mental health providers, and presented the fact sheet to this meeting. One member caught an error and provided new statistics; others provided other stories which validated the original stories I had collected. Obtaining feedback from another set of stakeholders was important in clarifying the message and in strengthening our case. These stakeholders further assisted us in identifying the "conceptual frames" that might create a more accessible message for policy makers (Shonkoff & Bales, 2011). The conceptual frame we developed focused on "family," "faith," "independence," and "citizenship" because these resonate with both Hispanics (a large population in Texas) and are part of the Texan Creed (Keith & Haag, 2012).

Policymakers often rely on "reading people" rather than reports (Brownson, et al., 2006; Shonkoff & Bales, 2011). This is especially important in the Southwest which is heavily influenced by "la platica" (the very important rapport-building inquiries about the family that characterize Latino-influenced cultures). So, I also developed a slideshow featuring some stories for use in talks with more community groups and "influencers." This allowed me to test and refine my own "material"; I was able to see what was most clear and impressive to audiences who were interested in learning more about mental illness.

**Public Policy Analysis and Development, and (More) Advocacy**

Developing public policy can involve citizens through work with legislative aides and in cultivating support for a bill. Aides are numerous, and can be more easily accessed and informed than the legislator themselves; aides influence their policymaker. In our county, legislators, judges, and other policymakers are invited to a legislative breakfast that occurs months before the state legislative session. Everyone can be involved in drafting policy at this breakfast table. Cultivating support for a piece of legislation occurs in state capitol visits. Planning visits to state legislators is guided by a legislator's committee membership and position on the issue.

In our visits, we had to identify and correct misperceptions held by legislators and community members who did not see a need for a "costly" state hospital. We addressed other beliefs like mental illness only occurs in "others;" that these others somehow created it in themselves, or deserved it, etc. We also updated legislators who were "unaware" of their own state hospital investigation, an investigation launched from within their own legislative chamber (Félix-Ortiz, 2005). This is a common problem in the contemporary legislative process where hundreds of issues can be considered in a single legislative session, so community psychologists must know their issues and also be familiar with proposed policy (Wilcox, Weisz, & Miller, 2005). We talked up specific bills, clarified their main effects, and addressed misconceptions about them. Finally, we asked, "Can we count on your support?" Usually, the policymaker is noncommittal, but if the visit scores a vote, this information is best passed along to the bill's authors/sponsors so they can focus on "converting" others.

Policymakers and community members appreciate "leave behinds" (the executive summary for the policymaker, and detailed information for her aides). These also can be shared with various media outlets, and the "unbelievers." Since the goal is to build awareness about an issue, no one should be considered an "enemy" (APHA, 2013). Community psychologists should have a "sales pitch" ready to deliver to anyone willing to listen (or stuck in an elevator). After a pitch, it is important to listen closely; policymakers do not like being lectured, and their feedback can help shape future advocacy messages.

Media relations are frightening to many community psychologists, but critically important in advocacy (Shonkoff & Bales, 2011). While scholars read academic journals, policymakers and their constituents are reading the newspaper, and
watching the nightly news, so press releases and public service announcements become as important as academic publications (Brownson, et al., 2006). Invite journalists to visit a facility or family. Coach community members in how to write a concise and clear letter to the editor. A “family impact seminar” can be another way of disseminating information, and it can be more effective than trying to compete with other legislators, professional lobbyists, etc. at a formal legislative hearing (Wilcox, et al., 2005). Community seminars are informal and relaxed venues for policymakers to hear about community issues. In our work to bring mental health training to our police officers, we invited the police chief to our task force meeting: Eventually, he ordered all the officers to receive this training.

Stakeholders can create their own opportunities to disseminate information. If all the relevant constituents are washing their clothes at the local laundromat, then that’s where one sets up “the soapbox.” Also involve young student constituents since these can be more welcome in some meetings than older adults; student invitations to address a group or event may also be more influential. Where the message is delivered and who delivers it is part of culturally-competent messaging.

In conclusion, policymakers live another culture, but they do rely on both citizens and community psychologists to educate them about important community issues. To this end, listening closely and paraphrasing with concision, clarity and cultural-competence are important community psychology competencies. National Alliance on Mental Illness and Mental Health America offer trainings and mentorship to develop these skills. SCRA maintains a listserv that provides easy access to a community of experts. In developing these skills, it’s important for the community psychologist to remember they’ve TWO ears but just ONE mouth. A community psychologist listens first, and speaks sparingly.

References

Intuition as a Core Community Skill
Written by Leonard A. Jason, DePaul University

Intuition is a hard to define practice competency, and some may perceive it as a trivial or unlikely skill within the domain of Public Policy Analysis, Development and Advocacy. Does it have a place within our toolkit of advocacy skills, to help build and sustain effective communication and working relationships with policy makers, elected officials, or community leaders? I believe it does, as no skill has been more fundamental in my work in the social policy arena (Jason, 2013). In this brief essay, I will describe some of my experiences in recognizing the importance of intuition and suggest ways in which it may be better appreciated and acknowledged by our field.

David Brooks (2011) has explored the thinking that occurs below the level of awareness, within the unconscious realm, which can influence our successes and sense of fulfillment in powerful ways. This unconscious thinking is related to traits such as being persistent after setbacks and accurately reading people and situations. As we try to unravel power inequalities, our instincts can help us break through intellectual barriers and provide unparalleled insights into the vital nature of complex social problems. Our journey in the arena of social change often begins with the recognition that something is fundamentally wrong and unfair. This recognition may take the form of a flash of outrage, but the feeling is clear: this needs to change. Often, we do not even know why we feel this way, but our intuition can steer us in the right direction. By listening and watching closely, ever present signs and guides will provide us clues and direction, and the key is to be open and receptive to them (Kelly, 2006).

Decisions that are made based on intuition can often be as good, or even better, than ones made from more deliberate cognitive processes. We can learn from cues such as silence, tone of voice, indirect verbal messages, and hundreds of other unconscious dimensions that constantly impact us during everyday
interactions. Today, this is called “thin slicing,” and some psychologists, such as John Gottman, have promoted this technique (Gottman & Silver, 1999). Paying attention to these kinds of subtle details, which fuel our intuition, can help us better appreciate the interpersonal dynamics among individuals, coalitions, and community groups that rally to bring about social justice. Intuition can steer us through the maze of misleading information, paradoxes, and obstacles to help us deal with stigma, discrimination, and power inequalities. Feelings that bubble up from our adaptive unconscious are not always right, but they can be a powerful aid in our efforts to bring about second-order change.

Let me give a specific example of the use of intuition in working on social policy. In the early 1990s, when I began reading the literature on chronic fatigue syndrome (CFS), I realized that the CDC was underestimating its prevalence (estimating that there were only about 20,000 people with this illness). Patients had been characterized as predominantly European-American, middle-to-upper class women, and this perpetuated a myth that CFS was a “yuppie flu” disease, affecting middle class and affluent people. In addition, the name given to the illness by the CDC trivialized and stigmatized it, and the CDC’s case definition of CFS was not well defined. Tests used to diagnose CFS were biased toward finding psychiatric problems, and treatment approaches were potentially harmful. I wanted to find a way to make a difference, but was not sure where to start with social activism and research.

It was intuition that steered me through this maze to decide on a course of action. My gut feeling was to reach out to patients, professionals, and organizations who might become potential allies, even though I had no prior contact with them. An intuitive feeling inside me indicated that this was risky, but at the same time, an essential starting point. Over time, a network of collaborators assembled, including several patients and graduate students, the CEO of the largest CFS patient organization, an epidemiologist, a physician, a psychiatrist, a biostatistician, and a survey research scientist. Gradually, what emerged from these discussions was our hunch that CFS would never be provided the attention and resources it needed if it was perceived as a relatively rare “yuppie flu” condition. Intuition guided our initial work in building a coalition of patients, students, organizations, and scientists with the intention of determining the most accurate number of people who had CFS, as well as their characteristics.

The prior CDC prevalence studies were based on a method that relied on physician referral of CFS patients. However, if physicians did not believe the illness really existed, or if some patients did not have a physician, many people with CFS would not be counted in those studies. Our research involved directly assessing a random sample within the general population to identify people with this illness. Our pilot work was financially supported by the largest CFS patient organization, so that those identified as possibly having CFS through telephone calls could be invited in to have a complete medical workup to exclude other conditions. When we collected pilot data that suggested a higher CFS prevalence, our coalition applied for a large federal grant, but we were informed by reviewers that there was no need for us to do this research, as the CDC had already proven that CFS prevalence rates were very low. Our intuition that we could prevail sustained us for years until we secured our NIH epidemiology grant, and ultimately the findings indicated that the true CFS prevalence was closer to one million people (Jason et al, 1999). The largest self-help organization widely publicized our other findings indicating that ethnic minorities had higher CFS rates than European-Americans, and that CFS rates were not greater among those with higher incomes. So much for CFS being a rare, “yuppie flu”. Because of this research, I was appointed as the Chairperson of the Research Subcommittee of the Chronic Fatigue Syndrome Advisory Committee, which makes recommendations regarding CFS to the US Secretary of Health and Human Resources. In this position, I had other opportunities to impact public policy, and intuition served as my steady guide.

Intuition is a process and domain to be uncovered or discovered, as it is an essential quality and disposition within us all. Logical analyses are much easier to teach, and the emphasis on more cognitive domains might have led to the neglect of the more subtle nuances within the area of intuition. However, instructors can emphasize its relevance when they acknowledge a feeling or sense of next steps that need to be taken in strategic coalition building or political action. Teaching needs to create space for this domain, as having an intuition that one’s vision will be fulfilled in the long run can be a sustaining and life-affirming force in the face of oppressive conditions. Social policy change leaders will often rely on conjuring up a dream and sustaining it with intuition in order to overcome the obstacles that we face in our community work. Yet the role of intuition in community psychology rarely receives attention or is mentioned in our published articles. We need to find safe ways to legitimize this discussion if we are ever to deconstruct and explore the real story of social policy.
Public policy is a top priority of many SCRA Presidents, over many years in Presidential Columns, including Bond (1998); Maton (1998); Solarz (2000) and Toro (2003, 2005). Elias proposed public policy as a three year presidential priority (2008, 2009a, b) and most recently Hill (2012, p. 1-2) proposes future SCRA policy influence through the creation of position papers and materials to educate legislators and the general public about specific issues.

**Legislative Context**

This article advocates directly engaging legislators to “build and sustain effective communication and working relationships”. Views expressed here result from experiences with state and federal legislators and staffers in Albany (N.Y.’s capital), as volunteer chair of a legislative committee for over ten years at a small nonprofit representing families of individuals with disabilities. In that role, I engaged many state legislators (N.Y. Assembly and Senate members), and at times, federal legislators (U.S. senators and congressmen), or their staff on disability issues. I often met with legislators or staff alone or with other parents with disabled family members residing within applicable districts (Note 1). This strategy builds relationships and alliances on both sides of the aisle, maximizing access to Democrats and Republicans, across many districts, avoiding the consequences, or poison, of ideological partisanship.

Issues addressed included education, health and day services access and funding, as well as social justice issues like residential services, enabling the disabled to live in the community. Rights to independent living are guaranteed by Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and Supreme Court’s Olmstead decision of 1999, with New York first, breaking written promises to eliminate residential waiting lists and secondly, being non-compliant with federal law and state law implementing Olmstead (Corbett, 2001; 2009).

**Lessons Learned**

Following are certain lessons learned which may prove helpful.

**Lesson #1: Face-to-Face, in-person meetings are essential.**

I use “direct engagement” to convey necessity of “face-to-face” contact with legislators and staff to build working relationships and facilitate access, especially when urgent action is needed. Given the political process, as I experienced in N.Y., sometimes legislation comes surreptitiously with bitter partisanship (Corbett, 2005, p. 155), or other times, like a freight train, as with N.Y.’s swift passage of the SAFE Act of January 2013 banning assault weapons. Here time is of the essence to possibly influence its course. Secondly, face-to-face meetings allow legislators and staff to get to know you, your values and that your CP perspective distinguishes you from others. With face-to-face exposure, you can build trust—enabling legislators to view you as an asset that can help them be more effective. Why do I believe this? Community psychologists (CPs) are trained to: see problems differently; apply systems thinking; be concerned with all community members (Heller, et al., 1984, p.4) and develop, or catalyze, public interested solutions (Corbett, 2011, p. 32). Insightful legislators should perceive CPs as resources to help solve difficult political, social and constituent problems. While email and letters have their place—notably to obtain information and appointments, your potential cannot be realized without personal contact.

**Lesson #2: Directly engaging elected officials, representing your district is extremely valuable, if not essential, to building bridges to other legislators.**

Initially I believed if I connected with known disability advocates and convinced them of a position or bill, I could be effective. So I arranged

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**Directly Engaging Legislators: Making Your Connection To Advance Core Competency # 15 Public Policy**

**Written by Christopher Corbett**

2012 is an important milestone for community psychology (CP) and SCRA. Particularly noteworthy, as described by Dalton & Wolfe (2012), is the drafting of eighteen Core Competencies approved by the Executive Committee (EC) (p. 8), that will greatly influence the field’s future. This article’s subject is: Core Competency # 15: Public Policy Analysis, Development and Advocacy.

This Core Competency is described as: The ability to build and sustain effective communication and working relationships with policy makers, elected officials, and community leaders (p. 12). This article describes the necessity of engaging policy makers, especially legislators and provides guidance to establish relationships.

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**References**


to meet with the most respected assemblyman on disability issues. Confidently, I presented arguments, requesting support. After my compelling plea, he said: “So Chris, what did Bob [my assemblyman] say?” -- a long pause ensued. I was prepared for every question and argument-- except that. I was stopped in my tracks. Why? I never considered going to my assemblyman or senator; neither was a disability advocate. I had to admit I failed to consult my representatives, assuming my focus should be disability advocates. After my explanation, he said: “I work with Bob all the time. We co-sponsor legislation. He is a good man. You must understand you are in his district and he has primary responsibility for his constituents, just as I am responsible for mine.” At that moment I began to grasp deep relationships among politicians.

Whether Democrat or Republican, legislators have long histories of supporting each other’s legislation, or opposing-- where bills stand or fall by single vote. After that meeting, I saw my assemblyman and state senator responsible to represent me as critical bridges to legislators across district and partisan lines. I also realized that pursuing legislative solutions without informing my own elected officials was self-defeating if not disrespectful -- by failing to keep my elected officials apprised.

**Lesson #3: After obtaining access, accept the opportunity and come well prepared for meeting with one or more staff, the legislator, or both.**

Access requires persistence, frequently requests by phone, in writing, or both. Upon success, you are usually told who to meet: a staff or legislator. While many believe meeting legislators preferable, my experience is they present different opportunities. If meeting the legislator, expect to do more listening and answering questions whereas with staff, you can expect more latitude.

Their job usually is to record your concerns and requests. In either event, it helps to be direct and brief, don’t lecture or pontificate and have a one page summary with action requested for everyone. To translate ideas into action, it is imperative to identify the tangible action or commitment you seek from the legislator. Possibilities include: written letters of support (Corbett, 2009, p. 33); co-sponsoring legislation with another legislator; sponsoring legislation him or herself; or referring you to other legislators. Leaving a one-page summary, with action request, also enables your follow-up to ask if or how your request will be acted upon.

With Public Policy endorsed as a Core Competency by SCRA, many CPs should be encouraged to engage legislators who need to hear from many more CPs and who will benefit from exposure to the values and field. With effort, you can connect! If you have any questions, contact me at: chris_corbett1994@hotmail.com.

**Note 1:** rules regarding contacting legislators (i.e. lobbying) vary widely by jurisdiction and affiliated organization (if any), so knowledge of requirements that may apply is necessary in designing your intervention. Also, it is common, at least in New York State, upon arrival at the legislator’s office to sign a log, to identify the organization you represent, if any, or whether you are meeting as a constituent. Such records would enable assessing compliance with applicable lobbying regulations. Other states may have similar practices or requirements.

Christopher Corbett is a master’s level community psychologist with over 10 years experience as Legislative Committee Chair for a nonprofit organized by families of individuals with disabilities that represents the interests of disabled citizens in Albany, New York. He has offered Public Policy 101, 201 and/or 301 Workshops at SCRA Biennials since 2005.

**References**


Adventures in Public Policy Advocacy

Written by Allen W. Ratcliffe, Ph.D.,
Community Psychologist,
Tacoma, WA

I started learning about public policy advocacy in 1975, after leaving my position as director of the community mental health center in Tacoma. A group of mental health centers hired me to be their first lobbyist at the just-opening session of the Washington State Legislature. I had no idea what I was doing, and my performance reflected that fact. Nothing in my prior training or experience provided any skills I recognized as directly related to lobbying. However, a couple of friendly legislators and legislative staff members took me under their wing and taught me enough to get started. I learned by doing and learned from my mistakes. It was, looking back, a wonderful learning experience!

Fundamental early lessons:

- Find mentors and listen to them.
- Credibility and trust are paramount, and fragile. I found that legislators could accept me if I admitted I did not know the answer to their question, as long as I did not try to bluff. Lesson: if you don’t know, say so and promise to find out. Then follow through and bring a valid answer.
- Get genuinely acquainted. I had no lead time before the session began, so I was unknown to any of the legislative leadership and even to some members from my county. That further limited my effectiveness. Over subsequent years, even though I was no longer a lobbyist, I got acquainted with key legislators from my county, provided consultation and information when asked, and advocated for solutions on issues related to mental health, homelessness, and funding. Lesson: Being known helps a lot. Create opportunities to get acquainted with legislators and with key staff members. (I wrote a blog post about that last year. See: http://communitypsychologypractice.blogspot.com/2012/01/useful-new-year-resolution-get.html)
- The pace of change is quite variable in public policy advocacy. Have people and groups you can call upon quickly for answers and to show support or opposition (but keep expressions of opposition polite and civil. Offer solid reasons for your opposition.). This is also a point where public policy advocacy and community advocacy can intersect. Sometimes you have to organize a community effort in order to support successful public policy advocacy. When needed, it helps to bring out the crowd. Lesson: Know your constituents and their concerns. Keep them informed in a timely manner, in order to keep them involved. Know the concerns of your opposition and look for opportunities to negotiate solutions to disagreements.

Over the years, I have chosen to work “inside the system” in various ways. Currently, I am Chairperson of the countywide Mental Health Advisory Board; a member of the City of Tacoma Human Services Commission; a participant in the local Homeless Coalition, the Human Services Providers Coalition, and the countywide (HUD mandated) Homeless Continuum of Care Work Group. Within the latter, I am facilitating an effort to reduce/eliminate discharge of homeless persons from hospitals and jails to the streets. (It helps to be semi-retired and have time to cast a wide net, because it enables me to promote linkages between various community entities.) I have helped to develop policies by offering informal critiques, suggestions, testimony, and consultation. Often, my most effective advocacy has been in private conversations where each participant can speak directly. I have not necessarily led the building of coalitions; often I have joined in and participated as an equal member.

Even though I had minored in Social Work in graduate school, my focus had been on clinical work rather than community organization. If I had known about community psychology in 1963-64, I would have studied community organization. Since then, I have learned public advocacy basically by doing, and by asking knowledgeable people...
Public Policy
Edited by Judah Viola

Building Advocacy and Policy Capacity: A Survey of SCRA Members
Written by Kenneth Maton, Melissa Strompolis, and Leopold Wisniewski

In the summer of 2012, the SCRA Policy Committee administered a web-based policy survey to the SCRA membership. The primary purpose of the survey was to gather information to help SCRA consider ways to enhance its policy capacity. The survey included a mix of close-ended and open-ended questions. Areas of focus included current occupational status, policy experience to date, the most important social problems/issues for SCRA to focus on in the policy arena, areas of policy expertise, and willingness to contribute to SCRA policy activities. Two hundred and seventy-nine SCRA members returned surveys (response rate of 22.9%). Key survey findings are highlighted below (a more detailed report of findings is available on the SCRA Website, Policy page). We conclude by drawing several implications for future SCRA activities to enhance our policy capacity and influence.

Survey Respondents: Occupational Status
Just under half of all respondents selected professor (48.4%), followed by PhD student (20.9%), practitioner (14.7%), consultant (12.7%), and researcher (12.4%). Slightly less than one-fifth (18.6%) of respondents selected more than one occupational status. Among those selecting more than one, the most common selected were consultant (65.4%), practitioner (59.6%), professor/academic (53.8%), and researcher (40.4%). Overall, a large number of SCRA members responding to the survey are involved in the academic arena as either a professor or student. However, the SCRA respondents also include representatives from a variety of non-academic occupations.

Policy Experience
More than one-third of survey participants (35.4%; n = 92) responded to the open-ended question requesting a description of up to three policy influence experiences. For current purposes, only the first area of policy experience provided was coded, in terms of policy domain and policy level. In terms of domain, the most common was policy-related work with intermediary or advocacy organizations (41.3%); in most cases, these organizations appear to be involved in legislative advocacy. The second most common domain was work with legislators (33.7%)—without a specific intermediary or advocacy group indicated. The third most common domain was work with executive branch officials (22.8%). Finally, a handful of individuals indicated work within the legal system (2.2%). The most common level of government was state (41.3%), followed by local (34.8%; including both city and county), and national (20.7%) with only a small number focused at the international level (3.3%).

Examples of policy involvement with intermediary and advocacy organizations include contributing to amicus briefs as a member of the APA Committee on Legal Issues, (national), serving as a legislative committee member for a coalition against domestic violence (state), working with a grass-roots citizen action group (local), and serving as director of a public policy center (multiple levels). Examples in the legislative domain include working for passage of the Violence Against Women Act (national), successful lobbying for AIDS Drug Assistance Program funding (state), and public service as an elected representative (to local
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Policy involvement in the executive branch include working for a federal agency that advocated for prevention funding (national), engagement in research for the Department of Civil Rights (state), and research-based contributions to changes in criminal justice system policy (local). The policy experiences described, taken together, indicate a wide diversity in branches and levels of government addressed, work settings (e.g., academia vs. intermediary vs. government), policy influence roles and activities, intensity, and specific policy issues of focus.

**SCRA Policy Priorities**

Respondents were asked to write in the top three social problems/issues which SCRA, alone or together with allied groups, might work most effectively on to influence public policy in the coming year. Taken together, 515 responses were provided: 186 top ranked social problems/issues, 174 second ranked, and 155 third ranked. The 515 open-ended responses provided were categorized into a list of 35 social problems (see report on SCRA policy web page for full listing). The summary below represents the total number of times a given social issue was indicated. Table 1 indicates the ten social issues of greatest policy importance to SCRA members, and sample responses.

**Areas of Policy Expertise**

More than one-third of survey participants (35.0%; n = 91) described up to three areas where they had substantial policy expertise and could potentially serve as a policy expert. Mental health (11.4%) was the most frequent area of expertise. Sample responses were: mental health user/consumer/survivor issues, reform and funding alternatives; I have a background in mental health funding. The second most frequent was prevention/promotion (10.8%) and responses included: the national prevention strategy of the American Care Act; suicide prevention. The third most frequent area of policy expertise was policy/government (9.0%). Sample responses were: public participation in policy making; lobbying. The fourth most frequent was health care (7.2%) and responses included: medicaid program for children; tribal long term care supports and services. The fifth most frequent was youth (6.6%). Sample responses were: juvenile justice; youth development. Clearly, among SCRA members there are a substantial number with critical areas of policy expertise who are willing to contribute significantly to the policy/advocacy arena.

**Activities for Building SCRA Policy Capacity**

A total of 119 survey respondents indicated willingness to provide input into a SCRA policy-related activity (74.8% of the 150 individuals who responded to this question). Respondents were next asked if they were interested in contributing to three specific types of SCRA activity: building capacity of SCRA members, advocacy, and collaborating with allied disciplines or organizations. About one third (32.9%; n = 74) of those who responded indicated they would be interested in participating in efforts related to building SCRA member capacity, with more than two-fifths (43.1%, n = 97) indicating Maybe. Approximately one quarter (25.9%; n = 58) of the respondents indicated they would be interested in participating in SCRA policy efforts related to advocacy, with close to another two-fifths (39.3%, n = 88) indicating Maybe. Finally, more than one fifth (22.3%; n = 50) of the respondents indicated they would be interested in participating in SCRA policy efforts related to collaborating with allied disciplines or organizations, with more than two-fifths (43.3%, n = 97) indicating Maybe.

Of the 111 individuals responding No to at least one of the three SCRA policy effort options provided, 32 (28.9%) provided a response to the open-ended follow-up question requesting “additional policy-related efforts in which you would like to be involved.” The most frequent category of response was a specific policy area of interest to the respondent (e.g., bullying as it pertains to LGBT youth; educational reform issues; racial justice approach to health disparities). Additional areas of contribution focused on graduate education (e.g., development of a webpage/distance learning course on policy for community psychology graduate programs); policy-relevant research (e.g. research discussion groups; research on the effects of policies); and specific types of advocacy activity (e.g., community-based advocacy; crafting policy statements; promoting awareness about nonprofit rights to advocacy; talking to policy makers on behalf of SCRA).

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**Table 1: Top Ten Social Problems/Issues for SCRA Focus in the Policy Arena**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Problem/Issue</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Sample Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Health Care</td>
<td>39.3%</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>Health care reform, Health disparities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poverty</td>
<td>29.0%</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>Affordable housing; Poverty and child dev.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>21.5%</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>Reading failure; Achievement gap in schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental Health</td>
<td>15.1%</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>Community impact of reduced services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Inequality</td>
<td>12.9%</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Widening gap between rich and poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Development</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>City development related to health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prevention/Promotion</td>
<td>10.8%</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Prevention as cost-solving mechanism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence</td>
<td>10.2%</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Youth violence reduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigration</td>
<td>10.2%</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Immigration reform (e.g., Dream Act)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy/Government</td>
<td>9.7%</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Public accountability for government</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Percentages and ns are based on first ranked, second ranked and third ranked responses combined (515 responses in total, from 186 respondents). Some responses are shortened to save space.
Finally, 42 individuals expressed interest in joining the SCRA Policy Committee (19.9% of the 211 who responded to this item). Another 114 members (54.0%) endorsed Not now, but possibly in the future. Overall, a substantial number of SCRA members appear interested, in various ways, in contributing to SCRA policy-related activities.

**Policy and Advocacy Activities Viewed as Critical to SCRA Mission**

The SCRA policy capacity survey examined the views of members concerning several policy-related activities, including policy advocacy, capacity building, collaborations, and research grants. The survey items were rated on a three point scale (critical to SCRA’s mission, important but not essential, and not important). The findings reported below reflect the percentage of respondents who viewed the policy-related activity as critical to SCRA’s mission. The number of respondents ranged from 256-260.

**Policy Advocacy**

The vast majority of survey respondents view policy-related activities as a critical part of SCRA’s mission (78.1%). Follow-up questions listing various types of policy activities indicated that two in particular were viewed as critical by most members, disseminating policy positions or research findings (81.1%) and developing policy position statements (66.5%). The level of focus for policy advocacy activities, according to survey respondents, is most critical for SCRA at the national level (75.6%), and somewhat less so at and local (55.0%) and state (54.1%) levels, with less than a third viewing policy advocacy as critical at the international level (30%).

**Capacity Building & Collaborations**

Most respondents reported two areas as especially critical to SCRA’s mission: disseminating policy positions or research findings (77.4%) and conducting policy-relevant research (75.5%). Three additional areas were viewed as critical by somewhat fewer members: learning to link SCRA values to policy initiatives (68.4%), advocating with policymakers (59.4%), and developing policy position statements (55.1%).

Two approaches for building capacity were viewed as critical by the majority of members, integrating policy-relevant coursework into graduate programs (73.5%) and providing workshops or training sessions at conferences (69.6%).

In terms of collaborating with other organizations, over half of the respondents feel that it is critical to SCRA’s mission to collaborate for policy-related activities with the Society for Prevention Research (57.8%), the Society for Psychological Study of Social Issues (56.8%), Psychologists for Social Responsibility (52.9%), and the American Psychological Association (51.4%).

**Research Grants**

Over half of the respondents (58.7%) rated SCRA Policy minigrants as critical to SCRAs mission.

**Additional Policy-Related Activities**

Respondents were asked their ideas for any additional policy-related activities (beyond those listed) that are critical to SCRA’s mission, or ideas for important new policy-related activities that SCRA should consider undertaking. The most common responses fell under the following themes: education (e.g., Application based training to help practitioners in the field to better prepare and participate in advocacy activities), collaboration (e.g., Linking up with existing community-based organizations and/or networks that work on policy issues), and research (e.g., Support research on the effects of policies).

**Implications for SCRA**

Moving Forward

The SCRA policy and advocacy survey provides a valuable snapshot of SCRA member views on the importance of policy influence activity for SCRA as an organization, current levels and types of member policy involvement, and priorities for future organization-level policy initiatives. Although any interpretation of finding must be tempered by the modest response rate and the unknown representativeness of those who responded, the survey nonetheless reflects the perspectives of hundreds of SCRA members.

Based on the survey findings, the membership feels it is critical for our organization to engage in policy and advocacy efforts and are very interested themselves in contributing to policy/advocacy work. Furthermore, there are many important social issues and problems that SCRA members not only feel passionate about (i.e., health care and poverty) but about which they have great content expertise. SCRA thus has an opportunity to address the social issues that are important to the membership by providing opportunities to those with expertise to contribute further, and by building the policy-influence capacity of those interested members with less experience in the policy arena.

In terms of providing opportunities and building capacity, the survey provided several clear directions. Based on the responses to questions regarding policy-related activities, the top priorities for SCRA and its members are conducting policy-relevant research and developing and disseminating policy-relevant position statements. When examining willingness to contribute to policy/advocacy initiatives, there is a slight decrease in response compared to the overall question of whether or not SCRA should engage in policy/advocacy related activities. This may be due in part to the number of individuals who do not yet feel capable to personally contribute to policy work. These members might benefit from the top two capacity building activities reported by the membership: integrating policy and...
advocacy relevant material into graduate coursework and providing trainings and workshops.

At the organizational level, SCRA should explore ways to capitalize on the content and policy/advocacy expertise of its members and at the same time build the capacity to engage in policy/advocacy activities of less experienced members. This may be achieved in part by providing opportunities for SCRA’s less experienced members to work with our experts in disseminating research and developing policy position statements. Additionally, SCRA could provide an opportunity for more experienced members to help design graduate course work, provide training materials, and participate in workshops to increase capacity for interested SCRA members. Finally, as SCRA moves forward in the policy domain, the SCRA Policy Committee welcomes your input on this article, and in particular on how best to utilize, mobilize, and expand the capacity of SCRA and its members to contribute in the policy domain.

Expanding Online Learning in Community Psychology:
A Dialogue
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Introduction
Can anyone doubt it now? Online learning is here to stay. Nor can we doubt that it’s accelerating at a pace few would have imagined. Four brief examples: Online courses with thousands of registrants are proving successful; major universities are placing course content online without charge; course credit is now available to the public. Closer to home, APA’s Monitor on Psychology (January, 2013) reports that an online course in environmental psychology – one of our near relations – last year attracted 170,000 (!) subscribers.

“Revolution” is not a term to use lightly, but when it comes to higher education we are in a revolution right now, and it’s moving very fast.

But what about online learning in community psychology? Online work is woven into some of our courses, and there are a few online platforms such as the Community Tool Box; but we have few coordinated offerings and little if any coordinated planning. The opportunity to extend our reach and impact is right here and right now. We’re not taking advantage of it.

This Special Feature of TCP is a dialogue that aims to stimulate discussion – and action – on how we might expand online learning in community psychology. We bring together six global leaders (including one research team) with expertise in the field to address key issues about online learning development and expansion – and there are many,
including goals, audience, content, platform, structure, costs, participation, barriers, and best next steps. The dialogue follows upon a roundtable on the topic held at the International Community Psychology Conference in Barcelona in June, 2012.

A note on procedure: We first asked our dialogue participants to arrive at consensus on key questions that should be asked. We then asked participants to respond to those questions, as given in the text. After that, we shared their comments with all others, and encouraged everyone to respond further. We offer their integrated and edited comments here.

We’d be the first to agree that online learning cannot and should not substitute for face-to-face instruction. And first to agree that expansion of online learning in community psychology brings multiple challenges, many of which are identified here.

But should we be working to meet these challenges and move our efforts forward? We definitely think so. Because online learning, done right, can surely help improve the quality of our graduate training; but also because online learning potentially enables us to reach literally billions of people across the world – one-third of the world has internet access now – with practical skill-building information that can strengthen community life throughout our planet. Is that not part of our mission, and our disciplinary responsibility?

Imagine the benefits if we could reach these goals. And, by focused action, we can.

The time to act is now. - BB

The Goals

Let’s start with a basic assumption: that online learning has potential value for community psychology. Would you agree? If so, how can we best utilize it? Do we want to extend it further? And if we do, what should be our primary goals?

Jason / Callahan / Sunnquist [CCR Team]: For us, the primary goals should be closely tied to the goals and values of community psychology itself – especially empowerment and community participation.

Christina: The primary goal should be preparing people to be successful in bringing about community change and improvement. This can apply everywhere, because many core skills and competencies for community improvement efforts are common across different cultures and contexts.

Hana: Our primary goal should be to make resources available for people in the community – to help those who need the information, theories, and best practices to better serve their communities.

Christina: To build on Hana’s point: In our model, online learning should focus on helping people access information for assessing community needs, plan for improvement, effectively engage their communities in improvement efforts, evaluate their efforts, and sustain their efforts over time.

Cesareo: We may also think beyond these goals. We know there is increasing activity across the world of people sharing experiences related to community health and development (CHD). Social media and other internet resources now contain more successful stories and examples of people dealing with common issues and problems that matter to them.

So these recent developments provide an excellent opportunity to form a universal online learning community, focused on promoting and sharing knowledge, skills, resources, and services across the world. Therefore, our primary goal would be to create a small-scale nucleus for a universal online learning community promoting CHD globally.

Mayte: And we can go further than that. We can envision a multilevel training platform, open to everyone, with various levels of education (basic, medium, and high). In each level, training would be experience-based; and the training platform would feature activities that promote participatory research, with the aim of achieving reflective and interactive learning. This learning by levels would allow people to develop personal road maps that fit their training needs, motivations, and goals.

Toshi: I think we have much common ground. I’d sum it up this way, which may reflect many of your ideas and adds a few of my own. The primary goals of online learning in community psychology [CP] should include the following: (a) to make CP research and practice knowledge accessible in a user-friendly fashion to anyone with internet access; (b) to inform both the general public and practitioners of CP goals and actual examples; (c) to help instill CP ideas and orientations in undergraduate and graduate education; (d) to connect our work with other related disciplines and practices, making it cross-disciplinary; (e) to welcome interactive learning through online activities; (f) to interface with classroom learning opportunities in all higher education programs; and (g) to offer online mentoring, especially for international participants, including contacts with local CP researchers and practitioners.

The Audience

If we could reach Toshi’s goals, that would be a great start. So given these goals, what do you think should be our primary audience? Should our main focus be on students within community psychology programs, or on community leaders outside of psychology, or on the general public? Or on all of these groups?

Toshi: I think our primary audience ought to be broad-based, but that our initial efforts need to focus on undergraduate students in psychology and related disciplines. Perhaps we might create separate tracks for
students (with some background in psychology) and practitioners. One concern here is the level of academic preparation for online participants. We would not just want people to jump right on some “good” ideas and implement them in their communities without further background. I would be worried about iatrogenic effects, especially for prevention interventions.

Christina: We tend to think broadly, meaning that online learning should target multiple audiences, to reach the maximum number of people. Reaching students is critical for training the future community development workforce, and we find that the free resources of the Community Tool Box are frequently utilized by students and instructors in institutions of higher learning.

But making resources available to grassroots community leaders is also essential, because anyone can engage in leadership, at any time. So these resources should be available to the public. For example, some of our current users include village pastors, neighborhood leaders, Peace Corps volunteers, school teachers, health departments, substance abuse prevention workers, funders, government agencies, and NGOs. Why prevent any audience from accessing important learning opportunities?

Mayte: If online learning can involve different levels of training, as I’ve mentioned, our multilevel platform would be accessible to a wide range of audiences. That should be a priority; because if we value participation, all sectors should be engaged and able to benefit.

Hana: I agree that online learning should be widely available, to whoever seeks it. This would benefit students within community psychology programs, community leaders and practitioners, and any others aiming to benefit their community.

For example, in Egypt our main target audience has been nonprofits – especially non-governmental organizations, because they need the resources to overcome the challenges they face. They need updated information, research, theories and best practices of their fields; additionally, they need to keep up with the West and donors’ requests. Having a generic way to get information makes their search easier and provides them with what they need. The information content and format, and the way it would be used, will differ for each category of people; yet, the end result should be to benefit the community as a whole.

Cesareo: And if we are talking about developing a universal online resource, its potential value would be directly proportional to the breadth of its audience. A wide range of public and private institutions, representing different applied social sciences, and working together with community organizations and citizens from different sectors in a multidisciplinary approach, should be among the developers and beneficiaries of this effort.

CCR Team: We’ll try to summarize this time. What we do should empower students, community leaders, and the general public through providing knowledge about how to effect change in areas that are important to them. For students, courses and other offerings should provide them with information to incite passion and create the next generation of community psychologists. Community leaders and others should be able to obtain the knowledge and tools they need to create changes in their communities. By achieving these goals, we will help more students become community psychologists and inspire more community members to become social change agents.

Content Development

Well said. But what about content? Should we be developing our own online content; or should we rely largely on adapting existing content from other sources?

CCR Team: As this project would be a collaborative effort among several universities and others, it will be beneficial to create and develop our own content. In addition to some core content, each university could be responsible for creating an “independent study,” or a series of courses with an overriding theme. These independent studies would encourage students to take a series of courses (as opposed to just one) and gain more in-depth knowledge in a specific subject area.

Toshi: The project to me should involve several steps. Initially, we want to work with content and programs that already exist, and create lots of content links domestically and internationally. After we gain some stability, we could start forming a task force for developing our own online content. All this means that we need to develop good working relationships with many groups and organizations across the board, both locally and globally.

Cesareo: We should proceed both ways. Obviously, developing our own creativity is important, and will help us respond to new needs and demands. At the same time, community psychology is about collaboration among different people and institutions pursuing the same common good. So developing our own content could be valuable if it does not interfere with our collaboration and mutual support.

Mayte: I agree we should develop our own resources, to identify us as a new global platform. But a principle of community psychology is also to seek out community resources and utilize them; therefore, we must also find relevant learning platforms that already exist, and use their content that is in line with our objectives.

Also, to respond to new needs and resources that are specific to each country, we could create nodes, as part of a network of universal learning. The nodes would have the same characteristics as the general platform, and be guided by the same objectives and principles; but they could have content specific to each locality, while also being part of a
global network.

Christina: It’s clear that vast online resources supporting the work of community health and development already exist; so perhaps our goal is to draw upon and combine these resources in optimal ways.

One way is to partner with other change initiatives. For example, we have recently “mashed up” Community Tool Box resources to support implementation of large-scale improvement initiatives, such as with Healthy People 2020 (http://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/implementing/default.aspx). Healthy People staff, in partnership with us, combined their resources with ours to support their own framework for action. We could seek out more of these web-based partnerships.

Hana: Since the audience for online learning varies, the information also needs to vary to accommodate different audience needs. Because of globalization and international communication, much information can be adopted from existing content elsewhere. This provides greater variety. But community psychology theories and practices need to be well presented and explained; development of our own content would be relevant here to the extent we are different from other fields.

Okay, but if we develop our own content, to what extent should it be shaped by potential audience needs? And to the extent so, how can those needs be determined?

Mayte: We can do that by e-mailing a questionnaire to associations, change agent groups, universities, and students.

Hana: Or a different kind of needs assessment could be conducted. This could be in a form of a “suggestion box” or request page, or a survey the audience could take. We should also welcome people to share their experience and expertise. This would help us learn about different needs, interests, and demands, and assess them as well.

CCR Team: Beyond that, to respond to audience needs and enhance the students’ learning experience, we can use techniques from a new movement called “Peeragogy” (http://peeragogy.org/); this connects and encourages motivated learners to collaboratively create content and teach it to others. (A related new site called Course Builder also provides free resources to help people create collaborative online courses. This is Google’s entry into the field of online education, found at https://code.google.com/p/course-builder/)

Regarding Peeragogy, Christopher Beasley, a graduate student in DePaul University’s Community Psychology program, has created a test site on Google+ called Peeragogy in Action (https://plus.google.com/communities/107386162349686249470), using social media as a forum for co-learning. This innovative learning method can be used to provide a greater sense of connection to classmates in an online environment. In addition, by having the students help each other learn, they could acquire a strong grasp of the course topic without increasing the funds or resources needed.

Content Form and Platform

Once we’ve got the content, how should we deliver it? The Web allows us to deliver online content in many different ways, from full courses to live chats and beyond. Then what delivery method, or methods, do we want to use? And what type of learning platform would be most effective to deliver our desired content? Should we use existing online instructional sites, or a site we create ourselves; or both? What do you think are the benefits and challenges connected to each option?

CCR Team: We should develop our own Blackboard platform that we can maintain and control. By so doing, we will avoid creative and content related restrictions that may occur in joining an existing online instructional site. We want to have total control of the content, design, and curriculum; that would undoubtedly be limited if we depend on an existing site to host our material. Blackboard is a leading product for collegiate online learning. It can easily be housed in a simple HTML or Flash site with minimal coding required.

It’s true that there would be some notable challenges to developing and maintaining our own site. We would need to have contributors with the requisite skills and knowledge to create and update online platforms of this magnitude. We’d also need to train individuals to maintain the existing site, or obtain people who already have web design and database maintenance skills.

Toshi: I as well would create a new website solely for the CP online program, with password access. However, copyright issues would need to be addressed. This type of online learning involves risks of infringement of copyright laws in Asia, especially when the materials are rare, and we want to avoid the possibility of some folks translating materials and offering them as their own.

Hana: Whether or not there’s a dedicated website, the means of delivering online content should be diverse, to suit different audiences and different content. I think it would be beneficial to provide self-learning modules, platforms for idea exchange, message boards, and live chats to convey quick information, tips and practices. But as a different example, I have been asked before to “quickly summarize how to conduct research” by a coworker at an NGO; providing a quick “how to…” would be helpful in similar cases.

Still, online courses should be present. People who seek online education may just want to read about something new or find answers to an inquiry. But they might also be willing to commit to a longer time, hence a course.

In sum, I think we should provide content and platforms
in three categories. The first category would deliver quick information and encourage users to network, brainstorm, and exchange ideas. The second would focus on processes and instruction on how to do things in an easy way. The last category would be online courses that would benefit people who want to commit to a course, with more detailed information.

**Mayte:** I agree that transmission of content can occur in different ways: certificate programs, full courses, modules, chats, mobile or tablet applications. In some cases you might use content already created by other existing online sites, but we could also develop new material.

Regardless of the format used, I think the platform should make it possible for anyone to get (a) constant tracking and feedback on their learning progress, (b) personalized advice about doubts and problems — I mean, teaching techniques that promote continuous interaction with the participant, and (c) verification of effort, such as through certificates recognized by the platform, as for governmental institutions and universities. With these elements, the motivation of the participants would increase and the possibility of dropping out would be reduced. Blended learning might also be suitable for this purpose.

**Christina:** I think we have many diverse delivery options to choose from. Our model at the Community Tool Box has been to provide free, “just-in-time” supports, available on our public website. In this model, users can access educational materials in consistent formats that utilize behavioral instruction – such as providing rationales for use, teaching of skills, real-life examples, related tools, checklists, and downloadable Power Points to support learning.

We can also partner with others to deliver content. Most recently, we have partnered with the Kansas Department of Health and Environment to develop self-led online courses to support community health assessment and improvement efforts through Kansas-TRAIN. The national TRAIN organization, at www.train.org, is a platform that’s already widely used by US and global professionals for public health trainings. If we follow the community development principle of meeting people where they are, utilizing such existing and broadly accessed online platforms may make sense.

**Cesareo:** I am less of an expert here, but in making choices I think some criteria should be flexibility and adaptability to emerging needs and resources, connectivity with other existing platforms, and also the friendliness, security, sustainability, and cost-effectiveness of the options.

**Toshi:** Any of the delivery methods mentioned above would be good, though my concern is with the quality of maintenance and management of online materials. From my perspective, students might be interested in “watching” online content as in a TED format with a guest speaker, but not necessarily actively participating in content-based programs, especially if they do not know CP and the English language. Mobile applications, such as for iPhones and Android devices, may be helpful in providing easy access, but students do not take them as seriously academically. I think we need to be conservative in terms of form and platforms, so that we are seen as serious by students.

**Christina:** Of course, there are many other possible ways to disseminate online learning opportunities, including newly popular sites such as www.coursera.org and www.edX.org. Perhaps one way to decide what methods should be used would be to survey potential users.

To show our seriousness, online learning would ideally be paired with engagement opportunities with experts, and with peers seeking to get involved in community improvement efforts. Additionally, learners would have the opportunity to submit work products – draft logic models, action plans, evaluation plans, or sustainability plans – for review and feedback from experienced instructors. A challenge with this model, though, would be resourcing instructor involvement.

**Structure**

However we do it, if we expand online learning there are more questions to sort out, and one of them **has to do with structure.** Once we’ve made some initial decisions on goals, audience, content, and the like, what kind of internal structures will be needed to implement those decisions? That is, who’s going to oversee and coordinate the work? How should those coordinators be chosen? And what form should coordination take?**

**Mayte:** We would have to create an initial open Working Group. Beyond that, I think the internal structure must be formed by those community professionals who truly believe in this project and have a high degree of motivation — because a coordinated expansion of online learning requires an intense and persistent effort.

**Hana:** Most importantly, we should have a clear vision and mission. Once that is established, there should be coordinators, and supervisors or consultants. The coordinators would be paid professionals who would provide the content. They would assess the needs of the audience, connect with existing resources, and develop and manage the information that is needed. The supervisors would oversee the work, supervise the coordinators, and monitor the content to make sure it fits with community psychology. Unlike the coordinators, who should be hired, I think supervisors ought to run for their positions and have SCRA members vote for them. This would give importance to the positions, and a portion of the audience would have the power to choose.

In addition, a possible overall structure would be to have a steering committee of the supervisors, and have...
every supervisor in charge of a leading a different team of coordinators. Each team would focus on a different element, such as content selection, curriculum development, instructional coordination, evaluation, marketing, technical maintenance, or external affairs. The steering committee would make sure all teams work in sync, and then work on broader decision issues.

CCR Team: We’d also need to look at the technical end. If we move beyond our initial low-cost platform option (such as a Google+ site), our long-term goals may require additional internal structuring. Ongoing development and maintenance of a more advanced platform would require volunteers and staff members with significant database and design experience.

Christina: I would think we would need funding to support staff person time, though the scale could vary greatly. Some volunteer involvement would be very beneficial, but some funding and staffing would be highly prudent. If funding were available, I wonder if this might be an area the Community Tool Box team could help fulfill, given our established brand and existence of related capacity-building supports.

Toshi: Yes, structure is a very difficult and tricky issue. Who should take charge? Anyone who has time? What would be a potential lure for those who could become involved? Although many may support CP online learning opportunities, it may be anybody’s guess as to who is willing to take on the charge. I, for one, am willing to contribute to the development of the online system. Perhaps we could identify several other active and committed community psychologists as a potential team for CP online programs, and then ask them if they are willing to contribute.

Cesareo: The most reasonable way to choose a suitable structure is to take into account the tasks to be fulfilled, the resources needed to fulfill them, and the particular stakeholders involved. The tasks to be done right now seem preparatory, to get the project started. Consequently, a relatively informal group serving as an initial steering committee might do the planning and preparatory work. After that, a second phase could be managed by a coordinating or executive committee.

Toshi: However, one of the first things we need to do is to outline the specific responsibilities and tasks to be performed by those of us willing to work on the system. We also need to be concerned with the quality and content of the program, avoiding what happened to Wikipedia where almost anybody can edit its content.

Costs
If we can agree on possible structures that’s a definite plus. So are we ready to talk about costs – for presumably there would be some? Where would we find the money needed to meet our goals?

Cesareo: Well, to begin with, the costs will largely depend on the scale we want to develop. As I am suggesting an initial small-scale pilot project, a development committee might form a financial plan and request a formal budget from a financial committee.

Mayte: The economic costs will depend on our goals and objectives. There will probably be costs for personnel and multimedia material. Professionals will also need to serve as teachers, designers, engineers, and illustrators, as well as tutors, directors, coordinators and expert authors. But we do have possible ways of getting money: enrollment in online courses, sponsors, partners, advertising on the web, mobile applications....

Hana: Although I think that online learning should be available to everyone, I also believe that people better appreciate what they pay for. Therefore a membership system with some benefits, like access to certain materials for example, or discounts on courses, needs to be implemented. Besides the membership system, we could rely on online advertising by community psychology-related partners like universities, consultancies, etc. In the future we could apply for grants and funding to start larger projects.

CCR Team: But as for the costs associated with developing our own online platform, those would be relatively small. If hosted on the SCRA server, the costs would be under $10,000 for the purchase of the Blackboard program. In the beginning stages, we would ask for volunteer contributors. In addition, we could ask for sponsors and donations from the Blackboard Company, as well as from Dell or another computer company, so that we could have our own server system.

Toshi: The major costs include personnel time and skills. How are we going to identify people who can work with a team of online CP program staff? Tech-savvy graduate students would be good under someone’s supervision, but we should not lose continuity, when graduate students graduate; and also we need someone who could serve as liaison between the development team and researchers, practitioners, teachers, community developers, and international folks. SCRA might be able to absorb some initial cost, and then gradually we would attempt to find funding sources. And perhaps we can ask for a nominal charge from those participating in the program, such as individuals and/or departments.

Christina: This is very hard to answer, given the different possible methods and resources that might be necessary. The ideas we’ve mentioned seem promising. I would also be in favor of a joint grant proposal submitted to international foundations with an interest in capacity-building, as well as a possible inquiry to SCRA.

Global Participation
All this is good, but can we agree that money alone...
is not going to do the job? We can imagine the best-designed system, but at some point people will have to start doing the work. And we've been talking about online expansion as being a global effort. So how are we going to get community psychologists from around the world to do something together? Beyond that, some of us have thought in terms of an eventual online global university in community development. Is this feasible, or even desirable?

**Hana:** First of all, I think that global participation is extremely important, especially in that community psychology is dominated by the West, while the practices are all around the world. Global participation would not only strengthen the content, but also encourage the spread of community psychology everywhere.

**Mayte:** It would also validate and reformulate our current principles of action, as well as help us extract new ones.

**Christina:** Yes, if we want to build capacity for community work globally, it’s essential to involve community psychologists and practitioners from diverse cultures and contexts. We would want to include both urban and rural settings, and especially the Global South; all of these would provide examples of different issues.

**Cesareo:** I feel the same way. What I ultimately propose is to test and demonstrate the universal validity of core principles on community health and development, which can be applied in a variety of community contexts. To fulfill this goal, the more broadly these principles are tested throughout the world, the more that evidence base would be expanded, and the more valuable our contribution would be.

**Then how do we go about getting the participation we need?**

**CCR Team:** The best way is to involve our global contacts in the development of initial courses and other offerings.

**Hana:** We should start by finding community psychologists from different parts of the world to contribute, eventually attracting a more diverse audience. This kind of global participation would help overcome cultural dominance and make the information content more inclusive and diverse.

**Toshi:** Global participation is possible. Recently, I was involved with developing a large-scale research proposal involving every continent, with about 25 researchers and practitioners.

It was not easy, but as a result, we gained a lot of perspectives and also enriched the proposal.

The same can apply here. Through networking among CPs across different countries, we can get inputs and direct participation in the development of online learning materials. I am positive that psychologists around the world would be excited with a CP online system if they could participate, above and beyond language differences.

**Hana:** Then after the structures and participation are in place, we could start thinking of an online global university in community development.

**Barriers and Challenges**

We’ve dealt with a number of issues – and maybe so far, so good. But taking a look at the bigger picture, what do you see as the main barriers and challenges to doing this kind of work; and how can they be overcome?

**Hana:** Of course, there are many. As mentioned, one concern is based on community psychology being dominated by the West, especially by the U.S.; we might not have enough community psychologists from different cultures to balance this dominance and provide a more holistic view.

Also, working with different cultures may pose some challenges based on different cross-cultural understandings. Language may be a great concern too, because information may be lost in translation, and community psychologists who do not speak English may not be able to share as much as the others. Audiences of different cultures would not be able to follow if they do not have English language skills. To overcome cultural issues, we need to involve people from different cultures equally, and make sure that information is communicated in languages people understand.

Last on this list, financing the projects may certainly be a challenge, as well as selection of the content. Yet I believe that these challenges have been faced by many other projects, and can be easily overcome.

**Toshi:** So if we want to avoid the European or Asian impression of U.S. domination, we need to think about how we could present CP ideas and practices as applicable to cultural contexts other than the U.S.

**Mayte:** Some barriers would certainly be language and culture, and also religion. Another barrier could be ignorance about new technologies, as well as technical knowledge itself. There can also be problems in the quality of the internet connection – bandwidth and the speed of transmission. Finally, another barrier is minimizing the risk of abandoning learning due to reduced motivation of participants. So it’s important to create a platform that is attractive in its content, its appearance, and its operation.

**Cesareo:** To add to this list, I can imagine there would be limited cultural sensitivity towards minority groups; and some institutions might not be ready to make the effort needed to develop online programs. Among other institutional obstacles, there might be administrative barriers related to giving and certifying formal credit and recognition for online courses. Some barriers for potential end-users would surely be related to language, basic skills and education, poverty, culture, and religion. All of these
would be in addition to general societal challenges such as inequalities in education, stereotypes, and prejudices.

**CCR Team:** In our view, we foresee four primary challenges to creating a platform for online courses and other online learning expansion: (a) marketing this platform to each of our target audiences (students, community leaders, and community members); (b) funding, to support the cost of creating and maintaining a platform; (c) organizing and teaching the courses to maximize their value for students; and (d) making sure that students have appropriate incentives to take our community psychology courses, since many free online courses are available.

**With all of these barriers, how could we go about overcoming them?**

**Hana:** We should encourage international participation and work to develop the different resources we’ve discussed. But we also should not shut out Western contributions, as they definitely add to our available resources and are equally beneficial.

**Christina:** Because core competencies for community change and improvement are often cross-cutting, I am optimistic we can develop supports that would be relevant globally. At the Community Tool Box, we reach a global audience with our capacity-building materials, and we attempt to generalize them with examples from diverse cultures and contexts. Also, language translation and cultural adaptation have been key to our growing global dissemination efforts – currently, users from outside the United States represent nearly half of all site traffic, and this global usage is growing.

**Cesareo:** There is also evidence suggesting that these challenges might be overcome, as shown through the work of supranational institutions such the World Health Organization and the Pan American Health Organization. They have carried out successful cross-cultural activities during recent years, on sustainable development, health determinants, and health promotion.

**CCR Team:** We’ll focus on the four challenges we noted above: (a) With respect to marketing, we recommend creating a marketing committee, described further on; (b) regarding funding, we could initially rely on volunteers and donations. In addition, we might consider developing materials that explain how the platform and courses were created, maintained, and marketed. These materials could be sold to other groups interested in starting this process and so offset the costs we incur; (c) on organizing and teaching the courses, some literature exists that discusses how to best use online forums for learning; we can supplement that literature with a survey to our target audiences to get feedback on what they would like to experience in an online course; (d) finally, to provide incentives, we could give certificates of completion from SCRA or a university.

**Toshi:** Still, among all the barriers and challenges, a major issue will be to identify a group or team of committed community psychologists domestically and internationally who are willing to get the project going and contribute to it.

**Next Steps**

**We have to begin wrapping up; so let’s focus directly on what should come next. What are the most important next steps that need to happen now, to keep this work moving forward in specific and positive directions? Just for example, where would we like to be in two years, say by the time of the 2015 SCRA Biennial?**

**Cesareo:** I would suggest setting up an initial steering committee to do the planning and preparatory work. Since as you know, I favor a universal resource for community health and development, this committee might prepare a proposal on such a resource for the 2015 SCRA Biennial, including goals, services, content, platform, structure, and financial plan.

**Hana:** To elaborate on this, I think the next step should be putting together a committee of community psychologists who are interested and willing to devote time and effort to work on online learning. The committee should gather ideas and contributions from different people and groups. A survey could be used to ask potential audiences about their expectations and needs; that information should aid in designing and planning the expansion.

After that, we should come up with a strategic plan, and create a structure to get started with the work. By the SCRA Biennial in 2015, I hope that we have established a framework for online learning expansion. This framework should be interdisciplinary and intercultural, operated by a sustainable governance structure.

**Mayte:** I have similar thoughts. The next steps could be: (a) Know who are the professionals willing to engage in this work; (b) with them, create a committee responsible for drafting objectives and strategies for action. In this committee, like others say, we would also want to identify the training gaps and available resources, establish an economic plan, devise a strategy to implement objectives, and create a pilot test course.

Subsequently, we would create at least four practical teams: (a) a design team for online training, composed of instructional designers, engineers, and content experts; (b) an instructional team, to guide the activities of professors, tutors, and students; (c) a management team, to handle enrollment, oversee the different levels of training, and maintain the functioning of the virtual learning environment; and (d) a coordinating team, composed of directors, online training experts, and project managers. It
would coordinate the other three teams.

**CCR Team:** We also envision teams, or committees, to maintain momentum. We recommend creating a committee within SCRA, with four subcommittees who would be responsible for progress in key areas: content, platform/website design, finance, and marketing. The content committee would be responsible for determining the course topics, creating the content and finding community psychologists (or others) to teach, as well as creating certificates of completion. The platform/website design committee would create and maintain the website. The finance committee would be responsible for raising funds and allocating budgets to other committees.

Finally, the marketing committee would advertise the availability of our website and courses, using outlets such as social media, universities, and student groups, as well as contacting those involved in ongoing community psychology research projects. The marketing committee would also encourage community participation, by ensuring that each of our target audiences was aware of the availability of these free courses and resources to create change.

**Christina:** To move from ideas to action: ideally, within the next two years, we will have successfully secured funding as well as commitments from various stakeholders to carry out this important work. Additionally, we will be working together on increasing online supports for community change, adding to those already available for people taking local action. We will also be engaging people representing various global contexts, and seeking to share stories of global action, as well as translating and culturally adapting materials. Ultimately, we can build a workforce to engage in community change and improvement efforts across the world.

**Toshi:** We could also do some other things to kick-start the project: (a) delegate specific goals and tasks to other folks; (b) find as many occasions as possible to discuss our goals via Skype and related channels; (c) organize a biennial program to identify those who can make a commitment; (d) bring up our specific goals for discussion by the SCRA’s Executive Committee, Practice Council, Education Council, graduate student groups, etc.; (e) consult with those who run existing online programs in other fields; and (f) make announcements on the SCRA listserv. By the 2014 International Community Psychology Conference and/or 2015 Biennial, we need to have a good grounding on the project.

**CCR Team:** To summarize, the ideas in this Special Section provide an exciting picture of what an online platform for community psychology courses could achieve: a permanently free structure that makes the knowledge and resources of community psychology available to all.

However, to accomplish this ideal end goal, a large investment of time and funding would be required. So in the beginning phases of this journey, our short-term goal should be to disseminate knowledge of community psychology through an innovative platform designed, hosted, and maintained by volunteers and funded through donations. But in the longer term, we are convinced that we can create a fully-functional and sustainable online environment for community psychology learners everywhere.

**Contributor notes:** Cesareo Fernandez directs CIDECOT, a community development organization in Spain and Malta, and has worked to create online learning opportunities in Europe and Latin America. Christina Holt is Associate Director for Community Tool Box Services at the University of Kansas Work Group for Community Health and Development, http://ctb.ku.edu, Toshi Sasao has promoted online learning in Asia and serves on the Council on Education Programs. Hana Shahin has created an NGO Toolbox in Egypt, at www.ngotoolbox.org, Mayte Vega has been developing and directing online community programs at the University of Salamanca and in the surrounding community.

Fuller versions of the comments here are available, and reader feedback on this Special Section is welcomed. Please direct correspondence to Bill_Berkowitz@uml.edu.
“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 an advanced clinical/community graduate student who is completing a self-designed community/internship. Chris will be a mentor at SCRA’s 2013 Biennial Conference in Miami, leading a lunchtime, small group discussion on creating community-based internships.

Featuring:
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Chris Nettles knew he was adopted from his earliest memory, having been brought to his adoptive home in Fort Worth from the hospital at 2 days of age. His adoptive parents’ Texan heritages went back many generations, his father’s to the Spanish land grants and his mother’s to the Civil War. “They are Texans, through and through,” he states. However, they divorced when Chris was 2 years old, and he and his mother went to live with his grandmother; at age 8, Chris moved to live with his father. Both parents remarried.

Although his adoptive parents were very open about his having been adopted, information about his biological parents was sketchy. An attorney friend of Chris’ dad had handled the adoption and revealed to Chris’ dad only that the biological parents were not married and that the biological father “ran off.” Chris’ dad, after completing 2 years of college at the University of Texas, Austin worked in advertising. A second grade teacher discouraged his dad about Chris’ academic potential, but he tested super high on a standardized test in third grade, after which he was placed in programs for gifted students. As a teenager, he was fascinated by astronomy, having started working at age 15 as a guide at the local planetarium.

Around age 17, in the mid-1980s, Chris revealed to his parents that he was gay. “They did not react at all well to this news,” Chris remembers. They withdrew financial support for him, derailing his plans for college. He lived with his grandmother for a year and, after high school graduation (1985), went to work for AT&T as a telephone operator. He worked his way up the career ladder, through ascending categories of an operator and culminating in being an operations manager, responsible for a $25 million budget and 150 employees. He was estranged from his parents for several years but established himself independently. Although he started out not caring about their rejection of his life style, he later reconciled with them – first, with his mom, later with his dad.

He transferred to Boston from Texas in 1989 where he worked on a systems installation project at MIT as a software technician. Boston’s liberal environment was a revelation. “Getting out of Texas was a culture shock. Texas had a gay underground, but that was overlaid by religious conservatism. Texas still had sodomy laws until the mid-1990s, meaning that it was illegal to be homosexual.” He hung out in the South End, Boston’s equivalent of New York City’s Greenwich Village, making a lot of friends along the way. Later, he transferred to Denver, working for Lucent Technologies and then Avaya.

With scholarship help from his employer, he began attending college via night school in 1989 and graduated in 1995 with a summa cum laude BS in applied management from National American University. Although Chris’ telecommunications career had risen rapidly, he became disenchanted with corporate values which he felt disdained employees and unions. “The higher up I moved, the more privy I was to practices that, while not unethical, walked a close line. I began to see the mismatch between my values and the corporate culture.” Prompted by a buy-out as a result of the “dot com bust,” he decided to change careers and concentrate on his real interest -- people in context. The part of his job he had most enjoyed was coaching and supervising.

With a 3.95 grade average, he thought he’d easily accepted into a clinical psychology graduate program. However, schools were not interested in him; he surmises that graduate programs felt that his interest in psychology was a passing interest, “not a serious life choice.” To make himself more competitive, he earned a second bachelor’s degree (again summa cum laude), in psychology, from the University of Colorado system in 2004. His honor’s thesis concerned high risk sexual behavior, an area of concentration which he has maintained to this day.

Chris first learned of community psychology from a professor, Kevin Everhart, a student of Abe Wandersman, with whom he struck up a friendship. He completely resonated with Kevin’s depiction of community psychology’s values of social justice, the systems approach to problems and its ecological framework. He was seeking research experience, having learned that graduate programs expected applicants to enter...
graduate school with that experience. Kevin mentored Chris’ independent research on time perspective on risky sexual behavior. Chris broadened his research perspective to stress and coping and subsequently (2007) earned a master’s degree with honors, again from the University of Colorado, in clinical psychology.

He applied to several clinical doctoral degree programs that included a community perspective and chose George Washington University for its emphasis on prevention and health promotion in diverse urban environments. Although GW is not well known for community psychology, Chris found those values to be embedded in the clinical program’s faculty and coursework. Students are taught how to intervene at higher systems levels in addition to the traditional one-to-one clinical model. He was especially drawn to Professor George Howe, whose emphasis on stress and coping was in line with Chris’ interests. Dr. Howe turned out to be a fantastic mentor, providing strong methodological training and allowing Chris to pursue his substantive interests of health disparities in minority populations, including LGBT people. Meanwhile, federal, State and local governments and nonprofits have sharply increased their emphasis on LGBT health disparities.

Despite the potential at GW for emphasizing community-based health promotion (the program requires clinical students to complete two courses in community psychology), Chris notes that often students travel a “well-worn, deeply grooved clinical path unless you have a deeply independent spirit, which I have.” Clinical students may default to the highly structured clinical training model. Chris sought out training experiences that had a community feel. For example, he externed at a full-service clinic in Baltimore, working with an underserved LGBT population and those affected by HIV. At Washington’s Whitman Walker Clinic, he helped set up a peer counseling program, training first-line mental health helpers who would work under clinical supervision.

Chris sought an APA approved clinical internship but found very few community- and research-oriented placements, especially those concentrating on adults. He found some internship placements that fit the bill, but they were primarily focused on substance abuse treatment. In general, the internships skewed heavily to the traditional clinical model. The application process was grueling, “it was like applying to graduate schools again.” He faced the dilemma of a sharply increasing number of applicants (especially from large PsyD programs) with a flat number of positions. This imbalance causes considerable stress for applicants. “Will I get interviews? Will I be matched? If I am not matched, what then?” In fact, Chris was not matched. “This was a big blow to my ego.” Although the truth is that 25% of applicants were not matched that year, laying bare a serious structural problem, “I began to question that maybe something was wrong with me.”

After licking his wounds, he took the initiative to learn about alternatives, primary of which was the prospect of constructing a community-oriented internship tailored to his needs. Earlier, when he served as the student representative on SCRA’s Council of Education Programs (2007-09), he met Bret Kloos who had mentored graduate students in self-constructed community internships at the University of South Carolina. Chris was greatly encouraged by Bret and two of his former students who had completed these internships – Victoria Chien and Greg Townsley. He shared their information with GW’s faculty, who had no prior experience with such an internship route, and was delighted that they gave a green light to proceed. Having closely read APA’s clinical internship accreditation guidelines, he structured his proposed program to closely align with those standards. GW faculty has shown a lot of interest in his community-oriented internship, but their approval was on a one time basis only; however, he hopes that his example becomes a framework for future students.

In constructing the internship, Chris had a clear sense of direction, a unified theme to work on – health issues for the LGBT population. Of invaluable assistance was the list of community psychology competencies that were developed jointly by SCRA’s Councils on Practice and Education Programs. He used the competencies to map the internship experiences he was creating. Then he networked, networked, networked to find internship opportunities. “I leveraged every relationship I’d developed over the years.” The first internship rotation developed was at GW, creating a comprehensive needs assessment around LGBT student mental health needs, looking at emotional, psychological and behavioral dimensions. This closely mapped a subset of the evaluation competencies for community psychology practice.

The second rotation started later – an opportunity to work with Community Science, Inc., a community psychology practice company that specializes in community capacity building and community evaluation. As part of his work there, he has contributed to a guide for data capacity building which is a tool for local organizations to better understand and monitor health disparities in their own communities.

Chris expects to have accumulated enough hours by early Summer 2013 to fulfill the requirements for an approved internship so that he can graduate in August. He reflects on the experience of constructing a
community-based internship as “not for the faint of heart. While I received almost universal encouragement, the devil was in the details for negotiating a complete plan.” Unlike the traditional, well laid out clinical path to an internship, Chris had to establish and thoroughly document a set of integrated experiences that would launch him into a professional career. And there had to be a payoff for his supervisors.

The toughest part was financing the internship. Chris estimates that, in order to have obtained financial support for an independent internship, he would have needed to have started planning up to 2 or 3 years ahead. Already carrying a heavy loan burden for his education, extending as far back as second B.A., Chris had to take out more loans to support himself through the internship year, compounded by being an older student living in a high cost area, with higher expenses. He obtained a Stafford loan, supplemented by some consulting work to finance his internship year.

On the positive side, his independent community internship gave him a broader set of experiences than he would have obtained in a traditional clinical internship. He broadened his skills with old and new competencies mastered, especially in the area of evaluation. Chris is not sure if he will seek State licensure, but having created a community-based internship as “not for the faint of heart, the devil was in the details for negotiating a complete plan.” Unlike the traditional, well laid out clinical path to an internship, Chris had to establish and thoroughly document a set of integrated experiences that would launch him into a professional career. And there had to be a payoff for his supervisors.

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Regional Update
Spring 2013

Edited by Susan Dvorak McMahon, Regional Network Coordinator, DePaul University
smcmahon@depaul.edu

The Executive Committee met in January/February in Washington D.C. for four days to discuss the future directions of our organization and our field. It was a productive meeting, and one exciting development is in relation to a request from one of our own International Regional Liaisons. For next year, we plan to roll out a reduced membership fee for international members, as well as a revised plan for undergraduate and graduate students and early career members. More details will unfold as we get closer to 2014. We hope that this plan will increase our membership and make strides in connecting more people with one another through Division 27 and Community Psychology.

Community Psychology Training at the University of Ottawa
Written by Tim Aubry and John Sylvestre, School of Psychology, University of Ottawa

The University of Ottawa is the largest bilingual university (English-French) in the world. Established as a Catholic college by the Oblate Fathers in 1848, it was elevated to university status in 1861 and became a public institution in 1965. The University of Ottawa has 10 faculties - Administration, Arts, Education, Engineering, Graduate Studies, Health, Sciences, Law, Medicine, Science and Social Sciences - that offer a full range of undergraduate, graduate and professional programs to over 40,000 students.

Training in the discipline of psychology at the University of Ottawa began in the 1930s and the Institute of Psychology, forerunner of the present day School of Psychology, was created in 1941. Today, the School of Psychology is one of the largest and most comprehensive departments of psychology in Canada, with research and training in experimental and clinical psychology programs.

Beginning in September 2011, the Ph.D. Program in Experimental Psychology at the University of Ottawa revised the name of the “social psychology” specialization to become “social/community”. The revision recognized the fact that a number of faculty members were actively pursuing research programs in community psychology or related fields and that a growing subgroup of graduate students in the programme was pursuing training in community psychology (CP) through their course work and thesis research. In particular, these students completed graduate courses in community psychology, program evaluation, and qualitative methods in addition to their regular core research courses. They were also receiving training in community psychology practice through practicums, research assistantships on applied social research projects, and community placements. Currently, there are eight doctoral students specializing in CP in the social/community stream.

In addition to this graduate training offered through the Experimental Program, CP training has also been available to graduate students in the Ph.D. Program in Clinical Psychology. The program is one of the largest and oldest doctoral programmes in clinical psychology in Canada with approximately 125 Ph.D. students. Over the course of the past 15 years, students in the programme have received CP training. Specifically, all first year students in the programme...
participate in a four class module on community psychology theory and practice. For many students, the module represents their first exposure to CP.

Students in the Clinical Psychology Program who are interested in specialized training can take courses in CP and program evaluation as well as participate in practicum and internship training with a CP focus. In the case of practicum training, students provide 150-250 hours of program-, organizational-, and system-level consultation to community agencies and governmental organizations. Students who complete their one-year pre-doctoral internship at the Centre for Psychological Services and Research, an internal clinical training unit at the University of Ottawa, can also devote 25% of their internship on developing CP practice competencies. The objective of this training is to facilitate the integration of CP values and practice into students’ professional development and identity as clinical psychologists.

Community psychology training in many Canadian universities has been characterized as being tenuous since its beginnings in the 1970s, relying on the teaching efforts of one or two faculty members (Aubry, Sylvestre, & Ecker, 2010). Fortunately, the number of faculty involved in CP training at the University of Ottawa has contributed to its increased and significant presence in the undergraduate and graduate programs over the past two decades. Faculty members offering CP training (along with their area of research) at the University of Ottawa are Tim Aubry (community mental health and homelessness), Robert Flynn (child welfare and prevention), Elizabeth Kristjansson (neighbourhoods and health), Louise Lemyre (social, environmental and organisational stress and risk perception and prevention), John Lyons (child and youth mental health), Pierre Ritchie (ethics, international psychology, and organizational development), and John Sylvestre (community mental health). Virginie Cobigo (people with developmental disabilities) will be joining the CP group as a full-time faculty member in July 2013.

An important vehicle for delivering CP training at the University of Ottawa is the Centre for Research on Educational and Community Services (CRECS) [http://www.socialsciences.uottawa.ca/crecs/eng/]. Founded in 2000 by Drs. Robert Flynn and Tim Aubry, the mission of CRECS is to collaborate in research, evaluation, and training with organizations in the educational, social service, and health sectors to improve social programs and policies for citizens, especially those facing social exclusion. Using a range of methodologies, CRECS contribute to the development of effective social programs through assessment of community needs, development and implementation of new innovative programs, and evaluation of the outcomes and costs of these programs. Ultimately, CRECS aims to produce new knowledge and mobilize existing knowledge to improve practice and policy.

CRECS is multidisciplinary in its make-up with 25 Senior Researchers who are full-time faculty from a range of disciplines at the University of Ottawa. As well, CRECS has 7 Affiliate Researchers who are external to the university but collaborate on projects with CRECS researchers. Typically, there have been approximately 40 students per year involved in CRECS projects as work-study students, research assistants, thesis students, and practicum and internship students. Since its founding, CRECS researchers have completed over 100 research projects in collaboration with community agencies and government at the local, provincial, national, and international levels.

For more information on CP training at the University of Ottawa contact Tim Aubry, taubry@uottawa.ca or John Sylvestre, jsylvest@uottawa.ca.

References
events as well as creative activities concerning visions and actions for social change. We are pleased to invite you to attend this event and join us in Naples in November, 2013. The deadline for receipt of program proposals is March 30, 2013.

**General submission topics:**
1. **Beyond the crisis: new critical visions for social change and wellbeing**
2. **Beyond the crisis: Intercultural approaches and Decolonization**
3. **Beyond the crisis: Equity in Gender Relations**
4. **Beyond the crisis: Togetherness, Community Trust and Building Coalitions**
5. **Beyond the crisis: Education, Health and Employment**
6. **Beyond the crisis: Research Methods for transformative goals**
7. **Beyond the crisis: Innovative and creative approaches to community building**

Now, we will highlight a program. The MSc in Community & Critical Social Psychology (CCSP) is unique in the UK in offering you the chance to explore these complementary areas within a single degree programme. If you are interested in approaches to psychology which seek to critique and reconstruct the discipline in such a way as to place the social, cultural and political context at the heart of all that psychologists do, then the MSc in CCSP is for you. The MSc is suitable for students who wish to use it as a stepping stone to a PhD, a professional doctorate, or employment in related areas (e.g., social policy, third sector, public sector). The MSc is led by members of the Community & Critical Social Psychology research group, who have active research interests in areas including: racism, domestic violence, conflict diversity, multiculturalism, citizenship, welfare, unemployment, migration health policy, sexuality, and gender relations. For more information, including details of fees and how to apply, visit our website [www.yorksj.ac.uk/ccsp](http://www.yorksj.ac.uk/ccsp).

**Ireland**

**International Regional Liaison**

**News from the Republic of Ireland**

*Written by Eylin Palamaro Munsell: eylin.palamaromunsell@ucd.ie, University College Dublin*

I often get queries from people at home regarding what it is like to live and work in Ireland. So, for this issue I have gathered my fellow foreign colleagues’ impressions of Ireland. Once you join Irish society, they treat you as an equal member as themselves. Nothing will change to meet your special requirement or discriminate you. The shop will not charge you more because you know less about the local price level. The taxi will not take the longer way because you are not familiar with the route.

I like to breathe the air in the city. When cycling to work in the morning, I try to breathe heavily to enjoy more fresh air, which tastes like a light jasmine tea. The sky here is clear and low. It seems that you can catch and touch the clouds in front of you if running fast enough.

Irish people can enjoy lots of fresh vegetables (mainly potatoes of course), fruit, eggs, animal food and its sideline production (e.g milk). They plant and produce these foods within the country, which allows them to implement the food security standard and control the food quality easily. They do not need to transport these foods, which also reduces the possibility of bringing in viruses.

**Hang Xiong, Doctoral Student, Economics, UCD, Mainland China**

I would describe the Irish people as warm, joyful and supportive. Whenever I’ve been lost, had any troubles with bureaucratic forms, or any sort of problem, people have provided help without looking for any sort of compensation. The Irish are always prone to have more than one pint, because always one of the mates will...
invite others for a pint and, thus, there is an inherent reciprocity agreement that the beer has to be invited (not paid) back. University facilities work quite well and everything seems to run properly, except the public buses. In a country that has been bailed out by the “troika” how can there not be any signs of protest within the university?? The place of intellectual freedom, progress, and youth spirit? In that sense, I like a bit more the Latin passionate spirit.

Jon Las Heras, Research Assistant, UCD
Geary Institute, Vitoria-Gasteiz, Basque Country, Spain

Having only spent 48 hours in Dublin, my experience so far can be summed up in a word: grand. From the moment I stepped off the plane, I was greeted and welcomed with complete hospitality and such warmth and friendliness. Having travelled a lot, I would say that what truly makes Dublin so beautiful is the people. I often find myself getting lost as I have no sense of direction whatsoever and unlike other cities I’ve traveled to, there is always a friendly face to help me find my way. The language and expressions used here differ to the expressions we use back home in Toronto; however, while I find myself confused at times to the exact meaning, I have found the expressions here quite charming.

Lisa-Christine Girard, Post-Doctoral Fellow, University of Montreal

Marie Curie Exchange Program, International Network for Early Childhood Health Development, Inserm, Paris, France, Toronto, Canada

My image of Ireland before coming was based on Celtic music and nature. The presence of beautiful nature is confirmed. What surprised me was how friendly and kindly are the Irish people. In comparison with English people there is an enormous difference, since Irish talk with a foreigner immediately as a friend (even if at the beginning the Irish accent is hard to understand). What also surprised me is the low political interest of people. There is not a big political involvement, even if I can see that people are getting more interested due to the crisis.

Antonio Bubbico, Doctoral Student, University of Bologna
Research Assistant, Politics and International Relations, UCD, Basilicata, Matera, Italy

The Irish do NOT have a gun problem. Their police do not carry guns. The last time a police officer (Garda) was shot here was 17 years ago. You cannot buy a gun in Ireland. Well, it is difficult and not part of the culture. Nearly all guns owned are used for hunting and less than 6% of the population owns a gun. The fact that you have to switch on an electric plug reminds you that you are using energy. The fact that we have to consciously consider how much internet we have left is an important lesson about trade-offs and scarcity. The fact that the toilets here aren’t filled to the brim with water that gets flushed every time reminds me that we don’t need to use so much water and that it is not limitless (although on rainy days here I wonder).

Time is exaggerated in Ireland (as in all Northern countries) where the summer days are incredibly long. This is the time of year when you can physically witness the days getting longer. They call it “the stretch”. At latitude 53.3 degrees north, longitude 9 degrees west in Galway Ireland, by mid-June there are 18 hours of daylight.

Lisa Giddings, Visiting Lecturer of Economics, University College Dublin
Associate Professor of Economics, University of Wisconsin-La Crosse, U.S.A.

Until next time, “Go n-éirí an bóthar leat” or may the road rise to meet you.

Midwest Region, U.S.
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News from the Midwest
Written by Luciano Berardi

The Midwest Region is getting ready for the SCRA affiliated meeting at the Midwest Psychological Association on May 3rd, 2013. Conference program can be found at: http://midwesternpsych.org/Resources/Programs/PROGRAM%202013R.pdf. The SCRA affiliated meeting will include 27 roundtables and symposia presentations and over 25 posters presentations. Following the MPA presidential address, the Midwest region will be hosting an informal dinner at 5:00 pm. Dinner details will be sent on the SCRA listserve. All are welcome to attend. For more information or to RSVP for the dinner, please contact Berardi Luciano at lberardi@ depaul.edu. Undergraduate and Graduate students are particularly encouraged to attend to this social event; there is a modest budget from SCRA to help defray the cost for students. We hope to see many of our colleagues for a great evening!

This spring, the Community Psychology program at DePaul University is offering a workshop on Community Based Participatory Research. Howard Rosing, PhD is delivering the workshop on April 8 at 5:30-8:30pm at the Lincoln Park Campus at DePaul University. All SCRA members are welcome to attend.
For more information or to RSVP for the event, please contact Bernadette Sanchez at bsanchez@depaul.edu.

We are searching for another Midwest Regional Coordinator to begin September, 2013. Serving as a Regional Coordinator is a wonderful way to become more involved in SCRA and to connect with colleagues. For more information, or to send nominations (including self-nominations), please contact Luciano Berardi.

Announcements and information for inclusion in future Midwest updates should be sent to Luciano Berardi (lberardi@depaul.edu).

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Regional Coordinators
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Joan Twohey-Jacobs:
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Dyana Valentine:
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Student Regional Coordinators
Danielle Kohfeldt:
mkcal1@yahoo.com,
University of California, Santa Cruz

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News from the Bay Area
Written by Danielle Kohfeldt & Regina Langhout

The network of Bay Area community psychologists and colleagues from other fields with interests in community-based research and intervention continue to meet once a semester for an informal colloquium. We are looking forward to our Spring symposium, which will be held in April at University of California Santa Cruz. If you are interested in attending and/or presenting, please contact Danielle Kohfeldt or Gina Langhout (see emails below). The goal of our network is to provide a forum to informally discuss work in progress, network with other community practitioners, and provide an exchange of ideas related to community intervention work. The larger group meets twice a year, alternating between University of California Berkeley and University of California Santa Cruz, while encouraging smaller groups to form around particular interests. If you would like to be on our mailing list, please email Danielle Kohfeldt (dkohfeld@ucsc.edu) or Gina Langhout (langhout@ucsc.edu).

Northeast Region, U.S.
Regional Coordinators
Michelle Ronayne:
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Massachusetts School of Professional Psychology

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News from the Northeast
Written by Samantha Hardesty

The Northeast region is busy finalizing plans for our yearly SCRA program which will be held at the 2013 meeting of the Eastern Psychological Association (EPA). This year EPA will be held at the Marriott Marquis in the exciting city of New York from Friday, March 1 to Monday, March 4, 2012.

We received so many fine poster and paper submissions, that this year SCRA programming will held over 2 days (Saturday, March 2 and Sunday, March 3). Topics covered during talks and poster sessions will encompass work with diverse populations and community concerns. For example, we will hear about some exciting research endeavors in health and wellness, human diversity, empowerment, and a broad range of important clinical applications. We are also very excited to welcome James Shearer as our invited speaker. He will discuss the great work he has been doing with respect to empowerment and those faced with homelessness.

To make things easier on SCRA attendees, the NE regional coordinators have put together a supplemental packet of SCRA-specific scheduled events. This packet of information will be available at the registration desk so please be on the lookout as you register for the conference! Also, for those of you interested in building your community and networking with other SCRA members, please join us in the lobby of the Marriott on Saturday evening around 7:00 p.m. Dinner and drinks out to follow.

In all, we are looking forward to an excellent program and we hope that you will be able to join us in New York City! For general information about the upcoming conference, please visit the EPA website at www.easternpsychological.org. If you have any questions concerning the SCRA program, please contact Michelle at michelle.ronayne@gmail.com or Suzanne at Suzanne.phillips@gordon.edu.

Lastly, the NE region is looking to bring on board two additional coordinators, one faculty-level and one student-level. As we look ahead to the next year we prepare to say goodbye to our graduate student representative, Samantha Hardesty, whose term ends in August 2013. Samantha has been instrumental in maintaining the connections among our new coordinators and in the planning and preparations of the SCRA programming at EPA. Additionally, despite bringing on 2 new members this year, our region continues to be short one faculty-level coordinator position. Coordinators serve three year terms and provide regional leadership and guidance to the processes of membership development, activities, and communication. If you are interested in serving at either the faculty or student level, please contact Michelle Ronayne at michelle.ronayne@gmail.com.
Rural Issues
Announcement & Brief Report
Edited by Susana Helm
and Cecile Lardon

Announcement:
Theory, Research, Teaching/Learning, Service, Practice. For the Rural TCP columns we will be highlighting the work of community psychologist in their rural environments. In addition to polling our current members, we are also soliciting submissions for upcoming issues. Among other areas of interest, we would like to know…

• How did you become a rural community psychologist?
• What type of rural activities are you involved in now?
• What were critical aspects of your training that influence(d) your commitment to improving rural well-being?
• How do you incorporate a rural voice in your teaching?
• What theories best inform your rural endeavors?

This is a great opportunity for students to share their preliminary thesis or dissertation work. We also welcome inquiries, if you have an idea that is not completely formed. With any submission, we will provide feedback in the form of track changes and comment bubbles on your word document. Given the timeline outlined below, we will provide fairly quick turn-a-round, so that a series of revisions is possible. We aim for submissions of about 1200 words, with up to 10 APA style references. Photographs (jpegs) and other graphics enhance articles, which are now published in color!

Please send submissions to Susana (HelmS@dop.hawaii.edu) and Cecile (cslardon@alaska.edu).

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Brief Report
Ethics in Community Engaged Scholarship – How to Protect Small Rural Communities?
Written by Susana Helm, PhD, University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa

My name is Susana Helm. In addition to being a co-chair of the Rural Interest Group, I am an Associate Professor in the Department of Psychiatry, which is housed in our medical school. Our university does not have its own teaching hospital; rather our students, residents, faculty, and staff conduct research, engage in clinical practice and education, and provide other relevant health services in community venues. As such, most of what we do may be considered community engaged scholarship. For example, soon after joining our department in 2006, I was fortunate to become involved in improving access to mental health services in rural and remote areas of our state, primarily through the use of telepsychiatry (Chung-Do, Helm et al., 2012; Helm, Alicata et al., 2011; Helm, Koyanagi et al., 2010; Helm, Swogger, Dunnebier, 2009; Onoye, Helm, et al, in press). The telepsychiatry initiative has expanded to additional rural locations as part of our Rural Health Collaboration, as well as for providing services to elderly with limited mobility (Lee, Mai, Suzuki, Helm, 2012).

Like many areas in the US, most rural locales in our state are designated by the federal government as Medically Underserved Areas and/or Medically Underserved Populations (MUA/MUP), as well as Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSA). While this creates unique opportunities to provide behavioral and mental health services, there also are vulnerabilities. For example, there is a critical need to provide services in rural areas and to engage in research and education/professional development in support of high quality services. However, the rural community and the university may not pause to negotiate the way in which the service and related scholarship will be provided in terms of public dissemination. The impetus to disseminate the results of community engaged scholarship may result in serious negative unintended consequences for both the community and the university (e.g. Foulks, 1989). In consideration that psychiatry is not a well understood field, along with the broad stigma of mental health/mental illness, protecting our community partners and ourselves from this type of unintended negative consequence and further stigma is paramount. While this process ought to begin at the inception of an idea for community engaged scholarship, and may include protecting the community’s identity in publicly disseminated scholarship, this level of planning and negotiating often is absent or late in coming. For the latter case, our main interest is protecting individual and community agency by anonymizing community and/or community organization in publicly disseminated community engaged scholarship.

As you may know, Hawai‘i is largely a rural state, comprised of several islands within which are located small and culturally
unique communities, served by a variety of small community-based organizations, medical clinics, and hospitals. Furthermore, as one of the most ethnically diverse states, we have no majority population. Given our small population size (approximately 1.5m) combined with ethnic variation and small communities, it is not hard for the public to ascertain community identity without due diligence on our part. Therefore, we are interested in balancing the academic freedom of members of our department (to describe what we do, where, and with whom) with the fundamental need to protect our community partners and the populations we serve.

Part of my current responsibility is to develop ethical guidelines for community engaged scholarship. While I have found excellent examples for community engaged research (e.g. Ross, et al, 2010; Trimble & Fisher, 2006), I am finding few well-articulated examples for the clinician scholar (e.g. Meurer & Diehr, 2012), a role which the majority of our faculty, residents, and students either fulfill or aspire. An important area of distinction for our department is the concept of public dissemination. We have defined ‘public’ to refer to scholarly venues in which people who are not members of the department may be present. This is often the case for psychiatry grand rounds which is available for continuing medical education, and may also include instances of case reviews conducted for educational purposes. We have defined ‘dissemination’ to include all forms of scholarship, not only limited to research which is guided by ethical standards set by institutional review boards. Oral and written presentations of scholarly activities may be conducted in educational, training, and professional development venues; as well as community presentations and workshops, and other clinical settings.

Another important distinction for us it to define ‘community’. Communities commonly are defined using spatial or relational parameters. Spatial communities refer to catchment areas and neighborhoods, or other geographic parameters. Examples include the State of Hawai’i, City & County of Honolulu, or the university campus. Relational communities refer to groups and organizations bound by a common interest, issue, or characterization. Examples include members of the American Psychiatric Association, members of the rural Interest Group of SCRA, or people with a serious mental illness (SMI). There are intersections of spatial and relational communities, such as the SMI population residing in rural areas in the State of Hawai’i.

However, the extent to which spatial and/or relational communities are formally structured (which varies along a continuum) matters in terms of community capacity for self-representation, self-determination, and agency. This is because ethical decision making in community engaged scholarship rests upon community agency. While some scholars have defined ‘community’ exclusively as groups with clearly defined internal structures and leadership (Ross et al, 2010), other scholars and practitioners would include in the definition of community those groups with less defined leadership and structure. For example, the SMI population residing in rural areas of the State of Hawaii may not have a formal organizational or leadership structure. In terms of community psychology, the field promotes concepts of social justice, and many of us work in the area of grass roots activism with loosely defined groups and communities such as the SMI population residing in rural areas in the State of Hawaii. As a result, ethical decision making becomes challenging, especially with respect to disseminating our scholarship.

Even in the case where a community has a formal organizational and leadership structure, members or representatives of their respective spatial/relational community may not have the authority to speak for or make decisions on behalf of their community. It is incumbent on the university-based scholar (whose job usually requires public dissemination of scholarly activities) to work with their community partners to determine who that authority is. In some cases the authority is well defined, in other cases the authority is loosely or undefined. Generally, there is a continuum of how well a community defines its authority. Further still, there may be situations in which there is an identifiable authority, but may not be trusted by some or even most of the people for whom they are responsible. Communities and community organizations are not without their own complex relationship dynamics! In situations where a well defined community authority exits and it appears that the authority is trusted by its community, it may be possible to obtain a formal agreement in which community identity is a) always revealed, b) never revealed, or c) revealed on a case-by-case example, in which case a protocol must be established. In the case that community authority is not well defined or relationship dynamics are unclear, our department is currently in discussion to default to protect the community identity by maintaining confidentiality and anonymity in publicly disseminated scholarship. However, as stated above, there is a need to balance academic freedom with community agency, particularly given our rural and ethnically diverse state.

We are very interested to learn from you – rural community psychologists and rural community practitioners. How have you conceptualized this issue of protecting rural communities? What guidelines are working for you? What ethical challenges or dilemmas have you confronted?
References

School Intervention Interest Group
*Edited by Paul Flaspohler and Melissa Maras*

Greetings from the School Intervention Interest Group! Over the past several years, this column has focused on highlighting interdisciplinary approaches to research, policy, and practice in schools. We continue that tradition in this issue with an article that focuses on student-teacher relationships through a conceptual lens informed by two literatures with distinct disciplinary roots: emotional labor and therapeutic alliance. These authors argue that teachers are under-prepared for the emotional experience of teaching, resulting in negative impacts on job performance and teacher retention, as well as lost opportunities to positively influence student well-being and success. They conclude with recommendations targeted towards collaborative work among educators and psychologists with a focus on specific roles for community psychologists.

Merging Pathways: The Interdisciplinary Study of Emotional Labor and Therapeutic Alliances in Schools
Written by Elizabeth Levine Brown, George Mason University and Michael W. Valenti, Pressley Ridge

A large body of research demonstrates the lasting impact that positive, pedagogical relationships between teachers and students have on shaping developmental and academic outcomes of children. Considering the influential power of the student-teacher relationship, schools would benefit from retaining teachers who are able to forge these positive connections. Unfortunately, current trends show that 46% of K-12 educators leave the teaching profession within the first five years (The National Education Association [NEA], 2008), and in fact research documents that within the first three years, one-third of new U.S. teachers exit the field (Ingersoll, 2012). These retention concerns can have significant implications on the developmental and academic success of students. Reasons for high turnover rates are due to multiple factors related to teachers’ well-being including high job stress, feelings of isolation and lack of value, concerns for compensation and benefits (National Technical Assistance and Quality Assurance Center, 2009), and poor preparation (Levine, 2006).

Notably, many teacher preparation programs focus exclusively on academic content with little emphasis on training teachers for the emotional complexities of their jobs as well as the range of emotional, behavioral and mental health challenges that their students might face (Maras & Weston, 2011). Although extensive bodies of education and psychology literatures state that expertise and training teachers for the emotional content with little emphasis on training teachers for the emotional complexities of their jobs as well as the range of emotional, behavioral and mental health challenges that their students might face (Maras & Weston, 2011). Although extensive bodies of education and psychology literatures state that expertise and training teachers for the emotional
findings supporting the emotive work in teaching (Hargreaves, 2000), there has been little investigation into the role of emotion in the classroom and how emotion, in particular emotional labor, influences teachers’ job performance and sustainability in the field, as well as support for students. Emotional labor, a theory from organizational psychology, is the deliberate suppression or expression of emotion to meet organizational goals (Grandey, Diefendorff, & Rupp, 2013). Past studies on emotional labor primarily explored how constructs of emotional labor, including surface, deep and natural acting as well as emotional display rules, link to job-related outcomes such as job satisfaction (Bono & Vey, 2005), emotional exhaustion (Kim, 2008) and burnout (Zhang & Zhu, 2008). More recent studies argue that if educators were more prepared for the emotional labor experienced in their jobs, research findings might show more promising results in teacher retention, teacher-student interactions and supervision strategies to support educators (Brown, 2011).

Malecki and Demaray (2003) argue that “students seem to rely most on their teachers’ emotional support. This type of support has been found to be the best predictor of academic, social and behavioral outcomes” (p. 249). Thus, it is possible that educators who are unprepared to process the emotional labor associated with teaching may struggle to create positive, impactful relationships with their students. The therapeutic alliance, a construct which attempts to explain the impact of the quality of relationships between service providers (e.g., educators) and their clients (e.g., students), refers to the bond or attachment formed during treatment (e.g., instruction and learning), as well as the collaborative nature in which the service provider and client agree upon goals and tasks for treatment (Horvath & Bedi, 2002). Findings suggest that healthy therapeutic alliances predict enhanced treatment outcomes for children and adolescents (Shirk & Karver, 2003). Studied in the context of psychotherapists and their patients initially, current research has begun to explore the effects of the therapeutic alliance in other settings, particularly in educational environments.

How do teachers process or do not process their emotional labor can have a significant influence on their ability to forge therapeutic alliances with their students. Therefore, shared directives for research in emotional labor and therapeutic alliance include (a) directions for teacher preparation, (b) influences on teacher-student interactions, and (c) improvements on developmental outcomes for children and youth. Bridging our interdisciplinary understandings of emotional labor and therapeutic alliance has important implications for educators and psychologists alike. This common agenda empowers stakeholders to share their knowledge and experiences, fosters ecological collaboration across school-based systems and explores new approaches for supporting healthy relationships within communities. Increased knowledge in this field of study could lead to several ecological advances in teacher preparation, student-teacher relationships, school climate and home-school communications. Examples of potential outcomes for this collaboration include:

1) Expanding our understanding and conceptualization of emotional labor and therapeutic alliance across understudied milieu

A logical step for the emotional labor and therapeutic alliance literatures is to investigate these constructs together in varied education environments. How do teachers who work with challenging students experience emotional labor? Are there differences in how teachers experience emotional labor across educational contexts (regular education vs. special education)? How does a teacher’s ability to process emotional labor impact or hinder the development of alliances with students? Providing answers to these questions could enlighten educational practice and lead to significant opportunities for collaboration across additional systems and services. One example is expanding this line of inquiry to include parents and communities, as teacher-student alliances are certainly influenced by their surrounding contexts. In addition, as mental health services become more integrated in schools, particular attention should be paid to the emotional labor experienced by external service providers in expanded school mental health systems.

2) Informing and improving teacher preparation programs

It is important for teachers to understand how their emotion management influences their behavior and their relationships with students. An exploration of emotional labor and the therapeutic alliance could lead to the development of coursework which (a) clearly defines the emotional practices associated with teaching, and (b) provides a shared language for discussing issues related to emotional labor. Preparing teachers to enter the field with a framework for processing and communicating their needs in regards to the emotional demands of the job may lead to a reduction in workplace stress and improved relations with students. Findings could also help to establish federal and/or state teacher certification requirements that include a demonstration of emotional and relational competence, further assisting newer teachers to respond appropriately when performing emotional labor and increasing their ability to forge healthy alliances.

3) Improving the quality of teacher training/coaching

Research has indicated that teachers identify emotional support as a characteristic of effective mentorship or coaching (Whitaker, 2000). Moreover, as most children and youth believe that it is the adult’s job to maintain a positive alliance (Manso, Rauktis, & Boyd, 2008), it is important for supervisors to urge teachers to actively reflect on
their reactions to student behavior as well as how students perceive those reactions. Therefore, school administrators, higher education faculty and school mentors must also consider the effects of educators’ emotional labor when providing supervision. Coaching that targets formative skill development concerning emotional labor could foster an increased emotional dialogue between supervisor and teacher that is grounded in research and depersonalized. Examining the interactions between emotional labor and the development of a therapeutic alliance could also lead to developments for teacher supervision and evaluation as well as advance professional collaborations across ecological systems to ensure that new practices and polices optimally promote students educational and social success.

**Conclusion**

The intersection of emotional labor and the therapeutic alliance is a relatively understudied phenomenon. Studying these theories in tandem requires the pooling of varied resources from the fields of psychology, social work and education as a means to turn research into actionable steps that enhance service delivery. Therefore, it is important to engage community psychologists to facilitate the collaborative process and maximize the contribution of all stakeholders. Community psychologists forge the professional communities which are committed to acting together to support learning and to improve stakeholders’ outcomes (Mellin, 2010). As such, community psychologists can help to facilitate the meaningful interdisciplinary collaboration required to translate findings into interventions, professional trainings, classroom strategies, or therapeutic practices that can improve teacher retention/selection, student-teacher alliances, and teachers’ ability to process their emotional labor.

**References**


Greetings SCRA Student Members!

As National Student Representatives we would like to update our student members on a change that will be implemented in order to better serve and represent our SCRA student members.

The first change concerns the way National Student Representatives manage annual student elections. Each year we select one current dues paying SCRA student member to nominate him/herself or someone they know who would be a strong candidate for the position. Upon receiving nominations, current SCRA student members are encouraged to vote and select the best candidate to serve a two-year term as NSR. The nominee must have a background in the field of Community Psychology, must demonstrate involvement in prior SCRA related activities, and must be committed to fulfill the term of office while remaining a doctoral student for the duration of their period serving as NSR. The call for nominees will be announced via the SCRA student listserv near the end of March. Voting will be limited to current SCRA student members who have paid their annual membership fees. Students will receive the list of candidates via email, along with an encouragement to cast a vote through an anonymous link via electronic data collection, like SurveyMonkey. Election of the new National Student Representative will be determined by majority vote, and the candidate will assume office in conjunction with the annual 2013 APA convention in Honolulu, Hawaii.

Our role as National Student Representatives is to serve as liaisons and representatives of student needs, to advocate of behalf of our SCRA student members on topics such as professional development, mentoring, research and practice, publications in The Community Psychologist, SCRA Student Research Grants, and travel grants to ECO regional conferences, the annual APA convention, and the SCRA biennial.

If you are interested in running for this position but have questions about the role and responsibilities, please send us an email at scrastudentreps@gmail.com

Also, we encourage all our current SCRA student members to join our student listserv for up to date, relevant information tailored to student needs and interests. For specifics on how to join, send us an email!

We are looking forward to the 2013 SCRA Biennial Conference in Coral Gables, Florida on June 26th – 29th, and hope to see many of our former and current SCRA student members at the “Student Member Mixer.” Stay tuned for more!

Sincerely,

Jesica & Danielle
National Student Representatives

How to Make Your Practicum Practical
Written by Sara A. McGirr and Jennifer A. Lawlor, Michigan State University

For many students of community psychology, taking part in a practicum or field experience is an important rite of passage. As we considered our own undergraduate and graduate practicum experiences one day over coffee, we reflected on some of the ways that we had (or wished we had) maximized the potential benefits of such projects for both our community partners and for our own academic careers. We decided to summarize some of these lessons learned into recommendations for students embarking upon field experiences in a presentation at the 2012 Midwest Eco Conference. We now share them here in hopes that these brief recommendations will prove useful both to student readers as they begin their work, and to faculty readers as they provide guidance to their students.

Maximizing Community Partner Benefits

As you move between academic and community contexts, you are in a key position to build networks. You are linked to people and organizations that your community partner might not be. Facilitate connections between them. One great way to do this is to invite them to university events or conferences and to introduce them to other faculty members, students, university outreach representatives, or potential donors that you may be connected to through your affiliation with the university. In addition, there may be relevant student groups or activities on campus where your partner could get the word out about services they offer and opportunities for student engagement in their work.

As a student, you also have an incredible amount of information and resources at your fingertips. Share these with your community partner. Sharing relevant scholarly articles you encounter through coursework or a literature search can provide information that community partners might not otherwise have access to. You can also share less formal resources, like handouts or notes you encounter at practitioner-focused conferences, online resources like The Community Toolbox, or listservs and newsletters within their area of work. Additionally, you can compile “best practice” interventions through your information resources for consideration as your partner develops new programming.

Being involved with university research has the potential to be very beneficial for an organization’s reputation, so show them off! Publishing with a community partner in an academic journal or presenting at a conference can promote your partner’s approach to their work and provide another avenue to connect with others who seek to address similar issues. Further, you can write a news release about the partner’s work (as well as your own) and send it to the university or local newspaper, or write a description of your collaboration that they can use for grant proposals.
Finally, disseminating a partner’s “best practices” to colleagues or online collections can also expand the use of their programming to benefit others doing similar work.

Neither you nor your community partner wants you to spend hours developing something that won’t be used. Promote utilization by framing your work with the values of the community partner and the intended use in mind. Maintain a culture of active dialogue about your work with your partner throughout the process and explicitly tie each step of the process back to its usefulness. Finally, don’t forget to take steps to understand how change happens in the sphere you’re working in and be strategic in using these channels.

**Maximizing Student Benefits**

Practicum settings frequently place you in professional situations that might not come up in academia. Take advantage of these professionalization opportunities. Learn about the group’s organizational culture and the politics of community-based work. This is a great time to practice operating within rapidly shifting organizational structures and to discover how to balance the stresses (and joys) of community-based work with other life commitments. Additionally, you can organize personal learning objectives and negotiate your role and responsibilities to maximize growth in these areas. Finally, you can take advantage of the opportunity to build an increased network of community connections that have the potential to be partners in future work.

By taking interests outside of a theoretical classroom context and into the community, you can begin to understand how you relate to the environment in which you work. Take the time to reflect on your experiences. Through this process, you can gain further understanding of power and privilege as well as how your own background might inform the work that you do. Reflection can also help you hone your topical and methodological research interests.

Undergraduates can reflect on future directions and the possibility of graduate school or community-based work after graduation, while graduate students can take this opportunity to reflect on whether they want to work in an applied or academic setting after completing their degrees.

Tangible products often come to mind as the most common outcome from a field experience. Be strategic, and these products may serve you in a number of ways. Collected data can be used for a thesis, dissertation, or publication. You can also develop conference presentations (potentially with your community partner) about the data or another aspect of the partnership process. Writing and presenting about your work is an excellent space to connect theories and lessons from the classroom to your practicum setting. (Don’t forget, it is critical that you obtain IRB approval before collecting data with a partner if you want to use it for academic work!)

Finally, practicum projects can end up guiding your research or practice for years to come. Use these opportunities to build real-life experience that will improve your approach and set you up for rewarding work in the future. By spending time with community partners, you can develop a personal connection to a community setting or a deeper understanding of a social issue to spark your passion and inform future research. You can also hone practical skills for maximizing community assets and ameliorating challenges, as well as cultivating an intuitive understanding of the timetables for community change.

Despite our best-laid plans, sometimes our efforts simply don’t bear the fruit we had hoped. Sometimes ideas fall flat, our data just won’t work for a milestone project or a publication, or partnerships sour. It happens. Despite the potential for these mishaps, we encourage you to do what you can to set yourself up for the ideal win-win situation in which everyone benefits. Keep these initial recommendations in mind and you’ll be well on your way! Good luck to all the students beginning their work with community partners in 2013!

**Want to learn more? Check out these resources for additional information:**


Promising Practices Network: promisingpractices.net
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 thecommunitypsychologist@gmail.com 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/Footer:** Do not use headers and footers.

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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Senior Member—must be 65 or over, retired, and a member of SCRA/Div 27 for 20 years

Are you retired? ___ Yes ___ No
What year were you born? _______
What year did you join SCRA? _______

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<th>Initiative Name</th>
<th>Please Consider Giving</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>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.</td>
<td>5.00  10.00  15.00  $_______ . ____</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>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.</td>
<td>5.00  10.00  15.00  $_______ . ____</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TOTAL: $_______ . ____

Payment by:

☐ Enclosed check (made out in United States dollars, paid to the order of SCRA)

☐ Charge to my credit card: ___ Visa ___ MasterCard

Name on Card: __________________________
Billing Address: __________________________
City: __________________ State: _____ Zip: ____________
Security Code: __________

Authorized Signature: __________________________
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
Mentoring at the Biennial Conference

The upcoming Biennial Conference in Coral Gables will feature, for the sixth successive time, the always popular Mentoring Program. This unique opportunity was created to serve the needs of students and early careerists or anyone new to the field of Community Psychology. On site throughout the conference will be 22 pre-designated mentors who represent a broad range of our field, from graduate students to senior professionals and from various career paths and interests. Mentoring activities include three activities: an orientation breakfast with tips on how to get the most out of the conference; your selection of one or two lunchtime small group discussions led by the mentors on two successive days; and informal meet ups with the mentors to talk about ... anything you want, throughout all the days of the conference. The mentors will be profiled in a booklet of photos and mini biographies to be made available to you and are identified by the MENTOR ribbons they will wear. To get a head start on your biennial conference experience, contact the mentoring program’s coordinator -- glorialevin@verizon.net Since you are the future of our field, Gloria would love to chat with you long before we arrive on site in Coral Gables. (Yes, really.)

Summit on the Future of Community Psychology Practice

The Community Psychology Practice Council (CPPC) invites you to the Second Practice Summit, being held at the 2013 Biennial Conference, on Wednesday, June 26, 1-5 pm. The First Practice Summit, held at the 2007 Biennial Conference, attracted 100 participants who arrived at a vision of an enhanced role for the practice of Community Psychology. Through communal action over the intervening years, many of the targeted goals were achieved. At this upcoming Summit, we will decide our future action agenda, with workgroups formed to collaborate after the conference to realize the goals. Lunch will be provided; there is no charge for the Summit (other than your good ideas and effort). All are welcome, including students and those who may not have had a chance to participate in the CPPC’s activities before. Plan your travel to arrive in Miami in time for the Summit. Further information can be obtained from Gloria Levin (glorialevin@verizon.net).
Communal Thriving: PURSUING MEANING, JUSTICE AND WELL-BEING

Date
June 27-29, 2013
Preconference events starting June 26

Location
School of Education and Human Development
University of Miami
Coral Gables, FL

Website
http://www.scra27.org/biennial

Join Us!
The 2013 conference will focus on diverse approaches to thriving in communities. Traditional as well as innovative approaches to community thriving will be considered. Over 200 sessions accepted from students and professionals all over the world!

6 Tracks!
Communal thriving through community partnership and social change
Communal thriving through prevention and wellness promotion
Communal thriving through narrative, arts, and new media
Communal thriving through equity, diversity, and social justice
Communal thriving through research
Communal thriving through organizational and school transformation