As I write this update, I reflect on the monumental number of events that have occurred in our country. During the fall of 2020, I think we believed that the COVID-19 pandemic was attacking fewer people. In California, where I reside, I began to see a laxer approach to social distancing and there seemed to be a feeling in the air that things at least with COVID-19 were slowly getting better. There was then and there are now many conversations about how this health pandemic was affecting our economy and the most vulnerable populations in our country. We were also revving up for a tremendous political display of hate and animosity with the presidential election looming on the horizon.

Many of my students were experiencing isolation, loneliness, food insecurity and home insecurity. The conversations around white supremacy, racism, and the injuring and killings of Black and Brown bodies continued. It seemed to

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me that everywhere I turned there were scheduled trainings on diversity, equity and inclusion. Many of my colleagues discussed how best to handle issues of diversity from a virtual platform. There was a lot of talk about microaggressions and the result that these insidious daily offensive comments and behaviors, albeit virtually, were harming our Black students and our students of color. There was a lot happening; yet, it seemed that things would get better with the election of a new president. A minute later we are here in December, and the COVID-19 cases are surging; there are few to no hospital beds to house all the sick and dying people, and things look bleak. In California, you are 2.7 times more likely to test positive and have worse health outcomes from COVID-19 if you are Latinx in comparison to whites.

And while all these events are happening, we belong to an organization that is deeply committed to creating positive change in our local and global communities. It has been a surreal experience to be your president during this time. As an organization we have committed to a tremendous amount of change especially in addressing white supremacy, racism, diversity and equity. I do not think there is anyone in our society that believes that addressing violence against our Black communities is a novel event. I also have to remember that although we are a society that is governed by the membership we operate as a non-profit based organization that has governing rules and considerations. We have an executive committee (EC) and it functions like a board of directors. We have a guiding vision for our society that speaks to us having a strong positive global impact while enhancing the well-being and the promotion of social justice for all people. We also believe in fostering cohesiveness and combating oppression. Our guiding principles are: having a global nature; using multi-sectoral, interdisciplinary partnerships and approaches; a focus on creating policies informed by community psychology and social justice values; and research and action that promote social justice. We have an extraordinary vision and great principles and carrying out these ideas takes much work from the executive committee and the membership. I also want to acknowledge it takes time and investment to realize this vision. On the other hand, our executive officers serve for the most part 3-year terms, and therefore the amount of turn-over in our society’s leadership is constant. All this occurs in the middle of us pledging to change the organization. We all have little time and little institutional memory to have continuity in the projects we propose to institute long term lasting change. Yet, we keep trying. It is in this spirit that I report to you some changes in our organizational leadership and share some of the things happening in our organization to address the call to action to address white supremacy and racism.

There has also been a change in our executive committee with Chris Smith stepping down as the Regional Network Coordinator, a position that supports local networks creating meaningful opportunities for connecting, including through regional conferences. I want to thank Chris for the work she did while she served as the coordinator. She always asked deep questions regarding why we wanted to make changes and how that would impact our membership regionally, nationally, and internationally. We are also pleased to report that Tonya Hall was elected to fill the position. We are happy to have Tonya’s dedication and organizational skills on board as she steps into this role.

In addition to changes in our EC, we also hired a new administrative coordinator. We want to welcome Jadwiga Hescox who is completing her MA in Health Psychology at California State University, Dominguez Hills. Jadwiga has been a member of SCRA since 2018 and she is excited to start her position. Jadwiga will eventually be the point person for our member services and will be the person to help with membership questions. Finally, after many years of service, Jean Hill will be retiring from her role as executive director (ED) in late February of 2021. Jean has served in many leadership roles, including president 2012-2013. Jean has so much institutional memory that it will be a great loss to SCRA. Jean, you will surely be missed, and, at the same time, we wish you the
best as you move into retirement. I will personally miss our conversations in which you continually demonstrated much care for the organization and all of us members. We know that with Jean’s retirement there will be many changes. We will need to hire an ED in a timely manner so that Jean can provide some of the training to our new person. At the moment we are forming a hiring committee to select the new ED. If you have interest in being part of this search please visit https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/SCRAED for additional information.

Another significant action that we have taken as an EC is to assemble the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Consultant Hiring and Transition- (DEI) Committee. This committee will assist us as an organization learning, examining, and moving in the direction of changing our organizational culture and operations to address White supremacy, racism, and anti-Blackness as proposed in the call to action. The primary role of this committee is to hire a diversity, equity and inclusion consultant(s) and oversee this group’s work until we can form an anti-racist, anti-oppressive working group to oversee long term changes. It is also our plan to form a Black, Indigenous, or other Person of Color (BIPOC) anti-racist, anti-oppressive advisory board. In these endeavors we have been fortunate enough to have Kien Lee from the organization Community Science (https://www.communityscience.com) volunteer her time to assist us with the formation, structure and process of hiring a consultant(s). Kien is also a member of SCRA and has a wealth of expertise in the design and implementation of research and evaluation initiatives that contribute to racial equity. Their involvement has been transformative. Thank you, Kien!

In terms of the DEI committee, we have 13 members with a cumulative wealth of experience in many topics related to diversity, equity and inclusion. For example, the members of this committee have expertise in power dynamics, social movements, media socialization, sexual identity, implied bias, cultural assets, microaggressions, cultural responsiveness, intersectional feminist care and in race and a sense of belonging. These committee members also represent a diversity in race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and ability. The committee members are: Bianca L Guzman, Ramy Barhouche, Pamela Martin, Meeta Banerjee, Natasha Ranamayake, Katie McAuliff, Karizma Funnyc, Seanna Leath, Mika Handelman, Magaela Bethune, Dolores Miranda, John Moritsugu, and Jonathan Coats. To learn more about these members visit, https://www.scra27.org/resources/call-action/. The committee is in the process of finalizing the request for proposals (RFP) call, and we aspire to begin receiving applications early in the new year.

Moreover, our committees, councils and interest groups have been working hard on the many initiatives that they have proposed and I want to thank all our members for volunteering their time to participate. For example, the Council of Education proposed a substantial shift in their use of funding to support thorough review of educational practices connected to anti-racism. The Policy Council continues to be a leader in supporting our members and organization by connecting to initiatives to hold APA accountable as well as movements to pursue healing and reconciliation in the United States. The Practice Council continues to host exceptional Conversations to Raise our Practice Game (Fridays), many of which have been dedicated to disrupting racial injustice. See their collection of videos here. The Council on Cultural, Ethnic, and Racial Affairs (CERA) also continues to hold important healing circle space dedicated to our members of color. This is just a snapshot of the member-led work being done that continues to move us toward a more just organizational future.

Additionally, I want to take a moment and acknowledge the work of the Awards Task Force. The members of this task force are Noe Chavez, Serdar Degirmenciglu, Bianca L. Guzman, Ashmeet Oberoi and Susan Torres-Harding. Building on the work of many past leaders in SCRA, this taskforce has had the particularly challenging task of re-imagining and updating our
awards. As a society we value the individuals who lead the way in our discipline. Many of our current awards are named awards. Most of the named awards are of white males. Many of our members have much reverence and admiration for the accomplishments of the individuals whose names are on the awards and yet as we move to be more inclusive in our field, we begin to examine what the function of these awards are and how we honor the voices of other individuals who have also had important impacts in community psychology and are often unacknowledged. In returning back to the call for action, the task force felt it was necessary to acknowledge the work of BIPOC individuals in SCRA. Although we currently have an award for the mentoring of students of color, the committee felt that there needed to be another award to honor BIPOC individuals. This decision led to the renaming of the former John Kalafat Award to the Community Psychology Award Recognizing Achievements by Black, Indigenous, or other Person of Color (BIPOC) Graduate Students. The task force also proposed, and the EC approved a new award focused on racial justice. The task force has much more work to do, however these are good steps forward.

I just finished the book called “My grandmother’s hands racialized trauma and the pathway to mending our hearts and bodies” by Resmaa Menakem. I am reminded that Menakem says, “While we see anger and violence in the streets of our country, the real battlefield is inside our bodies. If we are to survive as a country, it is inside our bodies where this conflict will need to be resolved.” This quote speaks to me about the trauma that we are experiencing in our inability to connect to other human beings who we love and value. I understand that we must process all trauma through our body in order to heal. This healing process also involves connecting to other humans for support and validation. I am hopeful that we will find ways to make these connections in ways that promote healing for ourselves and those we cherish.

Happy New Year! With another year, comes another issue of The Community Psychologist! We’re excited to be taking on our new editorial roles! We first want to thank Susan Wolfe, the previous Editor and current President-Elect for her great work during the last three years! We will continue the work you have done and will keep pushing this publication forward into the future.

The last year has been rough for many of us: a global pandemic, economic hardship, a seemingly eternal election cycle, a historically active hurricane season, and the list continues. There have been moments of hope such as the number of people who took part in the largest mass protest in the last 50-60 years and the number of mutual aid organizations that emerged to meet people’s needs. We saw an open call for action in response to anti-Black violence and racism with hundreds of signatures from SCRA members pledging to push this work forward. Several conferences shifted to a virtual format, in some ways making the events more accessible than if they had been in-person (yet we all miss in-person interactions). Technological innovations abound to address a variety of needs as well as provide new opportunities for creative expression. These moments of hope show that even in the midst of an extraordinarily difficult time, we can build and maintain radically inclusive communities while
continuing to challenge hegemonic structures that maintain social inequities.

In the spirit of hope for the future, we wanted to share some new ideas we wanted to incorporate.

1. Podcast - Each issue we will release an accompanying podcast episode (possibly 2). We will have conversations about the issue, responses to some of our featured articles, and follow-up from previous issues.

2. Real Talk - We are introducing a new column that will discuss how COVID-19 has exacerbated issues already present within higher education. From both our research and practice experiences within higher ed we have observed several trends that are only accelerating due to the pandemic. We think there should be an honest and frank conversation about what this means for the future of community psychology. Real talk, are we on a sinking ship?

3. Reading Circle and Recommended Reading List - To encourage ongoing dialogue with each other about what we are reading and how those readings are influencing our work, we are starting a reading circle and recommended reading list. Each issue we will share 5-6 readings that have influenced our work and provide a space for additional submissions. This is a space for people to share what they are reading so we can get an idea of the different knowledge bases people are exposed to and what is influencing their research and practice. This is also a way for us to share information and knowledge across a variety of topics to showcase and enhance richness of thought within the field.

Dominique and Allana
TCP Editor and TCP Associate Editor

The Community Practitioner
Edited by Mayra Guerrero and Olya Glantsman, DePaul University

A Search for Global Truth

An educator, advocate, fixer, and healer – this is how psychologist Dr. Vernita Perkins describes how she approaches her role in promoting global wellness and meaningful living within corporate systems, communities, and the daily lives of individuals. Dr. Perkins is the Founder and Chief Scientist of Omnigi Research, an innovative hybrid global entity, composed of multi-disciplinary scientists committed to the real-world application of rigorous research aimed at health, wellness, innovative leadership, and purposeful, meaningful living.

Looking back on her childhood, Dr. Perkins remembers how she questioned the injustices she witnessed and experienced, and saw the need to identify solutions. Her family valued education, which made Dr. Perkins become infatuated with both research and literature. Research fed her curiosity. Literature made her fall in love with writing, in part because in writing we have the power to convey ideas and envision a better world. For Dr. Perkins, education is about continuous learning and improvement. Education enlightened her on the human benefits of empathy and self-awareness. To her, doing the inner self-development work should precede everything else.

Dr. Perkins started her professional career in private sector corporations, before pursuing further graduate school. While in the private sector, Dr. Perkins encountered systemic issues due to ineffective leadership and toxic organizational cultures. At first, she believed that these were isolated issues, and learned over time the depth of these embedded structures.

Dr. Perkins’ fixer-identity continued to emerge, from fixing watches, clocks, and other mechanical items as a child, to fixing systems and processes in corporate settings. Identified in corporate and
academic spaces as a problem-solver, she committed to finding solutions for the challenges she observed. She realized that to enact real change within corporate systems, she needed to acquire additional knowledge and tools. This led her to pursue a Ph.D. in Organizational Leadership from The Chicago School for Professional Psychology. In graduate school and beyond, her scholarly work focuses on understanding leaders and improving their leadership, broadly defined as any individual in a decision-making position (including parents, caregivers, religious leaders, organizational leaders, and governmental leaders alike). During her graduate career, Dr. Perkins was never afraid to question systems, even if it meant challenging established hierarchies, despite the push-back, exclusion, and marginalization she received. If answers were not provided, she kept searching, despite how easy it would have been to abandon the effort, her integrity and tenacity prevailed.

These days, she is committed to dismantling oppressive systems, visioning and implementing cohesive, collaborative practices, and closing the wealth gap. “I’m on the side of humanity,” says Dr. Perkins, “people can and should work together, and we have to do our best to take care of each other.” She calls it the “only global truth” that we are here to live meaningful, fulfilled lives, to daily transform into the best humans we can be, and to express empathy, concern, and care for others. Nothing is about the individual alone and we achieve nothing alone, this pandemic has made that very clear. This call for action is a breath of fresh air in our too often self-centered and individualistic society. One way we can do this is by cleaning up our culture, our language (the harmful terms and sayings we use), what we choose to value, how we develop our consciousness, and literally the way we choose to independently think and behave. She also calls for reform in leadership, specifically discouraging those who jump into leadership roles with ulterior motives or self-interested agendas. “I am always suspicious of people who crave leadership. Within leadership scholarship, we know how difficult and humbling leadership can be when practiced in service, ethically, and transformatively.” According to Dr. Perkins, some things are not up for interpretation, like the fact that everyone and every living thing deserves an equitable existence. Since we live in a society where this equation does not compute, it means we are not living the way we should and now must. In everything that she does, she infuses this civilizational justice.

As humans, we cannot exist without others and we affect each other by what we do, and because thinking affects behavior, psychologists are needed more than ever. As psychologists, we can assist with self-development work—first by knowing our own emotions and how our thoughts and behavior affects others. Dr. Perkins says, “no one has the right to claim to be an expert, who does not daily practice their own self-development with self-reflection and self-governance.” And even the field of psychology itself needs to significantly change, evolving its practitioners and scholars to focus more on empathy, integrity, ethics, and self-awareness, as opposed to self-promoting, self-interest, and profit-seeking. This is, perhaps, why Dr. Perkins found a home in the community psychology field, a subfield of psychology that embodies some of the same values that Dr. Perkins ascribes to. Moving forward, Dr. Perkins believes we need to ultimately change our thinking solely towards the good of all, and to each identify our true purpose. While she finds it saddening that so many aspects of our society need to be healed and transformed, she is grateful that she can use her unique skill set to do so.

To learn about Dr. Perkins and Omnigi Research, [www.omnigi.com](http://www.omnigi.com). To get connected: Instagram @omnigi.research.
Introduction

The Early Career Interest Group is pleased to present a new column introducing our membership. Early career includes undergrad and grad students through 10 years after graduation. We asked our members to present their reflections on how they came to Community Psychology and to SCRA, along with their research focus and purpose. These stories highlight the diversity, background, and career trajectory of some of our newest and ongoing members.

Meet the Early Career Members
(in alphabetical order)

Michelle Abraczinskas
A passion for improving youth-serving systems brought me to Community Psychology and to SCRA in 2009. A decade later, I am a tenure track faculty in Prevention Science/Youth Development in the Department of Family, Youth, and Community Sciences at the University of Florida. UF is a land grant university, and extension programming is run out of my college. The land grant university and extension mission aligns with community psychology values. I plan to bring a unique community psychology lens to extension programming and evaluation to improve youth and family serving systems and have a local impact.

Sheree’ Bielecki
My journey to the Community Psychology world began in January 2019. I started my new career as administrative faculty in the BA in Community Psychology degree program at Pacific Oaks College, Pasadena. I learned about SCRA and became a member in March 2019. I attended my first biennial in June 2019. This began my love and passion for the program that I am currently overseeing. In my CP core courses, we use photovoice as a method for students to self-reflect on what they are learning in class. My dissertation has changed to using photovoice as a way for undergraduate students to self-reflect on their journey in community psychology. When I am not directing programs, writing my dissertation, or just taking time to relax, I serve and give back to underserved communities and families, and mentor teens through a program I have been passionate about for 15 years, A Child’s Dream-CA. My purpose is to bring change to underserved communities, lead, mentor, and educate.

Mikana Montagnino
My way into Community Psychology was through my work in participatory action research and providing social services to community college students as an undergraduate. I have been a SCRA member for one year, but what really brought me to community psychology was my family background in the Deaf community. I am passionate about bringing accessible social services to disabled people where they live, in their communities. I have also seen in my own life how mental health and accessibility concerns are often not addressed in the right way. It’s very hard to address emotional distress and communication barriers simultaneously. To further empower the Deaf community and disabled people in general, I am pursuing a research focus on accessibility in mental health and social services. During this COVID-19 pandemic, I believe it is more important than ever to ensure accessibility for all people, regardless of ability.

Christopher Nettles
My interest in Community Psychology began when I returned to school for a MA in psychology at the University of Colorado, Denver. My primary research mentor introduced me to the field. I was awarded my clinical psychology PhD in 2015 from George Washington University. Their clinical
psychology program has a community psychology orientation. My research focused on stress and coping, prevention of sexually transmitted infections, and health promotion in LGBTQ communities. I am also an ordained Buddhist priest. I worked for the American Psychological Association for five years, where I directed an NIH-funded early-career mentoring program and a program on integrated healthcare. Two years ago, I moved to Cobb, California to help rebuild a Buddhist monastery destroyed by a wildfire. This year, I was elected to the Cobb Area Municipal Council where I am using my community psychology skills to help inform community resilience and rebuilding efforts.

**Vernita Perkins**

Formally educated as an Industrial Organizational psychologist specializing in organizational change, spiritually educated in the self-development practices of self-awareness, empathy, change, and social responsibility, and principled in the constructs of Community Psychology. I found my background in private sector corporations and my passion for integrity, accountability, equality and civilizational justice have blended into a unique niche career. This year, my resolve was tested as long-upheld racial injustices coupled with this tiny, deadly virus demanded the realization for so many that the racial and global health inequities we at Omnigi have researched over the past four years are now the next necessary global resolution. With my life purpose now centerstage, I continue collaborating with social scientists, developing innovative experiential initiatives to reframe and reconstruct a future that supports and sustains the good of all.

**Traci Weinstein**

I had never heard of Community Psychology when I graduated with my BA in Psychology. I moved home to Massachusetts and worked in human services while I explored my interests. I knew that I wanted to go to graduate school, and I knew that Social Psychology was the closest field to my interests, and yet it didn’t quite fit. I applied to a few graduate programs, both MA and PhD, and even got into a few, but I was concerned that they didn’t spark joy (thanks, Marie Kondo!). While teaching high school in Lowell, Massachusetts, I eventually stumbled upon the program at UMass Lowell. Within the first two weeks of my first class in Immigrant Psychology, I knew that I had finally found my home! I AM a Community Psychologist, I just didn’t have the name for it.

Shortly after enrolling in the MA program in Community Social Psychology, I became a SCRA member and attended my first SCRA biennial meeting in 2005. It was magical. I finally found my home! Since then, I have followed a twisted road that led me to my current tenure-track position as an Assistant Professor of Community Psychology at Rhode Island College. I feel that this institution’s desire to create a line specifically for CP, shows the continued development of our field. My continued dedication to working with marginalized communities, highlighted by my ongoing work examining the experiences of teachers who work with immigrant and refugee students, is further complicated with COVID-19.

**Conclusion**

In this year of unprecedented global events forcing us to re-evaluate and re-prioritize so many aspects of our lives, including: health and well-being, national healthcare, the foundations of America and its evidenced history of oppression and marginalization, recognition of social identities and intersectionality, the importance of decision-making and who we give our decision making power to advocate on behalf of our community psychology values, how wealth and resources are distributed, and how we envision a community-oriented future. We are proud and excited to share the research interests of some of the newest Early Career additions to the SCRA community along with those known members who are showcasing their community psychology journey, and research and advocacy interests. We will continue to share introductions from our ECIG membership, in an attempt to reduce duplicative efforts and encourage future research and advocacy collaborations with SCRA members and other SCRA Interest Groups. With so many of us collaborating, the path to
Community Psychology (CP) educational councils have existed for almost as long as the field itself (Council on Education, 2019). Over time, the names, types of goals, and composition of the councils have changed in ways that we would argue have resulted in a deliberative body that is increasingly aligned with the values of and better positioned to provide leadership for the CP field. Despite this progress, the current Council on Education (COE) continues to grapple with some of the same challenges faced by educational councils historically, coupled with new challenges, both internal (to the Council and SCRA) and external (adapting to the pandemic and recession, and responding meaningfully to the social upheaval and protest related to racial injustice). In this column, we consider these longstanding and new challenges and our recent and planned efforts to meet them in ways that we hope will draw ourselves and the Society as a whole closer to our ideals and goals.

**Continuity and Change in Council History**

At the last SCRA Biennial in June 2019, the COE organized a pre-conference workshop designed to provide a foundation for the activities of the COE moving forward “Community Psychology Education: Collectively Clarifying our Vision for the Next Five Years” (Coulombe & Haber, 2019). The ecological principle of succession suggests
participating programs. Members were program representatives rather than being directors per se. The new Council also sought to broaden its focus to encompass undergraduate as well as graduate programs.

From CEP to COE. The second transition occurred in 2016 (Table 1, Panel C), associated with the renaming of the Council on Education Programs to its current title, the Council on Education. This transition was driven by a desire to further broaden both the participation and scope of activities of the council. First, the decision was made to move from a “member-driven” organization in which participants would be identified through a formal selection process for set terms, to a body open to all that would serve a “Coordinating role for a broader set of activities” (CEP, 2016). To implement this, meetings were re-organized as open calls – any SCRA member could participate at any time. Continuity was to be provided by a small “Coordinating Committee” of 4 to 8 members including a Chair.

Educational Council History: Continuity and Change across Transitions

To develop a sense of the types of challenges faced by these successive forms of the council dated approximately a decade apart, we compared two documents contemporaneous with the transitions described above. As shown in the second row of Table 1, for the first transition (Columns A and B), the selected document was a summary of Education Summit proceedings published in TCP, “The SCRA CEP: Reactivating the Council of Education Programs” (Mankowski, Meissen, & COE, 2007). The second document (Table 1 Column C) was the “2016 SCRA Strategic Plan, Education Priority Section” (Society for Community Research and Action :: SCRA Strategic Plan (scra27.org).

Comparison of Summit Report and Strategic Plan documents. By crosswalking the objectives activities across these documents, we identified four cross-cutting themes that were remarkably similar in their framing and associated activities, despite the associated changes in membership and scope of the councils. Table 2 shows these themes and associated activities. Across the decade plus of activities captured in these documents, councils sought to describe community psychology education and training (e.g., through administration of the council’s periodic Graduate Survey of Community Psychology Programs; Haber, Kohn-Wood & COE, 2018), to disseminate community psychology education and training through publicizing community psychology programs and creating training resources, to sustain education and training programs through activities such as program consultations, and enhance community psychology training through the development of research and practice competencies (Christens, Connell, Faust, & Haber, 2015; Connell et al., 2013). The types of strategies proposed to achieve these goals, however, seem increasingly sophisticated, perhaps in parallel with organizational maturation of the Society as a whole; for example, the acquisition of an Executive Director and paid staff support.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Council of Educational Program Objectives/Activities</th>
<th>Council on Education Objectives/Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Describing education and training</td>
<td>• Survey of Graduate Training Programs &lt;br&gt;• Dissemination of Results</td>
<td>• Implementation of a system of data collection, management, and analysis to support training programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disseminating education and training</td>
<td>• Listing CP Training programs on website and developing training program brochure &lt;br&gt;• “Infusing” community psychology into undergraduate textbooks</td>
<td>• Creation of a social media subcommittee to contribute to outward-facing website (communitypsychology.com) &lt;br&gt;• Development of a community psychology module for distribution to textbook publishers &lt;br&gt;• Support the development of an online community psychology textbook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustaining education and training</td>
<td>• Developing and disseminating student recruitment strategies &lt;br&gt;• “Site review body” to conduct site visits for programs wanting or needing APA accreditation</td>
<td>• Consultations with training programs to “develop opportunities to learn practice skills”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhancing rigor of education and training</td>
<td>• Development of a syllabus and training materials exchange &lt;br&gt;• “Support package” for instructors</td>
<td>• Contribute to the development of Practice and Research competencies in conjunction with other groups (e.g., the Practice Council)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Table 2: Comparison of Historical Documents

Missing: Concern for diversity and racial justice? Of particular note, absent from these documents were specific initiatives, objectives or activities related to social justice or diversity, either in general, or in relation to an issue of particular
interest to the society and the COE now, racial justice. In our Education Connection column in the Winter 2020 issue of TCP (Haber, Henderson, Coulombe, and Kohn-Wood, 2020), we explored this apparent neglect of one of the core concerns of our field, using data from a mini-grant focusing on barriers to participation faced by SCRA members affiliated with Historically Black Universities and Colleges (HBCUs) and Hispanic-serving Institutions (HSIs). We also examined data from our “Clarifying our Vision pre-conference” summarizing goal statements shared by participants during the pre-conference and, similarly, the relative lack of attention to diversity and equity in education relative to other types of goals. Recognizing this lack of attention as a pressing concern, the COE emphasize diversity and equity in training in its planned activities for 2020, identifying the objective of diversifying SCRA training programs (both racially and along other dimensions of diversity) as a goal in our draft theory of change (see Appendix A), and as a top priority in our proposed program consultation initiative for 2020. In regard to the latter, our plan was to partner with other organizations and councils in SCRA with similar interests in diversity and social justice to recruit and provide consultation to support diversity and social justice in training through helping to sustain or expand programs. Although we still hope to pursue this initiative, we decided to redirect the focus of our efforts temporarily in recognition of the current moment – specifically, that broader action was needed to address a challenge faced by the entire field, rather than focusing on individual programs.

**Educational Council: New Challenges**

**The Call to Action on Anti-blackness**

As it happened, the timing of the Haber et al. 2020 column was unfortunately prescient – within months, across the U.S. and in other parts of the world saw large scale protests in reaction to the killing of George Floyd, re-invigorating racial justice as a priority for social change in the U.S. both in criminal justice and other spheres of society. As well-known to the readers of this publication, our SCRA members sought to build on this movement by issuing a “Call to Action on Anti-Blackness” to the SCRA community, asking for a swift, substantive response from the organization to neglect of racial justice issues in community psychology practice and training. In particular, the call highlighted a lack of vigorous, sustained attention to anti-racism in community psychology pedagogy and an absence of committed resources to support community trainees and emerging scholars and practitioners from communities of color and their allies in pressing for racial social justice.

**Executive Committee Response to the Call to Action**

In response to the Call, the SCRA Executive Committee (EC) prepared a detailed response to demands in the Call for Action. This response included specific expectations for the COE to develop “anti-racist curriculum and practice guidelines,” and a “self-assessment of existing practices” and “identification of new skills, tools, and resources to support transformation.” The COE also responded to the call directly, by convening a meeting of program directors in June of this year to reflect on the status and needs for improving racial justice in community psychology training, and committing to a similar meeting of community psychology students, which we will hopefully schedule in the early part of next year.

**COE Response to the Call to Action**

The directive of the EC Response to help develop anti-racist curriculum and training guidelines grounded in self-assessment is consistent both with the longstanding commitments of the COE to promote the values of the field in CP education and provides us with an occasion to address objectives of diversity and social justice that we believe need greater emphasis going forward, in a focused, intentional, timely way. During the program directors meeting on anti-racism and social justice in June, we raised the possibility of repurposing our 2020 budget and requesting a supplement to support this work. In addition, because of the historical investment of the COE in developing competencies for the community psychology field, we would like to
convene with other committees and councils to discuss possible revisions and additions to these competencies to better align them with our diversity and social justice values generally and our efforts to confront anti-racism in particular.

**Council on Education Activities for AY 2021**

Below, Table 3 summarizes our planned racial justice activities for the year. The activities that we have planned relate both to our historical commitments and responsibilities as well as our commitment this year to SCRA’s activities related to anti-racism and include short-term (completed during 2-3 months, through December), ongoing (initiated during the first two months and intended to continue) and longer-term activities (i.e., to be completed by the end of the Academic Year). They include activities to create resources for describing and growing the field (e.g., formalizing an ongoing process for updating our list of community psychology training programs and collecting more in-depth information on these to attract new students), and convening students and program representatives around current and ongoing community psychology education and training issues. We also have committed to pursuing some activities that, while also grounded in these and other historical commitments of the COE, are responsive to the timely emphasis of SCRA on anti-blackness.

Exemplifying this commitment to continue to pursue our historical responsibilities as well as address new challenges, we would like to highlight in particular our plans to develop a hybrid program self-assessment tool and program survey. Every three to four years since the 70s, the COE and its precursors have conducted field-wide surveys of Graduate Training programs to collect basic data on the status of CP training (e.g., number of programs, faculty, students) as well as more in depth information on specific topics such as the availability of training in community psychology research and practice competencies (Haber, Kohn-Wood, and the COE, 2018; Haber, Neal, Christens, Faust, Jackson and Scott, 2017). This year, we plan to focus in depth on anti-racist curriculum and training guidelines in community psychology training programs – both at the undergraduate as well as the graduate level – and, as part of this survey effort, pilot a program self-assessment instrument focusing on the same content areas. The program self-assessment and survey will consist of qualitative and quantitative components. The qualitative component is being designed primarily for use of individual programs in guiding their own exploration of the status of their own efforts to develop curricula, pedagogy, and structural supports to reduce racism in training programs. The quantitative component will likely include summary indicators capturing aspects of the qualitative data as well as unique quantitative metrics of the status of current anti-racism curriculum and training efforts.

**Conclusions and … Another Call to Action**

If successful, we believe that the activities shown in Table 3, collectively, would make a substantial contribution to the agenda of re-creating SCRA as an organization that is more genuinely and effectively acting on its commitment to diversity and social justice values in regard to race. At the same time, informed by our recent visioning and
strategic planning activities, we understand the many ways in which pursuing these new commitments will reinforce and reinvigorate our ongoing commitments to advancing the growth, sustainability, and rigor of the field. We cannot and should not do this work alone. In order to help understand the needs of a broad set of stakeholders in our field, our members have been conducting outreach with a comprehensive list of SCRA interest groups, committees, and councils over the past year we plan to submit our findings on this outreach to the next issue of *The Community Psychologist*. To create greater possibilities for collaboration, we are currently seeking liaisons from these groups to contribute to our activities (currently, the Community Psychology Practice in Undergraduate Settings Interest Group and Research Council are represented). We are especially interested in recruiting liaisons from groups with a particular interest in anti-racism, social justice, and diversity (e.g., the Council for Ethnic and Racial Affairs, the International Committee). We would also welcome broader participation from individual CP program representatives. Our meetings are open to all SCRA members and allied stakeholders and are held on the third Monday of every month on the SCRA Conference Line, as indicated on the Conference Line schedule: [SCRA Conference Line Schedule (scra27.org)](http://scra27.org) (note that information on joining calls can also be found at this link). We hope you will consider joining us to advance our important work.

**References**


Appendix A: COE Theory of Change (Draft)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barriers</th>
<th>Resources</th>
<th>Strategies / Model Practices</th>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Short-term Outcomes</th>
<th>Long-term Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lack of focus</td>
<td>COE members</td>
<td>Theory of Change; Strategic Plan</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low community self-efficacy</td>
<td>Program directors</td>
<td>Leverage funding sources at a national level</td>
<td>Identity/Diversity</td>
<td>Improved resources (human, financial, knowledge)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structure and culture (both academia and practice have cultures not supportive of building infrastructure)</td>
<td>Other committees and interest groups (e.g., Undergraduate, Cultural, Racial, &amp; Ethnic Affairs)</td>
<td>Support/Resources</td>
<td>Increase diversity (particularly racial diversity)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Program stability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Few financial resources</td>
<td>Existing data and measurement tools related to the health of programs</td>
<td>Actively recruit from diverse bachelor and high school student populations</td>
<td>Increase visibility of the range of CP careers</td>
<td></td>
<td>Productivity (research, teaching, practice)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited operational support</td>
<td>Previous experience with supporting/consulting with programs</td>
<td>Identity/Diversity, Pipeline</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Expanded definition of Community Psychology Education</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Immigrant Justice
Edited by Sara L. Buckingham, University of Alaska Anchorage and Kevin Ferreira, California State University-Sacramento

Atrocities Committed against Women on U.S. Soil: A Call to Action
Written by Yolanda Suarez-Balcazar, Dana B. Rusch, Tara G. Mehta, University of Illinois at Chicago; Alissa Charvonia, Howard University; Rebecca Ford-Paz, Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children’s Hospital of Chicago; Carolina Meza-Perez, University of Nevada Las Vegas; and Sara L. Buckingham, University of Alaska Anchorage

In September of 2020, a brave nurse working at a U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) detention center in Georgia made disturbing allegations of medical neglect and forced sterilization performed on detained Latina women at the center (Project South, 2020). Detainees have been denied medical treatment, not offered preventive measures to stop the spread of COVID-19, and worst of all, sterilized without their consent (New York Lawyers for the Public Interest, 2020; Project South, 2020; Southern Poverty Law Center, 2020). These horrific allegations spurred the SCRA Immigration Justice Special Interest Group to speak out, writing letters to the editor of our local newspapers. We encourage other community researchers and practitioners to take action with us.

Unfortunately, the United States has a long dark history of committing atrocities against women of color, as well as women with disabilities, women living in poverty, and incarcerated women (Alonso, n.d.; Treisman, 2020). Abuses against women’s
bodies and reproductive rights in the United States go back to mass sexual violence, genocide, and mass sterilization of Native American women, with sterilization promoted as the best method for contraception (Torpy, 2000). By the late 1970s, 25% of Native American women were sterilized by the U.S. government through Indian Health Services (Pember, 2018). The reproductive rights of Black women have also been violated in similar ways. Black women were not only exposed to forced sterilization, but were also subject to experimental surgeries conducted by the “father” of gynecology (Prather et al., 2018). Young Black women were often sterilized without their consent after giving birth. This secret procedure was so common that it was referred to as the “Mississippi appendectomy” (Rol, 2018). These abuses were fueled by the eugenics movement at the turn of the 20th century that sanctioned abuses against those considered “undesirable” by the White majority society. This notion of a “desirable race” not only resulted in atrocities committed by the Nazis during World War II, when forced sterilization in concentration camps to prevent non-Aryans from reproducing was common practice, but also continued in the U.S. when the government engaged in forced sterilization of individuals with mental health, cognitive, and physical disabilities and incarcerated women.

The United States also has a long history of committing these atrocities against Latina women. For example, in 1937, Law 116 was enacted in Puerto Rico, which supported a population control program that promoted sterilization as a method of birth control. This law was not repealed until 1960 (see Mass, 1977). Between the 1930s and 1970s, mass sterilization was performed on Puerto Rican women without their consent, most commonly after the birth of a child. Women who had “la operación” (as it was commonly referred to by Puerto Ricans in rural communities) were later surprised to discover that they could no longer have children (Lopez, 2008). The Puerto Rican and U.S. governments, who initiated and carried out this practice, argued that the island was overpopulated, poor, and in need of intervention to achieve economic success and reduce poverty. With grant money from USAID, factories in Puerto Rico hosted “family planning clinics” wherein women were sterilized and served as “experimental subjects” without their consent. At these clinics, sterilization was promoted as a method of contraception and often deceptively announced as a procedure that could be reversed. Through this program, Puerto Rican women also “became guinea pigs for U.S pharmaceutical companies who were developing the modern-day birth control pill” (Andrews, 2017). The U.S-sponsored campaigns to promote sterilization targeted women with limited education and health literacy, and many women feared losing their children or federal benefits if they did not comply (Andrews, 2017).

Mass sterilization of Latina women was also common in California. Between 1920 and 1945, California’s sterilization program disproportionately targeted Latina women, particularly those of Mexican descent (Novak et al., 2018), and these efforts intersected with the state’s efforts to curb immigration (Sánchez, 1995). Again in the 1960s and 1970s, Latina women of Mexican heritage in Los Angeles were sterilized without their consent, or under immense pressure from health care providers insisting that the procedure could be reversed or obtaining consent under duress while women were in labor. These abuses were fueled by stereotypes centering White, mainstream preferences for smaller nuclear families, racist efforts to slow down the proliferation of people of color, along with stereotypes of Mexican women as hyperfertile and dependent on welfare. Although a small group of Latina survivors of the coercive sterilizations filed a lawsuit, the judge did not rule in their favor, citing cultural misunderstandings (informed consent was not a legal protection at the time). We encourage you to watch the documentary, No Más Bebes, based on this case (Tajima-Peña, 2016).

Unfortunately, atrocities against immigrant women continues to be perpetrated today. Our country’s leaders have systematically criminalized immigration and dehumanized immigrants, labeling those arriving at our country’s border as murderers...
and rapists, fueling acts of hatred and abuse. Currently, women in U.S. detention centers are being denied their basic human rights. Violence against women such as forced sterilization is a painful reminder of the oppression and racism experienced by the most vulnerable women – those who are of color, low-income, undocumented, seeking asylum, and being detained by ICE. Besides the inhumane and unhygienic conditions of these detention centers, many of these women have also been sexually assaulted while in ICE custody or detention (Human Rights Watch, 2018; Kassie, 2018). Several women have spoken out in anonymity to corroborate these claims, but women are afraid to speak up for fear of losing their right to request asylum, prolonging the separation from their children, or losing their children permanently.

The reproductive rights of women in situations of vulnerability have been violated across history and women continue to experience oppression, placing them at risk for poor wellbeing and health outcomes. One of the core principles of social justice is the protection of women’s basic human rights. Morally and philosophically, sterilizing women against their will, with no opportunity to consent, is wrong. Women have the right to autonomous decision-making. As psychologists, we can play an important role advocating for the rights of all women calling attention to practices that support their human rights, denouncing practices that violate them, and advocating for reproductive justice policies. All women should be free from any type of oppression, including marginalization, violence, cultural imperialism, exploitation, powerlessness, and a culture of silence and domination (Young, 2004).

As community researchers and practitioners, we believe that is time to change the landscape of social injustices toward women. We must ask ourselves, “How is it that forced sterilization of women still exists in 2020?” It is clear that our code of ethics demands that we not stand idly by or allow the report of these atrocities to be lost in the news coverage of the pandemic or the recent presidential election. As concerned citizens, we need to call attention to the issue, write to our Members of Congress, and hold our governmental agencies responsible for wrongdoing. We must strive for a society in which women’s rights are protected, and our human diversity is celebrated instead of quashed through government-sanctioned violence, coercion, or sterilization. Those of us in proximity to power must use our skills, voices, and power to act.

We hope you will join us in action. You can write your own letter to the editor in your local newspaper to call for justice. Read one of our letters here for inspiration: https://www.vcstar.com/story/opinion/readers/2020/10/11/letter-oppression-latinx-women/5942489002/ and find tips on writing letters to the editor here: https://www.communitypsychology.com/writing-an-op-ed/.

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International Committee

Edited by Douglas Perkins, Vanderbilt University and Olga Oliveira Chuna, NOVA University

Review of a new edited volume from the 2018 Santiago, Chile, International Conference on Community Psychology

Written by Douglas D. Perkins, Vanderbilt University

For TCP readers unfortunate enough to have missed the seventh International Conference on Community Psychology in October, 2018, in Santiago, Chile, or even those who attended but missed any of the featured presentations, a new collection of papers based on those presentations was just published in November and can be read for free online at https://issuu.com/libropsicologiacomunitaria/docs/libro_cipc. The volume entitled Diálogos contemporáneos en psicología comunitaria: Escenarios, problemas y aprendizajes (Contemporary Dialogues in Community Psychology: Scenarios, Problems and Lessons) was edited by Conference Chair Jaime Alfaro Inzunza, along with Bárbara Olivares Espinoza, Ma. Verónica Monreal Álvarez, Paris Gamonal Corbalán, and Francisco Jeannerett Birth. Dr. Alfaro and his team have done the global field of community psychology a great service in compiling so many of the invited addresses from the conference after giving the authors the opportunity to edit and polish their ideas into more coherent chapters.

Although most of the chapters are in Spanish, several are in English, and the Foreword to the whole volume, written by longtime TCP international columnist Irma Serrano-García, is published in both Spanish and English. (As an Associate Editor of the open-access, no-author-fee journal Psychosocial Intervention, which also uses a mixed-language format, I encourage native English speakers to learn to read Spanish—as readers of English as a second language all over the world do with our dominant language. Readers who want the PDF can request it from me (address at end of article), and if needed (while imperfect) use Google Translate.) The title of Irma’s Foreword, which succinctly summarizes the entire volume, is Solidez y Compromiso: El Futuro de la Psicología Comunitaria (Strength and Commitment: The Future of Community Psychology). I appreciate and agree with her assessment and conclusion that, perhaps against all odds, our discipline has managed to survive and grow both internationally and interdisciplinarily, but that concerted work is yet needed for community psychology to fully live up to its foundational values of “commitment to disadvantaged peoples; respect and appreciation of culture, empowerment, and our goals for change and social justice” (p. 20).

An introductory chapter provides an overview of the whole conference, in which participants came from 29 countries, including: Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, Germany, Hungary, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Norway, New Zealand, Peru, Portugal, Puerto Rico, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom, United States, Uruguay, and Venezuela.

The first section of the book is on ethics and politics in working with communities and begins with a chapter entitled the “African-diaspora in Australia Narrating Stories of Belonging through Community Theatre: Enacting Decolonial Aesthetics toward Epistemic Justice” by Rama Agung-Igusti and Chris Sonn. They “examine a community arts project called AMKA that was informed by decolonial attitude and necessitated by a desire to (re)create narratives from the African-
diaspora in Naarm/Birraranga1 (Melbourne), Australia, that centres them as the originators of their stories” (p.45). That is followed by a chapter on “Los Derechos Humanos, la Violencia Institucional y la Acción Social en México” (Human Rights, Institutional Violence and Social Action in Mexico) by Eduardo Almeida Acosta. The section concludes with an international collaboration by Terry Mitchell from Canada and Gonzalo Bustamante-Rivera from Chile on “La Intervención Comunitaria con Pueblos Indígenas: Desafíos y Apuestas desde la Psicología Comunitaria” (Community Intervention with Indigenous Peoples: Challenges and Gambles from Community Psychology).

The second section addresses such questions as: How does one use community frames of reference when studying or implementing government policies and programs? What problems arise and what pathways are possible in the creating and applying policy-focused theories, logic models, technical training and practice? Alfaro’s chapter “Posibilidades y Tensiones en la Relación entre Psicología Comunitaria y Políticas Sociales” (Possibilities and Tensions in the Relationship between Community Psychology and Social Policies) argues that community psychologists must understand how different ideological and related theoretical assumptions and models of government determine the creation, nature, function, and transformation of social policies. The second paper, “La Política de las Políticas: La posición de los/as Psicólogos/as Comunitarios/as frente al Quehacer Gubernamental” (The Politics of Policies: The Position of Community Psychologists in confronting Government Work), by María Isabel Reyes Espejo and Bárbara Olivares Espin analyzes the challenges of professional work with or inside government using participatory methods of engaging both public employees and citizens in the community. In my own chapter entitled “Public Policy Training, Research and Practice for Community Psychologists in the U.S.” (https://www.researchgate.net/publication/346081772_Public_policy_training_research_and_practice_for_community_psychologists_in_the_US), I provide a brief history of community psychologists’ involvement in public policy in the U.S. and...briefly describe my own personal history and engagement with policy work... The focus of the rest of the paper (is) on some of the ways community psychologists are trained and work in the U.S. in the policy arena and how (SCRA) and other APA divisions are addressing the challenges of psychologists having an impact on government policies at all levels: local, state, national, and international. ... focus on graduate and professional training for policy work, theory and research on policy issues and engagement, and examples of advocacy practice or interventions for policy change” (p. 171). The last paper in this section is by renowned community psychologist Esther Wiesenfeld and Stefany Larrota and titled “Psicología Ambiental Comunitaria y Desarrollo Sostenible: El Caso de la Gran Misión Vivienda Venezuela (GMVV)” (Environmental Community Psychology and Sustainable Development: The case of the Great Venezuela Housing Mission). They analyze the results of that policy, the international Habitat conferences, and the Venezuelan response from environmental, community psychosocial, economic, and political perspectives.

The third section of the book is on mental health and community psychology. The first paper is “El Lugar de la Comunidad en las Políticas de Salud Mental” (The Place of the Community in Mental Health Policies) by Verónica Monreal Álvarez, who focuses particularly on empowerment, organizational dynamics, and participation of groups of Recovery and other mental health program users and family members. The next paper by Jorge Castellá-Sarriera is “Salud Mental y Bienestar Socio-Comunitario en el Sur del Brasil” (Mental Health and Socio-Community Well-being in the South of Brazil), which emphasizes the importance of community capacity to provide material, psychological and social resources for people's mental health. The last paper in this section, “La Vertiente de la Salud Mental en la Psicología Comunitaria” (The Angle on Mental Health in Community Psychology) by Enrique Saforcada analyzes the deteriorating state of...
mental healthcare, considering ongoing challenges to reconciling organic bases and cultural definitions of mental illness, actions of pharmaceutical corporations, inequity in the distribution of knowledge and medicalization of society; and the role of community psychology in reclaiming power and citizenship.

The fourth section is on social exclusion and community psychology. The first chapter by Monreal Álvarez, “El Problema de la Intervención Sociocomunitaria en Contextos de Exclusión Social” (The Problem of Socio-community Intervention in Contexts of Social Exclusion), updated to the political-economic crisis in Chile starting in late 2019, addresses community programs to reduce the social exclusion of those in a “street situation” (people experiencing homelessness). The next chapter is “Community Activity: A Mediator of the Work in Communities in Northeastern Brazil” by Verônica Morais Ximenes, James Ferreira Moura Jr., Elívia Camurça Cidade and Bárbara Barbosa Nepomuceno. They discuss liberation activities using dialogical-experiential methods with low-income residents as a paradigm for community work and social transformation. The last chapter of this section-- “Comunidad, Exclusión Social y Dignidad Humana: Apuntes para la Conversación” (Community, Social Exclusion and Human Dignity: Notes for the Conversation) by Benito Baranda Ferrán-- introduces ideas on "training in action," how contact with excluded people is a source of learning for liberation, and how deconstruction of poverty and recognition of human dignity promotes social inclusion and provides greater coherence to theory and action in community psychology.

The final section is on Professional Training, Ethics and Community Psychology and begins with a paper by Leonor María Cantera Espinosa titled “Perspectiva de Género y (Auto) Cuidado: Dos Pilares en el Proceso de Formación y Actividad Profesional” (Gender Perspective and (Self) Care: Two Pillars in the Training Process and Professional Activity). Next is “La Ética Psicosocial como Promoción de las Opciones Vitales” (Psychosocial Ethics as Promotion of Vital Options) by prominent Catalan psychologist Alipio Sánchez Vidal. The final chapter is “Construyendo Formación en Psicología Comunitaria: Reflexiones desde la Praxis en la Región de la Araucanía” (Building Training in Community Psychology: Reflections from Praxis in the Araucanía Region) by Alba Zambrano Constanzo and Daniel Henríquez Fernández.

In conclusion, this is the kind of edited volume from an international conference on community psychology from which both SCRA members and future Biennial Conference programmers could learn a great deal. I close with a reminder to please send your ideas for future TCP international columns about either an international collaboration or a community psychology project based outside of North America to both cunhalgaoliveira@gmail.com and d.perkins@vanderbilt.edu.

Reference

Real Talk
Edited by Dominique Thomas, Independent Scholar and Allana Zuckerman, Mesa Community College

Community psychology is in danger, but not for the reason you may think. We must ask ourselves if we have properly allocated our time and resources as a field. Being so wedded to the academy and higher education may end up being our downfall.
within CP; training as community psychologists and as instructors often has led us feeling more disconnected from our communities, unable to feel totally at home as community psychologists. What communities does community psychology currently serve?

Within an academic framework, words like “mentor” are utilized in ways that are more in line with traditional vertical hierarchical structures thereby reproducing problematic power dynamics that are then perpetuated beyond graduate training. These traditional power dynamics are exactly the type we actively condemn when discussing structures outside of academia however they are being reproduced many times over within CP graduate training programs. What messages are we sending to potential future or budding community psychologists by reproducing the same power dynamics within our programs that we fight against in other spaces? Furthermore, community engagement and methodologies are not valued as highly within academia and many students are therefore deterred from community work as they are not properly acknowledged for it. If community work is undervalued in academia, then why is it that the academy is the only space where CP is legitimized? Why should the norms of the academy influence how we work with and serve communities? Are we serving two different masters, community and the academy? Why are so many resources in CP tied to whether someone is tied to an academic institution? Why are so many resources in CP available through academic structures, usually where people have to pay to be involved? Is CP pay to play?

If we asked “what is community psychology?” would the same answer come from academics, community practitioners, or community members? Should community psychology be formed in the image of the academy or the community? Where is community psychology housed in terms of institutional resources, power, and relationships? If community psychology is too attached to higher education, possibly a sinking ship, then would CP go with it?

Regional News
Submitted by Regional Coordinators

News from the Midwest Region U.S.
MIDWEST REGIONAL COORDINATOR
Tonya Hall, Chicago State University
MIDWEST STUDENT COORDINATOR
Moshood Olanrewaju, National Louis University

Cultivating A Sense of Community During the Coronavirus Pandemic in the Midwest
Written by Tonya Hall, Chicago State University

An individual’s sense of belonging often established via positive social relationships is essential to human health promotion and survival. Urie Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Systems Theory posits that a person’s development is influenced by her or his social relationships and interactions with the environment (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Establishing social relationships can have both positive and negative aspects on one’s health. Cohen (2004) argued “Social networks provide emotional, informational, and material support; regulate behavior; and offer opportunities for social engagement. They also provide modes of contact to spread disease and the opportunity for conflict, exploitation, stress transmission, misguided attempts to help, and feelings of loss and loneliness. These potentially negative aspects of networks can act as psychological stressors resulting in cognitive, affective, and biological responses thought to increase risk for poor health (p. 680).” Strengthening the positive while simultaneously minimizing the negative aspects of social relationship and network building are essential now more than ever during the present age of the coronavirus pandemic.
However, on the contrary, due to the pandemic residents in most if not all States—whether they agree or disagree with public health officials—are currently required to minimize most forms of social interactions with other people as well as their environments. For example, individuals are required to stay home and quarantine, work and attend school and conferences online using various virtual applications and platforms and forego most social and religious activities. This leaves little to no time to build positive social relationships and experience positive social interactions that often serve to reduce one’s stress like playing a game of golf with peers, frequenting a gymnasium, having a cheerful brief conversation and chuckle with a coworker in passing, gathering together with other Society for Community Research and Action (SCRA) members for a backyard barbecue or pizza after an SCRA Eco or MPA conference, or simply eating lunch or grabbing a cup of coffee with one another.

Community psychologists and community psychology researchers are equipped to fulfill a societal need by seizing the moment to pivot and use this challenging period of time for many to serve as catalysts for collectively establishing safe (i.e., free from all forms of racism, hate, discrimination, and microaggressions) and healthy (i.e., acceptance of culturally diverse individuals) communities that support positive social interactions, relationship building and social networking. This may be accomplished by their full participation in existing community psychology communities such as SCRA’s Committees and Councils (https://www.scra27.org/who-we-are/committees-and-interest-groups/), Interest Groups (https://www.scra27.org/who-we-are/interest-groups/), and/or Midwest U.S. Regional activities (https://www.scra27.org/who-we-are/regional-activities/midwest-region/) such as the Midwest Ecological Psychology conference and the APA Midwestern Psychological Association (MPA) SCRA Affiliated conference.

Being an active SCRA member allows you to be a part of a community of people with similar interests. Have you partnered with other SCRA members lately? What type of SCRA-related events have you participated in recently (e.g., a meeting, ECO or other regional conference, formed a new collaboration, posted your opinions on the SCRA Listserv, requested or provided resources on the Listserv)? What was your experience like? Was it positive such as networking that resulted in your forming a new collaboration that advanced your work or negative such as attending a meeting but not feeling welcomed? As a SCRA member your participation can help to establish positive social relationships and social networking for yourself as well as others even during the coronavirus pandemic. If you are not a member, join SCRA today and make a difference (https://www.scra27.org/members1/membership/)

If you are already a SCRA member, we hope you are giving back to your SCRA community? Consider taking on a leadership role such as helping to host the Midwest Regional ECO 2021 conference or serving as a SCRA Midwest Regional Coordinator or SCRA Midwest Student Regional Coordinator. SCRA needs your help with administering one of these three roles! You can make a difference. Contact Dr. Tonya Hall at thall26@csu.edu for more details.

Change starts with an individual. Community begins with an individual. Case in point, a couple of years ago the SCRA Midwest Regional Coordinators were attending a SCRA conference, networking and seeking to recruit a host for Midwest ECO. They were referred to Dr. August Hoffman who was sharing his research on the psychological and social benefits of community gardening, natural green space and urban forestry. Dr. Hoffman is an active SCRA member, a Professor of Psychology at Metropolitan State University in St. Paul, Minnesota, a 2020 APA Division 27 Society for Community Research Action (SCRA), and Fellow and recipient of the 2020 Metropolitan State University President’s Civic Engagement Leadership Award. Dr. Hoffman agreed to lead the efforts to host the next Eco conference despite his busy schedule because he has a passion for community psychology. He then recruited and partnered with his colleague, Dr.
Stephen Stelzner, a Professor of Psychology at College of St. Benedict/St. John’s University St. Joseph, MN. Together they recruited students, who as is the tradition, volunteered, organized and spearheaded an outstanding, most attended and first ever virtual Eco conference 2020. The students included Autumn Kirkendall, Rick Taylor, Stephanie Lam, Barbara Ovalle, Lucia Rivas, and Moshood Olanrewaju.

Thank you to our unsung heroes who currently volunteer tirelessly as SCRA Regional Coordinators (https://www.scra27.org/who-we-are/regional-activities/). Also, we would like to thank Moshood Olanrewaju, a graduate student in Community Psychology at National Louis University, for his faithful three years of service as the Midwest SRC. We welcome Wendy de los Reyes Moore, a graduate student in Community Psychology at DePaul University who will start as Midwest Student Regional Coordinator in January 2021.

If you do not have time to take on a new leadership role in SCRA currently but are interested in staying connected by attending upcoming community psychology conferences and events held in the Midwest, then prepare to attend the MPA SCRA affiliated virtual conference to be held on April 22-24, 2021 (http://midwesternpsych.org/).

Although we are past accepting any new proposals for this conference, we hope you will attend. Many thanks to this year’s team of reviewers. Decisions will be sent and registration available as of January 2021. Contact Dr. Michael Bernstein for more information (mjb70@psu.edu) about MPA. Also, a SCRA MIDWEST Zoom session will be held in January and all SCRA members are invited to attend to check-in to see what other members are accomplishing. Plan to attend. Have a Happy New Year 2021!

References

News from the Western Region U.S.
WESTERN REGIONAL COORDINATORS
Rachel Hershberg, University of Washington
Tacoma; Erin Rose Ellison, California State University-Sacramento

On December 1-2, The International Surf Therapy Organization (ISTO) will conduct its inaugural virtual conference, MAKING WAVES. According to CEO Kris Primacio, the purpose of the conference is twofold: first, promote inclusion, diversity, and equality in the ocean; second, promote surf therapy as a mental health solution.

Accordingly, MAKING WAVES will host a wide array of transdisciplinary panelists to discuss the mental health benefits of surfing, creating safe spaces for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC), protecting Mother Ocean/Earth, restoring the ocean to a place of healing for women, and so much more. Experts running surf therapy programs in Sri Lanka, Somalia, New Zealand, and Sierra Leone will explain how they reinvent the lineup.

ISTO's motto, "go far, go together," is lived out by focusing on establishing diversity in the ocean together.

World-renowned surf photographer Aaron Chang a Keynote Speaker at the ISTO 2019 conference, said, "I think this can permeate through the medical world, throughout industries, and this can be the start of a whole new awareness...it feels good to be in the water. We can't explain it...I think these people have the academic training and skillsets to give that feeling a definition and deploy it where it can help a lot of people."

One of ISTO's organizational goals is to gather recognized evidence to advocate for surf therapy as a standard form of healthcare. In April of this year, the Global Journal of Community Psychology Practice published the "Special Issue on Surf Therapy Around the Globe" facilitated by ISTO. The first of its kind academic journal helps establish unshakable proof for surf therapy. Wallace J. Nichols, another Keynote Speaker at their 2019 conference, and author of Blue Mind, stated, "I think in the room you got researchers,
organizations, nonprofits, pro surfers...It's all the ingredients you need to take this to the next level. The distinguishing factor is the heart. People who love the ocean because it saved their life are unstoppable. You can build barriers and walls, you can unfund them, you can make it bureaucracy, but you can't stop them. That's what you feel. You don't feel that at every conference."

ISTO’s upcoming symposium, "MAKING WAVES: Through Inclusion, Diversity, and Equality in the Lineups," will focus on challenges related to accessing healthcare services, which continue to reverberate through society in the wake of 2020. As speakers will discuss, surf therapy is a method of intervention using surfing as a structured activity to promote psychological, physical, and psychosocial well-being. Surf therapy organizations exist worldwide to serve vulnerable youth, Veterans, people with disabilities, first-responders, individuals caught in addiction, homelessness, crime, and more. And ISTO works to connect these groups and facilitate a global community of surf therapy organizations. Through the power of partnership, ISTO Contributors increase the recognition and use of surf therapy as a proven health intervention by sharing outcomes and communication tools.

To learn more about this conference please visit this website: https://whova.com/web/istos_202009/

News from the International Regions

The international Regions include Asia, Australia/New Zealand/South Pacific, Canada, Europe/Middle East/Africa, and Latin America

Australia/New Zealand/South Pacific
Regional Coordinators: Katie Thomas, Antony Street Specialist Centre
Student Coordinator: Nathan Medford, Murdoch University

New Beginnings: Solidarity and Sustainability
8th International Conference of Community Psychology: Melbourne Australia

The 8th International Conference of Community Psychology was held from November 11-13th. International delegates from more than 25 countries met virtually on the ONAir platform to hear presentations on the Conference theme of Fostering and sustaining solidarities – communities, activism, knowledges & environment and to strengthen solidarity, create new networks and partnerships and share knowledges. All scheduled sessions were recorded and are now available to participants on the conference platform. Delegates also have access to an additional 80 pre-recorded Open Oral, Ignite and e-poster presentations stored in a Resource Gallery so it was a veritable smorgasbord of inspiration and resources. In line with Community Psychology’s principles of equity, sustainability and wellbeing, it is worth noting that these outcomes were achieved with zero carbon emissions for flights, printouts, conference binders, delegate name tags, food, accommodation and other face-to-face conference costs. Delegates were reminded during the Conference by Indigenous and other leaders that the planet and sustainable ecology of the planet, its peoples and other living beings must be prioritized over narrow agendas.

The 8th International Conference of Community Psychology was a living example of how virtual meetings can sustain solidarity, knowledge development and relationality without the luxuries of first world travel. The conference sub-theme of “knowledges for sustainable futures” invited and attracted participants who engage with critical theories and ways of working that have been produced in various countries and contexts, often referred to as the global south. Participants were privileged to hear stories of wellbeing, resistance from collectives and communities from India, Mexico, Indonesia, New Zealand, Italy, South Africa, Puerto Rico, Australia and the United States. Presentations demonstrated the diversity and similarities of community responses to social, environmental and cultural violence, degradation and exploitation. The similarities of the challenges and diversity of global approaches was a wonderful
opportunity to think more about how to advance community research and action towards its goals of liberation, community and wellness. Participants were privileged to hear from many Indigenous activists and theorists whose prescient voices have engaged with these issues for hundreds and thousands of years.

The conference met its promise to be a fantastic opportunity to be invigorated by diverse critical epistemological and methodological tools and critical reflexivity. The conference was sponsored and organized by Victoria University and the APS (Australian Psychological Society). Hosts in partnership were Moondani Balluk Academic Unit and the Melbourne Convention Bureau. For further information please visit the conference website at https://communitypsychologyaustralia.com.au/.

Member Support
If you are a current SCRA member and would be willing to maintain a collegial support system in your region please forward your name and contact details Katie Thomas at mothercarematters@gmail.com. Following the momentum of the conference this is a continuing opportunity to set up support and mentoring networks across the regions for solidarity and support.

Rural Interests
Edited by Susana Helm, University of Hawai’i at Mānoa

Brief Report: Community in Rural Nova Scotia, Canada
Written by Cari Patterson, Inspiring Communities

Location and Geography
Mi’kma’ki to its original people, the Mi’kmaq, Nova Scotia is Canada’s second-smallest province at 55,284 km² or 21,345 mi², and is nestled on the Atlantic coast, with 7,400 km (4,598 miles) of shoreline. Part of the Appalachian Mountains, it is home to rolling hills, highland wilderness areas, low mountain ranges, rich agricultural land, one of the deepest natural harbours in the world in Halifax, the capital city, and thanks to the funnel-shaped Bay of Fundy, the highest tides in the world at 16 metres, or about 50 feet. Refer to the map of Nova Scotia here.

History
The Mi’kmaq have inhabited Nova Scotia for about 13,000 years. The French (Acadians) and British settlers arrived in the mid-17th century and fought over the territory. In 1755, the British expelled the Acadians, many of whom fled to Louisiana; they also decimated the Mi’kmaq, despite signing Peace and Friendship Treaties in the 1750s. Today the Mi’kmaq and Acadians each make up about 3% of the population.

After 1764, a small number of Acadians were allowed to return to Nova Scotia. Without their homes or farmlands, they resettled in areas along the coast. Many made their living off the sea, establishing strong communities that exist to this day. With a history defined by tragedy, courage, and perseverance, Acadians have preserved their traditions and culture for over four centuries. The French language and a vital Acadian culture are part of the diversity celebrated in Nova Scotia today.

Nova Scotia also is home to Canada’s largest indigenous Black population, whose roots reach back to 1750, when early settlers arrived, followed by Black Loyalists, slaves, Maroons, and Black Refugees (Sehatzadeh, 2008). Despite the fact that they were subjected to systematic racism, marginalization, and poverty, they established strong communities that continue today. The achievements and triumphs of ancestors endure as a great source of pride and inspiration for African Nova Scotians. Today, Nova Scotians of African descent make up about 3% of the province’s population.

The Mi’kmaq are still fighting for their treaty rights. They are currently asserting their right to
define a **moderate livelihood** and have launched a new fishery under their Supreme Court of Canada-affirmed treaty right to hunt, fish, and gather in pursuit of a "moderate livelihood," which the federal government has never defined. Their actions have met with opposition from some non-Indigenous fishers, put treaty rights in the spotlight, and garnered international attention.

**Community Development Context**

The **Antigonish Movement** has played a critical role in the Nova Scotia context. It grew from the pioneering work of Rev. Dr. Moses Coady and Rev. Jimmy Tompkins in the 1920s and started as a community development response to the poverty afflicting farmers, fishers, miners, and other disadvantaged groups in Eastern Canada. The Antigonish Movement used a combination of adult education and group actions in communities, called The People's School. It led to the development of the now world-renowned extension department at St. Francis Xavier University and the **Coady International Institute.**

**New Dawn Enterprises Limited** in Cape Breton, Nova Scotia, is the oldest Community Development Corporation in Canada and is a Founding Member of the Canadian Community Economic Development (CED) Network. It also grew from the Antigonish Movement. New Dawn's mission is to engage the community to create a culture of self-reliance and is as relevant today as when it was founded in 1976.

**Strengths in People**

One of Nova Scotia’s greatest strengths is its people. Nova Scotians are known for their warm hospitality. In 1999, they welcomed 2,500 Kosovar Albanian refugees; hundreds of people volunteered their time, skills, and resources to support people fleeing warfare in the Balkans and crowded refugee camps in Macedonia. On September 11, 2001, 40 aircraft carrying 8,000 passengers were diverted to Halifax Stanfield International Airport. Hundreds of local families took the passengers into their homes for days and weeks until the flights started moving again. The provincial volunteer rate is higher than the national average by 7.7%; in 2013, the province contributed a higher annual average amount of volunteer hours than any province in Canada (Canadian Rural Revitalization Foundation, 2015).

**Rural Nova Scotia Today**

Today, nearly a million people live in Nova Scotia; more than a third in the Halifax Regional Municipality, one of two major urban centres in the province. Nearly half of the population (46%) lives in rural areas, defined as communities with a population of less than 1,000 and outside areas with fewer than 400 people per square kilometre (Canadian Rural Revitalization Foundation (CRRF), 2015).

Rural Nova Scotia is currently experiencing three key demographic shifts: 1) a shift of population from rural communities to urban communities, particularly the outmigration of youth; 2) an increase in the aging population, which has implications for succession planning, opportunities for youth, volunteerism, and community dynamics in general; and 3) an overall declining population, which has implications for standard of living, and quality of public services and amenities, particularly in the rural regions of the province (CRRF, 2015).

**Rural Economy**

The rural economy relies on natural resources, such as agriculture, fisheries, mining, and forestry. Many people are calling for the diversification of the economy and for increasing immigration (Ivany, 2014). The **Centre for Local Prosperity** encourages practical, innovative, and experimental community development initiatives and sustainable business practices that balance community purpose with business profit. It emphasizes *localization as key to community economies, and spreads* to localization of various aspects of the economy, economic infrastructure, community governance, and citizen engagement. The cooperative sector is especially active in rural Nova Scotia. Rural co-ops generate 1.8 times the revenue, have three times as many members and twice as many employees, compared to urban cooperatives (CRRF, 2015). Social enterprise organizations, as organizations that operate using a business model in order to catalyze positive social or environmental change, are also an important part of the social economy in Nova Scotia (CRRF, 2015).
Community Psychology in Nova Scotia

My community psychology work in Nova Scotia is based at Inspiring Communities, a not-for-profit organization that focuses on building collective action for change. We have three key areas of work: 1) nesting and supporting social innovation and experimentation, 2) creating a culture of learning and evaluative thinking, and 3) building capacity for systems leadership. We support three collective impact initiatives in the province designed to mobilize communities to address complex social issues relevant to the local context to improve life for community members. As Director of Research and Evaluation, I support a wonderful team working in community-based research and providing developmental evaluation supports, which allow the work to pivot and adapt in real-time. Together we are building collective capacity for a systems approach to social change. Please feel free to contact me.

References


Student Issues
Edited by Jessica S. Saucedo, Michigan State University

“Un solo pie adentro”: Sense of community of Puerto Ricans in Miami
Written by Tatiana Elisa Bustos, Michigan State University

LITERATURE REVIEW

Public health needs call for greater community participation and control in processes that define community problems and design and implement interventions that are both meaningful and feasible within the community (Israel, et al., 1998; Wallerstein & Duran, 2010). To that end, a systems approach to public health challenges in underserved communities can utilize community-academic partnerships (CAPs)—partnerships extending beyond academic boundaries to translational research in real-world settings—to support and enhance the capacity of existing community-based initiatives and integration of evidence-based programs. CAPs involve community-partnered research that includes community stakeholders into the decision-making processes of interventions, programs, practices, and other health-related efforts; likewise, academic stakeholders are integrated into the decision-making processes of community-based organizations’ (CBOs) real-world application of said practices, interventions or treatments into the community (Drahota et al., 2016; Pellecchia et al., 2018).

While CAPs are increasingly utilized, the perspectives of community partners participating in these collaborations remain understudied. Other studies on CAPs have indicated a significant gap in documenting the effectiveness of partnerships and an overall limited understanding of how partnership characteristics relate to successful or unsuccessful outcomes (Drahota et al., 2016; Lasker et al., 2001; Ortega et al., 2018). Furthermore, little attention is paid to the interactive relationships in CAPs, which can be a proxy to its effectiveness (Behringer et al., 2018; Bunger et al., 2014; Honeycutt & Strong, 2012; Ortega et al., 2018). For instance, factors such as motivation to participate, perception of success, and reasons for continuing to collaborate...
can strongly predict the long-term effectiveness of the network of CAPs (Carney et al., 2011; Valente et al., 2008). Furthermore, assessing contextual factors of CAPs (such as facilitators or barriers) and eliciting details on community partner perspectives have strong potential to create strategies that are more effective for real-world settings (Behringer et al., 2018; Suarez-Balcazar et al., 2005). Thus, there is a need to broaden understanding of how communities can benefit from CAPs to inform strategies that sustain partnerships for health efforts over time. The current dissertation study explores CAP partners’ motivation to participate, perception of benefits, and overall CAP experiences. Further, the study explores how external factors related to the COVID-19 has changed (or amplified) CAP efforts. The report here will focus on phase 1 of the dissertation project, as phase 2 data collection remains underway.

**METHODS**

**Study Design.** The project utilized a longitudinal, sequential mixed methods design (QUAN → QUAL) to explore an instrumental case study of a CAP centered on public health efforts in Michigan. Specifically, the project applied mixed methods social network analysis (MMSNA) utilizing social network analysis in tandem with qualitative interviews. Of note, a longitudinal approach allowed for a temporal assessment of how contexts can change over time, revealing underlying processes of partnership dynamics. Guided by the Model of Research-Community Partnership (Brookman-Frazee et al., 2012), the project aimed to identify facilitating and hindering factors to the collaboration process, understand partner perspectives about the collaboration, and examine changes in the overall network structure over time (1 year apart). The quantitative phase applied social network analysis (SNA), with the unit of analysis as the network and outcome measures related to existing network ties, degree of collaborative activities, level of trust, and frequency of interactions. Qualitative interviews then solicited community perspectives to contextualize quantitative responses, providing the breadth of collaboration experiences. Through the use of MMSNA, results are expected to provide an in-depth assessment of factors that contribute to or hinder the growth of networks in CAPs, along with the perspectives of community partners, including motivation to participate and perceived success.

**Recruitment and Sample Characteristics.** In January 2020, the CAP was comprised of 28 primary agencies within the Midwest region, including community members, academic partners, and policymakers involved in health equity efforts at the local, state, and national level. All participating agencies within the CAP were recruited to participate in Phase 1 quantitative data collection using phone calls and emails. Phase 1 eligibility criteria included: (a) represent a participating agency in the CAP; (b) read and speak in the English language; and (c) be 18 years of age or older. In this case, key representatives were members who attended meetings, completed evaluation assessments, and acted as site facilitators to communicate between the CAP and their affiliated agencies. Given the strain of the COVID-19 pandemic on community-based agencies, only CAP core leaders were interviewed for phase 1 qualitative data collection. However, all partners will be recruited for phase 2 data collection (QUAN + QUAL).

**Materials.** The PARTNER Tool is a social network analysis tool designed to assess the collaboration efforts among partners within a collaborative. The tool was integrated with other assessments exploring motivations to CAPs, including items from the Decision to Participate (DPO) survey (Gomez et al., 2018) and the CAP survey, which included facilitators and barriers.
identified from a prior systematic review on CAPs (Drahota et al., 2016). The final adapted survey collected information on: (1) facilitators and barriers to CAPs; (2) partners’ motivations to participate; (3) demographics; (4) perceived goals; (5) perceived success; (6) trust; (7) perceived value; and (8) network metrics on interactions between partners. These details were expected to provide insight into characteristics that have contributed to the ultimate success of the community partner’s goals (Williams et al., 2018). Efforts were made to incorporate the context of the community partner in collaboration with community core members. The quantitative data analyses then informed the development of a semi-structured, individual interview. The interview protocol aimed to elicit: (a) perspectives on the collaboration process with the community partner; (b) barriers and facilitators to the CAP efforts; (c) motivations for joining the CAP; (d) expectations of community partner’s outcomes; and (e) suggestions for improving the partnership. Participants were provided a $15 Amazon gift card as an incentive for their participation in the survey and for completing the interview at time-point 1. Of note, these interviews with community representatives were halted when COVID-19 rates were rising. In response to COVID-19, the interview protocol for phase 1 qualitative data collection was modified to explore how the pandemic changed the structure of the CAP, how the partnership continued to support collective health equity efforts, and what advice would be given to another CAP experiencing these same emergencies from the perspective of the CAP leaders.

Data Analysis Plan

Social Network Analysis. For the quantitative portion of this study, social network analysis (SNA)—a systems science methodology—was used to assess the CAP at two time-points approximately one year apart (January 2020, January 2021) to examine how partnerships grow and develop over time with the unit of analysis as the network of the CAP. Using the PARTNER Tool platform, applied network analysis was used for time-point 1 to assess the overall structure of the network and identify significant relationships between network metrics and CAP characteristics. Visual sociograms were then created to depict the nodes, representing agencies, and network ties, conveying the links between multiple pairs of nodes within the network (Bergenholtz & Waldstrom, 2011; Borgatti et al., 2013; Monge & Contractor, 2001). This sociogram provides an overview of how agencies within the CAP are interacting, if there is a clique or cluster of groups working together, where interactions are predominantly occurring, and how organizational attributes (e.g., type of agency) are related to frequency of ties. Figure 2 provides an example of a sociogram where the size of the nodes indicates the average rate of ties with other partners in the network (e.g., density).

![Figure 2](image)

SNA can integrate other characteristics with visual illustrations, such as sociograms for frequency of collaborations or separate sociograms for different levels of collaborative activities. Additional descriptive statistics, including means, standard deviations, t-tests, and correlational analyses were used to explore the quantitative data (e.g., number of months participating with the CAP, type of services contributed through the agency, job title, and other CAP characteristics). Analyses for time-point 2 are underway. A community report with preliminary social network data from time-point 1 was presented to CAP leaders for a formative discussion to inform next action steps for the collaboration as a whole (see Figure 4).
Content Analysis. Qualitative data from time-point 1 was analyzed using directed content analysis, a widely used, flexible qualitative approach (Bernard, 2006; Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Transcriptions of interviews with leaders were completed with Rev Transcription services. Using MAXQDA, text data was then coded to create themes that explain underlying patterns or meanings (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005; Vaismoradi & Snelgrove, 2019). Codes were quantized to present ever-coded (e.g., the number of transcripts that had the code assigned ever) and frequency (e.g., the number of times the code was assigned throughout all of the transcripts) counts, which provide additional data to support the salience of the emergent themes (Bernard, 2006; Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Qualitative analysis for phase 2 of the project (final interviews with community partners) remains underway.

Integration of QUAN + QUAL. Convergence refers to the process of bridging the quantitative and qualitative data strands to explain the phenomenon of interest (Palinkas et al., 2019; Plano Clark et al., 2015). Phase 1 QUAN results will be converged with the Phase 2 QUAL data at time-point 2 to allow for expansion of collaboration experiences and comparisons within and across partners’ responses. The product resulting from this mixed-method approach will yield a joint display to demonstrate the salience of themes related to barriers and facilitators, along with motivation and perspectives from key representatives regarding the CAP process.

PRELIMINARY OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS

Participants. A total of 23 quantitative survey responses were received at time-point 1, resulting in a response rate of 83%. Twenty respondents represented local, state, and national level community partners, and three respondents represented academic partners. Participants who did not complete the network survey at time-point 1 included 2 policymakers, 1 academic partner, and 2 local community partners. At time-point 1, CAP partners’ involvement with the CAP averaged at 23.95 months ($SD = 12.675$) with a range of 2 - 40 months (e.g., since the CAP began in 2016).

Further exploration of these rates by partner type revealed that community and academic partners were both involved with the CAP around the same duration, at an average of over 24 months ($M = 24.26$, $SD = 12.346$; $M = 21$, $SD = 21.213$, respectively).

Knowledge on relationship ties exchanged between partners in CAPs. Network scores indicated that there were 195 ties in the network of 27 nodes, with a mean average of 13 ties with other partners in the CAP. See Figure 4 for an overview of other network-level metrics. The dissertation project contributes to the application of a social network perspective to CAPs in public health, with emphasis on observational changes to a CAP’s network structure. A social network perspective can allow for the visual representation of patterns in ties over time and facilitate discussions on governance, legitimacy, trust, with collaboration in a community-based context. Qualitative findings from interviewing leaders further demonstrated how CAPs mobilize and collaborate to improve ties amongst community members representing major public health departments, particularly when faced with a public health crisis.
Motivations to participate. Understanding motivation to participate is important to ensure efficient and successful strategies for collaboration to result in health equity outcomes (Carney et al., 2011). For time-point 1, both community and academic partners were motivated by the opportunity to network with others engaged in health equity efforts. However, many community partners were also motivated by their shared sense of values and mission in health equity; whereas, academics prioritized their motivations for a systematic process to implementing evidence-based practices. The current project will assess motivating factors again in December to explore how motivations may have changed over time, particularly in response to COVID-19. Additionally, qualitative interviews at time-point 2 will help expand on these findings by revealing why such motivational factors were particularly important to community partners and how they may have led to the CAP’s outcomes.

Perceived goals and success. Positive perceptions of the efforts affiliated with a CAP can influence a community member’s decision to participate (Ortega et al., 2018). Interestingly, many community partners viewed the most important goal of the CAP as a means to reduce health disparities, whereas academics rated the most important goal as “increasing knowledge sharing.” This suggests that community and academic partners in collaboration are working towards practice-oriented goals rather than goals set by other commitments. Further, both community and academic partners viewed the CAP as successful in meeting its goals, with some qualitative responses indicating where improvements can be made. In this case, both partners prioritized improvements in role and participation.

CONCLUSIONS
Organizations, communities, and partnerships involved in public health efforts must not be seen as static but as fluid and cumulative efforts that are dynamic by nature (Behringer et al., 2018). Studies in public health are progressing towards integrative, system-level approaches with SNA (Bright et al., 2017, 2019; Chambers et al., 2012; Franco et al.,...
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2015; Leischow & Milstein, 2006). However, the use of SNA is underutilized in the study of CAPs, in particular (Bright et al., 2017; Franco et al., 2015). The impact of this research builds on systems-level, ecological perspectives grounded in community psychology, emphasizing how networks of CAPs in public health within larger systems of marginalized communities can function collaboratively to better understand and resolve health disparities. In utilizing SNA, the dissertation explored how network properties and partnership dynamic processes relate to CAP success and outcomes. Community stakeholder participation in the CAP process is also important to understand in order to create and design strategies that are relevant, useful, and responsive to the needs of a given community (Benoit et al., 2005). To this end, this project contributes to research on the CAP collaborative process to inform future efforts to develop and maintain successful partnerships for broader public health equity impacts. Findings ultimately contribute to community and academic perceptions of CAP collaborations that highlight dynamic processes intertwined with contexts related to community, operational, and interpersonal processes.

AUTHOR INFORMATION
If you have any questions or are interested in following up on more specific details about the study, please reach out to me via email at bustosta@msu.edu or follow me on Twitter (@telisa72).

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS
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From Our Members
Edited by Dominique Thomas, Independent Scholar

Using Community Psychology Values to Foster State-Level Change
Written by Corbin J. Standley, Michigan State University

Community psychology aims to use research and action to promote positive change at the individual and systemic levels (SCRA, n.d.). This vision guides our research, activism, and community engagement efforts. As graduate students in the field, we learn that this vision is guided by values such as participation, collaboration, and diversity (Nelson & Prilleltensky, 2010; Rappaport, 1977). Recently, I have had the opportunity to engage in state-level change efforts and have been reflecting on how these values have influenced this work. Two major state-level initiatives—the passage of the Save Our Students Act and the ongoing work of the State Suicide Prevention Commission—provide powerful examples of these values in action.

Youth Advocacy for Policy Change
In addition to my role as a student and researcher, I also serve as Chairman of the Board of Directors for the Michigan Chapter of the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP). In this role, I help to oversee AFSP’s research, education, advocacy, and support efforts to prevent suicide across Michigan. I also bring my expertise as a suicide researcher and community psychologist to advocacy and have been engaged in policy work at both the state and federal levels. Earlier this year, we organized a State Capitol Day advocacy event in Lansing, Michigan bringing volunteers across the state together to advocate for mental health and suicide prevention legislation. As a part of this event, we partnered with students from the Student Mental Health Committee at a local high school in mid-Michigan.
This gave the students the opportunity to learn about the legislative process, talk to their state legislators face-to-face, share their stories of suicide loss and survival, and use their voices to advocate for change. As community psychology values teach us, “participation entails individuals playing an active role in decisions that affect their lives and meaningfully contributing to their communities” (Nelson & Prilleltensky, 2010, p. 35).

Joined by three faculty advisors, the high school students came to the State Capitol on a Spring morning in early March. Together with over sixty other volunteers from across the state, the students participated in an hour-long advocate orientation to learn about the legislative process, discuss the bills for which we would be advocating, and role play a legislative meeting to practice sharing their stories and key talking points. After an informal open house lunch with legislative staffers, the students joined their chaperones and other volunteers for meetings on the hill with state senators and representatives.

Along with the other attendees that day, the students met with over 50 legislators and their staff and helped to drop off briefing material to the other 100 or so offices around the Capitol Complex. In one meeting I had the pleasure of attending with the students, we met with State Senator Curtis Vanderwall, who Chairs the Senate Health Policy and Human Services Committee. Senator Vanderwall is known for asking tough questions in committee hearings and brought a similar, though toned-down energy to this meeting.

Among other things, the students talked with Senator Vanderwall about House Bill 5482. Colloquially known as the “Save Our Students Act,” House Bill 5482 mandates middle and high schools in Michigan to print a suicide prevention hotline phone number on all student ID cards and display Michigan Department of Health and Human Services-provided suicide prevention materials and resources in school buildings and on their websites. They talked about their own struggles with anxiety and depression; about friends they had lost to suicide and the grief, guilt, and hopelessness that can follow; and about wanting—more than anything—to turn their experiences into action to create change. They also talked about the practical implications of the legislation—that students carry their ID cards with them everywhere; that the legislation does not require school districts to incur any additional costs; and that something as simple as a suicide hotline number lets students know that they are not alone, that others care about them, and that help is available.

House Bill 5482 passed through the House of Representatives in June, through the Senate in September, and was signed into law by Governor Whitmer on October 15, 2020. For these students, learning about the legislative process and being able to influence it by sharing their stories and talking directly to their legislators gave them a sense of purpose, a renewed sense of activism, and a rekindled passion to create change. As one student put it in that meeting, “I’m here to help prevent suicide, and so that no one has to feel alone again.”

**Community Engagement to Fight Suicide**

In another policy win, Senate Bill 228 was signed into law in December of 2019 establishing the first State Suicide Prevention Commission in Michigan. After helping to draft this legislation and providing testimony in various House and Senate Committee hearings to support it, I was appointed by Governor Whitmer to serve on the Commission in March of this year. As a Commissioner, I also serve on the Data and Policy Subcommittees helping to inform the recommendations made to the state legislature—recommendations made in an annual report developed by the Commission.

The Commission represents a broad range of stakeholders from various backgrounds, geographies, and professions across the state. This was an intentional aim of the legislation in order to meaningfully and authentically represent the diversity of the state of Michigan and the diversity of those impacted by suicide. As Kelly (1971) states, “Being able to see the variety in the way persons cope with tragedy, how they confront social inequities, initiate legal action, and celebrate good times is the measure of the community psychologist” (p. 900).
In an effort to broaden this diversity, more holistically understand how people experience the issue of suicide and ascertain how local communities across the state are tackling it, the Commission is hosting four public town hall meetings later this year. These town halls will provide Commissioners with an opportunity to hear from people across the state. From a community psychology perspective, these town halls “represent our laboratory and require that we be in attendance to observe and participate and earn a right to contribute” (Kelly, 1970, p. 528) while also ensuring the Commission remains accountable to communities across Michigan.

In addition to the values of diversity and participation, the Commission is committed to providing evidence-based recommendations in its report to the state legislature. This includes a thorough understanding of successful programs and initiatives in other states, a commitment to strengthen data infrastructure and funding in the state, and an understanding of how research can meaningfully be used to inform the policy change (e.g., Standley, 2020; Tseng, 2012).

**Conclusion**

The successes described above were possible because the work was rooted in key community psychology values of participation, collaboration, and diversity. Multiple organizations, legislators, and volunteers across the state have made these successes possible. Progress is slow and iterative, and there is much more work to do, but the passage of the Save Our Students Act and the ongoing work of the State Suicide Prevention Commission exemplify community psychology values in action. By extending beyond the walls of academia, engaging youth and community members, and centering the stories of lived experience, we have been able to create state-level change in Michigan.

*Corbin J. Standley is a Ph.D. student and University Distinguished Fellow at Michigan State University. To contact Corbin or learn more about his work, visit [www.CorbinJStandley.com](http://www.CorbinJStandley.com)*

**References**


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**The 8th International Conference on Community Psychology: Building Local and Global Community in Challenging Times**

*Written by Christopher Sonn, Samuel Keast, Emma Scott, Victoria University, Australia; Rachael Fox, Charles Sturt University, Australia*

The 8th International Conference on Community Psychology (ICCP) was held 11-13th
November 2020, and for the first time, delivered as a virtual event. Our conference builds on a rich tradition of ICCPs that was started in Puerto Rico in 2006, and that has gone from strength to strength since that time. We set out on our journey over two years ago now with the support of the Australian Psychological Society’s Events Team, and were ready to circulate the final program in May 2020 for the face to face conference, initially planned for June 2020.

Then the COVID-19 Pandemic halted our progress.

The virus has made its way effortlessly around the world with devastating effect, causing major disruption and much uncertainty. Our organising team have had to regroup and start again, which we did, collectively. We have learned new technologies, new ways of working, and we have found new ways to stay connected in and beyond place during the lockdown.

At the 7th International Conference of Community Psychology (ICCP) held in Chile in 2018, many delegates called for re-examination and reconnection with the field’s commitment to social justice and for critical and deeper engagement with what some have referred to as the ‘decolonial turn’. This turn has been described as a paradigm shift that can disrupt colonial legacies of power, knowledge, and being (Mignolo & Walsh, 2018).

The current moment of colliding crises reverberating around the world have magnified: continued racialized social injustice; deepening ecological crises; the struggles of First Nations people; Black Lives Matter; LGBTQI struggles for rights and safety and more. This reality, this moment, calls for reawakening the sense of injustice - a call to community and allied psychologists, social scientists, and beyond. It is a call to critically interrogate our field, the profession, the university afresh, to examine the possibilities and limits of various underpinning worldviews, methodologies and practices, to push beyond disciplinary boundaries and to learn from, with, and in dialogue with the various movements, activisms, and other agents about processes of social and societal transformation to advance transformative praxis.

With our core theme of Fostering and Sustaining Solidarities of the 8th ICCP conference, we have received inspiring responses to our call. The conference showcased the rich range of methodologies and critically-oriented research and action that are based on feminist, liberation oriented, and Indigenous and critical race approaches in our fields. We were excited by the stimulating program, which delegates commented inspired them and fostered new visions and solidarities in, across, and beyond our local contexts.

Two webinars preceded the conference. These were very significant preludes that provided us with a sense of what was possible, along with the confidence that we could deliver an online event. We produced two power pre-conference webinars; one on Indigenous Knowledge, and Radical Imagination Decolonisation (featuring Pat Dudgeon, Aus, Linda Nikora, NZ, and Nuria Ciofalo, US) and a second on Critical Transnational Conversations on Structural Violence and Radical possibilities (featuring Paola Balla, Aus, Jesica Shiham Fernández, US; and Michelle Fine, US).

Each webinar attracted over 400 registrations and are still accumulating views on our ICCP youtube channel.

Some described these webinars as a labour of love. For us, it was indeed a very rewarding labour of love to be able to foster connectedness and community during a very challenging time using a digital platform. And, it was this connectedness that reaffirmed the need to move forward with the delivery of the ICCP Conference in the 2020 year despite the technological, time zone and language obstacles we would face.

The 3-day conference schedule was split into morning and evening segments AEDT to cater as best we could for various time zones. Sixty-one scheduled conference sessions were delivered within those three days, with 80 gallery presentations (i.e., eposters, 5-minute ignite presentations, and short papers) available to view
on-demand, and Spanish language translation made available for many sessions.

The behind the scenes production was labour and time intensive compounded by the fact that this was all very new to most of the team, academics and events staff alike. Finding the right technology, within budget, and training a team to deliver a multi-faceted conference within it, took many resources over many months. The technology used to deliver the conference was the OnAIR platform within the suite of EventsAIR event management software. Accompanying this conference delivery platform, we used Zoom Webinar and Meetings for live conference content, Twilio for conference networking and Slack for post-session and conference discussion.

We had over 350 registrations for the live event, and more people are signing up now to access the content asynchronously. Registrants were from all around the globe and came from a range of academic discipline areas, with distinguished professors, early career researchers, practitioners, artists, and activists joining in dialogue in zoom spaces. Over 188 speakers from 25 countries presented. The papers were varied both in terms of content and style showcasing amazing critical work but also the creativeness of delegates in producing impactful digital presentations.

We delivered three invited keynote panels with commentary from leaders in their respective fields during the event. These included a session on Southern Theories and Actions, Anti-Capitalist Solidarities and Creating Inclusive, Empowered Cultures and Communities, a closing plenary and a hand over session in which we announced the 2022 host city of Naples, Italy and for the first time, a second host city, Montevideo, Uruguay for the 2024 event.

From our perspective as conference organisers, we were very pleased with the event and people who completed our post-conference survey agree. We asked people standard questions, including if they liked the virtual format and what they liked about the virtual platform. Most of those who responded said that they liked the platform. Most people were happy with the quality of the content as well as the volume of content. All respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that they were satisfied with the event.

Two comments below illustrate some of the experience with the platform.

"I liked because it allowed for the conference to proceed despite COVID. ICCPs are expensive so I hope it allowed others to attend who may not have otherwise been able to afford it. The organization and sessions went well.”

"I have attended a previous conference that utilized a different virtual format and I liked the OnAir format much better. It was easier to navigate and I appreciated being able to change the time..."
zone to see the times of the presentations in my own time zone. That was really helpful.”

Some were not as positive as expressed by one person who captured a range of challenges related to the format, everyday life, and the realities of the changes we are negotiating:

“I am glad the conference was still able to be held despite the pandemic; however, the online format did not go as well as I had hoped. It was difficult to be interactive due to the different time zones. It was also a challenge still having to do other day-to-day activities, work, and school, along with attending the conference (whereas attending in person allows people to be able to focus on just the conference). I also felt like it was hard to promote presentations, and it was disappointing to not receive any feedback. It was great to be able to participate in this conference, but sadly the online format can’t compete with the in-person experience”

A couple of general comments capture the overall tone of feedback that we received:

“I liked online because it was accessible across the world, but really missed that in-person experience for informal conversations.”

“All in all it was a wonderful experience, I learnt a lot. I know it must have been a challenge to accommodate different time zones. My sessions started at 4:00 am until 6:00 am, and then they began again at 5:00 pm until 11:00 pm. I just wish next time they could begin a little later in the morning 😊, but I understand the complexity of arranging a convenient time for everyone. Thanks for the opportunity.”

We also asked people about moving forward, and what format they would prefer to see in future events. Most people indicated a preference for a hybrid event, followed by face to face, and online/virtual.

For us, the conference was a significant achievement given the turbulent context. We learnt many valuable lessons about perseverance, creating good working relationships in our teams, thinking outside the square and trusting the expertise of respective teams brought to the table. We developed a deeper appreciation and respect for our colleagues, locally and globally, in and outside the university, who generously supported this coming together and sharing their gifts of knowledge, collegiality, and solidarity. We have all been re-energised after a tumultuous 2020, buoyed by the visions, ideas, and possibilities of critical solidarities for the future that was enacted in the lead up to and through the virtual ICCP2020.

Reference

Reading Circle
Edited by Dominique Thomas, Independent Scholar and Allana Zuckerman, Mesa Community College

To encourage ongoing dialogue with each other about what we are reading and how those readings are influencing our work, we are starting a reading circle and recommended reading list. Each issue we will share 5-6 readings that have influenced our work and provide a space for additional submissions. This is a space for people to share what they are reading so we can get an idea of the different knowledge bases people are exposed to and what is influencing their research and practice. This is also a way for us to share information and knowledge across a variety of topics to showcase and enhance richness of thought within the field. Here’s what we’ve been reading!


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**SCRA Membership**

If you are not currently a member of the Society for Community Research and Action (SCRA) and would like to be, please visit [http://scra27.org/](http://scra27.org/) to learn more about the organization. If you would like to become a member, the membership form can be accessed at: [http://scra27.org/members1/membership/](http://scra27.org/members1/membership/)

If you would like to learn more about community psychology, visit [www.communitypsychology.com](http://www.communitypsychology.com).

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**TCP Submission Guidelines**

TCP is published four times a year. Articles, columns, features, and announcements should be submitted as Word attachments in an e-mail message to Dominique Thomas and Allana Zuckerman at [TCP@scra27.org](mailto:TCP@scra27.org). Submission deadlines are:

- February 15th – Spring issue
- May 15th – Summer issue
- August 15th – Fall issue
- November 15th – Winter issue

Authors should adhere to the following guidelines when submitting materials:

- Length: Five pages, double-spaced
- No cover sheet or title page. Please be sure to put the article title and author names and organizational affiliations at the top of the article.
- Graphs & Tables: These should be converted and saved as pictures in JPEG files. Please note where they should be placed in the article.
- Images: Images are highly recommended, but please limit to two images per article. Images should be higher than 300 dpi. 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.
- Margins: 1” margins on all four sides
- Text: *Times New Roman, 12-point font* – this includes headings and titles and subheadings.
- Alignment: All text should be aligned to the left (including titles) with a .5” paragraph indentation.
- Punctuation Spacing: Per APA guidelines, make sure that there is only one space after periods, question marks, etc.
- Do NOT include footnotes or endnotes.
- References: Follow APA guidelines. These should also be justified to the left with a hanging indent of .25”.
- Headers/Footers: Do not use headers and footers.
- Please put your email information and an invitation to contact you into the article.
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