From the President
John Moritsugu
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Pacific Lutheran University

The Mid Winter Meetings were held at the end of January in Washington, D.C. These meetings permit us to come together, share what we have been doing and discuss our plans for the coming year. It is an exciting time since the executive committee is an extraordinary team of individuals who have accomplished much in their professional lives as individuals and have experience as creators of communities. It is fun and it is challenging. From this crucible of ideas and opinions come the plans and programs for the division. We accomplished our business of discussing the future and approving a budget for the year. There is a synergy generated by these face-to-face meetings. My thanks to all of the EC participants at the Mid Winter Meetings: Bret Kloos—Past President; Susan McMahon—President-Elect; Dina Birman—Representative to APA Council; Stephanie Reich—Secretary, James Emshoff—Treasurer; Tiffany Jimenez—Member-At-Large; Anne Brodsky—Member-At-Large; Chiara Sabina—Member-At-Large; Meagan Sweeney—Student Representative; Regina Langhout—National Regional Coordinator; Brian Christens—Council of Education Programs; Olya Belysaev-Glantsman—Practice Council, Meg Bond—Publications, Jacob Tebs—Editor of AJCP, Daniel Cooper—Co-Editor of The Community Psychologist (Tiffany McDowell, is the second Co-Editor). And of course a special thanks to our Administrative Director, Victoria Scott and the assistance of Taylor Scott. Following discussions led by Susan McMahon, we left the D.C. meetings with a set of clear objectives outlined. The Strategic Planning process and report details are being elaborated elsewhere. I would only say our thanks to their long and timely efforts.

Also of note around our meetings was the report of APA’s awarding Sam Tsemberis of Pathways Housing National, the Distinguished Contributions to Independent Practice Award for 2016. A well-deserved acknowledgement of his work on the Housing First model for addressing homelessness.

In the realm of awards, the Executive Committee, at the recommendation of Bret Kloos,
conferred special awards to Ann Bogat of Michigan State University and Jacob Tebs of Yale University for their work on securing a new publication agreement with Wiley, for the American Journal of Community Psychology. A second special award was bestowed on Bradley Olson for his work on advocating policy changes within APA with regards to the Ethics Code, the law and psychologists’ roles in interrogations. Finally, a third special award was given to Jean Hill for all of her hard work updating the SCRA website, and building a more robust digital and social media presence.

In another vein, at this time, I am aware that two new International Regional meetings are occurring this year. Toshi Sasao has organized a meeting in Tokyo that included participants from the Asian region in February. Mona Amer has helped organize a Middle East/ North Africa conference meetings in Cairo that meets this spring. I am also aware that John Sylvestre and Tim Aubrey from University of Ottawa and Manual Riemer from Wilfred Laurier University along with a strong Canadian committee have been busy organizing the next biennial, to be held in Ottawa in 2017.

All of this activity helps to underscore, that the society is alive and active, and growing. This is made possible by an involved and engaged membership that includes students, early career, and established members. There are committees that are at work, or re-awakening. And as always, there is more to do. It is my privilege to be a part of this all for the year.
Interest Group columns provide multiple avenues for members to get involved and connect with other comrades through groups, conferences, and events. Finally, SCRA’s President and Treasurer provide us with a transparent look at the state of the society coming out of the mid-winter meeting. Happy reading all!

Dan and Tiffany ♡

The Community Practitioner
Edited by Olya Glantsman

Interview with Pathways to Housing founder, Sam Tsemberis

One of the best representations of community psychology in practice is the Pathways Housing First model, which is recognized by the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH), the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, among others, as the most effective approach to ending chronic homelessness for individuals with mental health and addiction issues. In 2014, its originator, Sam Tsemberis received an award for Distinguished Contribution to Practice in Community Psychology from the Society for Community Research and Action. This year, Sam is the recipient of the American Psychological Association’s award for Distinguished Contributions to Independent Practice. The story behind this extremely successful project offers community psychology practitioners the opportunity to see not only the intervention and results, but also the process behind them. The following interview with Dr. Tsemberis highlights some of his valuable insights as a visionary practitioner with respect to the intervention that has changed so many lives.

While doing my homework on the Pathways to Housing’s website, I came across a quote by Dr. Tsemberis: “Housing ends homelessness, it’s that simple.” Many still do not see this “simple” truth as they discuss and implement policies surrounding homelessness. Many still believe that homelessness cannot be addressed unless we first address the ‘root causes’ which are considered to reside in the individual’s addiction, mental illness, or poor choices. So an obvious question for Sam was when did he realize this wasn’t so? What led him to believe that giving someone housing first, without any requirements for psychiatric treatment or sobriety would be helpful? The answer was definitely not
The LGBT Interest Group increases awareness of the need for community research and action related to issues that impact LGBT people, and serves as a mechanism for communication, collaboration, and networking among community psychologists who are either interested in research or policy related to LGBT people and communities, and/or who identify as LGBTQ.

Co-Chairs: Debbie Ojeda, debbie.ojeda@gmail.com
Christopher Jenne, cjonne@marymountcalifornia.edu
Corey Flanders, corey.flanders@camh.ca
Rachel Smith, rms7@pdx.edu

**INTEREST GROUPS**

**AGING**
The Aging Interest Group focuses on the productive role of aging in the community and the prevention of mental health problems in the elderly.

*Chair:* Andrew Hostetler, andrew_hostetler@umich.edu

**CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES**
The Children, Youth & Families Interest Group facilitates the interests of child and adolescent development in high risk contexts, especially the effect of urban poverty and community structures on child and family development.

*Chair:* Michelle Ronayne, michelle.ronayne@gmail.com

**COMMUNITY ACTION**
The Community Action Interest Group explores the roles and contributions of people working in applied community psychology settings.

*Co-Chairs:* Bradley Olson, bradley.olson@nmu.edu
Susan Torres-Harding, storresharding@rosevelt.edu

**COMMUNITY HEALTH**
The Community Health Interest Group focuses on healthy aging, disease prevention, and health care services delivery issues as they relate to the community.

*Co-Chairs:* Venarcha M. Batá-Ambrus, criollav@hotmail.com
Darcy Freedman, dfreed@case.edu
David Lounsbery, david.lounsbery@einstein.yu.edu

**DISABILITIES**
The Disabilities Interest Group promotes understanding of the depth and diversity of disabilities issues in the community that are ready for research and action, and influences community psychologists’ involvement in policy and practices that enhance self determination, personal choice, and full inclusion in the community for people with disabilities.

*Co-Chairs:* Naoko Yura Yasui, naokoyasuiyusui@gmail.com
Erin Stack, erinstack@gmail.com

**EARLY CAREER**
The ECIG focuses on developing and enhancing the skills of early career community psychologists (less than seven years of experience post terminal degree) by creating opportunities for mentorship, networking, and leadership within the SCRA organization.

*Chair:* Ashlee Lien, lien@oldwestbury.edu
Ben Graham, benjamin.graham@gmail.com

**ENVIRONMENT & JUSTICE**
The Environment & Justice Interest Group is focused on research and action related to global climate change and environmental degradation. With a focus on environmental justice, particularly how environmental change affects and often perpetuates social inequality, this group explores the role community psychology can and should play in understanding the urgent changes to our ecology.

*Co-Chairs:* Lena Bain, lenabain8@gmail.com
Allison Early, allisonearlyy@gmail.com

**INDIGENOUS**
The Indigenous Interest Group is hosted by the Australian, New Zealand and Pacific branch of the Society for Community Research and Action. The aims of this group are interrelated. Firstly, it wants to support SCRA members who are conducting Indigenous research by providing a forum for the exchange of ideas, literature, and experience. This will assist the group’s more specific focus which is to utilize our combined resources more effectively to conduct research and praxis towards raising public awareness of the plight of indigenous people and addressing the social justice issues they face in oppressive dominant societies.

*Co-Chairs:* Debbie Ojeda, debbie.ojeda@gmail.com
Corey Flanders, corey.flanders@camh.ca
Rachel Smith, rms7@pdx.edu

**NEW GRADUATE PROGRAMS**
The mission of New Graduate Programs Group is to support and strengthen new graduate education programs of the SCRA nationally and internationally.

*Chair:* Tiffany R. Jimenez, tiffany.jimenez@nl.edu

**ORGANIZATIONS STUDY INTEREST GROUP**
The Organization Studies Interest Group is a community of scholars who are interested in community psychology themes (e.g., empowerment, ecological analysis, prevention, sense of community) in organizational contexts, and in practicing organization studies concepts, methods, models, and theories into community psychology.

*Co-Chairs:* Kimberly Boss, kimberryl.boss@welded.org;
Neil Boyd, neil.boyd@bucknell.edu

**PREVENTION & PROMOTION**
The Prevention & Promotion Interest Group seeks to enhance development of prevention and promotion research, foster active dialogue about critical conceptual and methodological aspects and implications issues, and promote rapid dissemination and discussion of new developments and findings in the field.

*Chair:* Toshi Sasa, tosasa02@gmail.com
Jessica Norman, jessicannorman@gmail.com

**RURAL**
The Rural Interest Group is devoted to highlighting issues of the rural environment that are important in psychological research, service, and teaching.

*Chair:* Susan Halm, helms@dop.hawaii.edu

**SCHOOL INTERVENTION**
The School Intervention Group addresses theories, methods, knowledge base, and settings pertaining to prevention and health promotion in school.

*Co-Chairs:* Melissa Maras, marasmas@misouri.edu;
José Ornelas, ornerelas@unione.edu

**SELF-HELP/MUTUAL SUPPORT**
The Self-Help/Mutual Support Interest Group is an international organization of researchers, self-help leaders, and policy makers that promotes research and action related to self-help groups and organizations.

*Chair:* Greg Townley, gtownley@pdx.edu

**TRANSFORMATIVE CHANGE IN COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH**
The vision of the Transformative Change in Community Mental Health Interest Group is to strive to establish an alternative paradigm that focuses the promotion of mental health based in community settings based upon the values of citizenship, recovery, empowerment, inclusion, and social justice. This includes the articulation of models, the identification of promising practices, and research to demonstrate the value of this alternative paradigm and its examples.

*Chair:* Geoffrey Nelsen, gnelson@whsu.ca

*Last updated 01/01/16*
right away. In fact, Sam told me that when he began working on the homelessness issue, he did not know that his project would develop the way it did. According to Dr. Tsemberis, when one enters a system of care and learns about the services for the homeless, one realizes that it is a service industry that is predicated on strongly held, erroneous assumptions that people with mental illness and substance abuse cannot function adequately without first addressing their clinical problems. Furthermore, most programs operate with the belief that a person’s diagnosis is correlated with inability to manage the ordinary demands of day-to-day life. Thus, individuals with a diagnosis of severe mental illness are often regarded as unable to manage something like housing; let alone an apartment of their own. Therefore, most programs for those who are homeless and have complex clinical problems require that participants first address their illness or drug and alcohol use in order to get ‘ready for housing.’ This is how programs for the homeless have operated for a very long time, and these demands for compliance with treatment or prolonged abstinence from drugs or alcohol in order to get a place to live were (and are) for many “too steep a climb” that puts housing out of reach. And so those who were most vulnerable and needed housing most, those with mental illness and substance abuse problems, remained homeless for years.

What Sam observed after working with this cohort for a while was that people were in fact much more capable than the first impression they give to the casual passerby. The person sitting motionless and seemingly helpless on a bench, her belongings in well-worn plastic bags placed nearby, is actually managing and juggling a number of decisions on a daily basis. People who are homeless need to keep track of the locations and hours of operation of soup kitchens and food pantries, they need to remember which churches, synagogues, and drop in centers offer a place to rest and an address where they can receive their monthly disability check, and on a nightly basis, they must find safe places to sleep without getting mugged or arrested. They know the terms and conditions of entry for clothing programs and shelters, and some know what to say to guarantee admission to detox or a hospital ward for a few weeks of respite from life on the streets. Many among the homeless are managing “an entire panoply of services” that would require a spreadsheet to keep track of. They have, what Sam calls “functional abilities” that guarantee their survival but all too often remain unseen by formal clinical assessments. Making this observation, he realized that even those people who may appear incapacitated by their symptoms are actually “managing a lot more than we give them credit for.” And this one realization, this one insight changes everything.

Knowing that a system needs to change and actually changing it are two different things, however. When asked what he wishes he knew going in, Sam says that he wishes he “would have asked people sooner what they wanted.” He notes that this delay had created a lot of “unnecessary hardship.” And even today there are still far too many people remaining homeless because programs do not recognize people’s strengths and insist that their participants must follow program rules especially with regard to first treating their mental illness or addiction.

When Sam talks about the clients he has worked with over the years, it is impossible not to notice how much he cares, and going back to the original question of how did he know, he says “The people we were working with were literally homeless and because of the complexity of their problems—mental health, health, addiction—they were unwelcomed, basically locked out of just about every traditional service setting; with the exception of emergency rooms and jails. They were locked out of their housing and they were also locked out of traditional service settings. They lived among us in a state of internal exile.” He continues: “It was out of frustration, we needed to try something different.” It was this frustration born of “repeated failures” to try to get people into treatment and into existing housing programs that drove him to find something that worked. What it took, was first to stop assuming that “we knew best” and to stop believing that the failures of our ability to place people in existing housing programs was because the people we were serving were “hard to house” or “not housing ready.”

He began to have the kinds of conversations that invited clients to become the “architects of their own program.”

And it turns out “people were very articulate” about what they wanted. It turned out that what people wanted first and foremost was a place to live, a simple decent apartment, like the places they had lived in before they were homeless; a place where they can feel safe and secure and begin a way of life that was not only about surviving from one day to the next.

The Pathways to Housing organization was initially funded by government supported housing grants that would pay for both the rent and the treatment services. These grants did not specify the sequence of housing and services and Sam and his team simply
reversed the traditional order; they did the opposite from what others receiving the same grants were doing. Most importantly, he says, it was about giving people chances – not just one chance at a new life but second, third, and fourth. “We were not going to operate a program that was going to discharge people for relapsing. Relapsing is part of recovery,” he says. “Where are people who were out on the streets when we met them going to go? We are the program of last resort.” So to him, it’s not just about the second chance. “The second chance,” he says, “is just the beginning. People need many, many chances.” It is “a journey, and it is a different journey with each individual.” Importantly, while it doesn’t always go smoothly or work right away, it remains a program that recognizes that a great deal can be learned from making mistakes and allows program participants the “dignity of failure.” Consumer choice and self-determination have been the cornerstone of the program’s philosophy. Making your own decision and charting the course of your life is “what recovery is all about” and “learning from the failures is as important as learning from success.”

One of the key reasons that Housing First is so widely disseminated today is because of the impressive research record it has established over the years. This practice of evaluating the effectiveness of the program is part and parcel of what Sam calls the ‘practice-research’ tradition of community-clinical psychology. From the very first year that Pathways was in operation the program was collecting outcome data. The results were remarkable. After the first year, 84 percent of the Pathways Housing First participants were still housed in their apartments compared to 40 percent for the ‘treatment then housing group.’ “That was a huge wakeup call,” Tsemberis says. “It was like, ‘Hey, we’re on to something here because nobody’s getting an 84-percent outcome on this population with anything.’”

Today Pathways Housing First is listed in the SAMHSA National Registry of Evidence Based Programs.

Upon reflection, he says he is glad he didn’t know how difficult operating such a program would be - people don’t always succeed in the first apartment, they may be relocated, there are crises, innumerable house calls, problems with neighbors, family members, landlord, etc. “I didn’t know enough to be afraid to try it, to give people a chance. I’m glad I didn’t know that.” He continues, “I think if I had been too risk-averse… I would have never had the courage to go ahead with it.” This insight is particularly poignant. How many times have practitioners, such as Sam, given up on a project because of fear of challenge or failure? Many have felt it, and it bears hearing that even those who have seen success still work through that discomfort. “Being a little bit optimistic, helped a great deal” he notes, “Sometimes, you have to take a leap of faith and assume that the best is possible.” Leaps of faith rarely happen in a vacuum. Dr. Tsemberis says that there have been others who inspired and supported him in the process. Asked to name them, he laughs and asks how much time we have. After listing a few colleagues like psychologists Bill Anthony, Mikal Cohen, and Rachel Efron, he talks about consumer champions like Howie the Harp, Ed Rooney and Hilary Melton and the many remarkable people he has worked with over the years, both colleagues and clients. He says wisdom and inspiration come from unexpected places. He credits his “long list of accumulated wisdom” to the “sum of the interactions with very wise people” he was fortunate to encounter through his life. What is most important, Sam notes, is trying to maintain an open mind, having openness to a life-long learning, and to continue exposing oneself to new ideas. According to Sam, “every person that you work with has the capacity of teaching you something new.” When he was younger, he tells me, he was a bit more hierarchically minded and expected important learning to come from “socially sanctioned teachers.” Over the years, he came to a realization that you never really know where the wisdom will come from and that great learning can come from all kinds of people. To him, “wisdom is not a monopoly of those in traditional position of authority” and comes from the experience of engaging with others and sharing of knowledge. The key is, that one has to listen to be able to “receive learning when it is available to you and allow yourself to be changed by the new learning.”

Shared knowledge implies ways to influence the future. What other basic human rights, in addition to housing, could we be working on in the future using the Housing First model? “America,” Tsemberis says, “is unique that it doesn’t recognize health or education as a human right. Young people are graduating college with enormous debt. Right now the largest national debt is college loans.” He continues: “How will someone graduating today be free to take risks or experiment with new and untested ideas when they are in tremendous debt and must hold on to steady work because they cannot afford to do otherwise?” To Sam, offering housing as a basic human right is an essential component of the program and a key message about how we regard housing as a society. Especially for people who...
are so poor that they are homeless housing should not be something that must be earned. The participants do not have to jump through hoops to get it. To him, this is not a clinical matter it is about social justice. “Who deserves housing?” he asks. “Why should people who are homeless have to earn it?”

He then tells me a bit about his own background. Sam was born in a village in Greece. From his growing up there he retained a “sense of community and belonging.” In the village, he tells me, it is “unthinkable that one of your own is on the street.” His voice becomes even more passionate: “You will do whatever you can to house that person.” He asks me where I was born and raised, and after I tell him Ukraine, he asks whether it was the same way in my country. We then talk about what he calls “the fabric of connectedness” and “inclusiveness,” and the result of those ideals: intolerability of social problems such as homelessness. “Ultimately,” he says: “If the general public came to believe that homelessness was unacceptable – we would no longer have homelessness.” To solve homelessness, people need to perceive as “intolerable the idea that our fellow citizens are on the street.” In sum, this wisdom can be applied to a myriad of other social issues. And thus, it is up to each and every one of us to affect change, to make injustice intolerable and it is our collective responsibility to help those who need help in the ways they need it rather than how we believe they should receive it. And often, success results from being open to learning and taking chances, and begins simply with asking and truly hearing the answers.

**Finance Report**

Message from SCRA Treasurer, Jim Emshoff

Early 2016 finds SCRA’s financial status to be healthy and strong. I will review our revenue, expenditures, and investment performance for 2015. Then I will describe some changes in our financial processes before providing a summary of our budget for 2016.

In 2015, we exceeded our expected revenue, primarily as a result of a profitable Biennial. While we have an expectation that the Biennial will provide us with some of our financial support, it has not always worked out that way. We are thankful to Andy Hostetler, Meg Bond and the rest of the team at UMass Lowell for both a stimulating and profitable conference.

We also had fewer total expenses in 2015 than we expected when we set the budget. Some of this was the result of under-spending in some categories, but most of it came as a result of not hiring the part-time Outreach Coordinator that had been authorized for part of 2015. That hiring process is underway now, and by the time you read this we may have filled this position. As a result of both the profitable conference and the underspending, we finished 2015 with revenues exceeding expenditures by $60,096.

One challenge for SCRA in 2015 was negotiation of a new contract for the publication of AJCP. Publication royalties have been our primary source of income for quite a few years, so the outcome of that negotiation was critical to our future financial well-being. In the time that has passed since our last contract negotiation with Springer, the business model for journals has been upended by the rise of electronic publishing and access, leading to fewer and less profitable print subscriptions. Nevertheless, a very able team led by Jack Tebes and Anne Bogat vetted offers from multiple publishers before signing what we consider a very good deal with Wiley. The reduction in our journal revenues could have been drastic, and we feel fortunate that these cuts are “only” $68,000. Making this reduction easier to bear is a one-time signing bonus of $100,000. This bonus will be added to our budget in five $20,000 increments over the years 2016-2020. Therefore, our net reduction for 2016 is $48,000. In addition, there is a possibility that our subscription numbers will be high enough to earn a $50,000 bonus, but we are not counting on that.

The Executive Committee (EC) met in January to set the 2016 budget. The reduction in revenue noted above has resulted in cuts to our grants programs as well as other areas of discretionary spending. If we are fortunate to receive the subscription bonus described above, these cuts will be fully restored by mid-year or so. The EC has also been engaged in a strategic planning process with the assistance of a committee external to the EC. We have acted on several budget requests associated with that plan, including the approval of funds for services that will increase the visibility of our website and an additional administrative assistant. Assuming we do not have any unanticipated expenses through 2016, our budget will be almost exactly balanced (anticipated revenue = anticipated expenses).

The detailed 2016 budget and a budget narrative are available to members who login on the SCRA website, under “Leadership”, “Budget and Finance”, within the “Who We Are” menu.

Our investments total in the neighborhood of $1.1 million. As might be expected, the past 15 months have not provided the returns we hope and plan for (we have a goal of 5% growth with a moderately conservative investment strategy which is managed by professionals). Our 2015 growth was...
0.4%. Guided by our Investments and Finance Committees, we have adopted a policy of spending from this nest egg. Each budget will include a revenue allocation from the nest egg which will be the equivalent of the average of 5% of our total assets over the previous 12 quarters. Thus, if we meet our goal of 5% growth in our assets, our net assets will remain constant, while years in which our investment performance is higher or lower than 5% will result in growth or reductions in our assets, respectively.

The most significant change in our financial processes is the decision to engage APA to assist with a substantial part of our finance operations. This decision was made after an extensive consideration of the costs and benefits. The primary benefit of this arrangement is that our accounting will be handled in a professional manner and not subject to the variable capacities of our volunteer elected treasurers. While there was a time when our finances were sufficiently simple to be handled in this manner, they have grown more complex by the year (e.g., contracts with 9 vendors to provide various communication services, monthly payments to administrative staff, administration of several grants programs). APA will be responsible for making all payments, as well as for handling our accounting and tax preparation. All of these services are provided at no cost (with the exception of a minimal payment of $500 for preparing our taxes; well less than half of what we have paid to external accountants for this service). Using APA eliminates the need for paying an administrative assistant to the Treasurer to assist with bookkeeping as well.

Looking forward, we are expecting to strategize around the issue of additional revenue streams for SCRA, as our heavy reliance on AJCP for the vast majority of our revenue may not be a sustainable strategy. We are in good financial shape in 2016 and want to maximize our chances of sustaining that status in the future. If you have any questions about the budget or our finances, or if you have any interest in participating with our Finance or Investment Committees, please feel free to contact me at jemshoff@gsu.edu.

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Education Connection
Edited by Carie Forden

This Education Connection column offers a series of reflections on community psychology education outside of the Ph.D. Nghi Thai, Susana Helm, and Dick Leavy describe the challenges they have faced with promoting student interest and engagement in community psychology programs, courses, and content, and they suggest strategies based in recruitment, course development, and undergraduate research. Michael Morris uses an ecological framework to discuss his experiences with teaching in and directing a long-running freestanding master’s degree program, and he describes the strategies his program has used to deal with challenges around community engagement, interdisciplinary collaboration, student recruitment, and maintaining quality. All four authors provide us with an opportunity to consider how we might best support the sustainability and growth of community psychology in our universities.

Developing and Sustaining Community Psychology Courses, Programs, and Content Outside the Ph.D. Program
Written by Nghi D. Thai (thaingd@ccsu.edu), Central Connecticut State University, Susana Helm (helms@dop.hawaii.edu), University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa, and Richard L. Leavy (rileavy@owu.edu) Ohio Wesleyan University

The growth of the field of

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**Table 1. Roundtable Themes**

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<td>Student Recruitment</td>
<td>• Use of “executive format” with evening and weekend classes</td>
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<td>• Recruit via Peace Corps, PCMI</td>
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<td>• Recruit through city year, LACY</td>
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<td>• Outreach to local CBOs</td>
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<td>• Market as non-profit leadership</td>
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<td>Program Parameters and CP</td>
<td>• Introductory psychology texts are missing CP as a psychology content area</td>
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<td>• For clinical/community programs, APA accreditation requires cultural competency, so CP expertise is needed</td>
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<td>• CP should be taking leadership roles in institutional research and service around key concepts, such as:</td>
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<td>• CP research as an institutional retention tool</td>
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<td>• Civic and community engagement activities</td>
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community psychology is evident with currently 45 doctoral programs, 28 master’s programs, and 5 undergraduate programs in the United States and internationally (Society for Community Research and Action “SCRA”, 2016). Of the masters programs listed, 15 are in schools without doctoral programs. Furthermore, a recent Education Connection column of The Community Psychologist highlighted three burgeoning undergraduate community psychology certificate and concentration programs as a means to introducing students to community psychology earlier in their academic careers (Forden, 2014).

A roundtable was organized at SCRA’s 15th Biennial Conference to discuss the challenges community psychology programs and/or courses face when not linked with community psychology doctoral programs. Roundtable participants generally were community psychologists working as community psychologists in departments of psychology or similarly named departments in schools of social science, some of whom are faculty in community psychology programs. The roundtable discussion centered around ideas for (1) student recruitment, as well as (2) working within our respective program parameters to infuse community psychology into teaching, research, service, and practice (see Table 1). Below, three faculty members from different institutions and at different stages in their careers share their experiences with developing and sustaining community psychology programs and courses.

**Community Psychology at a State School (Nghi D. Thai)**

Despite a strong community psychology presence in Connecticut since the opening of Seymour Sarason’s Yale Psycho-Educational Clinic in 1961, followed by the University of New Haven community psychology master’s program (1974), Central Connecticut State University (CCSU) community psychology master’s program (1977), The Consultation Center at Yale (1978), and other community psychology related programs, community psychology’s visibility continues to be a challenge for recruiting students into our master’s level graduate program at CCSU. A vast majority of students at both undergraduate and graduate levels have never heard of community psychology and there appears to be several reasons contributing to this: a) lack of coverage and representation in introductory psychology textbooks; b) limited undergraduate courses on community psychology; and c) very few faculty who identify as community psychologists or conduct community psychology-related research at academic institutions. As a result of this lack of exposure and understanding of what the field has to offer, only a small number of students are interested in applying for community psychology master’s programs.

As a faculty member in my fourth year, we began implementing various strategies two years ago to strengthen the program and make recruitment a priority. Getting the word out and letting people know about our program has been very important and has included creating, redesigning, and updating websites, brochures, bulletin boards, and billboards. Promotion of the program has also occurred at open houses, conferences, and informational sessions. The informational sessions are more targeted and appear to be more successful for potential students to learn and ask questions about the community psychology program.

The master’s program itself has also gone through some changes with the addition of community-based research experiences, evaluation research, and global psychology. In the classroom, connecting students to the broader community and incorporating applied research experiences has been extremely beneficial. For example, borrowing from the education department, I incorporated the community walk as a method for students to learn and be more engaged with the New Britain community. After the community walk, one student wrote, “…the biggest thing I took away from the community walk experience was an increased desire to get involved and help facilitate change.” After taking the introductory community psychology course in the fall semester, students taking the prevention and community-based research course in the spring semester work together in teams on community-based research projects with a community partner. Community partners are invited to the classrooms to share their background and experience throughout the semester to provide both context and consultation for the projects, and then are invited back at the end of the semester to see the student presentations. This interaction with community partners has proven to be a motivating experience and students comment again and again about how they feel they are contributing to something of high value and importance for the community members that will actually be utilized. Both the evaluation research and global psychology courses are being offered for the first time this spring semester.

These changes take time but are already showing positive impacts. We had the highest number of incoming community psychology students enter the program this past fall, and as more students learn about what community psychology is,
either they themselves or people they know want to apply to the program. As the program strengthens, more collaborative relationships are built with community partners, and as the word gets out, we are hopeful that positive changes will continue. SCRA's role and support will be beneficial for smaller master's programs like ours to continue and flourish.

Community Psychology at a Medical School (Susana Helm)

Among my impressions of several past biennials regarding overarching discourses on community psychology (CP), one discourse has questioned the stability and sustainability of a CP brand in and beyond the field of psychology, which has implications for education and training. To oversimplify, it seems that both the early pioneers and the newly minted CPs have been/are concerned that absent a clear identity, CP may lose its focus and render itself obsolete. If no one knows what CP is, then no one will want to use it. Not only might the dissolution of CP annul much of the good work by our predecessors, recent graduates likely would encounter employment challenges beyond those since the 2008 global financial crisis. Although I felt the CP brand indeterminacy was less evident this summer in Lowell, it softly enveloped the emergent themes in our roundtable – student recruitment and program parameters vis-à-vis CP.

As a community psychologist engaged in community and cultural psychology in a Department of Psychiatry’s Research Division; my school of medicine context may be a little different from my social/natural sciences colleagues. Like many U.S. schools of medicine, our students enter with bachelor’s degrees or the equivalent, and progress academically through a tightly defined series of courses and internships with a cohort, all of whom graduate together four years later. As a result, there is no undergraduate program in psychiatry, nor do we mentor masters and doctoral candidates as they complete theses and dissertations. Our students are pursuing MDs not PhDs, and residents and fellows already earned their medical degree. We are not recruiting students on the merits of our CP program specifically or CP prowess in general, nor are we striving to enhance the relevance of CP in our program. Nonetheless, like other roundtable participants, I struggle with student recruitment and CP relevance. My main job responsibility is to conduct research. Naturally, as a community and cultural psychologist, CP frames much of the inquiry process in our studies. And as an academic researcher, I depend on student contributions to assist with activities ranging from literature searches for study conceptualization; to data collection, data management, and analysis; to dissemination and grant writing.

Fortunately, our department has a single undergraduate course by which upper level students may enroll in directed studies (PSTY 499). Although we did not start out collaborating with each other on student recruitment, screening, and enrollment into PSTY 499, the research faculty have been aligning our efforts strategically since Fall 2014. Initially, each faculty used her/his own network to recruit and screen students, and mentored in their own lab. We collectively agreed that student involvement in our research was mutually beneficial to each of us as faculty as well as the students. So we decided a more strategic approach likely would accrue improved benefits to the faculty, the students, and the projects. We developed a streamlined approach, which includes a semi-monthly seminar which I facilitate (students are assigned literature, provide lab updates, and discuss professional development). We recruit third-year undergraduates so that they may participate for more than two semesters. While we recruit from most departments across our university, highest interest and actual enrollment and retention has been among psychology and public health students. We are very pleased that over the past decade our directed research students have matriculated in graduate programs in Hawai`i and beyond in community psychology, social work, public health, and medicine among other academic disciplines; and they have made meaningful contributions to our projects as evidenced by authorship on published manuscripts and presentations at peer-reviewed conferences locally, nationally, and internationally. Feedback from prior students who are in graduate school or already working in their field has indicated that learning about how and why culture matters in health and mental health, and working with the community as a partner has enhanced their work, and for some former students changed their career trajectory in this direction. While student recruitment continues to be a challenge in spite of our improved strategic approach, and being in a medical school often feels like working at the margins of community psychology, CP is evident in action, even if not by name.

Community Psychology at a Liberal Arts College (Richard L. Leavy)

I have been teaching community psychology to undergraduate psychology majors at Ohio Wesleyan University for more than 30 years. I have been the only person with a community psychology background in the department. Typically, students take the course in their
junior or senior year, but have never actually heard of the field prior to walking into class. The syllabus provides an introduction: “Community psychology is an approach to social problems that fosters social change by seeking to maximize the fit between people and their environment. It is the study of how individuals affect communities and communities affect individuals. As the name implies, community psychology is done where people live, work, and go to school, not in a clinician’s office. The goals of this course are to increase your knowledge of community psychology’s principles and practices and to provide opportunities to see prevention efforts in the community around you.”

To achieve that last goal, students have typically been required to do a project in which they identify a social problem (e.g., sexual assault, drunk driving, childhood obesity) that they care about. They research the scope of the problem nationally and the effectiveness of prevention programs to address it. After choosing their “favorite” prevention program, they contact local key informants – most often agency directors – to learn the dimensions of the problem in the community surrounding the university. They are prompted to ask these officials what current prevention efforts exist and the likelihood that their favorite program might be adopted locally. These conversations usually open students’ eyes to the challenges of funding and sustaining programs and the need to modify programs in order to match community context.

On occasion, student initiatives have augmented community action. An added bonus is that agency personnel often gain an appreciation of community psychology’s potential.

Community psychology, as we know, is underappreciated, even in academic circles. In the past year I have changed the project in the course. Instead of focusing on the town around us, the current edition of the course seeks a way to use community research and action to assist the university. The target problem is student attrition and its possible relationship to psychological sense of community. Our method for addressing the problem this semester is through participatory action research. My hope is that using this method to teach about community psychology will lead to several good outcomes. First, students will learn first-hand about a key topic in community research. Learning-by-doing is a surefire way to increase student engagement and retention of knowledge. In addition, students will come face-to-face with the factors that foster and thwart social change. They will have to identify the administrators who are influential and persuadable, and then develop ways to effectively voice their concerns. We hope, of course, that the project will assist the university. It will uniquely present a students’ eye view of the barriers to a psychological sense of community on campus and guide steps that might improve student retention.

Finally, the heretofore unknown field of community psychology may get some recognition in the minds of university administrators. Perhaps after I retire, there will be greater value placed on finding a replacement who knows about community psychology.

The participatory action research approach we are using is Photovoice, a method by which participants take pictures and write stories that depict a key concern in their lives. My students have been taking pictures of the places and activities on campus that have both served to strengthen and weaken their sense of belonging. Independently they have written stories about their pictures and identified common themes in their group discussions. This is not unlike the pedagogical use of Photovoice described by Lichty (2013) but with the added goal of developing a picture-and-story presentation we can give to administrators. We are currently in the presentation-development phase of the project. I am hopeful that as a result of Photovoice my students will better appreciate participatory action research and the university will make use of student-generated ideas concerning ways to build community and decrease attrition. As a bonus, perhaps the field of community psychology will get to be a bit more widely appreciated.

Conclusion

As we reflect on the status of community psychology courses and programs from the perspectives of being the only community psychology faculty at our respective universities and/or departments, both our identities as community psychologists and our work to infuse community psychology are integral to who we are and what we want to promote for the field of community psychology. Student recruitment and engagement are prominent themes for all of us and will continue to be important areas for development in the future.

References


37 Years and Counting: Reflections on Master's-Level Training in Community Psychology
Written by Michael Morris
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Over three decades ago, an anonymous reviewer of a manuscript on master's-level training in community psychology that my colleagues and I had submitted to the American Journal of Community Psychology (Hoffnung, Morris, & Jex, 1986), commented, in the midst of a positive evaluation of the paper, that there probably was not much of a future for such training. The reviewer doubted that CP programs could penetrate a labor market already populated by a variety of better known master's degrees relevant to human services and the public sector. Although one can argue with the accuracy of the reviewer’s prediction—the SCRA website currently lists 16 master's programs in the U.S. that include “community” in their title—it is almost certainly true that most of these programs exist in environments that pose ongoing challenges to their sustainability. That is the case with the University of New Haven’s program, one of the oldest freestanding CP programs in the country, dating back to the early 1970s. In this essay I would like to employ an ecological framework (Kloos et al., 2012) to reflect on these challenges—and strategies for dealing with them—based on my 37 years (yikes!) of experience as a core faculty member in the program, the last decade or so as its director. As I paddle my academic kayak toward retirement, I hope these reflections are useful to my colleagues in the field.

**Macrosystem**

The anonymous reviewer was right in at least one major respect: the higher education marketplace in the U.S. is replete with master's degrees that compete with CP—for example, in social work, counseling, criminal justice, marriage and family therapy, school psychology, clinical psychology, and public administration. When the marketing staff at UNH asked me to identify the programs that most directly compete for our students, how I wish that I could simply limit the list to CP programs in the Northeast (UMass Lowell, Central Connecticut State University, the Sage Colleges, etc.). My list of competitors is very long, and continues to grow as schools venture into the theme park of hybrid/online degrees in human-service-related domains. I must admit that something strikes me as fundamentally askew with the notion of largely online community psychology programs, but I plead guilty to being socialized in an educational era that is increasingly viewed as quaint by high-level academic administrators.

Against this background, the value-added perspective discussed by Elias and others (Elias, Manuel, Summer, & Basch, 2015; Elias, Neigher, & Johnson-Hakim, 2015) has proven to be valuable when recruiting students to our program. We emphasize the job relevance of training in areas such as program evaluation, consultation, prevention, and systems change, which are domains that non-CP programs are less likely to address in depth. Although we mention the advantages of having an ecological, multi-level perspective on human problems, our anecdotal experience is that the value of this mindset is more likely to be appreciated post-graduation than pre-enrollment.

It is also helpful that, all other things being equal, many if not most undergraduate psychology majors wish to maintain their identification with psychology as they pursue their graduate education. This preference can partially compensate for the fact that a CP degree is a less direct route to professional licensure at the master’s level than a social work or counseling degree.

**Locality**

All of our students do their year-long internship in Connecticut, and most of them obtain their first post-graduation job here as well. Cultivating a network of organizations that are supportive of training and employing CP students is thus a crucial task. Agencies with the same espoused vision (e.g., serving troubled youth) can differ greatly in the educational backgrounds they regard as most appropriate for professional practice in the name of that vision. We devote relatively little time trying to persuade agencies with a narrow view to develop a broader perspective that includes community psychology. Usually, the return-on-investment of such effort is just too low to warrant its expenditure. Rather, we focus on less guild-oriented settings that frame their mission in a way that values the contributions of trainees and staff from a variety of backgrounds. Also, we stay connected with our employed graduates in the region to expand the network of settings that welcome CP students.

It is important for us to develop internships in a wide range of content areas, given the varied career and professional interests of our students. We work with mental health agencies, youth service bureaus, community coalitions, philanthropic foundations, schools, community-based programs for...
the mentally ill and previously incarcerated, substance abuse prevention and treatment agencies, advocacy organizations, programs that work with gang-related youth, and community action agencies, among others. This is a labor-intensive endeavor, to be sure, since our highly individualized approach to placing students does not enable us to guarantee internship settings that they will receive a student from our program every year. In this case, however, the quality of training outcomes achieved justifies the substantial effort involved.

**Organization**

The University of New Haven is a private, tuition-driven institution, like countless other universities in the U.S. In such an environment, the pressure to maintain or “grow” enrollments is ever-present, generating an ambient organizational buzz similar to the din produced by millions of chirping crickets in a tree-filled New England neighborhood on a late autumn evening. Virtually every week a report is distributed to master’s-program coordinators, presenting point-in-time data (and comparisons with the previous year) for numbers of applications, acceptances, and enrollments for every graduate program. It’s sort of like watching the value of your investments in the stock market fluctuate from day to day.

Of course, CP programs are not uniquely subject to this pressure. In my experience, the key is to keep enrollment high enough so that deans and provosts don’t start targeting the program for elimination, but not so high that the program is viewed as a “cash cow” candidate, where there can be pressure to increase enrollment significantly (perhaps at the expense of student qualifications) without a commensurate increase in program resources. The latter scenario is a recipe for dilution of program quality.

A second organizational dynamic that is more distinctively associated with community psychology involves interdepartmental relationships that reflect the interdisciplinary nature of our field. Courses in areas such as sociology, education, public administration, and criminal justice can enhance the breadth and quality of our students’ CP education. Nurturing linkages with colleagues throughout the institution can enable a relatively small number of CP faculty in a psychology department to offer a rich master’s-level curriculum.

A challenge here is quality control. The caliber of departments (and individual faculty within departments) can vary tremendously across a university, and one department does not typically have a major (or even minor) say in who teaches courses in another department. As a program director, having students complain to me about the inadequacies of a course they are taking outside of our department can be a highly frustrating experience, to put it mildly. Departments differ considerably in how responsive they are to feedback about their courses from colleagues, and there are instances where I have stopped recommending courses that have continued to be inently taught. When interdisciplinary education conflicts with quality education, the latter must prevail.

**Microsystem**

Not surprisingly, the microsystem that most directly influences a master’s program is the department that houses the program. As I’ve suggested, one doesn’t necessarily need a lot of CP-trained faculty in the department to run a worthwhile program—we currently have two—but one does need a supportive group of departmental colleagues.

Over the years our CP program has enjoyed such support, mainly provided by the faculty who teach in the department’s master’s program in industrial/organizational (I/O) psychology. We share courses in statistics and research methods, and CP students take selected I/O courses (e.g., Organizational Behavior). There are also cases where I/O students take courses that are primarily associated with the CP program (e.g., Program Evaluation). Faculty in both programs attempt to shape their courses in a fashion that makes them responsive to the multiple constituencies enrolled. Indeed, during a period of low enrollment in the CP program a couple of decades ago, it was the enrollment of I/O students in certain CP courses that allowed those offerings to escape the scrutiny of university administrators.

The other core component of the program’s microsystem is the adjunct faculty who teach selected courses. The quality of these practitioners, in terms of both their content expertise and teaching ability, is essential. We have been fortunate over the years that our locality-based contacts have enabled us to attract a skilled set of enthusiastic part-time faculty whom we endeavor to support in ways that go beyond the modest pay they receive for teaching (e.g., post-course debriefing lunches).

**Individual**

Strong programs require strong students. For us, this means students who can handle a challenging, writing-intensive curriculum that includes a significant applied research component (statistics/research methods/program evaluation). Naturally, we seek students who have a record of involvement in community life as evidenced by undergraduate field work, volunteer activity, and/or relevant employment, but there is no...
denying the fact that students with a strong undergraduate GPA are more likely to complete the program than those with weaker GPAs. Thus, it is not often that we accept applicants in the latter category.

Overall, the students who probably thrive the most in our program are those with the greatest commitment to the systems-change perspective of the field. These are most often, but not always, the students in the Program Development concentration. Community/Clinical Services and Forensic Psychology students tend to enter the program with a more individualistic orientation, though most of them become more ecologically savvy and engaged as they make their way through the curriculum, an outcome consistent with the value-added analysis discussed by Elias and others (2015).

**Conclusion**

Master’s level community psychology programs are likely to remain outside of the mainstream in graduate psychology training for the foreseeable future, and that might not be a bad thing. Being on the periphery, rather than embedded in, social institutions can enhance one’s ability to develop an appropriately critical perspective on that institution. We only need to look as far as the Hoffman Report to see what can happen when a profession becomes overcommitted to currying favor with the reigning political mother ship. Master’s training in community psychology will continue to be pursued by undergraduate psychology majors with an interest in social change who want to maintain their identification with psychology but don’t see themselves fitting neatly into the dominant, more traditional, subfields of the discipline. Will there be enough of these students to sustain this training in the decades to come? The evidence from the past five decades would suggest that the answer is “yes,” but predicting the future of such programs in the volatile, increasingly competitive world of higher education is risky at best (see also Kloos, 2015). Stay tuned.

**References**


**Living Community Psychology**

*Written by Gloria Levin (Glorialevin@verizon.net)*

“Living Community Psychology” highlights a community psychologist through an in-depth interview that is intended to depict both personal and professional aspects of the featured individual. The intent is to personalize Community Psychology as it is lived by its diverse practitioners. Prior columns are available online, at http://www.scra27.org/publications/tcp/tcp-past-issues. These past columns contain a wealth of life advice gleaned from over 60 profiled community psychologists, from graduate students to retirees, representing an invaluable resource for community psychologists.

For this installment, we introduce a clinical/community psychologist (CP) who, after moving from place to place for her education, is now settled in the Bay Area, working as an implementation scientist in the largest health care system in the U.S. – the Veterans Health Administration. She also has played a critical role in encouraging and implementing SCRA’s emerging presence online and in social media, thereby providing wider opportunities for younger members to participate in the organization.
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Lindsey Zimmerman believes that her interest in CP was partly impacted by her upbringing as a “pastor’s kid.” Raised as a very conservative, evangelical Christian, her beliefs included a commitment to caring for others. A second impact was growing up in the tanking economy of mid-Michigan. “I had an acute awareness of the huge structural factors beyond individual control constraining people’s resources. I was hungry to address the systemic causes of disenfranchisement or inequality based on what I saw in Michigan.”

Her hometown is in an area of industry and agribusiness, between Flint and Lansing. Her mother, a music teacher with a master’s degree in oboe performance, stopped teaching for a while to raise her and her brother. Beginning when Lindsey was age 11, her father (who had a little college and some formal biblical training) became a fulltime pastor for a Conservative Congregational church. “My parents identified as born again, evangelical fundamentalist Christians, and I was ‘all in’ until I was a late teen.”

During spring breaks, Lindsey did humanitarian missionary work in Haiti and Ecuador, motivated by her religious convictions. “At the time, I did not view my work as being for social justice ends.”

In high school, she was class president, honor society member, played sports and performed in music groups. Lindsey applied only to Christian colleges, enrolling at Wheaton College near Chicago, a conservative Christian college whose most famous alumnus was Billy Graham. But she began to grapple with a misfit between her views and conservative interpretations of religious principles, in particular, the exclusion of women from church leadership. After reading leading scholars with discrepant views on the subject, she could no longer reconcile her own beliefs with this culture. “I didn’t seek to be an iconoclast but I kept finding issues of cultural dominance that I could not reconcile.” She met with the Dean to discuss her evolving theological and scientific views which were inconsistent with “the pledge” (the school’s statements and covenants). Her assertion that she had come to college not to reinforce her existing beliefs but to expand her thinking, was met with kindness but steadfastness to “the pledge.”

Lindsey withdrew from Wheaton and — money being tight at home — began working at a photography studio in her home town while figuring out next steps. Over the next 8 years, she earned credits from 6 undergraduate universities while working fulltime as a manager at professional photo labs, before finishing her BA in 2005. She commuted to Michigan State University; moved to Chicago and then to San Francisco to a now-defunct college; then to City College of San Francisco.

A turning point occurred in a statistics class, in which Professor Esther Nzewi’s examples of social phenomena clicked for Lindsey. CP’s language resonated even more in a course taught by Ken Miller at San Francisco State University, from which she eventually graduated cum laude after 3 years. Lindsey applied to only 4 doctoral programs, all with a mix of clinical and community psychology training, using the example of Dr. Miller, who was trained as a clinician but was formatively shaped by CP. She was pragmatic in choosing a graduate program – for example, excluding from consideration any university without student health insurance and a full stipend.

Her decision to attend graduate school was met with skepticism from her mother. Equally problematic for her mother was Lindsey’s decision to embark on a round the world tour to trace her ethnic heritage. Her mom cautioned: “Lindsey, people of our class don’t just pick up and travel around the world.” However, Lindsey was committed, having saved money and airline miles for the trip for over 3 years.

The backpacking world tour began as soon as her graduate school applications were submitted. The plan was to travel until the time for school interviews, which turned out to be 4 ½ months. She traveled with a friend through 9 European countries, tracing their grandparents’ countries of origin. Her trip of self-discovery then took her to India for two months, training to be a yoga instructor. While at a remote location in Kerala, India, she had scheduled a telephone interview for Georgia State University (GSU). Lindsey traversed down a mountainside through tea plantations for miles in the moonlight to an outdoor telephone booth, which was surrounded by curious villagers who had followed her and her guide on their trek. Her guide shushed the chattering villagers, saying “interview!” Above the payphone was a lit sign, saying “Atlanta” – surely a sign!!

The interview was with Dr. Lisa Armistead who later became her primary mentor at GSU. Lisa had
adapted family HIV prevention efforts in high-risk ethnic minority communities by developing strong partnerships with community advisory boards. “I told Lisa that I did not care exactly what programs or problems I would be working on. But I had a heart for vulnerable populations and was drawn to her scientific values and her mode of working, establishing genuine relationships with people impacted by the problem.”

Lindsey’s decision to attend GSU also was based on its urban location and its emphasis on diversity, among both faculty and trainees. She was especially attracted by GSU’s approach to combining Ph.D. training in (APA accredited) clinical and community psychology. This approach, however, involved a heavy course load, requiring four courses each semester for four years. Nevertheless, she wanted to be equally trained in both fields and is now convinced that was the right choice for her – “This training prepared me for the full range of skills I apply in my work.”

Before entering GSU, Lindsey encouraged her best friend, Erin, a photographer she had worked with in San Francisco to join her in Atlanta. “I said that I would love to have a close friend there.” It only slowly dawned on them that, after years of a friendship, they had romantic feelings for each other. Both are hardworking and love music and the arts, but Lindsey is serious and planful, plotting her life with spreadsheets, while Erin is creative and can get lost in the moment. Shortly after arriving in Atlanta, they became a couple. “We were both in our late 20s and knew what we wanted. We’ve been together ten years.”

Lindsey had her first same-sex relationship when she was 21 years of age, “which is kind of late nowadays.” Coming out and later marrying Erin were difficult for her family. Nevertheless, her loving parents try their best to understand and accept Lindsey, even though they do not agree. “Over the years, neither of us gave up on our relationship. They are willing to talk through the difficult emotions, but my mother explains to me her hometown Christian circles as: “Lindsey is not a ‘biblical literalist.’”

GSU had a flexible mentoring model, so in addition to Dr. Armistead’s mentorship, she trained with Jim Emshoff, Rod Watts and Sarah Cook, with whom she focused increasingly on violence and trauma. Her training was mostly funded via these professors’ research, but she also worked for Drs. Barbara Rothbaum and Nadine Kaslow at Emory Medical School /Grady Memorial Hospital, both experts in recovery after trauma. At Grady’s emergency department, she was on call for 4 years for suicide, intimate partner violence, and sexual assault cases. “I felt SO useful and vital in this role. A patient wants someone who is at the top of her game, who will advocate and fight for you in the system. This is my strength.”

Lindsey’s dissertation on HIV prevention with families, part of an NICHD trial, was conducted with a local team in the oldest Black separated township in Capetown, South Africa. The task was to adapt programs that had been successful in the U.S. to the South African context. This involved establishing community input through partnerships, learning what people felt was needed locally and then making program adaptations. Some intervention aspects had no cultural equivalent locally. “Families told us that to tackle HIV in their community, we had to address youth-directed sexual violence. We updated what we were doing, bringing in this trauma component as directed by the community.”

In considering clinical internships, Lindsey developed another spreadsheet, the primary cell being what would benefit Erin, who had moved her photography business to Atlanta and now had to relocate again. Lindsey traveled to interview at 13 internship sites, all of which included protected research time. She chose to return to the San Francisco area to intern at the Veterans Administration Palo Alto Health Care System. “I wanted to focus on some kind of system change using research, and the VA Palo Alto program protected more research time than anywhere else, up to halftime towards the end.” In choosing the VA, she had to forego her prior training on family systems and children to work exclusively with adults. But the VA was a natural fit for her emphasis on trauma and her passion for justice for underserved and vulnerable populations.

“PTSD is the only diagnosis in the DSM manual that requires a stressor in the environment,” a perfect focus for CP’s values of person-environment fit and normative resilience. “The trauma field is advancing; in just 30 years, the field went from not even having a PTSD diagnosis to having more than one possible treatment that might work for 60% of the people who complete it.” When in training back at Grady Hospital, a safety net hospital with a Level I Trauma Center, she learned about the relationship between PTSD admissions and substance abuse comorbidity, which is also prevalent among Veterans.

Her next career stop – an NIAAA research fellowship at the University of Washington (UW) School of Medicine – was in a setting where seminal research had been conducted on preventive alcohol screening and trauma. As many as 50% of people who show up in an emergency department
for trauma were drinking during the event. This UW research led to policy mandates that every Level I Trauma Center must include alcohol screening, because this system-wide brief intervention was found to reduce re-injury and readmission. “Unfortunately, preventive intervention screening is often conducted in the context of the deficit and risk focused medical model. My focus was on improving interventions by identifying strengths and enhancing resilience.”

Nearing the end of her fellowship in 2014, Lindsey was faced with a difficult decision: Whether to stay at UW on soft money, resubmitting a K award grant application to further develop an electronic tablet application for brief alcohol intervention after trauma, or to accept a newly-announced fulltime, hard money implementation science research position at the National Center for PTSD back at VA Palo Alto. The latter choice would uproot her and Erin a fourth time in four years, but she decided to return to the Bay Area and the team she had earlier worked with as an intern.

Now in her current job for over a year and not being so dependent on obtaining the next grant, she is better able to honor commitments made to patient and provider partners in the VA healthcare community. “The trust developed in me is moot if I cannot sustain the work. Working in four places in four years is no way to build community. It was hard to be true to myself.” Moving from place to place since high school also affected Lindsey’s personal sense of rootedness. “The many moves I made taught me a lot, but it came at a cost in community connections and service, each of which were undermined with each move I made. My professional creds were getting a boost, but at personal cost, a trade off.”

At the VA, her fundamental job as an implementation scientist is to improve the delivery of care and identify ways to optimize patient access and quality. This includes the development of The Veterans Advisory Partnership, a genuine sharing of information and power with Veterans, in contrast to the “expert’s stance” that undervalues their opinions. “Their experience is just as important as my professional expertise. Not that Veterans’ experience is ‘kind of important,’ but it is equally important.”

Lindsey has always tried to innovate methodologically and continually takes advanced methodological training. Her fortuitous attendance at an SCRA biennial conference presentation by David Lounsbery (Albert Einstein School of Medicine) introduced her to systems dynamics modeling as a tool for systems change. She recognized that this approach would be ideal for studying practical problems in VA health care, and she has collaborated with David ever since. She empowers the frontline staff to use this tool, combined with a participatory process, to identify and make the improvements in their settings that have eluded them because they could not achieve consensus or decide among competing alternatives as to which would be more effective. Her Center is involved in a large national effort to improve the quality and effectiveness of mental health care. The potential for wide impact is substantial, being that she is situated in the largest health care system in the U.S.

Lindsey’s training in clinical psychology is useful in her job, having exposed her to different evidence based psychotherapies. She is licensed and has hospital privileges. “But my wheelhouse day to day is 100% community psychology. The skills that I use to consult with organizations to engage in second order level change efforts are from my CP training. I am always mindful of how I can help find solutions to frontline problems experienced by VA staff and Veterans.” For example, Lindsey facilitates staff meetings and consults with local leaders and national program offices, getting input from frontline staff and patients all the time.

Lindsey joined SCRA as an undergraduate student and was elected in 2009 to be the national student co-representative, serving on the Executive Committee for two years. She is committed to the field’s vitality, visibility and sustainability and also actively promotes “new blood” for leadership positions, retaining graduates when they transition to early career. Nowadays, on a daily basis, she provides substantial organizational support to SCRA. In addition to her service on multiple task forces, she has drafted several reports for the EC. She assisted SCRA in establishing an online and social media presence including development of the new SCRA website. But she is probably best known within SCRA for organizing the annual video contest and the webinar series – her efforts to provide new opportunities for meaningful involvement for people who wish to participate in SCRA.

Says Lindsey: “There are millions of people who are 35 years and younger for whom community organizing primarily occurs online, so SCRA’s entry (although late) into online media and content is crucial for our future.” The video contest attracted submissions from all over the world. She asks: “How better to show people what CP is than to have a video of what you’re actually doing in your community and, thereby also raise the community’s profile by SCRA’s recognition?” And the webinars are joined by many who log in from distant time zones,
sometimes at outgodly hours. “We need to recognize these accessible, public-facing resources as being just as important to our organizational viability as building up our programs on the academic side. I’m always trying to find innovative methods to expand democracy.”

Public Policy
Edited by Jean Hill

SCRA Statement on the Global Refugee Crisis
For more information and to take action, please visit the SCRA website at http://www.scra27.org/what-we-do/policy/rapid-response-actions/global-refugee-crisis/

Currently more than twelve million people need humanitarian aid in Syria. Nearly eight million are internally displaced and four million are seeking asylum somewhere in the world. For SCRA, one of its’ main principles is to support every person’s right to be different without risk of suffering material and psychological sanctions. We are urging the public to take individual action in your own communities to:

1. Request city mayors to welcome Syrian and Central American refugees into your community.

2. Write Op-Eds and letters to the editors in your local newspapers denouncing anti-immigrant and anti-Muslim rhetoric and voicing your support for refugees.

3. Denounce hate speech when you hear it, particularly if it incites hatred or violence against a particular immigrant group.

4. Encourage community leaders and service providers to meet the needs of refugee populations, ensuring services and care that is sensitive to their cultural roots, recognizing the special needs of those who are victims of systematic violations of their human rights

5. Raise awareness in your community about initiatives aimed at overcoming the conditions of oppression and suffering of those displaced by war and generalized violence.

6. Participate and collaborate with local, national and international agencies working with refugee and displaced populations.

The SCRA denounces the unfair treatment of those who enter our borders requesting refugee status. By refusing to welcome them, our governments are contributing to the development of racist and xenophobic attitudes among the local populations.

Regional Update
Spring 2016
Edited by Regina Langhout

Happy spring! With this column, I would like to thank the following Midwest Student Regional Coordinators, who have finished their terms: Jaclyn Houston, and Abigail Brown, both from DePaul University. Also, welcome to two new Midwest folks: Regional Coordinator Amber Williams, from National Louis University, and Student Regional Coordinator Taylor Thorpe, from DePaul University. In this issue, I want to draw your attention especially to the work happening in the Southeast Region. That region has been doing a really great job of figuring out how to stay connected in between regional meetings.

Northeast Region, U.S. Regional Coordinators
Bronwyn Hunter, bronwyn.hunter@yale.edu, University of Maryland, Baltimore County
Christopher Beasley, cbeasley2@washcoll.edu, Washington College
Melissa Whitson, mwhitson@newhaven.edu, University of New Haven
Graduate Student Coordinator
Andrew Martinez, andrewmartinez78@yahoo.com, DePaul University
Undergraduate Student Coordinator
Emily Stecker, estecker2@washcoll.edu, Washington College

News from the Northeast
Written by Melissa Whitson

We recently convened at the 2016 Annual Meeting of the Eastern Psychological Association in New York on March 3-5. For the SCRA division of this conference, we had a wonderful program, which included two days devoted to Community Psychology presentations. Our “SCRA days” included 15 posters and 8 symposia/roundtables. We had our social event on the Saturday evening and gave out awards to undergraduate and graduate students for poster presentations. SCRA’s representation at EPA is growing, and it was a great time seeing colleagues and networking with folks from across the East Coast!

If you are interested in serving as a student-level coordinator, please email Bronwyn Hunter at continued on page 27
COMMUNITY PSYCHOLOGY AND COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH
Towards Transformative Change

Edited by Geoffrey Nelson, Bret Kloos, and Jose Ornelas

Community Psychology and Community Mental Health provides empirical justification and a conceptual foundation for transformative change in mental health, based on community psychology values and principles of ecology, collaboration, empowerment, and social justice.

September 2014 • 240 pp.
9780199362424
Paperback • $53.00/$37.10

PRINCIPLES OF SOCIAL CHANGE

Leonard A. Jason

Principles of Social Change is written for those who are impassioned and driven by social justice issues in their communities and seek practical solutions to successfully address them. Leonard A. Jason, a leading community psychologist, demonstrates how social change can be accomplished and fostered by observing five key principles.

January 2013 • 208 pp.
9780199841851
Paperback • $44.95/$31.47

ORDER ONLINE AT OUP.COM/US AND ENTER PROMO CODE ASPROMP8 AT CHECK OUT TO SAVE 30%
HANDBOOK OF METHODOLOGICAL APPROACHES TO COMMUNITY-BASED RESEARCH

Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods

Edited by Leonard A. Jason and David S. Glenwick

The Handbook of Methodological Approaches to Community-Based Research is intended to aid the community-oriented researcher in learning about and applying cutting-edge quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods approaches. The Handbook presents a number of innovative methodologies relevant to community-based research, illustrating their applicability to specific social problems and projects. These methodological approaches explore individuals and groups in interaction with their communities and provide examples of how to implement and evaluate interventions conducted at the community level. The chapters discuss how particular methodologies can be used to help gather and analyze data dealing with community-based issues. Furthermore, they illustrate the benefits that occur when community theorists, interventionists, and methodologists work together to better understand complicated person-environment systems and the change processes within communities.

Oxford University Press

ORDER ONLINE AT OUP.COM/US AND ENTER PROMO CODE ASPROMP8 AT CHECK OUT TO SAVE 30%
Want to bring prestige and recognition to your institution?
Consider hosting the 2019 SCRA Biennial Conference!

The Society for Community Research and Action is soliciting proposals from individual institutions and consortia of academics and/or practitioners to host the 2019 SCRA Biennial Conference.

**PROPOSAL CONSIDERATIONS**

The focus of this proposal is on the Local Planning Committee.

Consider the following:
- Local planning committee members
- Proposed dates
- Availability of facilities and accommodations
- Transportation accessibility
- Budget

Conference planning and organizing assistance will be provided by SCRA.

The conference is typically 3 to 4 days in mid to late June and draws 500 to 700 participants. Hosting this exciting event draws national and international recognition to the host institution and enables conference participants to appreciate the sponsoring institution and its location.

If you have interest in possibly being a host, are considering applying, and/or have any questions, we will be delighted to talk with you and send you more information regarding the details required in a formal proposal. We would like to begin conversations as soon as possible.

Please contact both:
Susan McMahon, SCRA President-Elect: smcmahon@depaul.edu
Taylor Scott, SCRA Administrative Coordinator: taylorb.scott@scra27.org

Formal proposals are due May 1, 2016.
Best Dissertation in a Topic Relevant to Community Psychology: Kate Dorozenko, Ph.D.

Dissertation Title: The Identities and Social Roles of People with Intellectual Disabilities: Challenging Dominant Cultural Worldviews, Values and Mythologies

Kate Dorozenko received her Ph.D. from Curtin University, Perth, Australia and is currently a Research Associate in the School of Occupational Therapy and Social Work at Curtin University. Dr. Dorozenko’s dissertation presents an in-depth, multi-layered qualitative analysis of the social construction of “intellectual disability” and how intellectual disability is understood and experienced by such individuals. The research challenges traditional notions that the intellectually disabled individual is not aware of the disability or constructs negative personal identities. The work is an excellent illustration of creatively and systematically engaging research participants and those in their social networks as co-investigators. The nomination letter describes the dissertation as “developing a detailed approach to participatory methods with persons who have been labeled as having an intellectual disability.” The research is grounded in models of empowerment and contextualist perspectives, and creatively uses multiple methodologies to expand understanding of this construct and ways to increase control and meaningful participation for persons with an intellectual disability.

Emory L. Cowen Dissertation Award for the Promotion of Wellness: Sarah Reed, Ph.D.

Dissertation Title: Thriving and Adapting: Resilience, sense of community and systemics among young Black gay and bisexual men

Sarah Reed completed her Ph.D. at Michigan State University and is currently an NRSA post-doctoral fellow at the Center for AIDS Intervention Research at the Medical College of Wisconsin. Her dissertation presents an in-depth and carefully executed qualitative study of two groups of Black gay and bisexual men (GBM): those who have experienced sexual abuse, depression, or substance abuse and those who have not experienced these. The study involved extensive interviews and multi-layered, multi-stage analyses that supported the significance of pride in being gay or bisexual, sexuality-related family support, and involvement in GBM social groups and organizations as protective factors for these men. The dissertation is distinctive in studying an underrepresented and marginalized group within a resilience framework, examining both relational protective factors and community resources. Further, the dissertation incorporated community psychology values/approaches such as a participatory approach with the development of the interview questions by interviewing key informants, a strengths-based framework, and a focus on health promotion, not just prevention.
Early Career Award: Jenna Watling Neal

Jenna Watling Neal of Michigan State University was selected as a recipient of the 2016 Early Career Award. Dr. Neal has established an exciting and prolific research program on the qualities of social networks, focused primarily on children’s relationships within classrooms, and has been an active contributor to SCRA and our field. Theoretically rich and analytically innovative, her research speaks to the social and structural aspects of community relations, exploring how resources (social, tangible, and/or, political) are exchanged to alter social conditions and the lived experiences of marginalized populations.

In a series of groundbreaking papers in AJCP, Watling Neal examines how a social network perspective can better define and measure power, in ways that facilitate empowering processes and outcomes, importantly, at both individual and setting levels. Letters of support enthusiastically describe her work as “remarkably creative,” “trail-blazing,” and as “providing a bold restatement of power,” thus representing major conceptual and methodological advancements in empowerment theory and ecological theory, core concepts to the field of community psychology.

SCRA Award for Distinguished Contribution to Theory & Research – Douglas Perkins

Douglas Perkins has been an outstanding scholar in our field for many years. Dr. Perkins has contributed to multiple bodies of literature examining the importance of social contexts, and his work in empowerment theory and research, citizen participation, environment/ecological psychology, and interdisciplinary community-based research has significantly advanced our field. Dr. Perkins has bridged scholarship across continents and cultures through his productive international collaborations with scholars in Europe and Asia. Moreover, his leadership in working to bring scholars and ideas together across disciplinary and national boundaries is exemplary. Dr. Perkins’ training of researchers through his longstanding involvement and leadership as a faculty member at Peabody College of Vanderbilt University also strengthens his qualifications for this award. Dr. Perkins’ body of work, by virtue of its methodological rigor, innovation, and enduring theoretical contribution to the field, is greatly deserving of the SCRA Award for Distinguished Contribution to Theory and Research in Community Psychology.
SCRA Award for Distinguished Contribution to Practice in Community Psychology – Ruth Hollman

Ruth Hollman founded SHARE! as a client-run agency that uses evidence-based practices to improve outcomes for people with mental health issues. SHARE! hosts more than 140 self-help support groups each week and make referrals to 12,000 others in Los Angeles County. As Executive Director, Ms. Hollman collaborates with other researchers to study self-help support groups. Her 25 years of participant observation with self-help groups supports the formulation of research questions that are informed by and relevant to practice. Her research background and experiential knowledge support high quality data collection within the cultural norms of the self-help groups. To help connect consumers to self-help support groups, she has developed extensive connections with numerous mental health providers. Ms. Hollman’s work is grounded in a well-developed philosophy of practice in community psychology that promotes dignity and acceptance of everyone and is highly deserving of the SCRA Award for Distinguished Contribution to Practice in Community Psychology.

Ethnic Minority Mentorship Award – Robin Miller

Robin Miller has enthusiastically and steadfastly mentored ethnic minority students as their primary advisor, committee member, and practicum supervisor. Dr. Miller was the inaugural hire for Michigan State University’s Consortium on Multicultural Psychology, and in this position, she has been instrumental in creating a department colloquium series on multicultural psychology, APA Summer Training Institutes for students, and an annual student multicultural research award to celebrate outstanding field research. Given Dr. Miller’s “history of involvement to increase representation of ethnic minority persons in their own institutions, research programs, or within SCRA,” her students note that they owe many of their own career successes to her mentoring. Her former students have successful careers at UCLA-Williams Institute, Northwestern University, DePaul University, The Children’s Trust, the University of California, and San Francisco AETC National Evaluation Center. Dr. Miller has transformed the lives of so many students through her dedication to diversity and inclusivity and is highly worthy of the SCRA Ethnic Minority Mentorship Award.
SCRA 2016 Special Contribution Awards

On occasion, by vote of the Executive Committee, the Society gives special awards to persons inside or outside of community psychology who have advanced the interests or goals of the field.

Jean Hill

We are recognizing Jean L. Hill with the SCRA Award for Special Contribution to Community Psychology for her work to create a digital presence for SCRA through a newly constructed website and coordinated social media. Although SCRA had a basic website prior to her efforts, the technology of this previous website platform and the content that was presented were outdated. Dr. Hill has contributed countless hours of work over three years to arrive at the website we have today. She has also led a group in discerning how best to meet the needs of SCRA given our resources and our requirements. The demands for coordination and management involved in the re-creation of the website and transition old to new site required much more work than first anticipated. Many of the functions on the new website are critical for SCRA functioning (e.g., calendars, posting society business, member outreach) and also represent an important vehicle for outreach to those not yet familiar with community psychology. SCRA needs to continue to develop its digital presence so that more people can learn about the field. Dr. Jean Hill’s contributions have built a crucial foundation upon which we can expand for years to come.

Bradley Olson

We are recognizing Brad Olson with the SCRA Award for Special Contribution to Community Psychology for his nine years of advocacy, investigation, witnessing, and pushing for social change within APA. As co-founder of the Coalition of Ethical Psychology, Dr. Olson was one of six “dissident” psychologists who worked to expose APA’s collusion with the Department of Defense and psychologists’ involvement in enhanced interrogations. In August 2015, the APA Council overwhelmingly backed the dissidents’ proposal to ban psychologists from taking part in national security interrogations. Dr. Olson has faithfully shared information with SCRA that has been critical to keeping our members informed about these issues. His untiring dedication has also ensured the visibility of SCRA as an active partner in these important efforts to hold psychologists, psychology, and the APA accountable.
We recognize Anne Bogat and Jack Tebes with the SCRA for Special Contributions to Community Psychology based on their work to negotiate a new contract for the American Journal of Community Psychology. During this time of tremendous change in publishing, Drs. Tebes and Bogat have helped to secure the vitality of our organization for the next several years. For over two years, as our prior contract was set to expire, they led a strategic review of the state of journal publications and evaluated the interest of competing publishers in working with AJCP through phone conversations, email exchanges, and in person meetings with publishing company representatives. This information gathering and “sales representation” for SCRA was a substantial amount of time, but critical for generating interest in working with AJCP and properly vetting the options available. After making a determination, in consultation with SCRA leadership, of the best options, they negotiated a contract that is crucial for enhancing the SCRA financially, as journal revenue constitutes the majority of SCRA’s operating budget. The contributions and stewardship of Drs. Tebes and Bogat were not only financial. In preparation for the negotiations, they became aware of emerging industry standards for promoting and sharing content through new digital platforms. Their work will greatly help the next editor of AJCP. As a Society, we have a more stable financial picture for the next few years and we have increased capacity to lift up the work of SCRA members and the field of community psychology.
bhunter@umbc.edu. Coordinators serve three year terms and provide regional leadership and guidance to the processes of membership development, activities, and communication.

**West Region, U.S. Regional Coordinators**
3rd Year: Lauren Lichty, LLichty@uwb.edu; University of Washington at Bothell
3rd Year: Eylin Palamaro Munsell, epalamar@asu.edu; Arizona State University
2nd Year: Emma Ogley-Oliver, eogleyoliver@marymountcalifornia.edu; Marymount California University

**Student Regional Coordinators**
Graduate: Angela Nguyen, angelanguyen@ucsc.edu; University of California, Santa Cruz
Undergraduate: Brittney Weber, Brittney.Weber@asu.edu; Arizona State University

**News from the Bay Area**
*Written by Angela Nguyen*

The network of Bay Area community psychologists and colleagues from other fields will be meeting again this Spring for an informal colloquium. The group generally consists of community and clinical psychologists, public health researchers, community workers, and others with interests in community-based research and intervention. The goal of our network is to provide a forum to informally discuss work in progress, network with other community practitioners, and provide an exchange of ideas related to community intervention work. The larger group generally meets twice a year, once in Fall and once in Spring, alternating between the University of California, Berkeley, and the University of California, Santa Cruz. Our upcoming meeting will be held at the University of California, Santa Cruz. If you are interested in attending and/or presenting at one of our meetings, or if you would like to be on our mailing list to receive more updates, please email Angela Nguyen (angelanguyen@ucsc.edu) and Erin Ellison (eellison@ucsc.edu)

**News from the Northwest**
*Written by Lauren Lichty*

The 2015 Community Research and Action in the West (CRA-W) conference was hosted by the School of Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences (IAS) at University of Washington Bothell and co-chaired by Assistant Professors Lauren Lichty and Charlie Collins. Over 100 community-engaged social justice scholar-practitioners attended, including undergraduate students, graduate students, faculty members, university staff, and members of community-based organizations. The conference theme, “Breaking Boundaries through Community-engaged Social Justice Work,” was well represented in the more than 30 peer-reviewed conference sessions. Keynote Brad Olson, PhD, of National Louis University delivered an address titled “Insularity, Injustice, and the Necessity of Interdisciplinarity to Socially-Just ‘Disciplines’: The Case of the APA, Interrogations, Torture, and the Hoffman Report,” sponsored by IAS and the Center for Human Rights at University of Washington. Thank you to all who participated!

**Southeast Region, U.S. Regional Coordinators**
Sarah L. Desmarais, sdesmarais@ncsu.edu; North Carolina State University
Winnie Chan, wchan1@gsu.edu; Georgia State University
Pam Imm, pamimm@windstream.net; Community Psychologist, Independent Practice, Lexington SC

**Student Regional Coordinators**
Candalyn Rade, cbrade@ncsu.edu; North Carolina State University
Jaimelee Mihalski, jmihalsk@uncc.edu; University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill
Dominique Thomas, dthomas60@student.gsu.edu; Georgia State University
Susie Paterson, University of Miami
Douglas Archie

**SE Regional Update**
*Written by Candalyn Rade*

We are in our third year of work to build a strong and connected community within and across programs of the Southeast Region (SE) of SCRA. Based in conversations around the campfire during previous SE ECO conferences, we are continuing to focus on ways to build community within and between the wonderful and diverse community psychology programs in our region. As one way to strengthen our community and promote collaboration, the SE SCRA student representatives would like to “map the region” by creating an accessible list of the community psychologists in our region.

We ask that members of the SE region please follow the link
below to complete a short survey about you, your work, and your research interests: http://tinyurl.com/SEregionmap. If you would like more information, have ideas on how we can keep the momentum going, or would like to become more involved, please contact Candalyn Rade (cbrade@ncsu.edu).

**SE ECO 2016 Announcement**

“On the Corner of Peachtree and Action: Empowering Communities for Social Change”

October 21-22, 2016

Atlanta, GA

If a tree falls on the corner of Peachtree Road and Peachtree Avenue (yes, this is a real intersection in Atlanta), does it make a sound? A similar philosophical question was asked over a century ago with the answers varying based on one’s knowledge of the unobserved world. Too often there are community issues that are unobserved, avoided, or disregarded. The purpose of the Southeast ECO 2016 Conference is to acknowledge the research and action taken towards social change. From Georgia State’s Sweet Auburn community to international level engagement, we gather to share the strategies, successes, and future directions of the communities we represent. Join us for the Southeast ECO 2016 Conference in the world city of Atlanta, Georgia, home of some of our nation’s greatest civil rights activists. Call for proposals will be sent out later in spring 2016.

**SE Featured Student Award**

The Southeast region is pleased to announce Tracy Hipp as the winner of the SCRA SE Featured Student Award. Tracy is a graduate student at Georgia State University. Her primary interest, both personally and professionally, is to improve the quality of life for sexual minority women, particularly those impacted by trauma and violence. She works to meet this goal through her research, advocacy, and activism.

Tracy’s research is focused on the prevention of sexual assault and centers on the experiences of sexual minority survivors. Bisexual women are grossly and disproportionately impacted by sexual violence, yet little attention has been paid to the needs and experiences of this community. Her work uses an empowerment approach to better understand their needs and experiences, exploring and celebrating resilience within this community in spite of trauma. Tracy has conducted policy and practice-relevant research, making effort to translate findings for social change efforts. For example, findings from her thesis were synthesized into a policy brief and provided to the working-group responsible for the reauthorization of VAWA—resulting in LGBT-inclusive services through federally funded agencies. In addition, she has partnered with small, grass-roots organizations that provide life-sustaining services to marginalized communities, providing evaluation services that would otherwise be beyond the capacity of the organization.

**Total Number of Presentations for the Past Five Years**

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Year</th>
<th>Posters</th>
<th>Roundtables</th>
<th>Symposiums</th>
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<td>16</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

program at the University of South Carolina. He was an active student member of SCRA and served as a dedicated graduate student representation for SCRA SE, committed to growing the region’s membership, diversity, and sense of community. Alex was a valued member of the SCRA SE community and has had a lasting impact on the region’s vision and growth.

**Midwest Region, U.S.**

**Regional Coordinators**

Amber Williams, amberewilliams1984@gmail.com, National Louis University

Olya Glantsman, oglantsman@gmail.com, DePaul University

August Hoffman, august.hoffman@metrostate.edu, Metropolitan State University

**Student Regional Coordinators**

Taylor Thorpe, tthorpe1@depaul.edu, DePaul University

**News from the Midwest**

Written by Amber Williams and Olya Glantsman

**New Team Member**

We would like to welcome a new member to our team – Amber Williams. Amber is a graduate of the National Louis University’s doctoral program in community psychology and is now teaching there. Her interests include: community engagement within the nonprofit...
sector, community-based participatory research, evaluation, education reform, and disability rights. She is excited to take on this new role in support of SCRA.

**ECO Regional Conference**

The 2015 Midwest ECO Regional Conference Forwarding Inquiry and Action for Social Change was held October 23–24, 2015 by the University of Wisconsin’s Civil Society and Community Studies Department and the Center for Community and Nonprofit Studies (CommNS). The conference overlapped with a day-long event for UW’s the CommNS, which included a panel discussion on mass incarceration, a methodological workshop, an arts and community change workshop, and the shared Midwest ECO and CommNS keynote with Veronica Terrriquez. The conference included formal and informal gatherings, a reception, a campfire, and a myriad of other events and activities.

**Special Thank You**

We would like to extend a special thank you to our student representative, Taylor Thorpe. This year, Taylor took the lead on the organization of the MPA SCRA 2016. Taylor was instrumental in coordinating the submissions, reviewing the proposals, accepting entries, and helping with the program. Taylor played an integral role in helping prepare for the upcoming conference.

**Upcoming Events**

The annual MPA conference is just around the corner (May 5-7, 2016). The SCRA meeting at the Midwestern Psychological Association will be held Friday, May 6, 2016 in Chicago. This year we received 65 proposals (40 posters, 16 roundtables, 9 symposiums)

For more information about the MPA conference (e.g., lodging, fees, etc.) please visit the MPA website at: http://midwesternpsych.org. Also, plan to join us for the annual dinner, which will include the poster award ceremony, following the Conference on Friday night (http://exchequerpub.com/menu/), Exchequer Restaurant & Pub located at 226 S Wabash Ave, Chicago, IL 60604). See you in Chicago!

**Community Psychology in Action**

It’s never too early to begin thinking about tree planting and community gardening projects. Last year several Metropolitan State University and Inver Hills Community College students participated in the inaugural Red Lake Fruit Tree orchard. Students, Red Lake community residents and members from the Red Lake Tribal Nation planted over 40 fruit bearing apple trees, a wide range of cultivars from the University of Minnesota (i.e., Honeycrisps, Frost Bite trees). The trees will provide healthy and nutritious foods for many low-income families who are food insecure. The purchase of the trees was made possible through a generous donation from the Society for Community Research and Action and The Fruit Tree Planting Foundation. This year we plan to expand our project and our goal is to plant an additional 100 trees with the support of tools and equipment from the Red Lake Dept. of Natural Resources. We need help from volunteers who would like to participate! Please contact the individuals below for more information. Tree Planting Dates: Friday, June 24, 2016 – Saturday, June 25, 2016. Contacts are Renea Charwood (ce7458xv@metrostate.edu); Rich Downs (richdownsjr@gmail.com); and August Hoffman (august.hoffman@metrostate.edu). Announcements and information for inclusion in future Midwest updates should be sent to Amber Williams (amberewilliams1984@gmail.com).

**Australia/New Zealand and The Pacific**

**International Regional Liaison**

Katze Thomas,
mothercarematters@gmail.com,
Antony Street Specialist Centre

**Student Regional Liaison**

Rahman Gray,
rahman.gray@live.vu.edu.au,
Victoria University

**Australia/New Zealand and the Pacific Regional Update**

Written by Katze Thomas

**Australasian SCRA Social Justice Symposium**

Community Events:

The 6th International Community Psychology conference is taking place from the 27-30th of May. SCRA ANZP is offering a one-day symposium in Perth on Tuesday May 24th for students and others interested in socially just research approaches. We hope this will facilitate attendance for those wanting to do a stopover on the way to Durban, South Africa. The Symposium is entitled: “Mixed Methods for Socially Just Research.” Similar to the concept of community barn raising, the Symposium will provide attendees with a portfolio of tested methods that would take months or years to be achieved alone. Researchers who have significant experience in the field will present a concise folio of the most powerful techniques or resources for Community Activism/Research or Social Change they
have identified over their career and some explanation of their use. By the end of the day attendees will have garnered a “toolkit” of excellent community research tools and good understanding of their utility and value.

To facilitate inclusion, the cost will be minimal: $40 per participant and $20 for SCRA members. This is a great value for all but particularly for SCRA members. It represents a full return of the $A20 investment of a 2-year student membership and a great return of the $30 “electronic journal” membership for academics. Core components of the day will be the establishment of a network, mentoring and support links for members. The symposium will be one avenue for providing those who have a passion for social justice with a social and informational support system. Please email Dr. Katie Thomas for further details and to be placed on the Symposium email list.

**Membership Drive**

The Membership Drive Competition has now been extended to April 15. All members in the ANZP Region are invited to participate in the annual Member Drive. There are very few professional bodies offering the level of inclusion and resources offered by SCRA and for $A10 a year it is a great investment for students who are seeking career and internship opportunities. This year there will be an award for the member whose enthusiasm and passion for Community Research and Action generates the most new members! To be in the running for the award (includes a $100 certificate and free registration for the upcoming Barn raising event), and/or if you would like some flyers for colleagues and friends, please email mothercarematters@gmail.com. Email this address with the name of each new member you enroll to be in the competition. The membership drive will finish on April 15th, 2016 and the winner will be contacted after this date.

**Film Screening Opportunity:**

SCRA (Australia/New Zealand and the Pacific ANZP) has received permission from Fork Films to present community screenings of Voices from the Frontline of Peacebuilding. The Film Series focuses on female activists in situations of oppression with a focus on women countering violent extremism (CVE). The screenings are part of a process to advocate for inclusion of women peace-builders in peace processes. Each screening will be followed by community discussion and, in NSW, with a question and answer session with a panel of international experts. Tentative ideas for discussion include: global indigenous oppression, the gendered nature of some weapons of war, and so forth. Refreshments will be provided. This will be a Professional Development activity eligible for Community Psychologists to maintain obligations under the new Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency and the Psychology Board of Australia. If there are other Regional members who would like to host a film screening or organize a Community Psychology PD activity, please contact Katie Thomas (08) 9339 3333.

**Europe/Middle East/Africa International Regional Liaisons**

**Europe/Middle East/Africa International Regional Liaisons**

**Sedar Degirmencioglu**
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**Caterina Arcidiacono**
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**Ronni Greenwood**
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**Rachel Manning**
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**Student Regional Liaison**

**Hana Shahin**
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**News from England**

**Written by Rachel Manning**

The Festival of Community Psychology took place in Manchester, 20-21 November 2015. The theme was ‘Creativity, Collaboration and Community’, with a focus on social change, wellbeing and community cohesion. Every aspect of the festival embodied the spirit and ethos of community psychology. First, there was an eclectic mix of participants, including professional psychologists, professionals from community and participatory arts, members of the wider community, voluntary sector groups, and the general public. Second, the venue chosen to host the festival, Bridge 5 Mill, is
Manchester’s first (and only) Centre for Sustainable Living. As well as providing conference and meeting rooms, the Centre has an exhibition area and a sustainability library. It is also home to a range of social enterprises, charities and campaign groups, all working to create a sustainable world. With the help of volunteers, the Mill was refurbished with reclaimed and recycled materials, eco paints, and low energy fittings. With such diverse participation in such a unique venue, the potential for interesting and innovative workshops, presentations, panel discussions, posters, and performances was realized. Although there were too many to reflect on here, one presentation in particular struck a chord with me—the VoiceBox Inc installation. Voice box is a mobile, multimedia-interviewing aid for co-productive methodological practice. In this case it was used with individuals with histories of substance misuse in the UK. Audio-visual data collected from range of recovery and community-focused events were presented which, in my opinion, facilitated a deeper understanding of the recovery community as well as the realisms of the recovery journey. More details of the event can be found on Twitter (@compsyfest15) and or compsyfest15 YouTube channel (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Dp5XHj9rjA)

News from Ireland
Written by Ronni Greenwood

Upcoming Events
The University of Limerick will host the Second International Housing First Conference on 7-9 July 2016. This conference is an opportunity for international SCRA members whose research focuses on ending homelessness to come together. The conference will feature a Keynote Address by Dr Sam Tsemberis, founder of Pathways to Housing, and the winner of both the 2014 SCRA Award for Distinguished Practice in Psychology and the 2016 APA Award for Distinguished Contributions to Independent Practice. Other distinguished SCRA members featured at the conference include Jose Ornelas, Tim Aubry, and Geoff Nelson. The aim of this Conference is to share knowledge about research, practice, policy and activism and promote the international dissemination and sustainment of Housing First Programmes that adhere to the key ingredients of Pathways Housing First Principles and Practice.

Community Psychology Regional Conference
We are planning to host a Community Psychology Regional Conference in Autumn 2016, so watch this space! The theme of the conference will be “Building Social Capital and Capacity in International Community Psychology”. The aim of this two-day event is to build and strengthen networks amongst psychology educators, researchers, and practitioners working within the philosophy, principles, and practice of community psychology.

BOOK REVIEW:
Opening the Door to Methodological Diversity and Better Matching to Community-Based Phenomena: A Valuable New Tool
Written by Maurice Elias
Rutgers University

Citation: Jason, L.A. & Glenwick, D.S. (Eds.)(2016). Handbook of Methodological Approaches to Community-Based Research: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods. New York: Oxford University Press

The latest edition of the Handbook of Methodological Approaches to Community-Based Research: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods strikes me as being three books in one, each telling a story of the growth and depth of research methodology in understanding community-based phenomena. The three stories, told by over 80 authors, correspond to the three sections of the book, and the last three terms in the title. The book begins with qualitative methods, which are really our oldest and most enduring way of understanding the world around us. We are treated to a journey through grounded theory, giving primacy to the voices of participants and focusing on building theory inductively, through thematic analysis, which involves systematic ways of identifying patterns of recurrent meaning in textual data sets, to community narratives, which uses story-based interviewing methods to generate narratives from diverse participants and stakeholders. As you might infer from just this subset of the qualitative methods section, methodology in community psychology is phenomena-driven.
As we seek to know more than individuals’ perceptions about their lives, our methodological lenses must widen to capture a wider range of ecological space.

And that space is viewed through the distinctive, strength-oriented perspective of community psychology. What if we want to build on problem-based participatory action research, rooted in the work of Kurt Lewin, to instead focus on community strengths? Use Appreciative Inquiry. What if we want to better inform decision making through understanding consensus on the part of experts? Use a Delphi method. And what if we want to be immersed in a community to better understand the forces of social justice and injustice, power and oppression, and activism and exclusion operating therein? Critical ethnography can be your guide. And what if we want our research to also begin empowering individuals, including those for whom verbal modalities are not their multiple intelligence strengths, or for those who require the courage of shared voices as a launch point for action? Photovoice and House Meetings are essential tools. And what is on the cutting edge of qualitative methodologies, both in terms of widening the methodological lens and focusing it to look into the human heart and soul? You can learn about Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and Emotional Textual Analysis.

For those of you wondering whether there is enough rigor in qualitative approaches to address directionality in observations and begin to put together stories that look at the spiral of causality, from who we are, how we think, what we do, and what we say, there is Causal Layered Analysis. Each chapter benefits from case example illustrations, and the CLA chapter presents a fascinating view of the relational sports community of women engaged in flat track roller derby in Australia. The social constructions of “women” and “athlete” are given a view that extends to cultural archetypes, values, systemic considerations, and individual perspectives to arrive at an understanding of the trivialization of the skill, strength, and power of these athletes. The authors note, “CLA can be a daunting methodology, particularly to the novice or early career researcher” (p. 109). But isn’t this the story of methodological evolution? Many researchers have been warned about the career-stifling effects of using qualitative methodologies and their “subjective” elements. This volume announces, by putting qualitative methodologies first, that we are now past that, and that soon to be routine is what was once deemed cutting edge and “daunting.”

The quantitative section has a similar narrative arc. Quantitative methods are about the power of aggregation and prediction. At some point, humans began to see the value in being able to observe trends and take action based on those tendencies. We start with what is now basic for my graduate students: latent growth curve analysis. Big computing certainly now allows calculations of equations and algorithms that used to wear out my abacus and slide rule. The chapters in this section are exemplary in that they know they are not speaking only to graduate students (though certainly and ideally to them), but also to old folks who really do want to understand these methodologies, since we read about them more and more, regardless of whether we use them. Understanding patterns and trajectories of change is ultimately essential to the action component of community-based research. That what we are studying is rarely linear is a reality with which we must grapple, particularly as it pushes us, wisely, toward more longitudinal approaches.

Subsequent chapters on latent class and profile analyses and multilevel structural equation modeling help us understand the structure of the many variables and influences on phenomena of interest, for such dependent variables as community participation, impact of community violence, or networks of collaboration. All of the latter are examples illustrated in these chapters. I, for one, felt relieved to not see the words, “imputation” or “moderated mediation analysis” in the index or in my reading of the text. Let’s see if these become chapters in the next edition of this outstanding volume. The jury is out on whether or not this would be a welcomed development.

The cutting edge in quantitative methods is defined by cluster-randomized trials (reflective of the problems of ecological validity with traditional randomized control designs for a field that puts such emphasis on context), behavioral and time-series approaches (essential for documenting patterns of change over time, especially following intervention), data mining (an unfortunate term, in my view, as it contains the implications of panning for gold; but the authors are clear in their caveats, particularly about the quality of the data sets currently available for mining), and agent-based models. I confess that the latter term and the analyses presented were completely new to me. The authors suggest that these models “offer a single analytic tool that simultaneously integrates individual and ecological influences and that bridges the explanatory gap between microlevel processes and macrolevel outcomes” (p. 205). And there is a software program to guide you!
The final two chapters in this section, on social network analysis and dynamic social networks, were previewed for me at a presentation by the authors at the most recent SCRA Biennial conference and my team and I have already put their insights to work. My simple recommendation is to get the book to read these chapters, and follow up with these most wise, generous, and helpful authors. In my work in the schools, the essential element in virtually every change model is relational interaction. Yet, this is far too rarely measured in our studies. Social network analysis allows for examination of patterns of relationship in settings, on the part of individuals, and in multiple dyads. It allows us to answer questions related to the impact of empowerment interventions, professional development, changes in friendships and mentoring, workplace structures, personal and peer networks, and so on. We are using it to see whether and how an intervention designed to inspire youth leadership changes interaction patterns in troubled urban middle schools.

The final section, on mixed method approaches, is the future for community-based research. As this book makes abundantly clear, there are many perspectives with which to investigate community phenomena. The best of our work is deeply contextual and rooted in both time and place. So when we have the opportunity and privilege for community collaboration, we need to optimize what we can learn from the time we have. And that learning is optimized by combining qualitative and quantitative approaches to the extent possible. Otherwise, we just do not get a complete picture, and it is very difficult to “go back” into a community-based study for additional data.

Community psychology textbooks, and the introductory chapter to this section, make the point that since all methodologies have limitations, mixed methods attempt to offset weaknesses in particular approaches. But from a strengths oriented perspective, there are other, powerful reasons to employ mixed methods. The phenomena we seek to understand are ecological in nature, beginning at the level of the individual, and are shaped by context and history. We need to appreciate the meaning of the data from the participants, and we need to look at “outliers” as well as gathering broad representative samples. Community psychology is not a field focused on central tendency. We are interested in the full array of forces operating and we know that distal voices can have indirect impacts that may be obscured in nomothetic analyses.

So the reader is treated to an overview of action research and focused elaborations of community-based and youth-led participatory approaches, cross-cultural and photo-ethnographic mixed method research, functional analysis of community concerns, concept mapping, and network and stakeholder analyses. Cutting edge chapters, at least to me, focused on data visualization (which I think is different from what I am used to, praying that when I hit the SPSS execute button the data will come out as I have visualized), multilevel, multisetting inquiry (continuing to push our approaches to match the complexity of our conceptualizations and observations), dialectical pluralism (illustrated with a compelling example of how diverse perspectives can be integrated to understand the effects of a community-based intervention program for juvenile offenders), and community profiling (featuring a sophisticated approach to mapping community strengths and weaknesses into a set of profiling dimensions, including productive activities profiles, anthropological and psychological profiles, and a profile of the future, highlighted by an application to Porta Capuana, Italy, part of Naples).

This book, helpfully framed by a Foreword (Ray Lorion), Afterword (Anne Bogat), and introductory chapter by the editors (Len Jason and Dave Glenwick), should be mandatory for any graduate program in community psychology and is an essential resource for researchers and change agents working on community-based concerns. The chapters are well illustrated with examples and I actually could follow most of them—a testimony to the authors!—and my graduate students will explain the rest to me. Even if one is not actively engaged in research, the chapters in this book provide valued window into what one is reading in research reports, which, in turn, often influence practice and policy, but not always wisely or appropriately.

Jim Kelly and Ed Trickett pointed out that the ecological model is a conservative one. In a field eager to promote change toward social justice and reduced oppression, it can be frustrating to see efforts at change frequently stalled, short-lived after initial success, or difficult to replicate. As our methodologies catch up to our conceptual understanding, the products of our community-based research will better and more realistically inform our interventions and improve the effectiveness of our actions, as well as our ability to adjust our actions in light of ongoing community and systems dynamics and changes in context.

Get the book. I am heading to our Lab to start working on our social network analysis data!
The SCRA Early Career Interest Group is launching several new initiatives this year, and we invite all early career community psychologists and graduate students considering their early careers to join our monthly call as we move forward in supporting early career professionals.

Starting this month, the ECIG will meet on the last Wednesday of every month at 1pm PST / 4pm EST. The mission of the ECIG is “to enhance the sense of community and a shared identity among early career members through advocacy, engagement, and the provision of resources.” Our current activities include launching our newly updated website, hosting our first professional development webinar, and to collaborate on a project to document the work settings and professional trajectories of early career community psychologists.

We invite you to join us, and look forward to hearing your thoughts and ideas! Please join us for our next monthly call by calling into the SCRA conference line. Also, you can join the ECIG listserv by following three easy steps:

1. Send e-mail to LISTSERV@LISTS.APA.ORG
2. Leave the subject area blank
3. In your message area type:
   SUBSCRIBE SCRA-ECP Your_first_name Your_last_name (e.g. Fred Smith)

Read more at http://www.scra27.org/members1/listserv-communication/#i23ff_lIdr0jBxKkK3.99

If you have any questions or ideas about ECIG, don’t hesitate to contact co-chairs Ben Graham (benjamingraham@gmail.com) or Ashlee Lien (ashlee.lien@gmail.com). Thanks!

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The Rural IG column highlights rural resources as well as the work of community psychologist, students, and colleagues in their rural environments. In this issue, we are pleased to provide a “brief report” from Courtney Cook, a fifth-year doctoral student in clinical psychology at East Tennessee State University (ETSU). For future issues, please email Susana (Rural.IG@scra27.org) if you would like to submit your own brief rural report or if you have resources we may list here.

### Rural Interest Group

**Edited by Susana Helm, Co-Editors Cheryl Ramos and Suzanne Phillips**

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### Rural Resources

**APA Committee on Rural Health.**

The APA Committee on Rural Health recently updated its vision and mission, which is now posted (retrieved 1/14/16: http://www.apa.org/practice/programs/rural/committee/mission.aspx). The CRH mission is “achieving optimal health and well-being for rural and remote populations” through a number of strategies which can be viewed online, and the vision is:

*The vision of the APA Committee on Rural Health is to achieve the full and optimal benefit of the science, education, practice, and advocacy of psychology for all rural and remote populations. To this end, the Committee envisions the equal protection and respect of the human rights of all people, including the residents of rural and remote regions, the integration of rural perspectives in APA policy and the removal of barriers to comprehensive health care for rural and remote populations.*

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**Project ECHO (Extension for Community Healthcare Outcomes).**

According to the Project ECHO website (http://echo.unm.edu/), this “collaborative model of medical education and care management”…

“increases access to specialty treatment in rural and underserved areas by providing front-line clinicians with the knowledge and support they need to manage patients with complex conditions such as hepatitis C, rheumatoid arthritis, chronic pain, and behavioral health disorders among many others.”

**Brief Report:**

In reviewing the 2015 roster of Rural IG members, we realized that Tennessee represents! In a quick calculation, we determined that 10% of the active members with known institutional locations in the US are located in Tennessee. Our roster shows that of the 162 active members of the Rural IG, seven members are located at institutions in the State of Tennessee: Tennessee, East Tennessee, and Vanderbilt. It should be noted that of the active members, our records include institutional locations for less than two-thirds of the total (96 people, or 59%). So there may be other members who are in Tennessee, and we just don’t have that info. Please feel free to send your location info so we can update our records. Based on this large representation, we invited submissions from Tennessee, and are pleased to present a brief report by Courtney Cook and her colleagues at East Tennessee State University. ETSU sits within the Buffalo and Cherokee Mountains in Johnson City, Tennessee, serving approximately 15,000 students. The Clinical Psychology graduate program provides doctoral training with an emphasis in both rural behavioral health and integrated primary care.
Brief Report:  
Rural Parents’ Perceptions of Mental Health Services: A Qualitative Study  
Submitted by Courtney Lilly Cook, Jodi Polaha, and Stacey Williams  

Author Note: This research was supported in part by a grant from the National Institute of Mental Health (R21MH090539). Special thanks to Dr. Melissa Schrift, Department of Sociology, East Tennessee State University, for her guidance in analyzing data according to thematic analysis.

Rural residents encounter multiple barriers in accessing mental health services including a lack of mental health professionals and stigma associated with mental health diagnoses and treatment (Merwin, Hinton, Dembling, & Stern, 2003; Boydell et al., 2006). Distance to a healthcare site, transportation, and poverty have also been identified as barriers to care in rural areas (Boydell et al., 2006). While rates of mental disorders may be similar among rural and non-rural groups, there is evidence that rural people receive fewer mental health services than their urban counterparts (Goldsmith, Wagenfeld, Manderscheid, & Stiles, 1997; Kessler et al., 1994).

While systemic barriers to care in rural populations are evident within the literature, this is only one piece of the rural help-seeking experience. Several studies have attempted to elucidate rural individuals’ experiences with mental health, yet these studies focus on barriers and facilitators of care which compose only a portion of the rural help-seeking experience. Knowledge of rural individuals’ perceptions, desires, and past experiences is vital to understand fully how and why rural individuals seek help.

Method  

Procedure  
Adults accompanying children to primary care were recruited in eight pediatric primary care waiting rooms across Tennessee and Virginia to complete a demographic questionnaire and the Pediatric Symptom Checklist (PSC; Jellinek, Murphy, & Burns, 1986). Those with PSC scores indicating significant or borderline significant psychosocial concerns were asked to complete a larger set of measures (see Williams & Polaha, 2014), including five open-ended questions/statements used in the analysis presented here. Data were collected via paper-pencil self-report format.

Participants  
A total of 347 adults participated in the full study, including the qualitative component, with 79.8% being the child’s mother, 7.8% father, and 12.4% other (e.g., grandparents, siblings). The average child age was 9.2 years (SD = 3.43 years), and male (57.9%). The sample was predominantly white (94.2%), consistent with the racial demography of clinic locations.

Analysis  
Inductive thematic analysis was used in reviewing and interpreting data. A team of three graduate students analyzed data. To reduce potential biases, faculty within psychology and sociology, one of whom has extensive experience in qualitative analysis, reviewed data classification and a finalized thematic classification system was chosen.

Open-Ended Questions/Statements  

1. Please list all of the factors that might be helpful to you if you were looking for help for your child’s behavior, development, and emotional well-being.
2. If you were to get help in a way that was “perfect” for your situation, needs, and interests, what would happen?
3. If you have sought services in the past, please think over those experiences and list the positive aspects.
4. What aspects were negative?
5. If you were asked to list the main reason why you have not/will not seek help for an ongoing problem with your child’s behavior, development, or emotional well-being, what would that reason be?

Results  
Analysis of study data revealed seven primary themes. Participants responded to items in two ways: reports of past experiences and perceptions or desires related to services.

Perceptions of Mental Health Services  
Numerous participants endorsed a desire for collaboration amongst primary care providers, teachers, parents, and behavioral health providers in caring for their child. One participant reported a desire for “everyone (parents, teachers, doctors) working together for the benefit of the child.” Along this same line, several participants reported ideas for innovative service delivery facilitating collaboration, including in-home behavioral treatment and services within the school setting. Several participants also recounted past experiences in which parent-provider collaboration was difficult or nonexistent, reporting their concerns were “ignored,” they “weren’t taken seriously,” and providers discounted their concerns.

Stigma  
One common manifestation of stigma was fear of consequences associated with a child’s diagnosis or treatment. In response to why a participant has or will not seek help for their child, one participant wrote, “Impact on his future – would it affect college enrollment, jobs or other things he would wish to do. I do not want him to feel like he has or is a ‘problem.’ How would he feel? He is only 5.” Several participants also reported that seeking help would evoke feelings of inadequacy as a parent or change how others view...
them.

**Medication**

While some participants reported efficacy of a child’s medication regimen, others reported negative experiences with medication or disproval of psychopharmacological treatment. One participant reported “a doctor that actually seems to care what’s best for my child instead of thinking medication fixes everything” would be a helpful factor in seeking services for the child.

**Desire for Guidance and Resources**

A number of study participants reported minimal knowledge about how to seek mental health services. Many were unaware of available resources and unsure of where to seek guidance. Many participants reported a referral from a healthcare provider or a pamphlet delineating resources within the area would be helpful in addressing this concern.

**Logistical Barriers**

Commonly endorsed barriers included long distances to care sites, insurance and financial concerns, inconsistent transportation, provider shortages, and lack of convenient appointment times. Several participants reported a desire for evening or weekend appointments due to concerns about missed school and work.

**Willingness to Seek Help**

Many participants provided responses indicating resistance to help seeking. Several caregivers reported their child’s behavior did not warrant professional treatment, despite significant scoring on the PSC. Other participants reported they have not or will not seek help because their child’s problems are normal for their age range, because of caregivers’ hopes that the concerns will improve naturally, or because of their desire or ability to manage the issue independent of professional help. Several other participants cited their child’s resistance to treatment as a reason for not seeking help.

**Provider Characteristics**

Participants frequently cited a number of desirable and undesirable characteristics in a potential pediatric mental health provider. Participants frequently reported a desire for a relatable provider who could communicate in a relatable fashion (e.g. without using jargon) as well as a desire for a child-friendly provider and environment. One participant reported “children’s counselors that are ‘appealing’ to children, meaning, not a stuffy office with a stiff-joint professor of psychology,” would be helpful in seeking treatment for the child.

**Discussion**

This study sought to elucidate the needs, desires, and experiences of rural caregivers in seeking care for a child with significant psychosocial concerns. While some findings uncovered within this study are consistent with previous research (stigma, logistical barriers), several new factors were uncovered (desire for collaboration, desire for specific provider attributes). Such information can be used to direct the delivery of mental healthcare services in individual clinical practices as well as broader policy initiatives. While all study findings have potential implications for service delivery, unanticipated findings in particular have likely been neglected in rural mental health service delivery to date. Future research should implement new findings and evaluate the effects on acceptability and uptake of mental healthcare services in rural areas.

**References**


Student Issues
Edited by Sarah Callahan and Meagan Sweeney

Taking Action: The Creation of Student Lead Initiatives in Doctoral Programs
Written by Michelle Abraczinskas, Emily Neger, Katie Knies, Nyssa Snow-Hill, Melanie Morse, and Rebeca Castellanos, University of South Carolina

Overview
This paper highlights how we, as a group of students in the clinical-community (CC) psychology program at the University of South Carolina (USC), have taken action to address areas of unmet need as we have progressed through our program. Though the experiences described below are situated at USC, we think the settings created are both applicable and translational to other CC, clinical, and community programs, and want to share our experiences with a wider audience in the hopes that it will be helpful.

Integration of Clinical and Community Psychology
More than 30 years ago, USC, along with other programs across the country, merged the community clinical psychology doctoral programs into a single clinical-community psychology doctoral program, (CC program) so students could have tools to enact social change. Few CC psychology programs remain. Perhaps this is because developing expertise in both clinical and community psychology is difficult to accomplish in a timely and thorough manner. Those students who desire an expertise in both the clinical and community psychology fields may struggle to allocate sufficient time for each discipline and meet program requirements, either feeling caught on a swinging pendulum between the sub disciplines, or surrendering to just one. To compound these difficulties, a thorough search of CC program websites and articles on the topic, revealed that a clear definition of CC integration does not appear to exist.

To address these concerns, students in the CC PhD program formed a CC integration committee in Fall 2014. A series of CC integration forums began for faculty and students to brainstorm integration ideas; faculty also presented personal examples. Students and faculty explored course content and noted those that were well integrated. The committee plans to have students share their personal integration via a variety of mechanisms (e.g. colloquia, symposia).

Creation of the SAB
The CC integration committee collaborates with the Student Advisory Board (SAB), created in Spring 2014 to empower students to make positive programmatic changes. The SAB provides a setting where students can have organized discussions about general training needs and then take action. The SAB is an example of CC integration because it serves as a mesosystem that bi-directionally impacts the systems/organizational level (faculty, clinic) and individual level (student self-efficacy, sense of community). The SAB is a communication pathway between different systems that previously functioned as silos, with a core action focus.

The SAB originally formed as a continuous quality improvement (CQI) mechanism for the innovation Getting to Outcomes (GTO®) in clinical practice at the Psychology Services Center (PSC). This innovation is another example of CC integration, as it impacts individual and systems/organizational level change. The PSC is a community-based treatment center where graduate students in the Psychology Department receive clinical training. In an effort to promote systematic clinical decision-making and practice, the Getting to Outcomes (GTO) framework (Chinman, Imm, & Wandersman, 2004; Wandersman, 2009) was adapted to be used on the individual client level to (1) demystify the therapy process for student therapists, (2) provide a systematic delivery of treatment, and (3) make each step in the therapy process clear to ensure a certain level of quality.

As part of this CQI, focus groups were conducted to gauge students’ usage of the new innovation. Students volunteered to meet on a regular basis to provide input and feedback. The SAB became a setting for such meetings. In addition to CQI, the SAB has grown into an empowering context where students provide input on training and program decisions and a conduit between the students, faculty, and PSC staff.

Though the reason for the creation of the SAB is unique to USC, the broader purpose of the SAB and its function is applicable to other programs. Programs could form student led settings such as the SAB or the CC integration committee as a way to increase student investment, make their voices more heard and collective, and to empower students to become involved in making programmatic changes. If interested, the following tips may be helpful.

Creating a Vision
It may be beneficial to develop the vision during a class, such as a class with a systems level project requirement. The USC SAB was designed within a community psychology practicum class to build the community practice skills of group process and community organizing. Establishing student champions across different cohorts also helps motivate students to attend meetings. Conducting an interest and needs survey through multiple
methods (e.g., focus group, survey, one legged interviews) can inform preliminary vision and project ideas.

Getting Started

When beginning, we found it important to work on projects that would likely lead to quick success as a way to celebrate small wins while gaining momentum and excitement. Once these small wins are in place, tackle something more difficult, such as a course curriculum or supervision need. Also, demonstrate taking the advisory board seriously. Meet on a regular basis, take notes, and host professional events that a variety of stakeholders find useful and fun.

We found it vital to garner the support of faculty and staff. Highlight that a SAB can help market the program and meet accreditation or other standards. The SAB at USC helps address clinical training needs and its innovative activities may be a unique draw to the program. In addition, an advisory board can take some of the programmatic change burden off faculty. To build faculty confidence in the SAB, select a realistic, time sensitive task and present the result to faculty. This can help establish a faculty advisory board champion if one does not already exist.

Choosing Meaningful Projects

When we selected change ideas, we acquired student support and interest by focusing on areas identified by the majority of students. We chose to implement peer mentoring to improve sense of community and share information between cohorts. Now in its second year, over 50% of students are participating in the program and they are interfacing with the program earlier in their training. The process and outcome evaluation of the first cohort was presented at the Southeast Eco conference in Fall 2015. Additionally, we created professional development events, such as work/life balance, which at the time was not an area of focus by faculty or other student organizations. We also advocated for curriculum changes and developed an internship preparation training. It is helpful to balance seriousness and fun in project design. We might be working to make changes to externships, while also planning a fun peer mentoring outing.

Maintaining Momentum

Once you have begun, it is important for your SAB to maintain momentum. One tip to maintain momentum is to create break out committees dedicated to larger projects with different student leaders in each one. This serves two purposes: it spreads out task responsibility across more members, so that the SAB can accomplish more, and it continues to build champions and further buy-in among committee leaders. Ensure one small win a semester to help keep morale high, especially when trying to target changes that are more difficult. In other words, it is rewarding to set small goals that you can meet to balance out the lofty ones. It is also important be flexible and recognize that projects can be successful yet very different from the original intention based on barriers as well as emerging needs. In our program, the original focus of the peer-mentoring program was peer clinical supervision, but it evolved due to a recognition of the need for more broad mentorship across students’ multiple roles and responsibilities.

Another important component for maintaining momentum is to remain visible. Ways to do this are to hold consistent meetings and a few events a semester and send listserv emails to both faculty and students. Additionally, create a page on social media or add a description to the program website. Finally, make sure change agents and other students know about your accomplishments. This can be done on the website, in an end of the year newsletter, or can be mentioned to faculty at meetings and to students outside the SAB through one legged interviews.

Conclusion

Our new settings helped us increase student voice and change efforts, as well as our connection to the program and each other. Using a systems intervention to improve clinical training and sense of community within our program has naturally provided a connection between clinical and community psychology. This example of CC integration is unique in that it occurs within a department and mainly centers on clinical training. The flexibility allowed in developing community competencies in this way, beginning with a community practicum class, has helped move our definition of clinical-community integration forward and shaped our identities as clinical-community psychologists.

We hope that other Community, CC, and Clinical training programs find the information about the formation of our Student Advisory Board and CC integration committee useful. It is likely that other programs and students have difficulties with CC integration, so it may be helpful to have additional forums to discuss this important issue. If you are interested in learning more about our CC integration committee, SAB, or our peer mentoring program, please do not hesitate to reach out to us.

References


Individuals experiencing chronic homelessness face numerous barriers to recovery and housing including lack of affordable housing, no or insufficient income, low educational attainment, job market instability, difficulty navigating complex service systems, and chronic and untreated medical, mental health, and substance use issues (Caton, Wilkins, & Anderson, 2007). In recent years, a promising shift toward evidence-based, transformative housing interventions, such as Housing First, has occurred in the U.S. and internationally to address systems-level causes of homelessness and promote recovery on the individual level (Goering & Tsemberis, 2014). Yet, due to demand, Housing First and other subsidized permanent supportive housing interventions are not readily available to everyone in need, and individuals often remain homeless with access to case management while on housing waiting lists. The quality of traditional case management services may be limited when caseloads are high (Rapp, 1998). Further, generalist case managers may not have the capacity to support individuals in identifying and achieving alternative channels out of homelessness. In order to address the limitations of traditional case management, the Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)-funded Pathways to Independence (PTI) program was designed as a specialized, team-based service model emphasizing economic independence, thereby expand housing choices and promoting person-centered goal attainment.

The three-year PTI program was initiated in 2011, based at a large homeless service agency in New Haven, Connecticut, and served 275 individuals who met the federal criteria for chronic homelessness, defined as an individual with a disabling condition who has experienced homelessness on the street or in shelters for one year, or who has cycled in and out of homelessness at least four times in the previous three year period. PTI addressed fragmentation of services through co-location of staff specialists in three primary areas: employment; SAMHSA’s SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access, and Recovery (SOAR) initiative to facilitate disability benefit awards; and housing. One way that PTI promoted shared power was through employing a peer educator to emphasize knowledge and capacity of individuals with lived experience. The program also focused on wellness by staffing liaisons from community mental health and community health centers on the PTI team who engaged interested program participants on-site. Upon enrollment to PTI, program participants engaged in an assessment of their personal goals, and the intake coordinator facilitated referrals to the appropriate PTI specialists.

Following a transformative change in community mental health framework (Nelson, Kloos, & Ornelas, 2014), PTI emphasized income and housing attainment over behavioral management and prescribed treatment. The message that participants had the right to employment, disability benefits, and housing was front and center. Moreover, integrated, mainstream housing and employment opportunities were prioritized, reflective of the strengths-based view of participants as individuals capable of recovery. A PTI participant conveyed the following during a focus group, “I didn’t feel confident I was going to be able to do what they wanted for rent – I’m not going to be able to afford it. [The PTI employment specialist] called me and gave me a pep talk. It was a vote of confidence, and without it I would have stayed negative. I took advice. They motivated me to be independent.” PTI staff members encouraged individuals to be active participants in the community in ways that were meaningful to them.

Notably, the composition of the team as specialists further promoted the model’s transformative nature. In contrast to a generalist case management model, the employment, SOAR, and housing specialists were solely responsible for facilitating participant goals in their particular area, allowing the specialists to gain a depth of knowledge and resources. PTI staff described satisfaction with the leeway afforded to them in defining their roles and the ability to think creatively to solve problems (Ponce, Brown, & Rowe, 2016).

The PTI staff specialists were able to overcome community-level factors impeding participant capabilities by bringing community stakeholders to the table. For example, the employment specialist not only provided individual-level employment education and coaching to assist individuals in obtaining and remaining in competitive employment, he also identified and cultivated employment opportunities.
for participants by building relationships with prospective employers. Gaining buy-in from employers not only increased employment opportunities for PTI participants, it also provided a benefit to employers. One employer shared the following sentiment in a focus group, “If I put a help wanted sign on the building, it takes a long time to hire. But if I call [the PTI employment specialist], he’ll have 10 people that day.” (Ponce et al., 2016). Transactions such as this promoted transformation at the community level by challenging employers’ beliefs about the employability of individuals with lived experience of homelessness.

The PTI program did not have dedicated permanent supportive housing vouchers for program participants, although the housing specialist assisted participants in signing up on housing waiting lists. On average, participants’ monthly income was less than the cost of fair market rent for a one-bedroom apartment. As such, another community-level barrier to overcome using creative solutions was increasing access to affordable housing among those who had an income through employment and/or federal disability benefits. The PTI housing specialist developed a network of landlords with whom he negotiated rent prices and utility costs to reduce the cost burden on tenants. Participants were educated about tenant rights and were encouraged to engage in self-advocacy when landlord issues arose. For those who were unable to afford independent living but were interested in unsubsidized housing, the housing specialist worked with groups of PTI participants on roommate living situations. Nearly 30% of those housed were housed on their own income without a subsidy (Brown, Rowe, & Ponce, 2015).

PTI participants reported a high level of satisfaction with the program, particularly on indicators of recovery-oriented care. For example, average satisfaction ratings on a 1 to 5 scale were greater than 4 on items such as, “Staff here believe that I can grow, change, and recover,” “I was given information about my rights,” and “Staff encouraged me to take responsibility for how I live my life.”

On a measure assessing citizenship—the extent to which an individual accesses the rights, roles, and responsibilities afforded in a society (Rowe, Kloos, Chinman, Davidson, & Cross, 2001)—PTI participants reported a significant increase from program entry to 6-month follow-up (Brown et al., 2015). Although promising, the PTI outcomes were measured in an uncontrolled evaluation. Future research is needed to examine the impact of PTI-like models on outcomes important within a transformative community mental health system.

Programs rooted in a transformative change framework are particularly applicable in supporting individuals experiencing chronic homelessness due to systematic issues of fragmentation of services and barriers to housing and income. PTI reflected a transformative change framework by promoting individuals’ capacities to engage in their community, addressing systems-level barriers to basic necessities through integrated services, and defining case management roles through specialty areas. The program’s transformative change values were mirrored in participant experiences. Future iterations of programs like PTI may consider implications for staff growth and work-related self-efficacy, in light of the potential for burnout in human services work. Further, parsing out unique characteristics of transformative case management models will enhance the evidence base for implementation.

References
Society for Community Research & Action
Membership Application

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First Name: __________________________  Last Name: __________________________
Address line 1: __________________________
Address line 2: __________________________
Address line 3: __________________________
City, State, Postal Code: __________________________  Country: __________________________
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- **Length**: Five pages, double-spaced
- **Images**: Images are highly recommended, but please limit to two images per article. Images should be higher than 300 dpi. Photo image files straight from the camera are acceptable. If images need to be scanned, please scan them at 300 dpi and save them as JPEGs. Submit the image(s) as a separate file. Please note that images will be in black and white when published.
- **Margins**: 1” margins on all four sides
- **Text**: Times New Roman, 12-point font
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