Dear SCRA Members,

Returning to the Executive Committee over a year ago, after such a long absence, I have been able to see up close the many activities driven by SCRA members, who also feel like friends and family. And, of course there are new members adding to the collective tasks and activities, and all of it is, it feels, like a unique, vibrancy of SCRA.

I’m just going to focus here on a portion of the Executive Committee (EC), the presidents, treasurers, secretaries and I will speak more on others later. I will also focus on our strengths, what we do so well, with the hope that a bit of asset mapping can help us all utilize and build on those who put such skilled work into SCRA’s well-being.

While I, and many of you, have long known these figures, I was surprised at how much I really understand their community psychology-assets when working with them on tough individual and
organizational decisions. Of those who are rotating off the EC, for instance, I have known our past-past president Susan McMahon (Susan M.) and past-treasurer Jim Emshoff (Jim E.), and initially got the sense that Susan M. was good at ensuring we adhered to the SCRA strategic plan and that Jim E. was responsive to budget requests. What I learned was that when extraordinarily difficult decisions needed to be made, for instance on budget requests, evaluating SCRA mini-grants proposals or working with our publisher Wiley, Susan M. has a most wise, honest, and critical style, an organizational thinker as good as they get, and Jim E. always broadens out our thinking, adding new complexities and depths and foresight—it becomes clear that the success of his evaluation and consulting business is no fluke.

And coincidentally, as one presidential-treasurer Susan-Jim set rotates out, another rotates in—Past Member-at-Large, Susan Torres-Harding (Susan T-H), is now our new President-Elect and Past-President, Jim Cook (Jim C.), is our new treasurer. Susan T-H is, to me, a dear SCRA sister going back to our days working at Lenny Jason’s Center for Community Research. Susan T-H has such a vast array of skills, all evident in her leading role co-organizing the last, 2011, Chicago SCRA Biennial. And Susan T-H she has already provided strong operational support for next year’s, the 2019, Chicago SCRA Biennial. Susan T-H is skilled as a clinical and community practitioner but has also long been strong at managing budgets and research and evaluation projects. SCRA’s relatively new Evaluation and Financial Planning Committee—a committee designed to look formatively and summatively at our internal SCRA investments in projects and other activities.

Three people in three other positions just feel like the most fortunate type of stability. There are many great people in SCRA who can carry out any of our roles, perhaps, certainly mine, but some of these positions—at least their titles of Treasurer and Secretary—do not capture the major leadership roles they are playing in SCRA, nor their part in the collective responsibilities involved. After being away for a little while, Jim C. is re-joining the EC as Treasurer and Elizabeth Thomas is staying on as Secretary. Both of them possess so much organizational knowledge, and both always reassure with responsible, calm, insightful, and caring leadership styles. And as for the institutional continuity, policy savvy, and balancing of taking action while allowing participatory leadership, we could not…well, put simply, she keeps us ALL together.

I will talk about the many others on the EC another day, which leaves us for now—last, but not least—to our immediate Past President, Yolanda Suarez-Balcazar. Under Yolanda’s leadership there have been so many exciting accomplishments in the past year, each according to many of the goals in our strategic plan, including the creation of and endorsing of the innovation grant mechanism. But nothing strikes me as more critical than her work with students and early professionals of color. Despite all the strengths and assets in SCRA, human and otherwise, we have places to grow. And as with every psychological and academic and other organizational entity in the country, it will be required of us to have a lot of openness, care, bravery, and self and community honesty around issues of implicit racism and empowerment within community psychology. And of implicit and explicit racism in the broader field of psychology, public health, evaluation, and related disciplines in the U.S. and all of it in the broader country. Yolanda has initiated and engaged in such great dialogues at our Midwestern Eco and other conferences, in webinars, in places like SCRA Immigrant Justice group, and while SCRA’s Council on Ethnic and Minority Affairs (CERA, pronounced like “Sarah”). CERA was really shaped by so many individuals, but Yolanda did so much to advocate for its place as a Council, “within” the EC to its unanimous vote to have it at a permanent place “on” the EC. I know that Yolanda loves this work and will continue doing this work for SCRA this year and well beyond.

So that’s it for now. These are all very accessible people, and don’t ever hesitate to reach out to me. Jean Hill is our Executive Director and has more institutional knowledge than anyone, but I am always happy to try to brainstorm around ideas,
answer questions about where one might fit in, give honest views about graduate schools, or help apply for faculty positions, or whatever. Don’t hesitate to email me: bradley.olson@nl.edu

Best, and look forward to continuing to communicate, and seeing many of you at the Biennial in June 2019.

Brad Olson
President of SCRA
Associate Professor, National Louis University
Chicago

From the Editors
Written by Susan M. Wolfe, Susan Wolfe and Associates and Dominique Thomas, University of Michigan

We think the biggest news for this issue is the new delivery format and the look of the new TCP. We hope you like it. For those of you who will miss the paper copy arriving in the mail, we hear your pain. Susan loves thumbing through a physical copy and will also miss it. However, we are excited about the possibilities this new format will provide. First, we won’t have the space limitations and will be able to share more pictures and content without having to shrink the font size so small that we need to use a magnifying glass to read it or be forced to hold back articles until future issues. Second, it allows us more freedom and flexibility for layout and design. And third, we will be saving the lives of countless trees as we move forward with the pdf format. We hope that the wonderful content we have received from SCRA members will compensate and we invite you to print and share it.

We are once again excited to share all the great articles we received with you. Welcome to our new SCRA President, Brad Olson. Thank you to Yolanda Saurez-Balcazar for her service and inspiring columns. In his first column Brad shares his thoughts about returning to the SCRA Executive Committee.

In this issue’s special feature Bret Kloos and Gina Hijjawi share information about the SCRA Leadership Development Fellowship Program. This feature includes articles by LDF Fellows – Janelle M Silva, Dawn X. Henderson, and Jennifer Wallin-Ruschmann. They also introduce the 2017-2019 Cohort of Leadership Development Fellows - Noé Rubén Chávez, Jessica Shaw, and Adam Voight.

The Community Practitioner offers two columns that illustrate how spirituality influences community psychologists and their work. The first is a column we had to hold over from the last issue because of space limitations. The column tells Carlos Luis’s story about how his spirituality and faith led him to Community Psychology. The second describes a mission trip by a team from Andrews University led by Dr. Melissa Ponce-Rodas to promote empowerment, hope, and healing in a community in Puerto Rico traumatized by natural disaster.

The CERA column offers an exciting announcement and an article about maternal mortality and the role of institutional racism. The high rates of maternal mortality, especially among African American women, have received a great deal of attention nationwide, and especially in Susan’s home state of Texas, which has one of the highest rates in the nation. SCRA members who are doing work in racial disparities in health and other areas will likely find this perspective as relevant to their work.

Both the Criminal Justice and Policy columns focus on the police. The Criminal Justice column shares Kassy Alia’s experience as the widow of a police officer, and how she has used this experience to bring about transformative change in the relationships between police officers and the communities they serve. The Policy column shares results of research on youth perceptions of the Baltimore City School Police Force. This article
demonstrates the range of responses to police officers based on the way the officers approach their jobs, in addition to various levels of context such as school climate, teacher and administrator roles, and relationships. Not only was the content interesting, but this article really illustrates the value in applying ecological models and frameworks in evaluation.

The Education Connection column was also held over from the last issue. In their column, Karinna Nazario, Taylor Strange, Alicia Beadle, Lisa Kawecki, and Nghi D. Thai share the community participatory research experience of three students (two Masters’ and one Undergraduate) and a community partner. They provide a great example of how faculty can incorporate community-based projects into their classrooms and provide students with hands-on experiences at the same time they serve their community partners.

Earlier this year SCRA released its Policy Statement on the Effects of Deportation and Forced Separation (see http://scra27.org/what-we-do/policy/policy-position-statements/effects-deportation-families/#HwoU8pFpmBOP5wUV.99) with recommendations. As discriminatory immigration policies and practices continue, many SCRA members have increased their advocacy efforts. The Immigrant Justice column presents Fabrício Balcazar’s summary of presentations from a symposium on the psychological and social harm to immigrant youth and families in detention facilities. The descriptions of the behavioral changes and symptoms of mental distress in children should be enough to get all of us mobilized to advocate for the families that are being treated in such a manner by the U.S. government.

We are excited to report that Gloria Levin has returned with another Living Community Psychology column! Over the years Gloria has shared many of our colleagues’ stories that illustrate the diversity of backgrounds of community psychologists, and the experiences and interests that have driven so many to the field. Having been one of Gloria’s subjects I can attest to just how deep she makes us dig during her interviews. Then she weaves it all together in a way that tells our story, while allowing us to review and edit to our
own comfort level before she submits the column. In this issue she shares Louis Brown’s story and we learn about his journey from Silver Spring, MD to El Paso, TX. Gloria, it is good to have you back. And, Louis, thanks for sharing your story.

We also have an update from Scot Evans and the Regional Coordinators. Check it out and find out what’s happening in your region! The Research column announces the launch of the SCRA Research Fellows Program which is designed to give SCRA members who are pursuing academic careers a boost with funding and mentoring.

We have two articles that introduce novel self-help initiatives. First, the Self-Help and Mutual Support column introduces Psychedelics in Recovery, an addiction recovery mutual aid group. Second, an article in the From our Members section that was held over from the last issue by Kristen Schramer and Kathryn Lafreniere describes the importance of online communities for individuals affected by Turner Syndrome.

The Student Issues column includes two articles. One, held over from the last issue, discusses how instructors can use disclosure when they teach about diversity. This information is useful for graduate instructors and everyone else who teaches. In their second column we meet Joy Agner, the new SCRA National Student Representative. Congratulations Joy!

In addition to the standard columns, we have content submitted by our members. First is a book review written by Ann Price about Martha Brown’s Creating Restorative Schools. We have an article by David Glenwick, John Moritsugu, Andrew Rasmussen, and Philip Sicker on using fiction in undergraduate community psychology courses. It was printed in a prior issue of TCP but a segment of the article was omitted. We also have two more member-submitted articles that were held over from the last issue. Chris Corbett shares a call to action to prevent climate change. August John Hoffman describes a community garden project.

We are very happy to share the newest TCP column, initiated by Dominique, called the SCRA Member Spotlight. This column allows members to engage and highlight their great work. The article includes a link that members can click to fill out a form whenever they have good news to share. So, we ask that you please fill out this form when something big happens. This can include any professional milestone, such as a grant, promotion, new job, retirement, successful dissertation or masters’ thesis defense, publication, or anything else that you are patting yourself on the back for. We would also welcome personal milestones if you would like to share them, such as new babies, weddings, lottery winnings or other great things that happen to you. Please let us all celebrate with you!

Finally, we have announcements that include that it is time for award nominations (come on everyone, get busy and nominate your colleagues!) and pictures from the handing over of the gavel from Yolanda to Brad at the APA Convention.

We hope you enjoy this issue. If you enjoy it, or really hate it, please let us know by sending an email to tcp@scra27.org.
In 2015, the Executive Committee of SCRA created a Leadership Development Fellowship Program based upon a proposal created by Nellie Tran, Tiffeny Jimenez, John Moritsugu and Bret Kloos. The proposal was created in response to discussions among SCRA leadership recognizing that individuals from underrepresented groups had fewer opportunities to participate at the leadership level throughout the organization and that the mission and vitality of SCRA could be strengthened by expanding efforts to be more inclusive. Much of the initial framework was modeled on a similar program from the Asian American Psychological Association’s leadership program. We very much appreciate that The Community Psychologist has created a special section to highlight the work of the first cohort of Leadership Development Fellows and to introduce the second cohort of fellows. In the Spring of 2019, we expect that SCRA will recruit a third cohort of Fellows.

**Description and Rationale**

The SCRA Leadership Development Fellows (LDF) Program is designed to nurture the professional development of early career psychologists committed to community research and action. It is also an explicit commitment to develop future leaders for SCRA. The program seeks to cultivate a diverse group of SCRA leaders by providing opportunities for mentoring and leadership experience in SCRA. We expect that Fellows will also serve as leaders in academic, community, organizational, and professional settings over their careers. Fellows selected for the 2-year program will participate in individual and peer mentoring, observe and participate in SCRA activities and leadership meetings, complete a year-long project, and present their experiences at a SCRA conference. Reflecting the values of SCRA, priority in selecting fellows will be given to cultivating leaders from under represented gender, racial, ethnic, and cultural groups. Similarly, the program will seek to promote leadership for early career community psychologists from a range of work settings to promote diversity of leadership from different career paths.

**LDF Eligibility**

Applicants must be SCRA members who have completed their doctoral degrees two years prior to submitting their application. Preference will be given to applicants who have some prior leadership experience in local contexts (e.g., within their graduate program, community, or current position) but who have not had leadership experience at the national level within psychology (e.g., held formal leadership positions in APA or other national psychological associations or served in any capacity on the SCRA Executive Committee). Individuals who have had limited opportunities to become more involved in leadership roles within SCRA and other organizations are strongly encouraged to apply (e.g., current mentors are not involved in SCRA, underrepresented professional interests or personal backgrounds).

**Structure of the Program**

**Program Co-chairs.** The program has been coordinated by two co-chairs, Gina Hijjawi and Bret Kloos. The co-chairs are responsible for recruiting and overseeing the selection of Fellows and facilitating formation of the mentoring teams for each fellow. The co-chairs also convene regular cohort professional development calls. The co-chairs serve as liaisons to the SCRA EC. The Co-chairs will be responsible for Fellow Orientations and finding a SCRA colleague to evaluate the Program with each cohort of Fellows.

**Mentoring Teams.** Each Fellow will work with the LDF Program co-chairs to form a three-person mentoring team tailored to their professional development interests. The team can include one or more persons from these three groups (a)
leader of an Interest Group, Council, or Committee, (b) a SCRA member selected for her/his professional expertise in an area important to the Fellow, or (c) an EC member. Fellows will work closely with their mentoring teams as they develop a plan for their fellowship projects. Ideally, the projects will create opportunities for SCRA become more responsive to member concerns, encourage linkages between different parts of SCRA, and align with the fellow’s leadership aspirations and interest. Working with the LDF co-chairs, each Fellow identifies a primary mentor and the mentoring team will facilitate planning fellowship activities, professional development, and leadership opportunities.

**Participation in an Interest Group, Council, or Committee.** To encourage networking and a broader view of SCRA’s activities, each Fellow participates in the activities of a SCRA group/committee/council mutually determined by Fellow, mentoring team, and SCRA group. We expect the chair of this group will include the Fellow in discussion of their strategies and activities in leading the group. Participation, observation, and reflection embedded in the work of the group can provide helpful material for mentoring discussions about leadership and professional development.

**Fellowship Project.** During the first year of the LDF, the Fellow and Mentoring team will identify a current SCRA initiative (e.g., strategic plan strategy) or opportunity to improve SCRA to which Fellows can contribute. Ideally the initiative allows for collaboration with other SCRA members. Discussions with the SCRA leadership (e.g., Presidential Stream, Executive Director) are designed to encourage that the project is relevant to SCRA’s needs and the fellow’s goals, plan of action, interests, and leadership aspirations. The Fellow would lead this initiative and may choose to work independently, within a committee or council, or to lead a group effort. Each Fellows’ projects will be presented at SCRA biennial or SCRA sessions at APA. The specific goals and outcomes for each Fellow in relation to her/his project will be developed in collaboration with mentors.

**Participate in SCRA Executive Committee Meetings.** During the years of the Fellowship, we encourage periodic participation in SCRA Executive Committee (EC) related meetings to become familiar with the opportunities, tasks, and responsibilities of different roles on the EC. The exact nature of participation will be determined by the Fellow, Mentoring Team, SCRA Executive Director, and the SCRA President. Ideally, fellows can participate in at least one SCRA Executive Committee Meeting in person during the Fellowship. In person participation affords more networking and relationship building opportunities. The most likely opportunity will be a Mid-Winter meeting where most of the EC business for the past year is reviewed and priorities for the new year are set.

**Fellowship Cohort Conversations.** One of the primary benefits of the Fellowship has been building relationships with the other Fellows. These discussions have occurred among the fellows themselves and/or with the LDF co-chairs. Through joint reflection on their projects and observations of career development challenges, fellows have built a network of professional relationships that can be a resource for future work.

**Contributions of LDF Projects**
In this next section, we share the experiences of the first cohort of Leadership Development Fellows. Janelle Silva, Dawn Henderson, and Jennifer Wallin-Ruschmann presented their three projects at the 2017 SCRA Biennial Conference. Each project connected to a different part of SCRA and created opportunities to engage more SCRA members and work toward changes in SCRA practices. We thank the Fellows for their vision and their persistence in creating these pathways for SCRA to be more responsive to member concerns and interests.
Increasing Visibility for SCRA Members of Color
Written by LDF Fellow Janelle M. Silva, Associate Professor, University of Washington Bothell (LDF 2015-2017)

Every leadership opportunity that I have sought out, as a graduate student and current faculty member, speaks to my identity as a social justice advocate and academic committed to diversity and outreach. As I reflect on these roles, I also realize that these positions, where I offer mentorship, stand in contrast to the mentorship opportunities within organizations such as SCRA, specifically for faculty of color. Like SCRA, I too am committed community research and action, and working with communities to facilitate their empowerment within settings that often seek to disempower subordinated groups. I originally applied to be a leadership fellow to increase my connection to SCRA as an organization and help increase efforts to engage community psychologists of color within academia. I have seen many people who should be at SCRA or a member but are not; many who were interested in finding ways to increase their presence and visibility of the next generation of community psychologists of color but were unsure of the process. My goal was to build bridges within the organization to increase the visibility and build community for SCRA members of color.

At the SCRA Executive Committee (EC) Mid-Winter meeting in Washington D.C., I raised questions as to what the committee on Cultural Ethnic and Racial Affairs (CERA) had been working on. This sparked a discussion as to the status of the committee and how this could be a potential space to address my interest in terms of visibility and community for members of color. With the support of the EC, CERA received the jumpstart it needed to move forward.

As a CERA member, I collaborated with the committee’s Chair-Elect, Dr. Jesica Siham Fernandez (now CERA Chair, 2018-2019) to propose two roundtable discussions at the SCRA biennial in Ottawa, Canada. With the intention of these panels as being a space to bring together SCRA members of color, we sent an email to the SCRA listserv to gain support and see if others wanted to co-facilitate these roundtable discussions. We received several emails from SCRA members of color across schools, nations, and profession, who were interested in supporting this work and wanted to know what other opportunities existed within CERA. “Making Space for Community Psychology Graduate Students of Color” was a roundtable discussion facilitated by Angela Nguyen, Alicia Boards, Katina Harris, Marvia Jones, Jesica Fernandez, and myself. Although Dr. Fernandez and I were the conveners of the roundtable, the four facilitators-each current graduate students-at various programs across the U.S. led the conversation. “Making Space for Community Psychology Faculty of Color at SCRA” was a roundtable discussion facilitated by Fabricio Balcazar, Kaston Anderson-Carpenter, Jesica Fernandez, Nghi D. Thai, CERA, and myself. Both roundtables were closed to SCRA members who identified as (graduate students/faculty) of color for the purpose of confidentiality and community building. Each garnered an honest and critical discussion of what it was like to be a person of color within SCRA, the need for mentorship programs, and the desire for more opportunities for collaboration and socialization at biennial events. Redacted notes provided to CERA contained specific goals of how to increase visibility for SCRA members of color, as well as a strong interest to continue to have roundtable discussions at future biennials.

I am grateful for the opportunity the SCRA Leadership Development Fellowship Program has provided me. Above all, I am thankful for this opportunity to increase the visibility for SCRA members of color, to amplify collective interests, and am eager to continue cultivating similar spaces at future biennials and beyond.
Forging Pathways for Community Psychology at Historically Black/Hispanic Serving Institutions
Written by LDF Fellow Dawn X. Henderson, Associate Professor, North Carolina A & T (LDF 2015-2017)

I joined SCRA in 2008 as a graduate student member and drifted in and out of the organization due to graduate school commitments. Somehow, I found ways to serve on some committees (e.g., Practice Council, Outreach Group for the Practice Council, and community psychology practice competencies) but these spaces rarely included racially and ethnically diverse individuals. When I made the transition from completing a doctorate degree to accepting a faculty position at a Historically Black Institution (HBI), the space in SCRA became much more isolating. I discovered a lack of representation in the organization of members from Minority Serving Institutions (e.g., Historically Black Colleges and Universities) and the overrepresentation of council members from “elite” universities.

I began to perceive SCRA as an organization that was a bit exclusionary or rather a hierarchy of “community psychology” programs. From my perspective, leadership positions, awards, etc., were dominated by this cycle of individuals from Research I, Research Intensive universities, and predominately-white institutions. I wanted to use my involvement in the LDF program to learn more about leadership in SCRA and gain insight in terms of the membership and involvement of faculty and students from Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs). I wanted to forge a pathway to increase involvement and engagement among faculty and students from these institutions and anticipated the relationships developed with the LDF mentors and other colleagues would support my own personal scholarship.

The LDF project I coordinated focused on understanding barriers to engagement and involvement among faculty and students at Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs). During this time, I discovered two graduate programs identified as community psychology at Historically Black Institutions had no representation on SCRA’s website. I reached out to them, worked with the SCRA’s administrative team to get data on current membership, and contacted members affiliated with MSIs to gain their perspective on barriers to engagement and recommendations to increase engagement. I sent the final report out through the SCRA listserv, members of the Executive Council, Council on Ethnic and Racial Affairs (CERA), and Council on Education (COE). I received some notable feedback, an invitation to serve on the nomination committee of SCRA officers, and some verbal commitments to discuss the findings.

The report revealed members from MSIs expressed a deep concern about a lack of outreach and no intentional efforts by SCRA to support more engagement and inclusion. The report revealed the financial barriers faculty and students face in attending conferences and a lack of “valuing” members at MSIs. This report led to some personal reflection regarding my engagement in SCRA and how it never happened through an invitation but rather a need to discover more about a field. My professional engagement on committees was driven by a need to “matter” in a professional space aligned with my psychologist identity.

I was my own case study and faced similar barriers identified in the report. Trying to be present and represented in an organization that did very little to find ways to include and value my presence was exhausting. After finishing and sharing the report, I realize that the commitment to act on these findings did not tie into strategic priorities. I know that I cannot continue to advocate for the engagement and inclusion of MSIs alone, specifically Historically Black Institutions, nor take on the burden of transforming an organization. I acknowledge my mere presence in the LDF program and on committees has the potential to alter the narrative. My participation in the LDF
program and completing the project taught me that the significance of our work and presence may not always lead to immediate change but if we can leave just a little dent then, just maybe, that little dent will one day translate into some bigger.

Extending the Reach of Community Psychology in Undergraduate Settings

Written by LDF Fellow Jennifer Wallin-Ruschmann, Assistant Professor, Idaho College (LDF 2015-2017)

Participating in the SCRA Leadership Development Fellows (LDF) program was particularly important for me as I began working at an undergraduate institution. While I transitioned jobs during my time in the program, my new context is similar. In both positions, I was in institutions and cities with no other community psychologists, yet I was able to create community psychology courses and mentored undergraduate community-based research at both institutions. In my first position, I was able to add a course in community-based research methods and in my current position, I have cultivated a cultural and community psychology minor.

As a part of the LDF program, I became more integrated into SCRA and made connections within the organization. I purposefully sought teaching focused positions in undergraduate settings and this type of community psychology practice was not often discussed within SCRA. Through conversations with my LDF mentors and inspiration from my LDF cohort, I was motivated to reach out to others in SCRA that might be in similar professional positions. I sent an email to the SCRA listserv in September 2016 to help find folks interested in sharing resources and forming a community of practice, focusing specifically on teaching, research, and mentoring in primarily undergraduate settings. Following outreach, conversations were held across several campuses, which led to collaboration at regional conferences, and the last biennial focused on undergraduate teaching and research. Additionally, Eylin Palamaro-Munsell, Lauren Lichty, and I are editing a special issue of the GJCPP focused on Developing Undergraduate Community Psychology Pedagogy and Research Practice.

Community psychologists working with undergraduates have distinct challenges and benefits in conducting community research and action in our institutional context. Further, many of us working within these settings work in relative isolation from other community psychology practitioners. Building a network to share resources and strategies for this distinct setting was the primary focus of my LDF project. While this focus started as selfish, I wanted a space to connect with colleagues doing similar work with undergraduates, I quickly became aware many others shared my experience and desired to build a community of practice.

As conversations electronically and at conferences developed over the next few months, the need for a designated space within SCRA committed to undergraduate interests became apparent. Lauren Lichty and I formally founded the Community Psychology Practice in Undergraduate Settings SCRA interest group early last fall. Recently we held our first webinar- Undergraduate Community Psychology Research and Mentoring. The listserv for the group has also been used to develop collaborative relationships and presentations across undergraduate campuses and we have hosted semi-regular phone call to develop a community to share strategies and stories.

I am pleased with the increased acknowledgement and attention to undergraduate issues within SCRA over the past few years and I sincerely hope this momentum will continue. Our undergraduate students do not always go to graduate school in community psychology, but many put community psychology principles into action in the variety of jobs they pursue. Those of
us working within primarily undergraduate settings have the broadest reach of possibly any community psychologist. Many of us are able to say we have exposed hundreds of students to the field and its associated practices and values. Without my experience and mentorship within the LDF program, I do not imagine I would have been empowered to reach out and begin a conversation around these issues. I hope that a broader swath of undergraduate focused community psychologists can receive more support in doing our work to grow the field.

Introducing the 2017-2019 Cohort of Leadership Development Fellows

Noé Rubén Chávez, earned his Ph.D. in Community Psychology from the University of Illinois at Chicago in 2011. He completed a Postdoctoral Fellowship at Columbia University in Pediatrics, focusing on prevention of HIV/STIs for adolescents of color. At Columbia, Noé also collaborated with New York-Presbyterian Hospital Lang Youth Medical program to provide mentorship to underrepresented minority adolescents. He also helped advise cultural competency training for Pediatric residents, challenging the training to address issues of systemic racism. Building from this work, during his current Postdoctoral Fellowship at City of Hope Comprehensive Cancer Center, he co-authored a chapter in the Oxford Textbook of Communication in Oncology and Palliative Care, focused on a health equity model to improve patient-centered care. He was invited by the Editor-in-Chief of the Journal of Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities to author a perspective article on inclusion of racism issues in medical school education. During his current fellowship, Noé has also co-led a multisectoral coalition using youth participatory action research for community health improvement (with support from the Institute for Healthcare Improvement and Robert Wood Johnson Foundation) and consulting with Harder+Company Community Research to evaluate and disseminate knowledge from the YMCA San Diego Connections 2020 project improving youth mental health services. Noé is starting a new position on September 2018 as Assistant Professor at Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science in Los Angeles, where he will continue work on issues of culture and racism in health, youth empowerment, and collaborating on initiatives to mentor underrepresented youth to pursue careers in science and healthcare toward improving communities and systems for health justice.

Jessica Shaw earned her Ph.D. in Ecological-Community Psychology from Michigan State University in 2014. She was a visiting fellow with the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) National Institute of Justice (NIJ) in 2015. During her fellowship, Jessica helped NIJ become more systematic and deliberate in their efforts to fund practice- and policy-relevant criminal justice research and to support research-informed practice and policy implementation among criminal justice professionals. Jessica is now in her third year as an Assistant Professor in the Boston College School of Social Work. Her research focuses on improving within and between system responses to sexual assault by relying on community partnerships to facilitate empirically-informed, sustainable change. Like many community psychologists, Jessica is guided by a firm commitment to social justice and action, and bridging the worlds of research, policy, and practice. In her work, she has partnered with crime lab personnel, law enforcement, prosecutors, sexual assault nurse examiners, medical providers, advocacy organizations, and state agencies. She has published on the criminal justice and medical system responses to sexual assault, the national problem of unsubmitted sexual assault kits, the
importance of systems-based approaches to research and action, policy change, advanced research methods, and evaluation. Jessica’s work has been funded by NIJ and the DOJ Office on Violence Against Women. Jessica is excited to be a part of the most recent cohort of Leadership Development Fellows, as it provides the opportunity to build community with her fellow community psychologists and become more deeply integrated into the work of SCRA.

Adam Voight earned his Ph.D. in Community Research and Action from Vanderbilt University in 2012. His research examines influences on the education and developmental outcomes of young people marginalized by structural forces like poverty and racism. Adam is presently an assistant professor in the College of Education and Human Services at Cleveland State University, where he also directs the Center for Urban Education. Under his directorship, Adam helped establish the Cleveland Alliance for Education Research (CAER), a research-practice partnership between the Center, the Cleveland Metropolitan School District, and the American Institutes for Research. Through CAER, Adam is working to understand how urban schools can and cannot offset the impact of negative structural forces on student outcomes. This work involves embedding and studying youth participatory action research in the formal secondary school curriculum. Adam has done pioneering research on school climate and student engagement, with publications showing how school climate is associated with important developmental outcomes and identifying within-school gaps in students’ experiences of school climate based on race and ethnicity. His writing has also identified factors that improve school climate, including giving students voice and agency in school decision making. Adam previously worked as a research associate at the WestEd Regional Educational Laboratory – West. His research has been supported by the Institute of Education Sciences, the National Institute of Justice, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the Spencer Foundation. Adam lives in Cleveland Heights, Ohio with his partner, Lauren, and their children, Otto and Felix.

New LDF Project: Understanding Experiences of Individuals Working in Settings with Few Other Community Psychologists

The 2017-2019 Leadership Development Fellows are currently conceptualizing a study to understand better the experiences of individuals who are one of a few or the only community psychologists in their work environments. The Fellows want to learn about their successes, as well as challenges that may arise as a result of being a lone community psychologist in their work setting. The Fellows are particularly interested in understanding the extent to which folks may feel isolated. As community psychologists driven by strong values tied to sense of community, diversity, empowerment, and equity/justice, work environments that do not prioritize, or are perhaps antithetical to these core values, create challenges for genuine collaboration to promote these values and development of a sense of belonging. The feelings of isolation and desire for connection may be intensified when certain identity(ies) (e.g., gender, ethnicity/race, sexual orientation, disability) are not valued or respected and intersect with one’s community psychologist identity or values to elicit further feelings of isolation or marginalization. However, it may also be the case, that community psychologists experience opportunities and environments well suited to promoting the core community psychology values as well as supporting the expression of intersectional identities. The currently evolving fellowship project seeks to apply a mixed-methods approach to understand the factors and type of environments facilitating or hindering lone community psychologists’ success in a range of setting as they pursue collaborative efforts grounded in core community psychology values. The action-based aim is to use the findings
in partnership with SCRA to develop and implement strategies and initiatives to offer support, resources, or mentorship to community psychologists striving to build authentic collaborations in multidisciplinary settings or environments where there is a greater need for connection. Please keep an eye out for opportunities to participate in this critical endeavor. If you’re interested in learning more, you may also contact the Fellows directly at LDF@scra27.org.

The Community Practitioner
Edited by Olya Glantsman, DePaul University

God’s Calling for Social Justice
By Olya Glantsman, Jack O’Brien, and Katie Ramian with Carlos Luis

Carlos’s disclaimer: I apologize if bringing religion and spirituality seems inadequate, however, I cannot deny that my journey to and within Community Psychology has been guided by God, and my experiences with faith communities. For me not to mention this, would be to deny my Faith and core beliefs. I hope the reader excuses the language, should it be deemed inadequate. I can assure you, it is not a proselytism attempt.

In 2011, Carlos Luis Zatarain was deciding whether to become a Jesuit priest. By then, he had been involved with the Jesuits in Mexico for 7 years and had even undergone the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola. The experiences with the Jesuits involved developing a critical conscience, the process of identifying how inequality and power shape our reality. Through developing his critical conscience Carlos became compelled to advocate for these causes, but because he contemplated having a family one day, he ultimately decided against becoming a priest. However, learning from and working with the Jesuits had instilled in him a commitment to understand and change social issues and systems. Following his spiritual trainings, he finished his undergraduate degree in psychology while working for almost 10 years in the call center industry.

The turning point came in 2012 in a form of a very tempting, major job offer - doubling his salary with great benefits. This is when Carlos realized that he needed to take time off to think about it and go on a spiritual retreat. His conclusion was that he would never choose an employment based on the income and benefits, that his career would be dedicated to pursuing something different. Instead, he would choose employment based on the positive difference he could make in others’ lives and ask: “How is this work going to make my community better?” He felt compelled, morally and spiritually, to start looking into careers where he could put his skills into service for the community. Following the retreat, the search began, and because he wished to employ his psychology degree occupationally. He made a list of fields that he wanted to explore like Social Psychology and Sociology, looking for areas that might address some of the causes and topics emphasized by the Jesuits. However, he felt something was not fitting while learning about these fields, in terms of being able to understand and change social factors affecting communities. While on the Social Psychology network website, Carlos came across a section called “related fields,” and discovered Community Psychology (CP). Intrigued, he started by reading the description of the field and about the work of community psychologists and went on to check out the Dalton, Elias, and Wandersman (2006) textbook and immediately felt an innate, strong connection. Something that really impressed him about the field was its value system guiding the actions of community psychologists, and all those
values felt like a precise alignment with what was important to him and what he wanted to do.

All this was happening while he was still at the call center. While he was immensely thankful for everything that was given to him by this job, he knew his time there was over. In 2013, after volunteering for a few months, Carlos began working at *Via Education*. It was the organization’s values and mission that attracted him. The organization was looking to develop competencies for participation and engagement in the community with the core belief that social transformation required individuals and groups to be involved with the community to cause that transformation. Their focus was on enabling the citizens to engage in the communities. One such example - *Citizen Circles*, which included 16 to 32 weeks of weekly gatherings in which Carlos occupied the role of a facilitator. The goal of the program was to try to identify the needs in the communities they cared for and to identify the strengths and abilities and the social capital to address these needs. Together with the members of the community who will be affected, the group would then develop a plan to address these needs. After reaching consensus, the group would implement the project and then evaluate it. Beyond the project itself, however, the most relevant thing was the development of the competencies (community organizing, participation, self-efficacy, democratic deliberation, peaceful coexistence, and empathy). Unfortunately, in the year and half, the funding ran out and Carlos was left looking for another job.

Because he was still in the process of applying to graduate school, he began working for the *Science and Technology Interactive Centre horno*. In the 1980’s it was a steel company that later went bankrupt. For 20 years the building was unused until some people decided to turn it into a technology and interactive center. The center honored the history of steel and the industrial character of the city with a museum of steel in Monterrey and Mexico that emphasized the impact it had on development of cities. Furthermore, the center aimed to inspire children, youth, and adults to become more engaged with science and technology through activities like short courses and robotics teams. While Carlos knew nothing about robotics, he decided to go forward with the job even though it felt like a bit of a mismatch compared to *Via Education*. Looking back, it has all been aligned, even now, with his Thesis work. All of these involve citizen engagement – Carlos’s passion and current research interest.

The job at *Science and Technology Interactive Centre horno* led Carlos to learn from the US-based nonprofit – FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) founded by Dean Kamen, and how these programs contribute to the development of values and skills among children and youth. Carlos was especially touched by reading the story of how four undocumented Mexicans participating in robotics programs in Arizona and California, changed the course of their lives (full story can be read in the book *Spare Parts* by Joshua Davis), and was convinced that his work on technology was also aligned with community development. Carlos spent almost two years working for the organization and facilitating interest and settlement of children and youth with science and technology.

During this time, Carlos continued to learn more about the field and attended the 2013 Biennial conference in Miami. He thought the conference matched what the organization was doing, and it made sense to apply, attend, and present the work of the organization. At that time, he also began reading more of the CP books and the CP Practice blog. When he saw there was a posting for the blog coordinator position, he applied for it. This connected him with Gina Cardazone. She and others, like Sharon Johnson-Hakim, were helpful in guiding him into the Community Psychology Practice Council (CPPC). He felt really supported and welcomed by the group and right away became a part of the leadership team and an integral part of the larger group. Carlos would like to thank profoundly to those who voluntarily gave their time, wisdom, lived experiences, and friendships, which made him feel even more happy to be a part of SCRA and the Practice Council.

Special thanks to: Gina Cardazone, Sharon
One key moment came at the Biennial conference when he attended the keynote address given by Michelle Fine, who spoke of her work with women in prisons. Fine’s main point was to highlight the cyclical process plaguing the institution. She argued, with empirical results, that this population of women lack the support systems necessary in prison to allow them to gain the tools and skills to pursue jobs when they were released. Fine continued to describe that without these tools and skills, these women are less likely to experience positive outcomes such as finding employment and safe housing. And, therefore, the institution inherently perpetuates the incarceration of women. For Carlos, this speech hit the spot! He finally heard someone else articulate what he has been aiming to do within his career and that it could be manifested into other diverse communities. As Carlos articulated, “It’s not about having good intentions and trying to do good in the world, it’s about learning about social conditions and structure, so that whatever measures we are trying to implement are effective and CP has these components - the right set of values and measure to help understand the social issues and evaluate solutions that you are trying to implement.”

Following the inspirational conference in the summer of 2013, Carlos decided to pursue a graduate degree in Community Psychology. During the extensive search for programs in the United States, South America, and Europe, he learned about the 2014 International Conference on Community Psychology (ICCP) in Brazil. It was a long shot to try and attend that conference, but after he presented the potential benefits to his boss, he was granted permission. Among other things, the conference in Brazil helped Carlos to obtain a better understanding about graduate programs. It was then when he decided to focus his search in the U.S. and Canada.

Meanwhile, throughout the decision-making process, Carlos continued to learn about and make connections within the field. In 2014, he began regularly attending the CPPC’s peer consultation calls and learning about the work from the field’s practitioners. He read the works of Leonard Jason, including the newly released book, *Principles of Social Change* and followed the *Public Science Project* by Michelle Fine. At the time, he started to conduct some interviews with community psychologists such as Eduardo Almeida in Mexico and Ruben David Fernández Carrasco in Spain, Mark Burton and Carolyn Kagan in the United Kingdom, Tom Wolff, Scott Evans, and Irma Serrano-Garcia in the U.S. to learn even more about the field and its potential impact. More and more Community Psychology appeared to be the logical career path.

Carlos, like many others, found the application process to graduate schools challenging. From the Graduate Record Exam (GRE) and paperwork, to financing his education, it took him two and a half years to decide and complete everything required for the application process. Carlos ended up applying to the University of Miami, Vanderbilt University, University of Massachusetts-Lowell, and Wilfrid Laurier University. Each of these institutions had great promise and he found it difficult to decide where to go. The answer came one early morning when he found himself praying. In conversation with God, Carlos jokingly asked: “Are you going to send me an email telling where to go?” When he finished his prayers and opened the computer, he received two emails from Wilfrid Laurier University in Ontario, Canada.

Carlos had met Geoff Nelson and Kathleen Worton, both from Wilfrid Laurier University, at the 2013 SCRA Biennial conference, and during the same year, through his work at the Practice Blog he met Natalie Kivell, alumni from Laurier. All of them were instrumental in learning from their experiences at Laurier and facilitating the decision process. Once accepted, he did not get the funding he applied for with the Mexican government to attend and postponed admission for a year. In what seemed like a setback year, Carlos experienced great change within his employment situation, as well as for his family. This change helped him in
this next venture, and he is thankful to his family and those who were there along the process. Specifically, he is thankful to the fabulous mentors and friends from the CPPC and the SCRA Executive Committee.

In September 2016 Carlos and his wife, Nancy, found themselves in Canada. While reflecting on his academic experience, he mentioned that he is, “Thankful for her to agree to take a step to the unknown and give this a chance.” For Carlos, it was also a step into the unknown. In a conversation with Geoff Nelson and Natalie Kivell at the 2015 SCRA Biennial, both had highly recommended the Waterloo Region Crime Prevention Council (WRCPC) for the practicum placement. Interestingly, Carlos never thought of himself as doing work in crime prevention. He thought he would end up working with the police or within the juvenile and prison systems. While he wasn’t thrilled, he felt he had to open up, trust, and learn. It ended up being one of the most exciting experiences for Carlos in Canada. Not only was he able to do his practicum placement, but his Thesis work is also embedded within the WRCPC. Through his practicum he was entrusted with facilitating a conversation between the WRCPC and the Safety Metropolitan Agency (AMS) of the city of Guadalajara in Mexico. The idea for connecting both cities came from Juma Assiago, coordinator of the UN-Habitat Safer Cities Programme, who proposed for the cities to initiate a learning dialogue, engaging in an action-oriented knowledge exchange that could lead to the revision and/or development of crime prevention policies. To this date, the cities have engaged in nine video conferences, and two face-to-face meetings, one in Guadalajara, Mexico and one in Calgary, Canada. Both organizations continue to learn from each other, with exciting possibilities for future collaborations. Carlos’s thesis work is looking at the implementation and outcomes of a community course by the WRCPC titled Reframing Crime, Justice, and Prevention. The course aimed to facilitate a critical reflection process, for participants to examine their notions and assumptions around crime, justice, and prevention; leading to informed critical action.

One of the key learnings from Carlos’s time at the WRCPC was coming to understand the role that the social determinants of health play in the creation and maintenance of safer cities. According to Carlos, “Healthy communities are where the social determinants of health are at play. Everyone has access to employment, good education, health services, and housing. These resources set up a foundation to create a city in which crime is in decline.” In other words, this is crime prevention through social development. However, how do we actively advocate for these social conditions so that communities become healthier and safer? This is what matters, this is the critical consciousness process to ask: “What does crime mean to us? What does justice mean to us? What does prevention mean to us? And what types of changes in our understanding need to occur? What type of changes are needed to understand crime, justice, and prevention so it becomes more clear how social determinants of health play a role in all of these.” Among other things, being a part of this organization has been a great learning experience for Carlos.

Carlos and Nancy have both been very appreciative of the people and organizations in Kitchener-Waterloo, a vibrant and caring community. They have been able to learn and interact with amazing organizations such as The Working Centre, Bridges to Belonging, Better Beginnings Waterloo, Langs Community Health and Wellness, KidsAbility, Community Justice Initiatives, Community Health Centre, YMCA, Multicultural Centre, Extend a Family, Kitchener Public Library, Neruda Arts, and the recently created Library of Things. In their own words: “We have been truly inspired in learning and living in such a remarkable community”.

Learning from his experiences both in the classroom and in the field, in the near future Carlos sees himself focusing on his work with his church, spirituality, immigrants and prevention efforts. His previous work with the community, as well as the support he and his wife received from the Latin
American church inspired him to continue to collaborate with the Latin American community in Canada. There have been conversations with a group of Latin Americans about creating a space where Latin Americans could learn (in their language) about the programs and services in the community, as well as a space to honor and maintain their culture and traditions.

He also plans to continue collaborating with the programs and organizations he has been involved with. Carlos definitely sees himself as a community practitioner and is grateful that the university and his training in CP has given him a space to reflect and learn about the theories and skills needed to continue his work. At the end of the day, his many journeys appear to have had a common thread - the drive to help communities through participation and engagement.

Carlos’s final disclaimer: this amazing journey has been possible through the support of outstanding people. Thank you so much. I will forever cherish in my heart your contributions to this journey. Special thanks to Nancy and our families in Mexico; in Canada special thanks to Geoff, Judy, Manuel, Christiane, Juanita, David, Dianne, Kathleen, to my cohort and all CP students, alumni and faculty, thank you so much! Thank you as well to the psychology department staff and chair, and to the University’s support systems: Wellness Centre, Writing Centre and Study Skills programs. Thank you to the Latin American community and Church, and to the Jesuits in the World. You have all made a huge difference in my life. And above all, thanks be to God for guiding and accompany me in this life changing journey.

On September 20th, 2017, Hurricane Maria devastated the US island of Puerto Rico. Watching the compounding difficulties over the course of that fall, a team of Andrews University students and staff decided they would spend their 11-day spring break in Puerto Rico, trying to help communities recover. This particular group knew their professor and colleague, Dr. Melissa Ponce-Rodas, has family on the island and it motivated a desire to make a difference in a substantial way. The form this motivation took was to develop an intervention and plan a mission trip, aiming to promote empowerment, hope, and healing across a community traumatized by natural disaster.

The goals of a mission trip are always ones that include collaboration and assistance to those in need. By their nature, mission trips are community interventions that utilize community psychology practice competencies to encourage lasting change despite limited exposure to intervention. The group led by Dr. Ponce-Rodas was also relying on the perspective, knowledge, and accumulated expertise of several different academic disciplines. The 20-member group consisted of four faculty members, one alumna, 13 students, and two other staff members from Andrews with backgrounds in undergraduate and graduate psychology, community and international development, and social work. This diversity of perspectives and approaches to helping people created a collaborative and talented dynamic that the team hoped would be effective in empowering those they sought to help. The ultimate goal of the mission was to “Accept, Talk, Heal,” providing mental health trainings in churches and communities to give those affected by the disaster the tools they needed to help them through the trauma of the aftereffect of the hurricane and to help them recover beyond the physical reconstruction of their community. This intervention was about more than cleaning up debris or restoring a school. It was about empowering a community to overcome trauma.

As in any Community Psychology (CP) intervention, an essential component to community action is getting to know the communities with
whom the team would be working and understanding what is important to them. To do this, the Andrews team contacted local church agencies and simply asked about their experiences and what was truly needed. This process of inquiry resulted in another group of people with expertise in the community to be invited into the collaborative process. The local collaborators included social workers, police officers, certified nursing assistants (CNAs), staff from the four schools, church groups, and others, people who were directly affected by the natural disaster. Once they began the intervention, the Andrews team was quickly accepted and trusted by the community. Dr. Ponce-Rodas believes one contributor to this is her Puerto Rican heritage that helped bridge the intervention team to the community and facilitate connections between community members and those from the mainland.

**Beyond Individualistic Approach**

Helping people deal with and overcome trauma often includes individual psychotherapy, and that professional assistance to those who need it is essential. However, the large-scale nature of natural disasters impedes an individual approach to healing. Each and every person on the island was impacted in one way or another. It was for this reason, Dr. Ponce-Rodas drew on her Community Psychology training to ensure the mission trip had a larger than individualistic approach and focus. One of the many reasons the team chose to partner with existing agencies on the island was so there would be more structural awareness, in addition to target multiple ecological systems. According to Dr. Ponce-Rodas, from a Community Psychology standpoint, one needs the ecology driving it and to have a beyond individual perspective, because there is no other way you can get 20 people, most of them students, to reach over a thousand people in 10 days.

Working with pre-existing groups, the team sought to break the stigma associated with mental health for the local community. Many of the community members had experienced, and continue to experience, symptoms of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Acute Stress Disorder. One way the intervention worked was by normalizing the emotional reactions affected individuals were experiencing: (1) this is what everyone goes through and (2) even those who, themselves, are involved in helping others may need help. It is a normal reaction when faced with adversity to seek help from others. One interesting insight the team found was that it was easier to break the stigma of seeking help when approached in a larger group. Dr. Ponce-Rodas adamantly reminded the community members participating in the intervention that the whole community was going through this and no one should feel isolated in their experience. The Andrews team emphasized this with the “Healing is a Process” slogan, capturing the dynamic and public nature of this concept. The message behind the slogan was that while the healing process is variable among individuals and takes time, the process is one that happens with others and sometimes requires the help of professionals.

The Andrews team prioritized realistic and truthful assessments of what the community could expect. They reiterated that people, as well as the community, would not get back exactly what was lost during the hurricane. To combat the loss and progress toward normalizing the emotions associated with that loss, the team urged community participants to turn to the strengths the community still has. One very common action throughout this community, in part due to the collectivistic nature of Puerto Rican culture, is a habit of regularly walking over to one’s neighbor to socially engage. This action specifically was used as an asset in moving the community toward normalizing emotional states. Rather than simply asking a neighbor “How are you doing?” the team recommended going further and including questions like: “Emotionally, how have you been feeling since the hurricane?”

**Resilience**

A strength-based approach fit this intervention well. The many stories of resilience in the wake of such massive destruction highlighted the power
and strength in not only the community the Andrews team visited, but also across Puerto Rico. The message across the island was Puerto Rico Se Levanta (Puerto Rico Will Rise). This was evidenced in many ways, whether it was using the last drop of gas to help remove a tree from the road or working 12 to 18-hour shifts rescuing others across the island. During the trip, the team encountered many stories of faith. The team purposefully used biblical stories about Noah’s flood and about characters who were depressed to help those with a faith background to identify with the characters. Those who had a faith background were encouraged to use it and help others. The team firmly believed that the best way the community could get help was by helping themselves, so each session/meeting ended with the words: “Take care of yourself, take care of each other, take care of your family, take care of your community.” Another example of resilience was when the team spent a day at one of the schools located in Vieques, an island off the eastern coast of Puerto Rico: the teachers were powering the copy machine using a car battery to make handouts for the students. This disaster brought people together in a literal sense (since many lost housing they were living together) and figuratively, making them creative in how they were rebuilding and solving everyday needs.

**Lessons Learned**

By the end of this mission trip, over one-thousand individuals were directly reached. Thousands of others were indirectly reached through word of mouth, as well as through the group’s participation in live community events and radio shows. The only way this trip came together was through collaboration and networking. Without these competencies, it would not have been as far reaching. The impact goes beyond those reached in Puerto Rico. Many students on the team stated that this first-hand experience changed their career plans, or how they see themselves working with people in the future. In Dr. Ponce-Rodas’s words: “There is no better classroom than real life.” The practice of community psychology changes lives. Throughout the trip, the group kept hearing the same question from the community members: "When are you coming back?" Excitingly, the team is already planning a return trip.

The driving force behind the trip was Dr. Melissa Ponce-Rodas. Dr. Ponce-Rodas is a native of Brooklyn, New York. She graduated from Yale University, in 2001, with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology and in 2006 with a master’s degree in Psychology from The University of Illinois at Chicago. Melissa earned her PhD in Psychology in 2015 from the University of Illinois at Chicago, focusing on the ways in which religion and spirituality impact people’s beliefs and behaviors.
Community psychologists hold tremendous potential for igniting transformation during divisive times. The skills and values which serve as the foundation for community psychology place us in a unique position to bring diverse stakeholders together to create second-order change. To do so requires a willingness to embrace the dialectic and openly consider divergent solutions (Rappaport, 2002), which can be very difficult when fighting for justice and equity. I call this, the courage for collaboration during divisive times. To illustrate what I mean, I will dive into an issue that is close to my heart – police and community relationships.

I am a police widow. My husband, Officer Gregory Alia, was shot and killed in the line of duty on September 30, 2015 (Wilks, 2015). When he died, I was deeply impacted by the tensions between police and community. At the time, the message I perceived was that people could be either for police or against police; you couldn’t be both. And, if you were against police, you were against all police, including Greg. This polarizing message left me wondering if his service and sacrifice were valued. Within hours of his death, I began speaking out in the media about my husband and calling for a message of empathy; I wanted to humanize his tragedy while fighting against a divisive rhetoric. This initial response grew into an organization, Heroes In Blue, which sought to rally community support for law enforcement and raise awareness of positive interactions occurring between police and community. However, I knew early on that if I wanted to combat the narrative that impacted me so deeply, I needed to do more than share positive stories. I spent time listening to perspectives most different from my own to identify opportunities for change. Through this work, I began to better understand the lived experience of communities of color in our country, and the historical and present context surrounding distrust in law enforcement. And, through my own process of finding peace with the man who killed my husband (Alia, 2017), I saw that the fight against inequity and racism was directly linked with my own tragic loss.

Transformative change requires a multifaceted understanding of the problem we are seeking to address. As the family member of a police officer, I was directly impacted by the distrust, fear and anger against police. In preparing for this piece, I searched the literature to see if my experience - and the experiences of other law enforcement families I know - was supported by empirical evidence. However, the effects of the current climate on the mental health and well-being of police officers and their families is understudied. There is some evidence of its impact on officer recruitment and retention (Ali, 2017; Smith, 2016), which have displayed downward trends in recent years. The negative portrayal of police and perception of greater danger on the job (“Police departments struggle,” 2017) are among the factors that have been cited as contributing to these statistics.

These were factors that I understood through my lived experience. Yet, to identify opportunities for change, I had to embrace other perspectives. Prior to my husband’s death, my work was largely focused on addressing community health disparities. I thought I had a grasp on discrimination in our country as a result, but it wasn’t until I sought to truly understand tensions between police and community from another vantage point that I began to see the humanity in the numbers. I listened to personal stories of police interactions in communities of color and heard what it is like for parents of black boys to fear for their children’s futures. I learned about the sources of distrust in law enforcement among minority populations (Peck, 2015), including the painful history of racism and police brutality in our country and present-day adverse experiences that leave black and brown populations feeling targeted. These stories peaked my desire to learn more about disparities in police interactions, including racial bias in traffic stops (Baumgartner, Epp, & Shoub, 2018). I began to see how movements like Black Lives Matter represent empowerment over generations of oppression. And I’ve learned about the heightened trauma that is experienced by black communities following cases
of officer-involved shootings (Bor, Venkataramani, Williams, & Tsai, 2018).

The interaction between my own personal grief journey coinciding with this process of learning led me to see an opportunity for bridging the gap between law enforcement and the communities they serve. We expanded the mission of *Heroes In Blue* and re-named the organization to reflect this shift in focus. The re-branded organization *Serve & Connect*, ([https://serveandconnect.net/](https://serveandconnect.net/)) is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) focused on building community resilience and well-being through transformative police and community partnerships. Our work seeks to promote proactive, collaborative, and prevention-oriented policing. Through our comprehensive support system, we seek to build the capability and readiness (Scaccia, Cook, Lamont, Wandersman, Castellow, Katz, et al., 2015) of police officers to help identify root causes of crime related to inequity and implement effective solutions for helping people in need. A key component of the work is fostering social capital between police officers and community organizations to spread resources that enhance resilience to adverse community environments. We also seek to create settings that encourage relationship development and constructive dialogue. *Serve & Connect* takes a strengths-focused approach to improving police and community relationships that builds on police officers’ desire to serve by placing them as conduits for improving the conditions that give rise to issues in community safety. We are guided by values of empathy, trust and an appreciation for our shared humanity. Our approach relies heavily on community psychology skills and principles to inform an inclusive and effective model of collaboration.

Though this organization is in its infancy, I am proud of our preliminary impact. Notably, our Compassionate Acts Program provides police with resources to help address immediate needs related to poverty and to build relationships with marginalized communities. Greg’s Groceries, a flagship initiative within the Compassionate Acts Program, provides police with boxes of nonperishable food so that they may assist people experiencing hunger. Each box contains a week’s supply of food. Police distribute boxes while responding to calls; through referrals; and at community events. The program was developed in collaboration with Harvest Hope Food Bank, a South Carolina food bank serving 20 counties. Since the launch of the program in August 2017, a total of 640 boxes equaling approximately 13,440 meals have been distributed in food insecure communities. Overall, the Compassionate Acts Program has been implemented in eleven police departments across six counties in South Carolina. We are also in the process of implementing a number of other initiatives that promote partnerships and courageous conversations between police and marginalized communities, including Latino communities, individuals experiencing physical and mental disabilities, at-risk youth and more.

This work focuses on creating a new way of interacting between police and community. We are taking an innovative approach to improving law enforcement and community interactions that is heavily informed by community psychology constructs, skills and principles. I believe this is a model that can be implemented across issues to facilitate change during our current polarizing climate. We know through research that community cohesion, social capital, and diverse partnerships foster transformative change. As community psychologists, we have the knowledge and skills to facilitate collaboration among diverse stakeholders and drive effective solutions from the bottom-up. We can build more inclusive, welcoming, resilient communities for all if we are willing to embrace the dialectic and confront our own biases. I believe it is time to re-engage what it means to be an agent for social change in today’s world by finding the **courage for collaboration during divisive times**.

**References**


Cultural and Racial Affairs
Edited by Jesica Siham Fernandez, Santa Clara University and Dominique Thomas, University of Michigan

Bridging Academia and Practice: Decolonizing Community Psychology
Written by Geraldine Palmer, PhD., Past-Chair, CERA

An expressed commitment of community psychology is to intentionally engage race, culture and ethnicity as key factors in community research and action (Cruz & Sonn, 2011). As a Council of the Society for Community Research and Action (SCRA), CERA (Culture, Ethnic and Racial Affairs) recognizes that to deepen emancipatory practices in community psychology (p. 203), and psychological science in general, it is important and crucial to include decolonizing efforts. These efforts must also be centered and the focus also on community psychology textbooks. CERA’s mission and goals include representing issues of cultural diversity and promoting the concerns of people of color as a focus of community research and intervention. To this end, a number of CERA members are authoring a chapter on Oppression and Power in an upcoming open-access, undergraduate textbook edited by Olya Glantsman and Lenny Jason. Chapter authors include Geri Palmer, Past-Chair, Jesica Siham Fernández, Chair, Dominique Thomas, Chair-Elect, along with members: Gordon Lee, Latricee Clark, Bianca Guzman, Ireri Bernal, and allies, Hana Masud, Catalina Tang and Sonja Hilson.

CERA is excited about this opportunity and thus far have nearly completed a first draft of the chapter! Oppression and Power will fall under the “understanding communities” section of the book. The chapter includes conceptualizations of oppression and power, impacts on communities and its members, decolonizing oppression and power in our communities, as well as, perspectives on liberation. Additionally, case studies, and
quizzes for application and assessment will comprise the chapter. Look for excerpts of lived experiences, the inclusion of related social movements, and an overall style that is expected to enrich and enhance the studies of upcoming community psychology students and the professional development and training of budding community psychologists!

Reference

**Matters of Maternal Mortality: The Geographic Dispersion of Institutional Racism**

*Written by Najjuwah S. Walden, Founder, Earth and Her Flowers Project*

In Missouri where I reside, and elsewhere in the United States, adverse pregnancy outcomes are epidemic to African diasporic populations (Creanga, Syverson, Seed, & Callaghan, 2017). The burden of maternal morbidity and mortality is estimated to be highest in low- and middle-income countries (Firoz, Chou, von Dadelszen, Agrawal, Vanderkruik, Tuncalp, & ... Say, 2013). However, death and acute or chronic illness due to pregnancy have been recognized as a national concern disproportionately affecting African diasporic populations in the United States since 1899 when W.E.B. DuBois published *The Philadelphia Negro*. While previous research has attributed high rates of adverse pregnancy outcomes to conditions of poverty (Handler, Rankin, Rosenberg, & Sinha, 2012; Posthumus, Birnie, van Veen, Steegers, & Bonsel, 2016; Zhang, Cardarelli, Shim, Booker, & Rust, 2013), rates for African diasporic women remain intertwined in the social condition of race. The maternal mortality and morbidity concern surpasses gynecological and obstetric understanding of reproductive health functioning by encompassing the forces of oppression and institutional racism interacting in the lives of African diasporic women.

As a student of reproductive health epidemics disproportionately affecting African diasporic women I must first ask, “Who are African diasporic women?” While African diasporic women identify with many ethnicities, dialects, religions, and cultural practices within the United States, the social condition of race composes nationally recognized subgroups of African diasporic women which do not coincide with the origins we use to differentiate ourselves. Further, I must recognize identities of African diasporic women exist through associations including, but not limited to, occupation, education, criminalization, marriage, and motherhood. Given the institutionalization of perinatal (i.e. pregnancy, labor and delivery, and postpartum) care in the United States, a complete understanding of the African diasporic patient includes an integrated analysis of associative identities defined by institutions of perinatal care and African diasporic populations receiving such care. Therefore, my complete study begins with analyzing the physical environments African diasporic women occupy and how we are defined in recognition of the spaces we occupy. However, the recognition of identities associated with African diasporic women is not simply an initial step but the foundation for differentiating disparities beyond the social construct of race.

The recognition of the maternal mortality and morbidity epidemic beyond the disparity of race instead increases our understanding of institutional racism within perinatal care. While racism is “the subordination of any person or group because of skin color or other distinctive physical characteristics,” institutional racism is “the use of specific policies and/or procedures of institutions [based on the socialization of racism] which consistently result in unequal treatment for particular groups” (Chaney, 2015). Institutional racism, as opposed to race, increases the scope from identities to interactions. To many Missouri born and raised populations, the African diasporic
question can be reduced to the city-county divide. And if you live in St. Louis city or St. Louis County, the direction of north county or south city is enough to deduce experiences of racism among African Diasporic women. However, African diasporic populations in the rural counties of Missouri are not excluded from experiences of institutional racism within interactions with perinatal providers. Therefore, our understanding of the spatial disparity in perinatal care is not limited to institutional racism in urban environments, but the facilitation of institutional racism in any environment where perinatal care is provided. Historical and continued perinatal practices in urban and rural counties create the Missouri endemic. In prior research, our understanding of African diasporic outcomes has been limited due to restricted associations of Black or African American to poverty and urbanization. However, a visit to any county will remind anyone of the true dispersion of a state-wide epidemic concerning institutional racism.

The spatial dispersion and identities of African diasporic women will be used to explain the institutionally racist effects of the epidemic in the studies I conduct; however, most studies have not expanded into further inquiries required to obtain a complete understanding. “What are African diasporic women?” is not a question that should remain outside of our understanding of African diasporic women at-risk for experiencing maternal mortality and morbidity. The reason institutional racism is facilitated within healthcare environments is because this question exists within institutions who facilitate racist interpretations regarding African diasporic women while providing care. It is impossible for me to believe labels including but not limited to Jezebel, welfare queen, baby mama, and criminal do not interact in the minds of perinatal providers who create practices and policies with a limited context of in-group identity, interpretations, and cultural practices of African diasporic women. At this point, we must admit not all African diasporic people are poor and live in ghettos; but these opinions may largely overshadow perceptions of African diasporic women held by perinatal care providers.

Generations of individuals who have occupied these occupations have also operationalized these interpretations of “non-compliant” patients, without knowing the true cause of non-compliance. I can only assume the distance required to travel, previous relationships with medical providers, insurance status, ability to afford associated costs of travel, time off from work, time off from school, or the desire to gain a pregnancy experience independent from institutionalization may cause “non-compliance.” However, these systematic and institutional barriers have never been mentioned as causes of maternal morbidities and mortality. There are few academics and practitioners who recognize the social and systematic barriers to mobility which are attributed to institutional racism operating within housing, transportation, and healthcare policies and practices. Previous research has not compared the various forms of barriers to mobility for African diasporic women living in various geographies of a state. We should know whether the burden of maternal mortality and morbidity in Missouri is actually greater among rural African diasporic women. We should aim to gain further understanding of the spatial geographies where disparities are greatest within the African diasporic population opposed to assuming all disparity exists within urbanization and poverty. As populations of African diasporic people across Missouri continue to migrate, we can expect greater dispersion of the maternal mortality and morbidity epidemic.

The analysis of population migration, which leads me to believe maternal mortality and morbidity will disperse, will, therefore, require us to predict changes to the epidemic for African diasporic women. Previous research has been unable to predict what direction the maternal mortality and morbidity rates will be going for African diasporic women. Based on the historical existence of maternal mortality and morbidity as well as the current system of institutionalizing both racism and perinatal care, I can say “not in the direction of prevention” with certainty. Yet this certainty is limited to the current system which is not intended to prevent but respond. Prior to the institutionalization of perinatal care, women were
able to avoid institutional racism, false identities, socialized interpretations, and spatial limitations to care. In the former system of perinatal care, births occurred in homes with members within the community; while the majority of present births occur in a hospital by a medical doctor. While the present system of obstetric and gynecologic medicine has yet to fully accommodate the identities, needs, and geographies of African diasporic women, most careful attention must be paid to the longitudinal development of the epidemic. The questions I have discussed not only lead to a current understanding of maternal mortality and morbidity but an integrated response to how the epidemic developed.

At this point, where my research currently exists, I cannot ignore my responsibility to enable the prevention of maternal mortality and morbidity. While the available research on the determinants of maternal mortality and morbidity for African diasporic women may be incredibly small, the existing body of research is a foundation to predict where the epidemic is going based on its formation. The most comprehensive and replicable research will require the participation of both African diasporic women and perinatal providers who wish to understand and articulate who African diasporic women are, where the epidemic is going, and how we get to maternal mortality and morbidity prevention. While the current practices of perinatal care may currently operate with institutional racism, acceptance of the maternal mortality and morbidity epidemic should not be the normative response. Due to the operationalization of institutional racism within institutions of healthcare which provide perinatal care, the maternal mortality and morbidity epidemic among African diasporic women is different from simplified individual risk factors or prescribed procedures and surgical solutions. The social construct of race cannot generalize an entire population, and the practice of doing so has led to instances of maternal mortality and morbidity caused by institutional racism. It is not enough to know what differences exist due to the social construct of race if we do not understand the historical pathway from trend to epidemic. It is not enough to be aware of the epidemic if we do not know how it developed. This is the phenomena of African diasporic maternal mortality and morbidity which I am devoted to describing, analyzing, understanding, and preventing.

References
Collaborating to Create Change
A Graduate Study’s Exploration into the Needs of After-School Programming for Middle School Youth
Written by Karinna Nazario, Taylor Strange, Alicia Beadle, Lisa Kawecki, and Nghi D. Thai

Student engagement and high impact practices such as participatory research are essential for both undergraduate and graduate students in the field of community psychology (Main et al., 2016; Thai, Helm, & Leavy, 2016). These real-world connections and the application of community psychology principles are beneficial for students at different levels and with varying interest in community psychology. The project shared here from the perspectives of three students and one community partner highlights the value of collaborative and participatory projects and demonstrates how action research aimed to create direct change can have positive impacts for the community.

During the spring 2017 semester, six students enrolled in the Prevention and Community-Based Research course at Central Connecticut State University worked with Lisa Kawecki, the curriculum information teacher and chair of the after-school committee for the Consolidated School District of New Britain (CSDNB). They examined why middle school youth were not interested in their after-school programs. In this article, the community partner describes the impact of the project for the school district and the afterschool program, and two graduate students and an undergraduate student and reflect on their experiences collaborating with a community partner.

Community Partner – Lisa Kawecki
The school district’s after-school committee found it very puzzling that less than 25 percent of our middle school population was involved in after-school activities in our district. Was it because the programs we were offering were not of interest, was it the yearning for independence of the young adolescents, or what was the real issue? After going back and forth with some district staff and middle school program coordinators, we decided we needed to ask the youth themselves in order to figure this all out. This is when we reached out to Dr. Thai and the graduate students at CCSU to ask for their assistance with conducting a survey.

After doing some research and realizing that the youth were burnt out on surveys, the CCSU student team came together again with the CSDNB after-school committee and we decided that focus groups would provide more useful and meaningful information. We wanted to actually talk to the youth about what was going on, not just asking them to complete another survey. From there we developed the idea that we should have student representatives from different interest populations – those that are not involved in after-school activities and those that are involved in after-school activities. The findings from the CCSU student’s analysis of the focus group data provided valuable insight on our programs. The data showed us that we needed to examine our programs more closely in terms of program structure, how programs are marketed to students, as well as what actual activities are offered within the programs.

While we are still working on the actual structure of our after-school programs, some programs were able to utilize this information gathered in planning activities and field trips for this year’s programs. Currently, attendance is at an all-time high for current programs. The district was also able to reallocate funds from programs that were not as popular to create some new programs from student’s suggestions such as a gaming program.
Community Psychology Master’s Student – Taylor Strange

During the spring of 2017, I was in my second semester of graduate school at CCSU in the community psychology master’s program. Although I am interested in clinical aspects of psychology, I also am at a point in my life where I want to explore the various career options. The Prevention and Community-Based Research class was a required course for my program, but it has been one of the most beneficial experiences that has truly opened my eyes to the field of community psychology.

This course gave me the opportunity to be involved in a community-based participatory research project by collaborating with community members from New Britain. Being involved in this project also provided me the experience of using a qualitative method. Having the opportunity to sit down with the youth and learn from them was a valuable experience for me and my impression was that the youth greatly appreciated that we were there to listen to them.

Overall, my experience on this project was incredible. As we have learned in our community psychology courses, for a community to reach their goals, it is important to hear directly from and involve the people in that community. To be able to use focus groups as a method to learn from the youth and then present those findings to our community partner was invaluable for me.

General Psychology Master’s Student – Karinna Nazario

As a general psychology master’s student, the experience of partnering with the school district in New Britain and going into the schools to meet with youth are experiences that I do not think I would have gotten by taking a non-community psychology course. The experience from beginning to end was the best experience that a graduate student could have. As a general psychology student, I was not aware of opportunities to apply what I was learning towards a problem but was able to do so with this community psychology course. Further, my classmates and I had the opportunity to work on a project that would directly impact our community partners and our contributions had the potential to positively impact them as they moved forward in planning their after-school programs. Lastly, I was able to learn about the field of community psychology and I will be able to use the skills from this course for the future. I learned about working collaboratively with community partners and conducting focus groups with a diverse youth population, which was something I did not have previous experience with. Overall, being able to practice and apply what we have learned about research in a real setting is a valuable experience for all students.

Psychology Undergraduate Student – Alicia Beadle

As a psychology undergraduate student in my final semester before graduation, I was interested in enrolling in a graduate course related to community psychology. I only had a small amount of research experience and was intrigued by the chance to further my experience by working with this project. I am thankful for having had this opportunity and leave with the experience of conducting graduate level research, something many other undergraduate students could benefit from.

Although I was the only undergraduate student, and the one with the least research experience, my team was also new to focus groups and it was a good learning experience for all of us. There was so much to learn about focus groups, how to conduct them, how to collect data, and how to analyze the data. The way in which we had to adapt our study and learn about a process we were unfamiliar with given the time constraint seemed possibly similar to the way we might have to handle the research process for studies that are off-campus.

Overall, I feel that training in real life research scenarios outside of the classroom like this is extremely important for learning how to conduct and report research as a prospective graduate student. The experience was important for me to have in my future pursuing a graduate degree, and even helped me have a better idea of what type of
degree I would like to pursue. Having a similar experience to what I had could also be useful to other undergraduate students looking to further their education in a graduate program as it is an opportunity to learn more about the research process, gain real hands on experience, and in the case of community psychology, feel more connected to a community. Further, it also gave me great insight into how research is conducted in community psychology and how it may differ with other subfields of psychology.

**Recommendations and Conclusion**

Students at all levels and community partners from different sectors can benefit mutually from collaborative classroom projects. Two themes that were consistently expressed included practicing the action part of action research and using a new method (focus groups) to collect data. While an initial challenge involved making sure the method chosen would be useful for the data that the community partner sought and for the students to be able to implement in one semester, the strong relationship, regular communication, and inclusion of everyone in the planning and implementation stages proved to be both valuable and feasible to do.

For faculty new to community engagement or community-based participatory approaches, the critical challenge can be building those relationships with a reliable community partner and structuring the projects for high impact learning. Logistical details such as working within the parameters of the academic semester can also be a challenge, particularly if the partner also has a school schedule to adhere to. However, once these relationships are established, projects are developed, and logistical details are finalized, a worthwhile experience with multiple outcomes are experienced by all involved. A few recommendations for faculty who want to incorporate community-based research projects into the classroom include:

- Having a community partner with local knowledge, access to data collection opportunities, and equal buy-in and participation with the project;
- Laying the groundwork in the classroom for students working in teams and the value of community engagement and collaboration;
- Fostering a strong sense of initiative for the project and empowering students to make decisions with the community partner; and
- Providing connections for students to see how the results of the project actually benefit the community partners and/or the community involved.

Ultimately, collaborative projects involving community partners can illustrate how the theories and approaches learned about in community psychology foundational courses can be put into practice and how working with community partners can enhance student learning.

**References**


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We would like to acknowledge and thank the Consolidated School District of New Britain, the After-School Committee, Sheila Wylie, Andrew Kelkres, and Jerel Edmonds for their collaboration and involvement on this project.

*Editor’s Note*: This article was held over from the Summer 2018 issue and edited by Laura Kohn-Wood.
During the APA conference in San Francisco, I was invited to represent our interest group at a symposium entitled “Exploring the psychological and social harm to immigrant youth and families in detention facilities.” The symposium was very well received as it brought diverse expertise into the discussion of the adverse impact of immigration policies. I want to share a brief summary of the presentations and present some actions psychological organizations are taking and subsequent policy recommendations.

The first presenter was Edward Ameen, who works at the American Psychological Association (he spoke about his previous research and not as a representative of the APA). His presentation was titled “Comparing Contemporary Public and Professional Discourses about Immigration.” One of the themes in Eddy’s presentation was his comparison of public and professional discourse about immigration, which he conducted with Rachel Backer from the Immigrant Children’s Affirmative Network while studying at the University of Miami. They selected the top two US newspapers with the highest readership (USA Today and the Wall Street Journal), the top two television news stations with the highest viewership (Fox News and CNN) and all peer-reviewed English-language psychological journals. They reviewed a total of 1,886 public articles and transcripts and 209 professional articles published between 1-1-09 and 10-31-09. In the analysis, they found that psychology and the public media largely share different views about immigration. In the psychological literature, the most recurring topics were acculturation, identity, well-being, human rights and issues particular to subgroups, like adjusting and coping with the host community. All media sources tended to focus on the legal and political status of immigrants and their economic impact. They found that there is in the media high concern about how the immigration policies affect the financial conditions of native-born people. Over 80% of Fox News coverage of immigrants related to criminal, legal and political topics, more than any other public source. The authors concluded that psychologists are not addressing public opinion in their research and the media is not translating and using psychological research. Instead, the media outlets are focusing on legal, security, and economic issues.

Lucia Melano, Wright Institute, Berkeley, CA, talked about the need to “Address the psychological harm experienced by individuals in detention centers.” The purpose of her presentation was to share an overview of an APA interdivisional project proposal currently under review (developed in collaboration with 7 APA Divisions – including SCRA—and the Society for Qualitative Inquiry in Psychology) that will focus on the assessment of detention institutions, including the conditions and psychological harm experienced by individuals in detention facilities. The project proposes to address several areas, including: Understanding the lived experience of children, mothers, and asylum seekers in the U.S., and that of the individuals who have been returned to their country; developing a culturally and linguistically relevant questionnaire to begin documenting the oral history of their experiences; documenting forms of resistance, solidarity and mobilizing on behalf of immigrants, refugees and asylum-seekers; organizing Community Ethics Panels to support professionals in the ethical challenges they face in providing services and supports to target populations and groups; and informing best practices and models of appropriate care to address the trauma experienced by individuals in detention centers, among others.

Claudia Atuña, talked about “Elements of trauma, implications and impact on immigrant families and communities.” Claudia has conducted more than 700 psychological evaluations of asylum seekers and immigrant detainees. She is based in Seattle, WA and is a frequent visitor to the Northwest Detention Center in Tacoma, WA, which
is the second largest Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) detention facility in the country. This facility has experienced a significant increase in its capacity (more than tripled since it was first built) and the average length of time detainees wait for court hearings to decide their fates has increased dramatically in recent years, from one month to four months or more. The increased wait times have also brought complaints from detainees about the quality of food and care they receive inside. For instance, individuals with mental illness only receive 15 minutes of therapy with a social worker or nurse regardless of diagnosis.

With regards to the negative impact on children and families experiencing the fear of deportation, Claudia reported the several findings from current research, including: Significant behavioral changes in children -- problems sleeping, headaches, stomachaches, depression and anxiety negatively affecting school performance; children feeling increased fear and uncertainty about potentially losing their parents to deportation or having to return to their parent’s native countries; and families are having to make changes in their daily lives and routines in response to fear of deportation. She pointed out that some parents are arranging alternative plans for their children’s care in case they are detained or deported while others are uncertain and fearful about what would happen to their children if the plan they put in place is not executed. She also added that many physicians, teachers, and social service providers feel stressed as to how to advise parents about they can do. Overall, there is growing concern about the long-term effects of this toxic stress.

Finally, Claudia pointed out that there is no right to an appointed attorney in immigration court. If the person cannot afford a private attorney, they are forced to represent themselves, which typically results in losing the case. For instance, 92% of the individuals at the Detention Center in Tacoma were unrepresented. Claudia also pointed out that undocumented immigrants should know their rights; they should create a family safety plan; keep informed of developments in immigration policy; beware of scams from unscrupulous people promising to solve their case; and ideally, hire a private attorney to ensure representation in court. She offered several Legal Resources:

- The Executive Office for Immigration Review Roster of BIA-Recognized Agencies: [www.justice.gov/eoir/find-legal-representation](http://www.justice.gov/eoir/find-legal-representation)
- The American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA) Referral Service: [www.ailalawyer.com](http://www.ailalawyer.com)

Finally, I talked about “Facing the challenges of U.S. Immigration: Policies and Practices.” The purpose of my presentation was to present an overview of what psychology groups are doing to address current U.S. immigration policies and practices; and I summarized some of the key points introduced in the two immigration-related policy statements produced by SCRA members. On July 3rd, 2018, a group of 14 APA divisions, 3 National Psychological Associations and the APA Committee of International Relations in Psychology released a public statement expressing their “strong stand against any policy that criminalizes parents fleeing poverty, violence and political persecution in search of a safe and better life for their children.”

This statement argued that current U.S. immigration policies and practices are likely to result in irreparable and life-long physical and psychological harm to both parents and children and that the “zero-tolerance policy” goes contrary to the moral, humane, and democratic principles and values upon which this country was founded. The signatories of this public statement urged elected officials to support the abolition of all policies and practices that harm immigrants, asylum-seekers, and families; to develop a plan and implementation for expeditious reunification of families affected by the “zero tolerance” policy; and to provide reparations in the form of rehabilitation (e.g., psychological services) for the thousands of family members separated. The members of the signatory organizations offered to assist by providing
categorically informed psychological and mental health services, culturally informed organizational consultation, staff training, and advocacy to promote the safety, well-being, and rights of asylum-seekers and immigrants.

With regards to the Division 27 Policy Statement on the Effects of Deportation and Forced Separation, SCRA members (see Langhout et al., 2018) proposed the following recommendations: Immigration reform should take into account what is in the best interest of U.S. born children -- in other words, keep families together; families should NOT be separated given the demonstrated negative impact on children, other family members, and the broader community; local jurisdictions should declare themselves as “sanctuary cities” to enhance the protection of undocumented immigrants; and local school districts should be encouraged to develop protocols for responding to ICE activity near schools and educating school personnel on the effects of immigration enforcement on families and students, among others.

Finally, with regards to the Statement on the Incarceration of Undocumented Immigrant Families and alternatives to Detention (ATD) in particular, SCRA members (see Chicco et al., 2015) made the following recommendations: (1) In many instances detained migrants may be released on their own recognizance or on a bond set by an immigration official; (2) a reasonable bond amount may allow families to post the bond and be released while pursuing requests for protection in immigration court; (3) ATD may also include release subject to specific reporting conditions, including a regular check-in time with immigration (in person or by phone, weekly, monthly or in another frequency); (4) monitoring ATD programs have been widely reported as effective; (5) treating migrants with dignity and respect, as well as providing them with clear and timely information increases cooperation and compliance; (6) Global Positioning Systems (electronic monitoring like ankle bracelets) should only be used sparingly if at all and as an alternative to detention; (7) the Department of Homeland Security should STOP the current practice of family detention and promote reasonable and humane alternatives to incarceration that guarantee the human rights of migrant families.

To conclude, this was an energizing symposium which generated a great deal of interest and multiple calls for action. Several audience members offered their contact information and were interested in the volunteer program that APA is organizing to training members in the procedures for conducting psychological evaluations for individuals applying for refugee status and their families. Members of our committee also met in San Francisco and we are starting to plan activities for the near future. Anyone interested in joining the group should contact Jean Hill at Jeanhill@scra27.org.

Resources
Living Community Psychology
Written by Gloria Levin

“Living Community Psychology” highlights a community psychologist through an in-depth interview that is intended to depict both personal and professional aspects of the featured individual. The intent is to personalize Community Psychology 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 feature Louis Brown of El Paso, Texas. Louis’ original focus, starting in graduate school, was on mental health self-help consumer groups, but his eventual move to a heavily Latino population on the U.S.-Mexico border and to a school of public health, have led to a broadened perspective, to multiple health-related issues, combining applied research and practice, and with a primarily Latino population.

EDITORS’ NOTE: For questions or comments on this column, you can contact Gloria Levin at gloralevin@verizon.net.

Louis D. Brown, Ph.D.

Louis was raised in Silver Spring, MD, a close-in suburb of Washington, DC. His father was a PhD physicist for the Naval Surface Warfare Center, and his mother, who holds a master’s degree in regional and community planning, was an editor in the marketing field. His sister, four years older, obtained her MA degree in history and, after teaching high school history a few years, is raising her two children full time. His father died of complications in surgery a few years ago, but his mother, now retired, is an active volunteer in her Maryland community.

Louis was a solid high school student, enrolled in Advanced Placement courses and encouraged by his education-conscious family to go on to college. But his real passion in high school was always running; he competed in track and cross country, which taught him the value of persistence. He sought to attend a large, state university as an undergraduate; he chose the University of Michigan (UM) after visiting the campus and observing the many activities available in Ann Arbor. He originally declared a double major in psychology and computer science, his favorite courses in high school. He later dropped his computer science major because it did not mesh with his growing interest in social justice, which was spawned while studying John Rawls theory of justice. Dropping computer science as a major was secondarily prompted by the unappealing prospect of staring at a computer screen all day. “I wouldn’t have the same job satisfaction if I were cooped up behind a computer screen all day.” He switched to a single major in psychology.

Along the way, he developed another passion in life – still photography – which he pursued as Photo Editor on the staff of the Michigan Daily, UM’s prestigious, 128-year old student-run newspaper. He envisaged a photojournalism career and won two competitive summer internships at city newspapers. He was attracted by the prospect of publishing in-depth photojournalism stories, using several photos to accompany text about a topic of social concern. In this way, he would combine his photography passion with his newly-discovered interest in social justice. He admits to having been “a terrible writer” as an undergraduate so his story-telling contribution would be strictly photographic. Eventually, he faced the hard truth that there were few publication outlets (and thus, little space) for the kind of social justice story-telling that he wanted to create and, thus, limited opportunities for earning a living.
Having scratched off computer science and photojournalism as potential careers, he turned to psychology. Like so many undergraduates, his view of a psychology career was narrowly defined as clinical psychology. However, he was steered to community psychology (“a better fit for me”) through independent study with UM professor Lorraine Gutierrez and joined her work in Detroit with Latino youth. Among his contributions, he assisted an inner-city youth group in producing a student newspaper.

He applied to several Community Psychology graduate programs for 2001 entry but received many rejections (“a theme throughout my career.”) In retrospect, he attributes his rejections to a mediocre GPA score and an unusual set of interests that did not align with faculty interests. Nevertheless, he was fortuitously accepted at Wichita State University where he latched onto the Self-Help Network, which later became the Community Engagement Institute. While there, he worked almost exclusively with mental health consumer-run organizations for his four years of graduate school. His WSU mentor, Greg Meissen, provided funding for tuition and a small stipend throughout. “It was a great experience. Everyone was very supportive, and I had space there to pursue my interests,” he remembers. During graduate school, he won several awards, including best WSU doctoral student and best dissertation (an ethnographic study that employed his photographic skills). Louis was able to obtain his PhD in four years by remaining laser-focused on the topic of mental health self-help. Along the way, he moved from a treatment to a prevention orientation, but with social justice as the consistent theme.

A central criterion for choosing among career opportunities was the concept of academic freedom, in the sense of his wanting ample latitude to choose the work he wanted to pursue. Still young, however, he had to be practical and realistic, acknowledging that his choice of research topics would be dependent on his ability to obtain funding to support that work. Louis decided to begin his career on an academic track, reasoning that if he decided to make a mid-career switch, it would be easier to move from rather than to academia. He pursued academic jobs (without success) as well as the limited number of available post-docs. Narrowing his choice was his desire to return to the Washington, DC area to reconnect with family and friends. He was accepted for a post doc in prevention science at Johns Hopkins School of Public Health, with supervisor Nicholas Ialongo, Ph.D. This turned out to be “a fantastic fit,” working in inner city Baltimore schools on a broad array of prevention-oriented issues, such as youth violence. Although his doctoral training had provided a solid research grounding, he admits that his rush through graduate school had not sufficiently prepared him to launch a career as an independent researcher. The postdoc gave him space to pursue social justice issues while strengthening his methodological, especially statistical, skills. His writing skills were honed through preparing a number of manuscripts that resulted in publication.

After his postdoc job, he accepted a research associate position at the Prevention Research Center at Pennsylvania State University (PSU), working with community coalitions. “The ongoing work of my colleagues was of enough interest to me that I did not feel compelled, at the beginning, to develop my own projects.” After two years, however, he was warned that his soft funding might soon end, so he directed his energies to finding a more permanent, tenured research position elsewhere. When applying for his first postdoc job, he had cast a wide net, looking at both academic and applied jobs. For his post PSU job search, he targeted only tenure-track research positions but considered multiple disciplines, when at all relevant. Louis perused weekly job listings scrupulously but found few for Community Psychology. He reasoned that public health (along with social work) were the most amenable to his interests in preventive community intervention research. “I consider public health equivalent to the Community Psychology of medicine.” He found his interviewers in public health programs to be, “to varying degrees, aware of Community Psychology” and respecting its main publication, The American
Louis knew that his publication record would be appealing to the job market. “I had published steadily, in respected and diverse journals, with a number of first-authorships.” But of even greater utility in the job market was his having been awarded an NIH R03 grant ($74,000), which was aimed at preventing drug abuse among youth. “As soon as I got that grant, all of a sudden I got waaaay more interviews because my grant showed that I was a promising prospect for future funding.” Employers were seeking a good researcher, but especially one with high potential for bringing in external funds, to cover salaries plus indirect costs. “In most places,” he reckons, “an R01 grant would almost certainly guarantee obtaining tenure.”

His job search for a tenured academic position was a whirlwind, with four interviews conducted within a month. One advertisement was generic, recruiting for 10 positions across the six University of Texas School of Public Health campuses. His first offer was from the El Paso campus. Unwilling to take a risk, he quickly accepted that offer, before having heard from the others. He admits to having had to consult a map to locate El Paso (on the Rio Grande River’s border with Mexico) and was surprised at the city’s geographic isolation, hundreds of miles from the nearest cities. Nevertheless, El Paso is a mid-sized city (population approximately 700,000) that offers a rich (bi)cultural setting with a low cost of living. Contrary to current scare-mongering about the U.S./Mexico border, El Paso is consistently ranked at the top of the list of the safest cities in the U.S. “I never regretted my decision. I was happy with UTHealth’s offer and remain happy here.”

Yet again, upon arrival (2010), he found his community-based research interests were an excellent fit with the ongoing work in UTHealth’s Department of Health Promotion and Behavioral Sciences, which has a strong applied orientation. The program’s focus on health disparities within an overwhelmingly Latino population offered a new and exciting challenge to Louis. He launched himself into the community by collaborating with colleagues who were already well-integrated in the community. A number of his longest-lasting activities developed from his earliest collaborations with his UTHealth colleague, Héctor Balcázar.

Louis’ social integration in the El Paso community included joining a running club where he met his now-wife, Perla Retana. A double BA graduate of UTEP, she is finishing her physician assistant degree in Phoenix, AZ. Although she was able to do clinical rotations in El Paso, about 60% of the time she has been located in Phoenix. The geographic separation between Louis and Perla has necessitated considerable travel by both of them, between the two cities. This was considerably complicated by the birth of their son, Mateo, now 5 years old, “an active and adorable guy.” Perla’s mother has been a great help in raising Mateo.

The addition of Mateo to the family led Louis to make an early request for a one-year extension (to the normal seven-year) “tenure clock.” He is submitting his material now, for an expected vote in January 2019. The reward system in his program prioritizes research productivity—especially in attracting grants. He has served as the principal investigator of 14 grants totaling almost $1.7 million and as co-investigator on grants amounting to over $15 million. He has reviewed for 20 different journals.

Louis has a strong record in awards, especially within SCRA. He won SCRA’s 2008 Cowen award for his doctoral dissertation; the 2012 Early Career award; third prize in the 2003 video competition; and, in 2018, was elected a Fellow by SCRA. In addition, he has been awarded for “making the difference” by the Border Public Health Interest Group and for excellence in public health by UT’s Health School for integrating research and practice. Also of interest to the tenure committee is teaching. “Our program takes teaching seriously, including student evaluations.” Although he did not teach his first year at UTHealth, he now teaches an MPH core course in health promotion and a “Community Psychology-like” course in community health promotion. He incorporates into both a broad range of content including behavioral change theory,
social networks, health disparities, policy change, etc. – all topics he would be teaching if he were community psychology faculty. Almost 70% of the students he mentors are Latino or African American.

Louis has been a member of SCRA since early in graduate school (2002) and considers it his primary professional organization. The first SCRA conference he attended was the 2003 biennial held in New Mexico, where he participated in a symposium panel and presented two posters. His primary affiliation within SCRA is with the self-help and mutual support interest group which he chaired, 2008-2013. He has been a member of several other academic societies for short time periods, but the one with which he has stuck (since 2006) and been active is the Society for Prevention Research (SPR). He recently attended the annual conference of and joined the American Public Health Association. “APHA is a natural fit with Community Psychology, with its applied and population-level foci.” Whereas SCRA holds a biennial conference, SPR and APHA conferences are held annually.

Because of his prodigious curiosity, Louis often finds himself pulled in many different directions, fielding multiple enticing opportunities. He assuages himself by reasoning that, with each new issue he works on, he is addressing different audiences while remaining focused on social justice. Among his primary research foci are: community coalitions and partnerships; self-help and mutual support; parenting; mental health; and Hispanic health.

In emphasizing preventive community interventions, a broad area, Louis sometimes struggles to balance opportunities with the need to remain focused. “Some opportunities fall into my lap and funding is hard to come by, but I try not to spread myself too thin.” He differentiates two main streams of work he conducts as “Whereas my work with community coalitions focuses on community change, my work with self-help support groups is focused on personal change. However, both are types of empowering volunteer-driven small group collaborations.”

Louis is increasingly pulled to advocating for policy change and community organization and aims to gain more skills in those areas. He is involved, as a citizen volunteer, in several El Paso community coalitions. In particular, he actively advocated for the successful passage of legislation by the City and the County of El Paso that would regulate e-cigarettes like other tobacco products and make parks smoke-free.

And living close to the US/Mexico border, he has a close-up view of the impact of the current effort to demonize immigration. El Paso has a long history of acceptance for both documented and undocumented immigrants. The city’s ties to Mexico are strong; the old timers miss the days when crossing was easier and rates of violence across the border in Ciudad Juárez were low. Juárez has a population of 1.5 million, and the sister cities constitute the second largest binational municipality on the U.S.’ southern border (second only to San Diego/Tijuana).

The children of El Paso immigrants often move on to larger cities in the region, while the older generations remain in El Paso. However, El Paso is characterized by especially strong connectedness within the large networks of extended families – a natural laboratory for health-focused preventive interventions. In addition, Louis is currently testing a technical assistance model, called the Coalition Check-Up, with 20 substance use prevention coalitions in Mexico.

When asked what his main contribution to community psychology is likely to be, Louis offered the hope that he will have substantially impacted our knowledge about the nature of community-based, health-related, preventive interventions. In so doing, he hopes to foster and highlight the ability of diverse community groups to work together effectively.

Louis reflected on his life, both personal and professional, acknowledging: “My path may seem linear, mainly because that is how my brain works. However, this should not be mistaken as meaning that my life has been easy or without ups and downs. Because I have had my share of disappointments – rejections related to training,
jobs, grants and publications. Persistence in the face of rejection is really important to succeed in our field. However, overall, it’s been a great ride to date.”

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Public Policy
Edited by Taylor Scott, Penn State University

Student Voice Project
Policy-Informed Research on Youth Perceptions of the Baltimore City School Police Force
Written by Lindsay Emery, Patricia Ferguson, Natasha Link, Taylor Darden and Loren Henderson

In response to increases in juvenile violence and high-profile school shootings during the 1990s, the United States has seen increased implementation of policies and practices intended to improve the safety and well-being of students (Fader, Lockwood, Schall & Stokes, 2015). However, some argue that these policies perpetuate the school-to-prison pipeline and the criminalization of youth behavior, particularly among youth of color (Harvard Law Review, 2015). One of the popular interventions that came about in response to these events was the creation of school resource officers (SROs), programs that assign uniformed police officers to public schools (Bracey, 2010). In Maryland, a statute specifically provides a “Baltimore City School Police Force,” which is comprised of police officers trained through the Maryland Police Training Commission and the Civil Service Commission of Baltimore City (Council of State Governments Justice Center, 2014). On March 31, 2015, Baltimore City school officials outlined sweeping changes to how Baltimore’s School Police Force operates. Also, at this time, the death of Freddie Gray in April 2015 while in police custody sparked local and national outrage, highlighting once again issues of police brutality against communities of color. While many perspectives were shared in the current public debate in Baltimore City, including those of parents, teachers, advocates, and police officials and leaders, the voice of youth went unsolicited by relevant stakeholders. In light of this debate and the highly publicized unrest involving youth in Baltimore City following the death of Freddie Gray, the question of the state of police-student relationships was and remains particularly salient.

Our team, which is comprised of graduate students in the clinical and community psychology program and sociology/psychology faculty members at the University of Maryland Baltimore County (UMBC), applied for and received the 2015-2016 SCRA policy mini-grant to solicit students’ perspectives of school police in Baltimore City public high schools. Our project, which we entitled, ‘The Student Voice Project,’ sought to highlight how students’ perspectives could shape local policy related to school police in Baltimore City.

We collected data via focus groups to explore student-reported perceptions of interactions with the Baltimore City School Police Force. Our research team conducted a series of 18 focus groups (N = 83), which included between two and eight participants in each group, from April 2016 to March 2017. Participants were students from Baltimore City Public High Schools and ranged in age from 14 to 20 years old (M = 16.6, SD = 1.16). Among the participants, the majority identified as female (71%) and Black/African American (67%). Focus groups were conducted at community
locations (e.g., public libraries, recreational centers, youth organizations) close to the respective schools that students attended as well as in the schools themselves (e.g., school libraries). Focus groups lasted between 1-2 hours and were facilitated by two trained psychology graduate students. The discussion guide was developed to promote conversation around several topics on school police, such as perceptions and interactions with school police and suggestions for improving relationships. Throughout various stages of The Student Voice Project, efforts were made to collaborate with local youth advocacy and other community organizations, which will be discussed in further detail below.

Our findings showed that student perceptions of their school police officers ranged from positive, to neutral, to negative. Positive attitudes were attributed to school police officers that participated as members of the school community through their actions to build relationships and engage with students. Students believed that these officers provided a sense of protection through their support, as well as their ability to de-escalate fights. This finding is consistent with previous research, which found that police officers that were viewed as likeable and a valuable resource to the school were viewed more positively (Bracy, 2011). Students that held neutral perspectives described police as being uninvolved in their lives at school, which also corresponds with previous studies (Hopkins et al., 1992; Bosworth, Ford, & Hernandez, 2011). In addition, students who had negative perceptions attributed it to school police officers that engaged in aggressive ways. For example, students reported the use of fear, intimidation, surveillance strategies, and weapons (e.g., guns, pepper spray) to control them. Several students also expressed concern that their school police officers lacked awareness on how to appropriately interact with youth. This is consistent with findings from the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU)’s study of 1,000 New York City public school students, which found that 53% of students reported disrespectful, abusive, or uncomfortable treatment by school police officers (Mukherjee & Karpatick, 2007). Students’ opinions of school police officers, however, did not exist in a vacuum. Rather, the school climate, including the sense of safety, level of violence, relationships, and the role of teachers and administrators, shaped their perceptions (Cohen et al., 2009). Perceptions of police officers also related to school safety, or the perceived levels of student conflict (e.g. fights), and fear of outside threats. Specifically, students who perceived a higher level of student conflict or had greater fears of outside threats were more likely to endorse the perspective that school police officers were necessary. Perceptions of the need for school police officers related to the perceived ability to handle student conflict: school police were only necessary when teachers and administrators were incapable of resolving student fights.

Overall, students offered opinions on ways in which school police officers can build trust and improve relationships with students. These small, but potentially impactful acts include, being more involved in the school community (e.g., attending sport games), getting to actually know students outside of disciplinary interactions only, and using de-escalation tactics as opposed to excessive force. There also was a consistent theme that students wanted police officers to remember that they are just that--students, children, and not adults. Overall, the students expressed a desire to be treated with compassion and understanding, not like criminals.

The final phase of our project focused on the dissemination of our findings, beginning in the Fall of 2016 and continues currently, to our various Baltimore City community stakeholders and partners, as well as academic communities. Key community stakeholders included youth advocacy organizations, youth and adults within the Baltimore City Public School System, and other community organizations. Dissemination was carried out in multiple ways via creation and disbursement of policy briefs, meetings with youth and community organizations, and development of a website (https://baltimorestudentvoice.weebly.com/) and project logo.

In phase one of our dissemination plan, we met with youth organizations to see how our
findings resonated with them and their experiences. Beyond reviewing the findings, we also gathered youth input on development of policy recommendations on local and state levels. These meetings were incredibly helpful not only to further make sense of our findings, but also to once again gain youth input into the various factors that impact youth-police relationships inside and outside of the school. Among these factors, students highlighted how systems of privilege and oppression maintain the disparities in treatment of White versus Black and Latinx students, especially in Baltimore City. They believed that police officer trainings should incorporate knowledge of these racial disparities and systems of oppression, while others stated that teachers were more equipped to handle issues within the school and so the presence of police was unnecessary and harmful. Youth feedback was critical in shaping the overall findings of this project and the language we used in the creation of fact sheets and policy briefs.

The second phase of dissemination focused on sharing our findings with other community organizations/partners and stakeholders, which included organizations such as the Center for School Mental Health in Baltimore City and the ACLU of Maryland. As word spread about our project, we were also asked to share our findings with other organizations. The NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund asked us to share our findings specific to Black girls as they were compiling a report on the disparities in school discipline, arrests, and referrals to the juvenile justice system for Black girls. Our findings, among many others, were then added to their final report, entitled ‘Our Girls, Our Future: Investing in Opportunity and Reducing Reliance on the Criminal Justice System in Baltimore,’ which can be accessed here: http://www.naacpldf.org/files/case_issue/Baltimore_Girls_Report_FINAL_6_26_18.pdf.

Currently, we are in our final stage of dissemination, where we have shifted our efforts to advocacy on the local and statewide level. Our team has shared our findings with a statewide advocacy group, the Maryland Coalition to Reform School Discipline, which aims to address disparities in discipline practices. Per their request, we are in the process of compiling a formal report to distribute to their members, who may use the report as part of their effort to address Baltimore’s newly formed policy on school police. More broadly, our team is tracking statewide legislation related to school police and school discipline, which will inform our advocacy efforts in Maryland. We are grateful to the SCRA policy mini-grants program for providing us with the funding and support to conduct this project and gain youth voice on this important social justice issue in Baltimore City.

References
And all at once, summer collapsed into fall" - Oscar Wilde. The fall season is a great time to check out your SCRA region information on the website and contact the coordinators to see what is going on in your neck of the autumn woods (http://www.scra27.org/who-we-are/regional-activities/). There are a lot of great things happening in our SCRA regions across the globe – check out the news from the Midwest and Southeast regions of the U.S. and info on the Community Psychology Conference in Slovakia.

News from the Midwest Region U.S.

MIDWEST REGIONAL COORDINATORS (RCS)
Amber Kelly, National Louis University; Melissa Ponce Rodas, Andrews University; Tonya Hall, Chicago State University

MIDWEST STUDENT REGIONAL COORDINATOR (SRCS)
Naz Chief, National Louis University

Announcements and information for inclusion in future Midwest updates should be sent to Melissa Ponce- Rodas (ponce@andrews.edu).

Interview with Monika Black: Are Community Psychologists Employable and Successful in the Midwest?
Written by Tonya Hall

QUESTION 1: Please tell me about your experiences as a community psychology doctoral student in the Midwest at DePaul University Chicago. Indicate pros/cons to share with community psychology students in the Midwest. I came to Chicago from Columbus, Ohio with a clinical psychology degree and a Master’s of Healthcare Administration from The Ohio State University. However, I was not fully exposed to community psychology until 2000. At that time, I found Chicago to be rich in the principals of community psychology. I did my own research to find out more about the field and found Bogart Dolton’s book and ecological frameworks inspirational. The ecological framework was the best model that I had found to easily explain the independent and intersectional influences of multiple variables across key contexts. Shortly after reading the book, I happened to drive by the front gates of DePaul, I knew that it was the school for me. When I started exploring schools in community psychology in Chicago, DePaul University was the only school that returned my call. Dr. Susan McMahon was on the way to a meeting but took the time to talk with me about my interests in the community psychology doctoral program. DePaul was destined to be a part of my personal journey.

I loved graduate school and my colleagues would not be shocked to hear that from me. I thoroughly enjoyed it. Early in my program, I met with three faculty members that I thought best matched my interests and asked them to be on my team. It was the beginning of a good partnership. My focus was and continues to be on three key areas including communities of color, leadership, and women.

DePaul’s program in community psychology was a phenomenal fit for my personality, character strengths, and leadership style. I was able to move to a faculty advisor who gave me direction and get the space that I needed to build relationships across disciplines and communities. I had the wonderful support of a leader within the department who helped me to truly forge relationships across each of the disciplines within psychology while building relationships with faculty from Women and Gender Studies, Public Health, the business school, etc. Later, I was graciously adopted by the I/O psychology program. I was also able to develop key relationships with community partners and leaders and work on outside projects, as long as I kept my grades up, of course. As I stepped into my identity...
as a budding consultant, I very intentionally formed relationships with other consultants to establish a deeper commitment in the community and establish a greater sense of validity for what the work really looked and felt like in the field. Truly it was a great ecosystem and I remain grateful for the faculty who gave me the freedom to work outside of the box.

In particular, the interdepartmental partnerships I was able to create led to a pipeline of opportunities, which prompted me think seriously about what I would do next, after DePaul. Also, I aimed to form partnerships with key foundations and corporations that were engaged in the community that were related to my interests. This resulted in one of my first funded projects called the “Telling Our Stories” Project that captured resident stories, the good, the bad, and the ugly, of the impact that Chicago’s Plan for Transformation had on their psychological well-being, sense of community, and livelihood. Over 400 former residents were interviewed and shared their perspectives regarding the issues. Community psychology made this possible and it was great to have these experiences while in graduate school and having a rich environment of resources. I would encourage community psychology students to focus on starting their careers right now and not wait unless they risk losing control over their personal journey.

The only restriction that I faced in community psychology was the limited choice of whether I would become a tenure-track professor or a practitioner in the field. I wanted to create partnerships. I am a consultant who partners with the University, similar to that of Dr. Leonard Jason. I added the community psychology perspective of partnering across communities. Essentially, I wanted to build and sustain partnerships with students, faculty, community leaders, and corporations. I wanted to be mindful of various lived experiences, perspectives, strengths, theoretical approaches that key players in the ecosystem provide. I did not want to be bound by context. For instance, in a system that can be fragmented and hierarchical, I find it important to teach and be challenged by the wonderful questions that students ask so that I can challenge myself, clients, community leaders, and bring those to the questions to the CEOs of organizations today, without having to wait for the report to come out. Engaging in each aspect of the ecosystem keeps me mindful, constantly challenged, fresh, and on my toes. So, I decided to move forward with TandemSpring, be forever adjunct, a consultant, and a coach who partners across universities, titles (e.g., students, staff, middle managers to CEOs), and contexts (academia, Non-profits, For-profits and entrepreneurship). I do it all with a passion to help people to realize their full potential and bring their whole self to their work.

**QUESTION 2: Please tell me about your employment experiences in the field of community psychology in the Midwest. Share any suggestions for community psychology students who have completed their Ph.D. program and are seeking employment in the Midwest.**

I am an oddball, for all the right reasons, because I moved out of the box and created my own jobs as a consultant. I did participate in a few traditional fellowship programs along my journey. I encourage community psychology students to do the same to establish tangible partnership experiences. You can be a consultant or associate consultant now. You can be your own leader. You can work with dynamic people now who can help you to obtain your next community psychology job in academia, clinical settings or the community including corporate settings.

My strength is my focus on positive psychology and I offer that to my clients and the people that I partner with. I encourage others to capture and tell your story of how academic experiences have given you your strength. It is not all about the bullet points on the CV but the Why and the How that inspired you to focus in one area or another, work with a specific faculty member, engage in community-based research project, etc. Show employers that you are ready to offer them what worked well in your academic program and how you can apply it to the community to be an active partner in solving problems, their problems. Always check to see if the job matches your strengths. Chicago has a wealth of community psychology experiences available. Apply
your strengths and build on it on your next job. For example, I ran non-profits, which led to my consulting in program development and evaluation across organizations, which created opportunities for me to be an executive coach to ensure that organizations had the culture necessary to support program design, development, and evaluation efforts. That opened the door to public speaking opportunities, working to empower women financially, and now, the development of Chicago’s only female-led and focused angel investing initiative.

At DyMynd, I started by working in the background to create an online assessment that would best match women with their financial strengths. At the time, financial institutions did not see these women as a part of a viable market and many women were left underserved with few options to become economically empowered. This was even more true for every aspect of difference that they brought to the table. Women of color knew that they were not valued clients by financial institutions and largely preferred to work with credit unions. I increasingly became intrigued by the opportunity to impact such an underserved population.

Shortly after completing my doctorate, I had the opportunity to go to New York for a focus group asking women to simply talk about their relationship with finance. The average net worth in the room was $35 million, and I am sitting there, a recently graduate community psychologist, wondering if perhaps this time I have gone too far outside of the box. However, I found that for the women in the room, that the challenges that they were facing, were interpersonal relationships with money, institutional, and societal. One of the women who commented on the systematic impact of women not being offered the same education, resources, and tools as men, ended with a statement about “This problem is too big; it is multipronged and too much for us to get our hands around at this point.” That is when I knew that this was now an issue for community psychology to address, and that is when I began to pursue as my passion project. I still had a consulting firm to run as my day job.

In Chicago, I used the experience in New York to run focus groups with 50 leading women in Chicago so that we could diversify the participants across, age, ethnicity, gender identity, and net worth. For many women it was the first time that they had ever had an open conversation about their emotional relationship with money. In the focus groups alone, we had women who cried, who were angry, who were tired for the ways that they had been taught that money was exclusively a man’s game by their families, cultures, and society. I was truly touched by the experience and the power of women collectively sharing their money experiences changed me and empowered me in my own life. Over the years, DyMynd illuminated another opportunity to economically empower women in Chicago which led to DyMynd Angels. DyMynd Angels is at the beginning phases of raising $1.92 million to invest in 20 female led start-ups, in Chicago and throughout the Midwest to close the gender funding gap. For me, DyMynd Angels, has been the ultimate intersection of community psychology. We are educating a new generation of female funders while healing the entrepreneurial ecosystem and fostering a community of female funders and founders who, together, will change the landscape for the female economy in Chicago. This initiative not only brings funder and founders together, but it has opened up a dialogue in Chicago about what it means for women to step forward and lead with their whole hearts (e.g., on behalf of themselves, their families and communities) across levels of net-worth, cultural identities, titles, phase of career, context, etc. Additionally, this program model has opened the cultural dynamics across women who are more likely to become NPO leaders and those encouraged to engage in the “for-profits” arena. Women can be driven by their values and causes and simply choose the financial model that works best for them.

Community psychology allowed us to create the space and processes to talk about these issues and to design transformational programming around it. I have had CEO’s and CFO’s of some of the leading banks in the country who now realize that women are the market in finance, ask “how did you get
women to engage.” My response is that “we asked questions, and then we listened.” I share this because what I know to be true but can’t say is that we simply used participatory-based research practices and created authentic space for the community to have voice. But the fact that such leaders truly wanted to know the answer to that question suggests, to me, that there continues to be a lot of opportunity and desire for the application of the principles of community psychology. The fact that participatory-based research is not a common business terms, says to me that we, as Community Psychologists, have a great opportunity to be proactive agents of change, even in Corporate America. In fact, I feel that there is great opportunity to do so in this economic socio-political environment.

**QUESTION 3: Please describe your research experiences in community psychology.** I do not have ample research projects in community psychology in the traditional sense. If you look at my list of publications it is very light. But that too is by design, as I wanted to do more community projects that resulted in reports, programs, etc. That list on the CV is rather long. I have more extended participatory based research on program design and evaluation. That being said, I do wish that I had spent more time in a formal research setting/lab and had just a few more publications under my belt, but not many more!

**QUESTION 4: Please indicate any of your additional employment-related or research goals in community psychology that you have planned to complete in the future in the Midwest.** My answers would have been different one year ago as 2017 was a rather productive year. Currently, I have an incredibly high level of job satisfaction in community psychology. I feel that I am in the right seat on the right bus. I have long considered leadership the ultimate of social justice issue. If we can answer the question of who is designed to lead then we will crack the Corporate Mindset and open the doors for ALL people to bring their talents and strengths to the table without micro aggressions, stereotypes, systematic barriers, etc. We can actually create space for people to simply lead well.

As an executive coach I am able to truly partner with leaders on their journey to bringing their whole selves to work. I co-wrote a book with my business partner and better half grounded in the principles of positive psychology and have the wonderful blessing of empowering women through DyMynd and DyMynd Angels, all of which I will continue to focus on over the next 3-5 years.

**QUESTION 5: Do you have any suggestions for community psychology students in the Midwest?** Do not wait for your career to begin to form partnerships, create projects and programs, and tasks some strategic risks. Graduate school is the perfect place to incubate a new idea, model, and/or business. With a more open mindset, owning your role as a leader, you might find more opportunities are right in front of you and what could be better than embarking on new opportunities with the support of great faculty and resources. Be a proactive partner in healing academic institutions and community partnerships. Create opportunities for true collaboration and timely dissemination of information with the community. Do not wait to look for opportunities to build a bridge. If you decide not to go the tenure track route, what can you do? Community psychology has the principles, models, and the tools to build the many of the bridges that the world needs right now.

**Trainings in the Midwest**

*Written by Amber Kelly*

The Midwest is full of various trainings opportunities to learn new skills or brush up on old concepts. Here are some upcoming trainings in the Midwest:

**Asset Based Community Development Institute’s Faith Rooted Working Group**

October 31st 8:30-5:00 pm CST

**Acumen**

Offers free and paid learning opportunities online this Fall. Some free sessions include: Storytelling for Change, Introduction to Human-Centered Design and Social Impact Analysis.
Upcoming Conference
Registration is now open for Midwest Eco. Check out the website to learn more https://midwesteco2018.weebly.com/

News from the Southeast Region U.S.

SOUTHEAST REGIONAL COORDINATORS (RCS):
Pam Imm, Community Psychologist, Independent Practice; Lexington SC; Wing Yi (Winnie) Chan, Rand Corporation; Elan Hope, North Carolina State University

SOUTHEAST STUDENT REGIONAL COORDINATORS (SRCS):
Geena Washington, North Carolina State University; Douglas Archie, University of South Carolina; Andrew Gadaire, UNC-Charlotte

Architects of Humanity: Decolonizing the Future of Community Psychology: Southeast Ecological Community Psychology Conference 2018
The Southeast Region of the Society for Community Research and Action hosted the 2018 Southeast ECO Conference - Architects of Humanity: Decolonizing the Future of Community Psychology at North Carolina State University in Raleigh, NC on September 28th & 29th, 2018.

Southeast ECO is a regional extension of the Society for Community Research and Action (SCRA, http://www.scra27.org). ECO conferences are organized by graduate students and allow community psychologists and other folks from applied settings to gather. We welcome cross-collaboration, including but not limited to community organizers, public health, social work, the arts, and technology. The theme for the conference was "Architects of Humanity: Decolonizing the Future of Community Psychology." We were guided by a call to explore worlds where those who are most marginalized thrive, humanity is affirmed, and communities' well-being is reflective of a commitment to liberation. The conference included storytelling, poster presentations, research talks, and teach-ins.

News from Europe/Middle East/Africa

REGIONAL COORDINATORS
Serdar Degirmencioglu, Cumhuriyet University; José Ornelas, Instituto Universitário, in Lisboa, Portugal; Caterina Arcidiacono, Federico II University, Naples, Italy; Julia Halamova, Comenius University, Bratislava, Slovakia

5th Conference in Community Psychology in Slovakia and Workshop on Community Service Design
The goal of the conference and workshop is to provide time and space for both researchers and practitioners from various areas of community psychology in Europe so they can meet, present their work and research, inspire each other, and enjoy socializing together.

Organisation: Institute of Applied Psychology at Faculty of Social and Economic Sciences at Comenius University in Bratislava, Slovakia, European Community Psychology Association (ECPA), and The Society for Community and Action Research (SCRA) Division 27 American Psychological Association.

Conference: December 3-4, 2018 (9.00-16.00)
ECPA General assembly: December 3, 2018 (16.00-17.30)
Workshop on Community Service Design: December 4, 2018 (14.00-18.00) and 5, 2018 (9.00-13.00) Prof. Alessandra Talamo from University La Sapienza, Rome, Italy
The Service Design Thinking workshop will provide a practical experience of some of the most popular techniques for the design of innovative services in real contexts. These participatory techniques are aimed at creating new services connecting the needs and wants of stakeholders with objectives and potential boundaries from service providers.

Conference language: English
Conference fee: No fee (free access)
Workshop language: English
Workshop fee: 50 €
Deadline for active participation in the conference: Please send an email with the following information to CommunityPsychologySlovakia@gmail.com: Name and surname of the presenters, workplace address, title of the presentation, and research based abstract (max 250 words) by September 16, 2018.

The proceedings from the conference will be published in electronic form with ISBN. The deadline for the submission of the conference papers is November 1, 2018 (CommunityPsychologySlovakia@gmail.com) in order to be reviewed and published prior the conference.

Deadline for participation in the workshop: Please send an email until November 15, 2018 to caterina.arcidiacono@unina.it


Place: Institute of Applied Psychology Faculty of Social and Economic Sciences Comenius University in Bratislava Mlynske luhy 4, 821 05 Bratislava, Slovakia

Contact person: Júlia Halamová, 00421908604141, julia.halamova@gmail.com

Looking forward to seeing you in Bratislava in Slovakia!

Research Council
Written by Chris Keys, DePaul University

Building a Structure for Research in SCRA: Launching the SCRA Research Fellows Program

As SCRA became involved with strategic planning following the 2015 Biennial hosted by the University of Massachusetts Lowell, the SCRA Executive Committee realized that research was not a central part of the plan. Yet research is part of the air we breathe in SCRA. One of our central principles is scientific grounding for our work. Among other things, we create knowledge. Knowledge and understanding are fundamental to what we do and how we make progress as a field. Further, for our field to be sustainable, we must have active researchers in academic positions who can educate and mentor future generations of community psychologists. AJCP, TCP, Biennial, mini-grants, awards and other SCRA activities are devoted to and/or include specific forms of research in one way or other as an important part of their focus. Yet somewhat surprisingly, we have no complementary structure within SCRA that is broadly committed to research in its many manifestations and researchers in their various activities and career stages. Sustaining and enhancing our knowledge base is central to the mission of SCRA. With these thoughts in mind, in 2016 led by Jack Tebes and Dina Birman, the Executive Committee asked that science be added to the strategy for the Society’s future growth. Jack Tebes, Dina Birman and Chris Keys agreed to develop plans for structuring research more explicitly into SCRA as an organization and came up with the idea of a SCRA Research Council as the vehicle for doing so.

The SCRA Executive Committee formally created the Research Council at its midwinter meeting in 2017. The Council will seek to support and enhance the evolution of a strong scientific
The planning trio invited a diverse group of inaugural committee members to join them on the Research Council including Fabricio Balcazar, Lauren Cattaneo, Andrew Case, and Noelle Hurd. Jean Hill as Executive Director of SCRA and Nicole Allen as Editor of AJCP are ex-officio members.

The initial effort proposed by the SCRA Research Council is the creation of the SCRA Research Fellows Program. The SCRA Executive Committee affirmed the Research Fellows Program in principle and funded the first year at its 2018 Midwinter Meeting and in its July meeting approved many particulars of the program. Previously, during its first meeting at the Ottawa Biennial, the SCRA Research Council had brainstormed ideas for projects. After some discussion the idea of promoting the success of community psychologists on the tenure-track or in research faculty positions with good access to the tenure track in graduate programs in community psychology seemed like an excellent initial focus. Successful junior faculty in graduate programs in community psychology often become tenured professors for the remainder of their careers. Helping community psychology scholars be successful at this critical early stage can help them have a base from which to contribute to the scientific literature in community psychology for decades. The changing academic landscape has some community psychology programs being founded, some growing and others disappearing. In this context it seems particularly important to support the development of a new generation of community psychology researchers to build on our first 50 years of successful advancement as a scientific field and as an academic discipline.

The SCRA Fellows Program is dedicated to the successful development of the next generation of community psychology scientists. SCRA members who are untenured faculty on the tenure-track or research faculty who if successful will have access to the tenure track in community psychology graduate programs or in graduate programs that include community psychology are welcome to apply for a SCRA Research Fellowship. Currently, two fellowships for between one and two years in length are planned to begin in 2019. Each is expected to include funding of up to $5,000 for research expenses and mentoring by a senior community psychological scientist with complementary research interests and/or extensive research experience. Mentors may provide insights and support for developing research programs, preparing for the promotion and tenure process, and offer career guidance. For more information the program announcement and application form are at the research section of the SCRA website at https://scra27.org/what-we-do/research/.

EDITORS’ NOTE: For questions or comments, you can reach Chris Keys at ckeys@depaul.edu.

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**Self-Help**

*Edited by Tehseen Noorani, University of Durham*

COLUMN EDITOR’S NOTE: In this interview, Kevin Franciotti introduces Psychedelics in Recovery (PIR), an addiction recovery mutual aid group where members use psychedelic substances as part of their recovery journeys. Often translated as ‘mind-manifesting’, the careful use of psychedelics can produce remarkably lucid experiences, offering insights ranging from the sensory-perceptual and the biographical to the spiritual and the mystical. As
is often the case with the formation of new mutual aid groups, PIR challenges many assumptions, in this case about psychedelic drugs, about addiction and about recovery. Franciotti can be reached through www.kevin.franciotti.net.

From author Robert Hayward’s book, The Thirteenth Step: Ancient Solutions to the Contemporary Problems of Alcoholism and Addiction using the Timeless Wisdom of The Native American Church Ceremony. Hayward described his peyote experiences as an alcoholic seeking recovery.

**TN: What is the Psychedelics in Recovery group and how does it run?**

**KF:** Psychedelics in Recovery (PIR) is a syncretic organization adapting elements of Twelve Step Fellowships (TSFs), most notably: Alcoholics Anonymous (AA), Narcotics Anonymous (NA), and Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous (SLAA), to attract members looking to incorporate the psychedelic experience as part of a spiritual program of ongoing recovery. The philosopher Alan Watts described the psychedelic experience as, “revelations of the secret workings of the brain, of the associative and patterning processes, the ordering systems which carry out all our sensing and thinking” (Watts, 2013). Watts saw value in using psychedelics to elicit such states that are for the psyche, “not an acquisitive process of learning more and more facts or greater and greater skills, but rather an unlearning of wrong habits and opinions.”

PIR holds online meetings twice a month, to allow new and established members separated in physical space to meet. Our membership is open only to those who identify as being in recovery from addiction. The format of PIR meetings resembles that of many other TSFs, typically centered around a rotating topic or open discussion. The meeting will open with a moment of silence, the group together recites the serenity prayer, then the chairperson reads our preamble (adapted from AA), and a working document of our group’s guiding principles. The main portion of the meeting then consists of individual sharing for everyone who wants to and ends after a prompt for anyone who feels their recovery may be in jeopardy and needs to share. The meeting then closes with the reading of an excerpt from the last page of Alcoholics Anonymous’ final chapter, “A Vision for You,” another moment of silence, and again reciting the serenity prayer together.

**TN: What is the backdrop to the formation of PIR?**

**KF:** Psychedelics have a long history of use as a treatment for addiction, and there has been a recent continuation in this line of clinical research. Bill Wilson, the co-founder of AA, was an early proponent of the potential for the LSD experience, as he underwent treatment for depression by psychedelic therapists in Canada. According to the book Distilled Spirits, Wilson's insights under LSD influenced his writings on the concept of a higher power and the spiritual component the twelve steps were founded upon. Wilson tried unsuccessfully to petition AA to support the use of LSD for alcoholics, to offer a preview of sorts of what a spiritual awakening might look like for a “recovered drunk.”

The founding members of PIR recognized that there were very likely members across TSFs who have found personal benefit from using psychedelics, and presumably had to negotiate within themselves that psychedelic use did not conflict with their interpretation of sobriety/abstinence. Rather than based on recreational or even medicinal desire, they are seeking psychospiritual experiences to deepen their practice of incorporating twelve-step spiritual principles of recovery into daily living. Our group was established to acknowledge these practices, and to make available a more appropriate forum to
share experience and seek/provide support than could be found in other TSFs.

**TN: How did you come to be involved?**

**KF:** My own motivation to help co-found PIR stemmed from successfully undergoing ibogaine treatment for opiate use disorder. Ibogaine is an alkaloid from the roots of the *Tabernanthe iboga* shrub found in western-Central Africa, discovered fortuitously by a heroin-addicted man named Howard Lotsof to significantly attenuate symptoms of opiate withdrawal. Ibogaine was later dubbed by researchers as an “addiction interrupter” (Alper and Bouso, 2012). After my ibogaine treatment, I began attending NA meetings and quickly found that when I mentioned ibogaine, it would garner responses that at best were of curiosity, but at worst – and more common – were unhelpful and annoying comments like, “Whoa sounds cool, I’d love to try that stuff!” These comments showed me that people couldn’t understand how my use of ibogaine was by no means recreational. It was clear that they didn’t view it the same way they’d refer to their own experiences receiving detox treatment. Compared to other kinds of diseases, no cancer patient (for example) would ever say to another, “Your radiation treatment sounded fun!”

**TN: Can you give an example of how psychedelic experiences help in members’ recovery?**

**KF:** Whenever one of our founding members went through a cycle of twelve-step work, he would have an MDMA or mushroom experience each time he finished the formal writing around a particular step. Consistently, his psychedelic experience would be highly relevant to the particular step he’d just worked. For example, when he completed Step Eight (“Made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all”), he had visions of several people he owed amends to, and the experience on mushrooms helped him become willing to make the direct amends suggested in Step Nine.

**TN: What is PIR’s relationship to the Twelve Step programs?**

**KF:** PIR follows the organizing principles of AA, known as the Twelve Traditions (especially Traditions One and Three), as well as the NA informational pamphlets, *In Times of Illness* and *NA Groups & Medication*, which set precedents for exceptions to “abstinence from all mood or mind-altering substances”. The SLAA program acknowledges that those who qualify for membership through a desire to stop living out a pattern of sex and love addiction, do not always struggle with substance use disorders. Therefore, the program suggests members work with a sponsor to identify different categories of bottom-line addictive behaviors, “self-defined activities which [members] refrain from in order to experience physical, mental, emotional, sexual and spiritual wholeness.” Bottom lines differentiate *Destructive Behaviors, Addictive Patterns, Accessory Behaviors, and Healthy Behaviors*, allowing for a dimensional perspective that departs from the (understandable) absolutism found in AA and NA.

These aspects of existing groups pave the way for our recognition of a role for the intentional use of psychedelics in the context of twelve step-based, spiritual recovery from addiction. We are developing guiding principles to clarify these nuances and put forth several additional ones. For example, that PIR fundamentally serves as a complementary recovery program, and therefore it is suggested that our members remain “active primary qualifiers” of another TSF, including maintaining relationships with a trusting sponsor and support network whom we can openly talk to about our involvement in PIR without fear of judgment or stigmatization.

**TN: Is there a risk that psychedelics will be addictive, especially for those recovering from addiction?**

**KF:** PIR absolutely recognizes the vulnerability of people prone to addiction engaging in any form of drug taking. However, according to surveys on drug use rates, psychedelics make up the smallest percentage of drugs people develop a dependency to. Psychedelics don’t exhibit any of the classic physiological withdrawal syndromes associated with other drugs, and the rapid tolerance they build, combined with the heavy psychological load of the experience itself, keep most people from repeating the experience again too quickly.
That said, I have met people for whom the experiential aspects of psychedelics do seem to compel a psychological dependence. In my view addiction is best understood as a learning disorder, and best defined as repeating a behavior despite mounting negative consequences. It is easy to see how psychedelics could theoretically contribute to this kind of process, but in practice it is rarely seen.

I experimented with psychedelics as a teenager and young adult, without any kind of mentorship, and I sought out the transcendent, mystical experiences typical of high doses. I was not interested in using psychedelics to develop the foundations of a grounded, disciplined approach to daily living. I suspect that this immaturity contributed to my eventual reliance on opiates, as a way of tempering the more manic tendencies I was experiencing from my grandiosely widening personality. Whereas prior to PIR my self-reliance on insights from psychedelic states bordered on self-delusion, through this fellowship I’ve found others I can identify with and have come to treat my experiences with reverence and integrity. Their potential to play a role in my recovery is not approached light-heartedly.

**TN: What unanticipated challenges have emerged that reveal some of the trickier aspects of this work for you?**

**KF:** One of our biggest challenges has been ensuring regular meeting attendance. PIR initially began in New York City as an in-person meeting among friends, but without enough turn-out, the cost of renting a room becomes untenable.

There have been some unexpected issues around public relations. There was a similar meeting prior to PIR my self-reliance on insights from psychedelic states bordered on self-delusion, through this fellowship I’ve found others I can identify with and have come to treat my experiences with reverence and integrity. Their potential to play a role in my recovery is not approached light-heartedly.

**TN: What’s next for PIR?**

**KF:** As the development of psychedelics continue to grow, with indications for use in the treatment of a variety of substance use disorders, including for cocaine, alcohol and nicotine use disorders, we hope that PIR can contribute to a thriving recovery community, by offering an integrated mutual aid group for clinical trial participants, the future patients of legally-prescribed psychedelic treatments, and people aware of psychedelic applications looking to self-experiment.

To work towards realizing this vision, PIR is looking to grow, beginning with developing informational literature, building a web page, and registering as a 501(c)(3).

**References:**


Graduate Student Instructors in the College Classroom
Using Disclosure when Teaching About Diversity
Written by Christina J. Thai, Seini O’Connor, Lydia HaRim Ahn, and Katherine Morales, University of Maryland, College Park

Many graduate students in psychology have opportunities to work as instructors or teaching assistants for undergraduate classes. Whether or not these classes focus exclusively on multicultural psychology, they may provide an opportunity to engage in important conversations regarding diversity. Weaving a rich understanding of diversity into instruction is critical for helping undergraduates develop as more aware members of the community. It is also helpful for graduate students who want to develop further as multiculturally-competent psychologists, in line with the APA’s recently revised Multicultural Guidelines (2017).

While all four of us are graduate student instructors and identify as women, we have different privileged and marginalized identities in terms of race, age, immigration status, and other hidden identities. During this year’s Winter Roundtable on Cultural Psychology and Education at Teachers’ College, Columbia University (February 23-24), we drew on our classroom experiences to lead a roundtable discussion on approaches to teaching about diversity. We structured our discussion around identity disclosure—that is, how instructors talk about their own identities in the classroom. In this brief article, we summarize our discussion, sharing both our own perspectives and some of the insightful views that were offered by roundtable participants.

Approaches to Instructor Identity Disclosure
As captured in the APA’s Multicultural Guidelines (2017), we believe it is essential for graduate student instructors to build awareness of their own identities and how those identities might be salient in each topic they are teaching. After reflecting on our own identities, we used three main strategies to help students think about identity-related power, privilege, and oppression: disclosure of invisible identities, disclosure of identity related experiences, and unpacking our privileged identities.

Making the “invisible” visible
To share an “invisible” marginalized identity we revealed something about ourselves that students may not have already known or perceived. Two of us talked about our own identities as non-citizens and how that influenced our experiences in the U.S. One of us disclosed an invisible disability, and shared experiences of how that affected her learning and emotional health. One of us disclosed explorations around sexual identity and the challenge of accepting uncertainty in a climate where that could be met with great disapproval. One of us disclosed how her (visible) racial identity intersected with her (invisible) socioeconomic status, and how this intersection shaped her early schooling experiences and aspirations.

These disclosures made us feel vulnerable but closer to our students. We believe disclosing helped to deconstruct power imbalances in the classroom, which is in line with APA Multicultural Guideline 5, addressing systemic inequities, and evoked a sense of interpersonal understanding and connection between our students and us. For instance, in response to the instructor’s disability disclosure, one student shared her own emotional difficulties with her peers’ reactions toward her learning disability—sharing that many called it “fake” or “not a real disability.” In response to the instructor’s disclosure of her low socioeconomic status, many students from similar backgrounds shared their experiences with classroom peers.
**Disclosing identity-related experiences**
We also disclosed our experiences related to our visible marginalized identities. For example, three of us shared how, as women of color, we were subject to repeated microaggressions in school and social settings.

Similar to disclosures of invisible identity, we believe these disclosures of personal experiences helped to destabilize the power differential between instructor and students by creating a climate in which openness and sharing could become safer for students. These disclosures also facilitated discussion about how different life experiences—including the absence of negative experiences, or even positive events—could influence attitudes and beliefs, which is in line with APA Multicultural Guideline 2, recognizing that we are all cultural beings. For example, when one of us shared her experience of racial microaggressions, white students expressed their surprise and lack of awareness that these microaggressions were commonplace.

**Unpacking privileged identities**
Finally, we centered our privileged identities and invited students to imagine what our life experiences might have been and how they might have differed for others with less privileged identities. For example, one of us asked her students whether, as a white international student, she was likely to fit the image people had in mind when they made negative statements about immigrants, or if she was likely to have faced difficulties with immigration. This helped to start a discussion about the intersection of racism and attitudes toward immigration, which is in line with APA’s Multicultural Guideline 1, appreciating intersectionality, and helped the instructor learn to model personal recognition and deconstruction of privilege.

**Alternative Perspectives: Potential Pitfalls and Benefits**
When sharing these teaching experiences at the Winter Roundtable, we received mixed feedback. Although we framed our approach in terms of benefits, some participants voiced caution and highlighted the potential pitfalls for instructors who discuss their identities. For example, experienced instructors noted that disclosure of marginalized identities could wear instructors down over time, creating an emotional burden and sense of exhaustion. Rather than disclosing their own experiences, they suggested using vignettes or case examples for a rich learning experience without direct emotional taxation.

Some participants noted the sense of obligation racial minority instructors may feel to teach diversity classes. These instructors may teach out of fear that others with more privileged identities would not teach diversity as well, while also feeling hindered by not being able to teach other courses to further their own professional development.

However, other participants said they also saw benefits to disclosure, particularly as a pedagogical tool and as a means of providing them credibility in the classroom. For instance, one instructor gave an example of teaching a class on sexual identities. In one class, they disclosed their identity and, in the other, they did not. The instructor felt that the students viewed the material differently and were much more engaged when they believed it was coming from an insider perspective, rather than from a (perceived) outsider. Another instructor shared that he always named his marginalized and privileged identities at the start of a teaching semester, in a clear but casual way, which he felt was important for encouraging students to be similarly vulnerable and open. In a similar vein, an experienced instructor said that she always gave students an identity exploration and a reflection exercise at the start of the semester and completed and presented the same assignment herself to signal that all identities were important and influential in the classroom.

**Building Classroom Environments that Welcome Identity Disclosure**
Instructor self-disclosure can create possibilities for new learning—but also discomfort. Each of us faced students who challenged us, and with whom
we struggled to find the best way to connect. For example, one of us had a student who vocalized her concern that the syllabus and teaching environment were not sufficiently neutral or balanced, and said that the class made her strong conservative Christian identity feel consistently underrepresented and marginalized. Another experienced three white male students who asserted that they were marginalized and rejected discussions of white privilege.

We struggled to find a balance between connecting with these students and engaging meaningfully with their viewpoints and being mindful of the way they made students with minority identities feel when they voiced their strong opinions. We wanted students to feel brave, own their perspectives, appreciate their unique strengths (in line with the APA’s Multicultural Guideline 10, a strengths-based approach), and not avoid difficult discussions—but also to feel safe. At the Winter Roundtable, other instructors affirmed the importance of difficult conversations for growth and learning and suggested that all instructors think carefully about the differences between discomfort and safety.

**Concluding Thoughts**

Our experiences of teaching, reflecting on, discussing, and, now, writing about our teaching have been important parts of our growth as graduate students in psychology, and as psychologists aspiring to follow the APA Multicultural Guidelines fully. We feel there are many benefits for both instructors and students in a classroom if instructors disclose and discuss their identities. However, we acknowledge this is most readily done when instructors feel confident, affirmed, and supported as disclosure is an inherently vulnerable approach. Accordingly, we particularly encourage instructors with privileged identities to model self-examination, and to support privileged students to do the same.

**References**


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**SCRA Transitions**

**A Message to Student Members from the Incoming and Outgoing Student Representatives**

**Moving Forward: Introductions and Invitations to Student Members**

*Written by Joy Agner, University of Hawai`i at Mānoa*

Aloha SCRA student members! I am thrilled to be joining the SCRA Executive Committee as the new Student Representative (SR), and would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself and my goals as the incoming SR. I am a fourth-year doctoral student in Community and Cultural Psychology at the University of Hawai`i at Mānoa and an occupational therapist. My research focuses on the betterment of health services and systems to promote patient empowerment and engagement, and I work under the direction of Dr. Jack Barile. My goals as the SR align closely with the work that Jaimelee and Erin have been doing thus far. I plan to:

- Promote funding opportunities for student theses and dissertations
- Increase students’ voice within the SCRA executive committee by raising any concerns, comments, or suggestions that you share with me
• Push SCRA to uplift and support student movements happening across the US (e.g. unionization, support for Dreamers, Title IX policies, diversity committees and scholarships, and support for students with disabilities)
• Encourage visibility of community and cultural psychology to undergraduates
• Promote opportunities for student publications (consider submitting a column to the student section of TCP!)
• Further develop funding opportunities for national and international students to participate in the Biennial
• Design fun and meaningful Biennial events for students geared towards networking and professional development

Honestly, I have been inspired by each and every community psychology graduate student I have met. We are dedicating our lives to making our countries and communities better! However, we need academic and financial support from our mentors, our institutions, and also our national organization to be successful. If you have ideas about how SCRA can better support students, or if you would like to get involved in any of the efforts I mentioned above, please don’t hesitate to reach out. Jaimelee Behrendt-Mihalski and Erin Godly-Reynolds, thank you for your service, advocacy, and accomplishments for the student members thus far.

Looking Back: Reflections on Two Years as a Student Representative
Written by Jaimelee Behrendt-Mihalski, University of North Carolina at Charlotte

Over the past two years, I have had the honor of being a SCRA Student Representative. While the role came with some challenges, it has been my pleasure to serve, and I have learned so much. Thinking back, I managed three student research grant cycles, attended bimonthly Executive Committee meetings, and advocated for funding student initiatives through the budget process and at the Mid-Winter Meeting. In addition, I spearheaded a fundraising plan, contributed to the membership survey, coordinated travel awards for the 2017 Biennial, hosted a student social at the 2017 Biennial, and interacted with students in many additional ways, such as sharing resources and information about how to be more involved with SCRA.

My tenure as a SCRA Student Representative gave me the opportunity to take the lead on and participate in several capacity building initiatives: revamping the student research award’s request for proposals and scoring rubric, examining SCRA’s current fundraising practices and recommending others and, working on a student needs assessment that was eventually merged with the membership survey. These various tasks allowed me to look introspectively at SCRA and the Student Representative role. Specifically, I took on the task of editing materials for the student research grants because previous materials did not align with SCRA’s mission and goals, and we wanted to ensure that SCRA was rewarding students whose research is firmly situated within community psychology. In addition, the fundraising initiative allowed me to see how SCRA members give to the organization, how SCRA can better track and report fundraising efforts, and other potential mechanisms SCRA can use to fundraise. While many of the report’s recommendations are on hold until SCRA receives additional guidance from the American Psychological Association (APA), SCRA now has the beginnings of fundraising plan that can be used to secure additional funding for various initiatives—and, specifically of interest to me, initiatives that cater to student members. Finally, this past year, I was part of an effort assessing the needs of students and SCRA’s capacity to serve them through a pilot needs assessment at Southeast ECO in Miami. This effort eventually merged with the membership survey, and results from this survey will inform an outward approach to serving students over the next Student Representative term.
Being exposed to various students' research through SCRA's student research grants has been one of my favorite parts of being Student Representative. In the three student research grant cycles I administered, we received many high-quality and impactful proposals from community psychologists in training, many of whom were requesting support for their dissertation research. It has been a pleasure reading these and working with grant awardees over the course of their milestone projects. In the future, I hope more master’s level students will submit proposals and student research grant awardees can better represent the diversity of SCRA. In addition, I hope the Student Representative role can better reflect SCRA’s diversity going forward and our Student Representatives can facilitate more opportunities for interested students to get involved. In the past year, Erin and I enjoyed collaborating with Cultural, Ethnic, and Racial Affairs (CERA) members to improve the mentoring section of the membership survey. Moving forward, I hope these, and other relationships will continue to be nurtured and will foster a more diverse student presence.

In conclusion, I want to thank the SCRA students who elected me to this position, as well as the SCRA Executive Committee for supporting me over the past two years and giving me a space to grow as a community psychologist. I would also like to extend a special thanks to Erin Godly-Reynolds for all her work this year, and I wish her and Joy Agner luck in the coming term.

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**SCRA Member Spotlight**

*Edited by Dominique Thomas,*

*University of Michigan*

The SCRA Member Spotlight is a new way for us to engage our members and highlight great works! Each issue will we solicit submissions of accomplishments. We especially would like students, early career scholars, and practitioners to submit their accomplishments and work. Submission can include but are certainly not limited to:

- New jobs
- Post-docs
- Promotions
- Thesis/Dissertation Defenses
- Newly published journal articles, books, chapters
- Podcasts, blogs, news items that are by or about you
- Certifications or other credentials
- Retirement
- Grants
- Awards
- Successful/ongoing projects
- New projects of community initiatives

If you are interested in submitting for the next issue, please click this [link](#) and fill out the form. We hope to hear from you!

**Deniza Alieva (Laboratorio de Redes Personales y Comunidades (LRPC), Universidad de Sevilla)** defended her doctoral dissertation on the experiences of Russian tourists in Spain, under the supervision of Doctor Isidro Maya Jariego. In her research, Deniza Alieva examines intercultural experiences of tourists, combining social network analysis and community psychology.

**Kyrah Brown (University of Texas at Arlington)** After two years of working in practice as an evaluation consultant, she accepted an offer for a tenure-track Assistant Professor position at the University of Texas at Arlington. Kyrah will be joining the newly established public health program within the Department of Kinesiology.
Urmitapa Dutta (University of Massachusetts Lowell) was promoted (with tenure) to Associate Professor.

Natalie Kivell (University of Miami) defended her dissertation entitled “Reraming the role of size in transformation: A Participatory Theory Development study with community organizers and activists.” Her research was funded through a 1st place award from the NSR SCRA Dissertation Grant, and the Alma H. Young Emerging Scholar Award from the Urban Affairs Association. Through the development of a new participatory theory development methodology, she and community organizers co-developed a theory of transformation to address structural injustices in our communities.

Gloria Levin was recently elected to the Board of Directors of the Glen Echo (Maryland) Fire Department. This fire and rescue department combines county government-paid career staffers and an impassioned group of volunteer EMTs and paramedics. She finds that community psychology skills are a vital addition to the (attorney-heavy) citizen Board. Contact Gloria (glorialevin@verizon.net) if you have experience with fire and rescue departments.

Cathryn Richmond (Virginia Commonwealth University) was elected as a 2017-2018 VCU Ambassador for APA Campus Ambassador Program (CAP). She was elected to the following roles: Campus Representative, Society for the Psychology of Women (Division 35) and Communications Engagement Specialist Student Member-at-Large, Society for the Psychology of Sexual Orientation and Gender Diversity (Division 44). She was the recipient of the APA Division 45 Student Travel Grant, APA Division 44 Bisexual Issues Committee Student Travel Grant, and the APA Division 35 Section 4 Student Travel Grant.

Melissa Strompolis (Children’s Trust of South Carolina) started the South Carolina Adverse Childhood Experiences Initiative - secured/leveraged dollars for training (over 75 volunteers), data (population-level for 5 years; numerous publications), community-based action (funding and tools for local coalitions), and policy (interviews with policymakers).

https://scchildren.org/research/adverse-childhood-experiences/

Dominique Thomas (University of Michigan) started a new position as a Scholarship-to-Practice Fellow at the National Center for Institutional Diversity.

Traci L Weinstein (Rhode Island College) started a brand new position as Assistant Professor of Community Psychology at RIC, the first such position at the college. The institution is committed to incorporating community psychology into their curriculum, programming, and academic life, with new experiences to link the college and the local community in Providence and surrounding areas. This represents an exciting new opportunity for growth in the field.

Susan M. Wolfe (Susan Wolfe and Associates, LLC) Ann Webb Price (Community Evaluation Solutions), and Jon Meyer (JLM Research) were recently selected as the evaluators for the Hogg Foundation’s three-year, $2-milion Well-Being in Rural Communities Initiative. Grants were awarded to organizations serving Morris, Bastrop, Nacogdoches, Victoria, and Brooks Counties in Texas to create or build on an existing community collaborative. Grantees are required to demonstrate commitment to shared learning, involve historically excluded groups, and address the need for inclusive leadership that does not perpetuate existing inequities. Collaboratives are expected to use a population health approach to address conditions that contribute to mental health disparities. Each community will determine their own path toward mental health equity and community wellness. The team will work closely with the program coordinators, Sherrye Willis and staff at Alliance for Greater Works, and the Hogg Foundation staff.

In 2018, there were 23 school shootings that took place in high school or college settings resulting in injury or death (Source: https://www.cnn.com/2018/03/02/us/school-shootings-2018-list-trnd/index.html). When looking more specifically at gun violence that takes place at an elementary, middle, or high school, there were 11 cases of school gun violence, making 2018 one of the most violent years to date. The Washington Post study found that approximately 130 students, educators, staff and family members have been killed in assaults during school hours, and another 254 have been injured. Their analysis found that 62.6% of students exposed to gun violence at school since 1999 were children of color, and almost all those shootings were targeted or accidental, rather than random acts of violence. Many people who commit these acts do so with a gun they obtained from their own home or from friends’ or relatives’ homes. Although we might like to believe there is a certain “type” of person who carries out extreme acts of violence in schools, there is no typical shooter and most do not have a mental illness.

Perhaps in large part as a reaction to violence in schools, many US schools have adopted “zero tolerance policies.” These policies apply to even minor infractions to school rules and often result in out-of-school suspension and/or the criminalization of behavior that could be handled within the school setting. Therefore, an unfortunate result for some students is referral to juvenile court and entanglement in the legal process. Most schools today routinely have police present in school in the form of an SRO (School Resource Officer). Some studies have shown that zero tolerance policies disproportionally effect students of color and students with disabilities. Out-of-school time is positively associated with academic failure and decreases a student’s likelihood of graduating from high school. Some have termed the implementation of zero tolerance policies and the disproportionate negative effect on students of color and those with disabilities as “The School to Prison Pipeline” (APA, 2008; Heitzeg, 2009).

*Creating Restorative Schools* offers an alternative where relationships and the ecology around school is changed. Positive support and practices and an environment where power is shared with students take the place of punitive zero-tolerance practices. When restorative practices (RPs) are fully implemented, according to RJE (Restorative Justice in Education) proponents, the way students, teachers, staff, parents and the larger community relate to one another is transformed. The central tenant is trust and the goal of RJE is to create a just and equitable school that works for all students.

Martha Brown, an experienced educator and nationally recognized Restorative Justice (RJ) consultant, presents an overview of RJ and how it works in practice through the lens of her qualitative study of Grant and Davis, two middle schools in the Oakland Unified School District. Brown begins with a comprehensive yet concise overview of the history of zero tolerance policies then introduces the basic tenets of RJE practices. Using the voice of principals, staff and most importantly students, Brown provides insight into the challenges of changing the culture of a school to shift from traditional and punitive approaches to a RJ approach. The book presents the culmination of her dissertation study in which she uses surveys, observation, key informant interviews and “Circles” in order to enter in and understand how two similar but fundamentally different schools implement Restorative Practices and provides the reader insight into their successes and challenges. Brown presents an impassioned case for changing “the way we do schools” and offers RJE as a solution to many of the problems in public schools today.

Current buzz words and practices in the field of education include “Social and emotional Learning (SEL),” “School Climate,” and “Positive Behavioral Intervention and Support (PBIS).” Brown discusses
SEL and PBIS and explains how RJE is a wholistic method that ideally includes both PBIS and SEL practices. When fully implemented, the ultimate effect is to fundamentally change the way students and teachers experience school and presumably result in positive academic and behavioral outcomes for students.

Brown, in her introduction, provides an overview of the four stages of implementing school-wide restorative practices and makes a strong argument that implementation fidelity is crucial and if not done properly, can do damage to the very children it is intended to help. Lack of implementation fidelity, Brown argues, can result in mixed-messages and create an environment in which students’ mistrust of adults is confirmed. Whether or not schools will commit to a 3 to 5-year process of implementation, along with the funding to support full implementation is debatable. But the main theme of the book is that this long view is an absolute requirement if the benefits of RJE are to be manifested. Failure to implement with fidelity will leave those involved, both teachers and parents, feeling as if RJE doesn’t work for everyone or that worse discrimination continues but in less harsh ways.

Brown’s argument is that only full implementation of restorative practices can provide a remedy to the harm caused by more than 30 years of zero tolerance policies. She contends that it is relationships and the restorative justice community that grows from the implementation of restorative practices that is the remedy for school violence, not police. In the face of so many school shootings, this may be hard for the parents of murdered children to believe. And yet, according to Brown, many schools are implementing restorative justice practices (RJP), many led by communities of color.

Dr. Martha Brown is a researcher, consultant, evaluator, and staunch advocate of restorative justice. She earned her doctorate in Curriculum and Instruction from Florida Atlantic University and studied restorative practices in the United Kingdom. She is the lead instructor for Simon Fraser University’s Continuing Studies Restorative Justice Certificate Program where she facilitates education programs in the United States and internationally. She writes and presents on restorative justice and correctional education, and in 2016 founded RAJE Consulting, Intl., providing planning, evaluation and consulting services to schools, school districts and other organizations focusing on restorative justice and art education.

Creating Restorative Schools, begins with an excellent and clear forward by Katherine Evans, PhD., Associate Professor of Education at Eastern Mennonite University. This introduction is needed as while Chapters 1 and 2 provide a compelling history of the history of zero tolerance policies, it is not until Chapter 3, that Brown provides the necessary foundational information for those unfamiliar with RJP, to understand the argument for restorative schools. A list of abbreviations and terms is helpful and provided.

Brown’s dissertation study, which is the basis for the book, used a mixed-method approach. The author conducted key informant interviews, focus groups, observations and surveys in both schools. She chose the schools because they were already in the “early” stages of implementation, student populations represented different demographic groups, and school resources available varied in each school. The leadership styles of the schools’ principles and the reaction from school staff was different as well.

Brown’s book is strongest when describing both schools, especially when describing the leadership and reactions of the staff and students to implementation. Brown makes a clear link between RJE and injustice and equity. She challenges educators and readers to recognize and resolve the historical injustices inflicted on students of color, students with disabilities, the LGBTQIA and other marginalized youth. She argues this is most effectively accomplished when RJE is fully implemented and not just a piecemeal application of specific techniques such as PBIS or SEL.

The book could be strengthened if it included research and evaluation studies that demonstrate that restorative practices are effective and result in fair and just discipline for all students, and improved academic, social and behavioral outcomes. Brown’s
largely qualitative study of Grant and Davis’s efforts to implement restorative practices also points to the need for more research on the effectiveness of RJ practices and specifically, to more closely study factors that affect implementation.

Creating Restorative Schools would be useful for community psychologists working in school settings, those who conduct research or evaluation in education, or those interested in justice, equity, systems, policy change, and issues related to youth. The book provides a service by framing of issues related to equity and justice as applied in education settings. Given the many PBIS programs and SEL initiatives being implemented in schools, to say nothing of the number of school shootings happening in the United States, Creating Restorative Schools is a timely read.

References

Editor’s note: This issue’s contribution comes from Ann Webb Price, PhD, a community psychologist, evaluator, and President of Community Evaluation Solutions, based in the Atlanta Georgia metro area. CES serves nonprofits, foundations and federally and state-funded prevention and social change programs.

From Our Members
Edited by Susan M. Wolfe, Susan Wolfe and Associates

Using Fiction in the Undergraduate Community Psychology Course
Written by David S. Glenwick, Fordham University, John N. Moritsugu, Pacific Lutheran University, Andrew E. Rasmussen, Fordham University, and Philip T. Sicker, Fordham University

EDITORS’ NOTE: This article originally appeared in the Winter 2017 TCP issue. The print version omitted a segment of the article. We are including the article in its entirety in this issue of TCP. The online version of the article is Winter 2017, Volume 50, Number 1 in the Education Connection column.

A number of diverse types of audio and visual resources have been recommended and employed as adjunctive/supplemental instructional materials in undergraduate community psychology courses. For example, the instructor’s manuals for two of the leading texts in the field (Kloos et al., 2012; Moritsugu, Vera, Wong, & Duffy, 2013) suggest the following as possibilities: movies (e.g., Do the Right Thing, And the Band Played On), videos (e.g., An Ounce of Prevention; videos on women in various cultural contexts), television programs (e.g., Eyes on the Prize, episodes of Desperate Housewives and Friday Night Lights), websites (e.g., related to community services in various countries), newspaper articles (e.g., from the Tuesday Science section of the New York Times, local articles related to community issues), magazines, and songs.

The benefits of using literature (e.g., fiction and memoirs) in the teaching of psychology have frequently been explicated (e.g., Wheeler, 2009), especially with regard to personality (e.g., Stone & Stone, 1990), abnormal (e.g., Christler, 1999), and developmental (e.g., Boyatzis, 1992) psychology. However, to date there has been scant discussion about utilizing literature in community psychology.
courses. The present article is aimed at illustrating the use of fiction (in this case the novel *Push*) in the undergraduate community psychology classroom. This example hopefully can serve as encouragement for instructors to similarly and creatively introduce such works into the syllabus.

**The Assignment**

Fordham University’s undergraduate community psychology course is a fairly standard one-semester survey of the field. The *Push* assignment is given by the instructor (the first author) at a point in the course at which approximately two-thirds (i.e., Chapter 1-8 in the Kloos et al. [2012] text) of the material has been covered. The students are asked to read the book and then “write a one- to two-page paper in which [they] show, in detail, how the novel (incidents, themes, characters, etc.) illustrates constructs, terms, models, theories, etc. from community psychology.”

*Push* (Sapphire, 1997) has been the work chosen because it is short (140 pages), readable (easily read in 2 hours), and rich in examples of community psychology concepts — three important criteria in selecting literary works for this type of exercise. In raw and graphic language (a trigger warning is given by the instructor) and from the first-person perspective, it tells the story of Precious Jones, a 16-year-old African American girl living in Harlem, NYC, in 1987. Sexually abused by her father and physically and emotionally abused by her mother, extremely overweight, and illiterate, Precious is directed to an alternative school. There, in a small class and with a caring teacher, as well as in an HIV-positive adolescent support group, she develops a more positive sense of herself, her abilities, and her potential. The novel ends on a hopeful but cautiously realistic note, with Precious nurturing her young (second) child and advancing academically toward earning her GED. (*Push* was subsequently made into the feature-length film *Precious* [Daniels et al., 2009].)

The students have a week to complete the assignment. Their papers are graded on a 3-point scale (check+, check, and check−), based on both quantity (number of concepts accurately noted) and quality (richness of the illustrations of the concepts). Points earned are factored by the instructor into the final course grade (similar to what is frequently done with extra-credit assignments). In addition to the written papers, a class session is set aside for discussion of the book and of students’ reactions to it.

**Findings**

The assignment has, to date, been given to four cohorts of students (N = 45). Table 1 presents the frequencies of the examples offered by students in their papers. The 14 categories were selected by the instructor as ones reflecting important concepts from class lectures and the text. Each student example was coded by the instructor as belonging to one of the categories. A particular category could be scored only once for each student. Thus, for instance, illustrations of Kelly’s ecological principles and Moos’ social climate dimensions in the same paper would be scored once under “Ecological models/approaches.”

To obtain an interrater reliability estimate, eight of the papers were scored by a second doctoral-level community psychologist. Of the 28 examples detected and categorized by the first rater, 26 were similarly detected and categorized by the second rater, for an interrater agreement of 93%.

The 45 students generated a total of 151 examples (M = 3.4). As Table 1 indicates, the most frequently cited concept was social support (e.g. types or sources of support), mentioned by more than half of the students. For example, “Ms. Rain [the alternative school teacher] provided Precious with emotional, tangible, and informational support.” Sense of community (e.g., elements of the McMillan and Chavis model) was the next most frequent category, offered by almost half of the students. Illustratively, “there is a clear sense of membership and belonging between the girls at the alternative school, as they all have the shared goals of overcoming abuse and succeeding academically.” Instance of stressors (16 students) and coping (14 students) were also provided fairly often.
Because of the commonality of much of the subject matter typically covered in the introductory community psychology course, one might expect some agreement across sites in the distributions obtained by this type of assignment. It is important to note, though, that the particular distribution obtained is likely also heavily contextually driven. That is, it probably would vary due to (a) differential emphasis of materials across instructors and texts, (b) the point in the syllabus at which the assignment is made, and (c) the specific literary work chosen. Because of these factors, there likely would be limited generalizability of distributions.

**Table 1: Frequency of Examples of Community Psychology Concepts.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social support</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sense of community</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stressors</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coping</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecological models/approaches</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protective/risk factors</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecological levels</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diversity/oppression</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternative settings</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blaming the victim/fundamental</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>attribution error</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Core values</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empowerment/competence development</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helper therapy principle</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attending to unheard voices</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. N = 45.*

**Discussion**

Bringing fiction into community psychology courses has benefits for both students and instructors. For students, it makes abstract concepts more concrete and real. As one student wrote, “*Push* brought to life what we have learned in class.” In the words of another student: “Nothing was sugarcoated by Precious, so why should it be for the rest of us? The very reason why I was initially hesitant about this book is the same reason why so many people ignored Precious for so long, because what you don’t know won’t bother or hurt you.”

For instructors, the assignment provides an additional mechanism for assessing students’ grasp of community psychology concepts. Both true positives (i.e., accurate application of terms to aspects of the book) and false positives (i.e., inaccurate illustrations) are revealed. With respect to the latter (i.e., misidentifications), for instance, one student erroneously cited Precious’s gradually broadened perspectives on different beliefs and sexual preferences as an illustration of multidimensionality in social support networks. Finally, a low frequency in a particular category (i.e., the absence of identification of a concept) might suggest that perhaps that concept has been insufficiently or ineffectively presented. For example, although *Push* contains many instances of Precious being viewed by others as the cause of her problems, only 6 of the 45 students provided an example of blaming the victim.

Although this article has focused on one particular work, a number of short novels, novellas, and short stories could be profitably read, written about, and discussed in community psychology courses. Table 2 presents examples of these, organized thematically. The wide range of possible pertinent works can underscore for students that, although the specific expression of community psychology concepts depends on time and setting, the concepts themselves are applicable across centuries and cultures.

Fiction provides a means of acquiring insights into and reflecting upon the human experience that complements the quantitative and qualitative research of community service. Though very different from one another, each is a valid way of knowing. Integrating the two in the undergraduate community psychology course, we can productively enrich our students’ understanding and appreciation of both.
### Table 2: Possible Works of Fiction for Community Psychology Courses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Interrelationships between the individual and the community | *Winesburg, Ohio*  
*Dubliners*  
*The Man That Corrupted Hadleyburg*  
*The Scarlet Letter* | Sherwood Anderson  
James Joyce  
Mark Twain  
Nathaniel Hawthorne | short story collection  
short story collection  
short story  
novel |
| Social support                                  | *Babette’s Feast*  
*My Antonia*  
*Daisy Miller*  
*Tonio Kröger*  
*Bartleby the Scrivener* | Isak Dinesen  
Willa Cather  
Henry James  
Thomas Mann  
Herman Melville | short story  
novel  
novella  
novella  
short story |
| Positive community support                      |                               |                  |                    |
| Support deprivation                             |                               |                  |                    |
| Diversity/oppression                            | *The Awakening*  
*Sonny’s Blues*  
*Things Fall Apart*  
*The Monster* | Kate Chopin  
James Baldwin  
Chinua Achebe  
Stephen Crane | novel  
short story  
novel  
novella |
| Gender                                          |                               |                  |                    |
| Race                                            |                               |                  |                    |
| Culture                                         |                               |                  |                    |
| Physical disability                             |                               |                  |                    |
| Empowerment/competence development              | *Their Eyes Were Watching God*  
*Barn Burning* | Zora Neale Hurston  
William Faulkner | novel  
short story |

### References


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Call to Action. Applying Core Competencies to Prevent Climate Change
Intervening in Communities to Reduce Carbon Emissions
Written by Christopher Corbett

Introduction
In Part I: Community Psychology and the Resist Movement (Corbett, 2017), I made the case that there is a moral obligation to resist our elected leaders when they make decisions clearly contrary to the public health and welfare (p. 17). The specific case cited was President Trump’s withdrawal of the U.S. from the United Nations Paris Agreement on Climate Change. In Part I I concluded that Community Psychologists and all citizens concerned about climate change are obligated to push to implement the Paris Agreement (p. 18). Part II puts Part I into practice by issuing a “Call to Action” which lays out a specific path to practically implement the Paris Agreement by applying various “core competencies”.

Background
On October 5, 2016, the United Nations Paris Agreement on Climate Change was approved by the majority of nations bringing the agreement into effect on November 4, 2016 (UN Secretary General 2016). According to the UN Secretary General (UNSG) climate impacts are devastating lives, livelihoods, and prospects for a better future (p. 1). He urges all governments and sectors of society to fully implement the Paris Agreement by taking urgent action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, strengthen climate resilience, and support the most vulnerable in adapting to climate impacts (p. 2).

Given global consensus on grave impacts and urgency to act, the time is now for all concerned with climate change to empower citizen action and participation at state, region, and community levels to implement the Paris Agreement and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Advancing Community Psychology’s Mission and Values with Core Competencies
The global field of Community Psychology (CP) is strongly committed to research and social action, promoting health and empowerment and preventing problems at all levels. Core values of Community Psychologists (CPs) often include: a concern for all members of communities, particularly including for harmful environmental conditions, as well as a strong commitment to prevention, empowerment and citizen participation (Heller et al. 1984).

The interest of Community Psychologists in preventing climate change is longstanding. To illustrate, it was the subject of a Special Section of the American Journal of Community Psychology (see volume, 47, June 2011, pages 349-426). One key conclusion of this special section was that it will take practitioners, researchers and activists to join together to address global climate change (p. 352). The Special Section urged the field to break its silence and find solutions “to the biggest crisis humans have ever faced”, declaring the Special Section as a “call to action” (p. 352).

The essential role of Community Psychology practitioners is increasingly apparent with the consensus achieved and issuance of “core competencies” as described in Dalton and Wolfe’s column (2012). Those core competencies help provide a detailed roadmap for practitioners, researchers and activists to intervene successfully in communities. Secondly, the value of the core competencies is well described in two Special Issues of the Global Journal of Community Psychology Practice, Volume 7(4), Dec. 2016 and Volume 8(1), March 2017.

As applied to the global crisis of the earth’s warming, the application of the community psychology core practice competencies becomes critical to unblocking the critical path to prevent climate change. That is, certain core competencies have been identified as enabling citizen participation
in reducing greenhouse gas emissions (Corbett 2017). Specifically, the following core competencies described in Dalton and Wolfe’s column (2012) are identified as playing an essential role in preventing and mitigating the harmful impacts of climate change: Empowerment (#2), Prevention and Health Promotion (#7), Public Policy Analysis, Development & Advocacy (# 15), and Community Education, Information, Dissemination & Building Awareness (# 16). Many roles exist for practitioners, researchers and citizens to help prevent climate change (Corbett 2017).

**Scientific Consensus on Climate Change**

Multiple peer-reviewed studies published in scientific journals assert 97% (or more) of actively publishing climate scientists agree climate warming trends are “extremely likely” due to human activities (NASA 2017). The report goes on to cite excerpts from supporting statements from 18 scientific institutions (p. 2-9) providing clear scientific consensus the earth is warming. The American Psychological Association noted this scientific consensus was earlier (APA Resolution, 2011), with global climate change analyzed in detail (APA Report 2009) and identified as one of the greatest challenges facing humanity in this century (Swim et al. 2011). While the vast majority of nations globally have reached consensus, the Paris Agreement opponents are Nicaragua, Syria, and the U.S. (Rucker & Johnson 2017). Clearly, consensus exists among scientists and nations that climate change results from human behavior or activity.

**Urgent Action Warranted**

Given the UNSG’s conclusions, action is immediately needed by all those concerned about climate change. Yet on June 1, 2017 President Trump announced U.S. withdrawal from the Paris Agreement (Viscidi 2017), which only increases the urgency for action. Ironically, the U.S. is the leading emitter of carbon emissions on a per-capita basis (Kortenhorst 2017) and imposes serious burdens on the poor (McKibben 2007). The U.S. withdrawal gravely jeopardizes the global progress in fighting carbon emissions achieved in the Paris Agreement.

Fortunately, the pursuit of more renewable energy to cut carbon emissions is often driven by state and local policies, practices, and incentives where the opportunity for citizen participation and demand for renewable energy largely resides. Urgent action is needed where opportunities are greatest: at state and local levels, where grassroots advocacy is critical for substantial progress to occur. Specifically, this requires policy intervention at the local level, education of local policymakers including on needs of low-income customers and education of citizens on their rights and opportunities to expand or choose existing renewable energy options.

**Recommended Actions**

Concerned citizen action can advance implementation of the UN Paris. The UNSG recommends all governments and all sectors of society urgently act to cut greenhouse gas emissions, strengthen climate resistance and support the most vulnerable in adapting to climate change. Given Community Psychology’s values, all bachelor, master and doctoral level CPs are well positioned to intervene at the state, region, and local community levels, including towns, cities and villages. Community Psychologists are well suited to play various roles that include providing policy consultation; and promoting and empowering citizen participation in renewable energy decision making through education and advocacy, with particular attention to the needs of low-income citizens and those most deeply impacted by climate change.

The urgent need for intervention is due to the profound shift from historic regulated monopoly service where government decision making largely excluded residential customers from participation and decision making, to a relatively unregulated regime where customers can exercise renewable energy decision making. That is, many customers, depending on jurisdiction, can arrange their own renewable source of energy—which often requires they understand costs and rates, sign contracts and apply for rebates such as federal, state and local tax incentives, if they are to protect their own financial interests. Intervention must also include advocacy on behalf of low-income customers to ensure that
they are provided understandable and affordable opportunities, so they also may participate in renewable energy decision making.

**Conclusion**

The profound implications of climate change present a grave global crisis that justifies urgent action by all Community Psychologists, organizations, and citizens concerned about climate change. The United States’ apparent abrogation of its obligations under the Paris Agreement exacerbates the crisis and increases the urgency for action.

Consistent with Community Psychology’s values and core competencies, all those concerned about climate change are needed to intervene at the grassroots level, with an emphasis on prevention, to reduce carbon emissions through policy intervention at state/regional levels, as well as local levels (towns, cities, villages). Such interventions include promoting citizen participation by all community members through advocacy, education, and empowerment, with emphasis on low income and the most vulnerable citizens adversely impacted by climate change.

There is an urgent need for "boots on the ground" -- Community Psychology practitioners and researchers, as well as citizens have critical roles to play. Such roles include advising and intervening at the state and local level; drafting model policies where they are lacking at the local level; researching best practice policies from model jurisdictions; educating policy makers and citizens through Letters to the Editor and Op-Eds; and modeling renewable energy choice yourself. A list of specific roles, policy interventions, Letter to Editor and Op-Ed examples, and local renewable energy policy, with reference to case studies of four states’ low-income programs is contained in Corbett (2017) and provides a valuable starting point for all who are concerned about climate change--and willing to intervene to prevent, or mitigate, the grave environmental consequences of human imposed climate change.

*Christopher Corbett, MA Community Psychology, is a former government regulator employed in the regulation of N.Y. State’s gas and electric utilities and author of “Accountability and Ethics in Nonprofit Organizations”, Global Encyclopedia of Public Administration, Public Policy and Governance (2018, Springer International Publishing).*

**References**


The Virtues of Green Spaces and Community Gardens
A Natural Way to Engage with the Community
Written by August John Hoffman, Metropolitan State University

Gardens have long been associated with psychological, emotional, and spiritual serenity and relaxation. In many ways, they serve as sanctuaries that help individuals escape the anxiety, stress and trauma that can exist in urban dwelling (Guerlain & Campbell, 2016). Gardens provide nourishment not only for our physical bodies, but also for our mind and soul. Community gardens have existed for centuries as a means of producing healthy foods typically in the aftermath of some form of natural (or human-related) crisis or disaster (Okvat & Zautra, 2011). During WWI and WWII, so-called “Victory Gardens” quickly developed in the United States as an efficient process for Americans to produce easily obtainable foods for their families and donate their excess food (i.e., non-perishables) to soldiers serving overseas. By 1944 an estimated 18 to 20 million families were participating in some form of a community gardening project and were producing an estimated 40% vegetables in the United States (Smithsonian Gardens, n.d.). As food production became scarcer as WWII progressed, many home owners in the United States tore out their nicely manicured lawns and planted vegetable gardens as a primary source of food. Additionally, First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt planted the first vegetable garden at the White House lawn in 1943 and thus vegetable gardens were now being described as more of a civic responsibility and “patriotic duty” among civilians.

Modern Community Gardens: Bringing Groups Together for a Common Cause

From a psychological perspective, the existence of community gardens provided individuals with a strong sense of comradery and cohesiveness during periods of food shortages, drought, and climate change (Harris, 2009). Recent research has consistently shown how groups of individuals can actually improve communication and reduce potential conflict with each other through the mechanisms of increased contact and interdependency (Al Ramiah, & Hewstone, 2013). When communities provide individuals with opportunities to increase contact with each other through the development of mutually beneficial programs (i.e., community gardens, green spaces, and urban forestry programs), many positive psychosocial benefits begin to emerge. The first thing that develops is that previously held negative stereotypes are debunked as increased contact affords individuals to discover that they actually have more in common with each other than...
previously determined. Al Ramiah and Hewstone (2013) also discovered in their research that the propensity for violence was significantly reduced among groups that historically have remained politically and diametrically opposed from one another, such as Israeli and Palestinian students. Specifically, as contact among the groups remained consistent over time during the participation of a peace program, prejudice within the groups diminished and was replaced by trust. In a similar way, community gardens provide community members with an ideal opportunity to work collaboratively with each other while providing healthy and nutritious foods for low-income families that also reside in the community.

**SCRA Grant: Community Gardening at Boy’s Totem Town**

In 2017 I was awarded a SCRA mini-grant ($750) that was designed to help construct a vegetable garden for a boy’s detention center (Boy’s Totem Town) in St. Paul, MN. The youths living in the detention center were adolescents between the ages of 14 and 18 and were living in the facility as an alternative to incarceration. In May 2017, we used the funds from the SCRA grant and began the work of cultivating, weeding, planting and harvesting the vegetables. Many of the youths in the Boy’s Totem Town facility wanted to participate in the gardening program but they had little experience in working collaboratively on an outdoor gardening project. Over the next five months (from May through September) I witnessed an incredible transformation among the youths involving interdependency and group cohesiveness. In the beginning of the gardening project, the 15 youths remained ethnically polarized and lacked group efficiency in the development of the project. There was frequent criticism and conflict within the group because the youths had not learned to cooperate with each other nor did they understand the benefits of interdependency and collective self-efficacy. Over the next several weeks the boys realized that to grow the vegetables they would need to work together. They began to develop a coordinated effort in creating groups of three to complete the more physically demanding projects (i.e., weeding and hand-cultivating with a shovel). The boys also realized that when they worked together within a coordinated and cooperative process, the work was completed at a faster rate and they could begin planting vegetables of their choice. Additionally, as the foods were gradually harvested in the later months of the summer (i.e., cabbages, tomatoes, peppers, and corn), they participated in preparing the foods (i.e., salsas, coleslaw, and squash) that they had grown in the kitchen of the Boy’s Totem Town facility. At the end of the growing season we conducted short interviews with each of the participants in the Boy’s Totem Town garden and they indicated they enjoyed preparing and growing their foods in the community garden and they indicated that they would be participating in future community service programs like community gardening.

Humans have evolved with a need not only to share experiences in an outdoor environment such as green spaces (White, Alcock, Wheeler, & Depledge, 2013), but we also have evolved with a basic need to cooperate and interact with each other. Additionally – we need to be provided with opportunities to share our skills with one another. The existence of community gardens and green spaces provides us with a unique opportunity to understand one another and discover the numerous ways we can share our skills in the development of a more natural and resilient environment.

**References**


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I Am Not Alone in My Struggle

**Importance of Online Communities for Turner Syndrome**

*Written by: Kristin M. Schramer and Kathryn D. Lafreniere, University of Windsor*

The growth of online communities, communities in which members communicate primarily through electronic means, has led to interest in their ability to develop a sense of community in their members, often referred to as Sense of Virtual Community (SOVC; Abfalter, Zanglia, & Mueller, 2012). There is evidence that members of online communities develop SOVC similarly to face-to-face (FTF) communities in line with the four dimensions of Sense of Community proposed by McMillan and Chavis (1986), which include: membership, influence, integration and fulfillment of needs, and shared emotional connection. Online support communities can transcend geographical, physical, and financial barriers to communication among members, and therefore may be important for individuals diagnosed with rare genetic conditions like Turner Syndrome (TS).

TS is characterized by the total or partial loss of the second X chromosome. It is estimated that TS occurs in 1 of every 2,500 live female births. The most common characteristics are depleted levels of estrogen and progesterone leading to amenorrhea, ovarian failure, and infertility, as well as short stature (Bondy, 2007). Because TS is a rare diagnosis, this leads to a geographically disperse community in which individuals often go into adulthood without ever interacting with another individual with TS.

Facebook groups, the Turner Syndrome Society of Canada (TSSC), and the Turner Syndrome Society of the United States (TSSUS), are communities that provide the opportunity for individuals affected by TS to connect. As with any Facebook group, members of TS Facebook groups can communicate through posting and responding to questions or comments on the group’s “wall.” Group members can also like or dislike other members’ posts and can send friend requests and private messages to other group members (Facebook, n.d.).

TSSC (n.d.) and TSSUS (n.d.) are national organizations that provide support for individuals affected by TS for a yearly membership fee which varies, based on the type of membership purchased (i.e., individual, family, or professional). These groups offer the opportunity to participate in FTF interactions through their annual conferences and events held by local support groups. Their webpages provide access to up-to-date research on TS, the ability to pose questions to health professionals, discussion boards, information on local groups and fundraising activities, and online stores. These organizations also maintain active social media accounts on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc. (TSSC, n.d.; TSSUS, n.d.). Published recommendations specific to individuals with TS indicate that early involvement with organizations like TSSUS should be encouraged (Bondy, 2007). However, to the authors’ knowledge, no research has investigated the benefits of belonging to such communities.

**Exploring Online Communities for Turner Syndrome**

To learn about the potential benefits of belonging to TS online communities, members of TS-based Facebook groups, the TSSC, and the TSSUS were recruited through their communities and Facebook posts. Respondents completed an
online survey that included measures of community participation unique to each community, health-related social support (Perceived Health-Related Social Support from Facebook Friends Measure; Oh, Lauckner, Boehmer, Fewins-Bliss, & Li, 2013), perceived level of TS knowledge, and Sense of Virtual Community (Sense of Community Index 2--Virtual Community Version; Abfalter, Zaglia, & Mueller, 2012). Questionnaires were adapted so that measures referred to the participating communities. Nine responses were received from individuals affected by TS who belonged to at least one online TS community. As there were only nine respondents, their responses cannot be generalized and may not be reflective of other community members’ experiences. However, despite the small sample size, we felt that it was important to share these women’s experiences.

All respondents (n = 9) reported that they felt more knowledgeable about TS due to their community membership as they indicated this statement was at least somewhat true. It should be noted that three of these respondents belonged to more than one community for a total of twelve responses (m = 6.08 out of a maximum of 7). This knowledge came from attending FTF events and communication with other community members. All respondents indicated that they participated in their communities (n = 9). FTF activities included attending national or local events (n = 9), while online activities included reading material from their community (e.g., e-mails, posts, and publications; n = 8) and communicating with other community members through online forums (e.g., posing or answering questions; n = 4). FTF events, such as attending TSSC or TSSUS conferences, as well as Facebook groups, were used to keep in touch with others and to form FTF relationships. Participating in FTF activities, such as local chapter events, as well as online activities, such as posting to discussion boards, were used to promote education and awareness about TS.

The mean score of all respondents (n = 7) who completed the adapted Health-Related Social Support from Facebook Friends Measure (Oh et al., 2013) fell above the mid-point of the scale (n = 7) and indicated that they felt the items were at least somewhat true. This demonstrates that respondents generally felt that other community members would provide them with support regarding their health-related needs. It should be noted that three of these respondents belonged to more than one community for a total of ten responses (m = 5.85 out of a maximum of 7). This belief occurred for appraisal, esteem, and emotional support, but not for tangible support. When asked about social support they have provided to other community members, respondents reported providing informational support on health-related issues, tangible support (e.g., giving rides), and emotional support and encouragement. This paralleled the reported types of support respondents indicated they received from their communities, reporting they had received informational support as well as emotional support and encouragement.

Of the seven respondents who completed the Sense of Community Index 2--Virtual Version (Abfalter et al., 2012) five respondents’ scores fell above the mid-point of the scale indicating they mostly or completely agreed with these statements. It should be noted that three of these respondents belonged to more than one community for a total of ten responses (m = 1.89 out of a maximum of 3). Results for each of the subscales were analogous to the overall score. This demonstrates that respondents to this survey perceived a sense of membership and influence over their communities, that these communities fulfilled the needs of their members, and that members felt a shared emotional connection with others in their community. The shared emotional connection subscale had the greatest mean score, which may indicate that the most important aspect of feeling like one is connected to their community involved having quality relationships, sharing similar experiences, and feeling invested in the community.

As stated earlier, these responses should be viewed with caution as they may not be reflective of all members of TS communities, due to the very small sample size and some incomplete questionnaires. Additionally, the benefits of FTF as well as online interaction are entangled within these
communities and therefore are difficult to tease apart. Nonetheless, this preliminary evidence is encouraging, as this study is the first demonstration of the benefits of belonging to communities for individuals affected by TS. Despite being geographically dispersed, these communities promote a sense of community within their members. While the current findings cannot determine how sense of community develops or how it may be related to benefits of belonging to these communities (i.e., knowledge and support), they indicate that these respondents actively participate in their communities and experience benefits which are likely due, at least in part, to being able to connect online with others affected by TS. The ability to connect with others and obtain information from the community electronically allows these individuals with TS to overcome geographical, physical, and financial barriers to connecting with others affected by TS. The importance of such a connection is best exemplified by one respondent’s explanation for participation in her community, “It is a continual reminder that I am not alone in my struggle.”

References
new ideas and new findings. Such distinguished work often challenges prevailing conceptual frameworks, research approaches, and/or empirical results; and

3. A major single contribution or series of significant contributions with an enduring influence on community theory, research and/or action over time.

**Nomination Process.** Individuals may nominate themselves or be nominated by an SCRA member. Nominations consist of the following items:

1. The name and contact information of the nominee.
2. A 250 to 500-word summary of the rationale for nomination.
3. A vita or summary of accomplishments that is no longer than 6 single-spaced pages.
4. A letter of recommendation that is no longer than 4 typed double-spaced pages.

One work sample may be submitted in PDF format so that it can be shared with all committee members. This work sample may be submitted in the language of the nominee’s choice.

Those nominees whose work is primarily in a non-English language or context may submit a second letter of recommendation that can clarify the work sample or further inform the committee about the nature of the nominee’s contribution.

*Note:* Committee members are free to seek out additional information about nominees, and second letter may be helpful if a candidate’s body of work may not be accessible to many committee members because of language differences or the nature of the work not being represented in typical publication or internet outlets. Submitting a second letter is at the discretion of the nominator/nominee.

**Evaluation process.** Nominations will be reviewed by an award committee constituted by the SCRA President-Elect.

**Award recipient receives** a plaque awarded at the SCRA convention in 2019, an invited address at the SCRA convention, and an invitation to publish their address (or a related work) in AJCP.

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**AWARD FOR DISTINGUISHED CONTRIBUTIONS TO PRACTICE IN COMMUNITY PSYCHOLOGY**

The Award for Distinguished Contributions to Practice in Community Psychology is presented annually to an individual whose career of high quality and innovative applications of psychological principles has demonstrated positive impact on, or significant illumination of the ecology of, communities or community settings, and has significantly benefited the practice of community psychology. The person receiving this award will have demonstrated innovation and leadership in one or more of the following roles:

- a) community service provider or manager/administrator of service programs;
- b) trainer or manager of training programs for service providers;
- c) developer and/or implementer of public policy;
- d) developer and/or implementer of interventions in the media (including cyberspace) to promote community psychology goals and priorities;
- e) developer, implementer, and/or evaluator of ongoing preventive/service programs in community settings;
- f) who has developed and applied knowledge and methods to understand and improve the functioning of communities and community settings; or
- g) other innovative roles.

**Criteria for the award.** The criteria for the award include the following. The first criterion applies in all cases; one or more of the remaining criteria must be present:

1. Engaged at least 75% time, for a minimum of 10 years, in settings such as government, business or industry, community or human service programs, or educational settings in the practice of high quality and innovative applications of psychological principles that have significantly benefited the practice of community psychology; past winners cannot be nominated. Full-time, tenure and tenure-track university faculty and/or those with
Nomination Process. Individuals may nominate themselves or be nominated by an SCRA member. Nominations consist of the following items:

1. The name and contact information of the nominee.
2. A statement, which can be from the nominee, that documents clearly specify his or her eligibility for this award by describing how he or she “engaged at least 75% of the time, for a minimum of 10 years, in settings such as government, business or industry, community or human service programs, or educational settings in the practice of high quality and innovative applications of psychological principles that have significantly benefitted the practice of community psychology.” This statement can consist of a brief list of the years, the settings, and the activities, but it should be sufficiently detailed so that there is no doubt about the eligibility.
3. A vita or summary of accomplishments that is no longer than 6 single-spaced pages.
4. A letter of recommendation that is no longer than 4 typed double-spaced pages.
5. One work sample may be submitted in pdf format so that it can be shared with all committee members. This work sample may be submitted in the language of the nominee’s choice.
6. Those nominees whose work is primarily in a non-English language or context may submit a second letter of recommendation that can clarify the work sample or further inform the committee about the nature of the nominee’s contribution.

Note: Committee members are free to seek out additional information about nominees, and a second letter may be helpful if a candidate’s body of work may not be accessible to many committee members because of language differences or the nature of the work not being represented in typical publication or internet outlets. Submitting a second letter is at the discretion of the nominator/nominee.

Evaluation process. Nominations will be reviewed by an award committee constituted by the SCRA President-Elect composed of prior recipients and Practice Council members.

Award recipient receives a plaque awarded at the 2019 SCRA biennial conference, an invited address at the SCRA biennial, and an invitation to publish their address (or a related work) in AJCP.
dissertation abstract should be submitted. The nomination cover letter should include the name, graduate school affiliation and thesis advisor, current address, phone number, and email address of the nominee. The abstract should present a statement of the problem, methods, findings, and conclusions. The abstract should be clear about the relevance of the study to community psychology, with particular emphasis on important and emerging trends in the field; scholarly excellence; innovation and implications for theory, research and action; and methodological appropriateness. Abstracts typically range from 5-8 pages and may not exceed 10 double spaced pages, including tables and figures. Identifying information should be omitted from the abstract.

Evaluation process. All abstracts will be reviewed by the dissertation award committee. Finalists will be selected and may be asked to submit full or partial dissertation electronically.

Award recipient receives an award plaque and $100; a one-year complimentary membership in SCRA; and up to $300 in reimbursement for travel expenses to receive the award at the APA convention or SCRA biennial in 2019.

EMORY L. COWEN DISSERTATION AWARD FOR THE PROMOTION OF WELLNESS

This award will honor the best dissertation of the year in the area of promotion of wellness. Wellness is defined consistent with the conceptualization developed by Emory Cowen, to include the promotion of positive well-being and the prevention of dysfunction. Dissertations are considered eligible that deal with a range of topics relevant to the promotion of wellness, including: a) promoting positive attachments between infant and parent, b) development of age-appropriate cognitive and interpersonal competencies, c) developing settings such as families and schools that favor wellness outcomes, d) having the empowering sense of being in control of one’s fate, and e) coping effectively with stress. The dissertation must be completed between September 1, 2016 and August 31, 2018 — any dissertation completed within these dates may be submitted.

Criteria for the award
1. Relevance to the promotion of wellness, including but not restricted to: a) promoting positive attachments between infant and parent; b) development of age-appropriate cognitive and interpersonal competencies; c) developing settings such as families and schools that favor wellness outcomes; d) having the empowering sense of being in control of one’s fate; and e) coping effectively with stress, with particular emphasis on important and emerging trends in the field;
2. Scholarly excellence.

Nomination materials required. Individuals may nominate themselves or be nominated by a member of SCRA. A nomination cover letter and a detailed dissertation abstract should be submitted.
1. The nomination cover letter should include the name, graduate school affiliation and thesis advisor, current address, phone number, and email address of the nominee.
2. The abstract should present a statement of the problem, methods, findings, and conclusions. The abstract should be clear about the relevance of the study to community psychology, with particular emphasis on important and emerging trends in the field; scholarly excellence; innovation and implications for theory, research and action; and methodological appropriateness. Abstracts typically range from 5-8 pages and may not exceed 10 double spaced pages, including tables and figures. Identifying information should be omitted from the abstract.

Evaluation process. All abstracts will be reviewed by the dissertation award committee. Finalists will be selected and may be asked to submit full or partial dissertation electronically.

Award recipient receives. An award plaque and $100; a one-year complimentary membership in SCRA; and up to $300 in reimbursement for travel
expenses to receive the award at the APA convention or SCRA biennial in 2019.

**EARLY CAREER AWARD**

The purpose of the SCRA Early Career Award is to recognize community psychologists who are making a significant contribution to the field of community psychology and to APA Division 27, Society for Community Research and Action.

**Criteria for the award**

1. The candidate must be 8 years or less from receiving their terminal degree.
2. Made an important contribution to community psychology. Examples include a research paper, community organizing, or policy change at the local, state or national level.
3. Be an active member of SCRA.

**Nomination materials required.** Individuals may nominate themselves or be nominated by a member of SCRA. Nominations consist of letters of support and a statement of significant contribution.

1. Two letters of support should outline the merits of the nominee in the criteria, above
2. A statement of significant contribution should highlight the nominee’s significant contributions in the areas of: a) contribution to the field of community psychology and SCRA, b) how work relates to community psychology, c) nominees plan to continue work within the field of community psychology

**Evaluation process.** An awards committee consisting of early career as well as more senior SCRA members will review nominations.

**Award recipient receives.** A plaque and a fee waiver to receive the award at the 2019 SCRA biennial conference.

**THE ETHNIC MINORITY MENTORSHIP AWARD**

The purpose of SCRA’s annual Ethnic Minority Mentorship Award is to recognize an SCRA member who has made exemplary contributions to the mentorship of ethnic minority persons. Mentorship may be provided in various forms. The goal of the award is to acknowledge the importance of encouraging ethnic diversity within community psychology and supporting the efforts of groups of individuals who have been historically more limited in their access to higher education within our field.

**Criteria for the award.** Two or more of the following:

1. Consistent, high quality mentorship and contributions to the professional development of one or more ethnic minority students and/or recent graduates involved in community research and action;
2. Contribution to fostering a climate in their setting that is supportive of issues relevant to racial/ethnic diversity and conducive to the growth of ethnic minority students and/or beginning level graduates;
3. A history of involvement in efforts to increase the representation of ethnic minority persons either in their own institutions, research programs, or within SCRA; and
4. Consistent contributions to the structure and process of training in psychology related to cultural diversity, particularly in, but not limited to community programs.

**Nomination Process.** Individuals may nominate themselves or be nominated by a student or colleague. Nominations consist of a nominations letter, letter(s) of support and a CV.

1. A nomination letter (no more than 3 pages long) summarizing the contributions of the nominee to the mentorship of ethnic minority persons;
2. Name and contact information (address, telephone, email) of at least one additional reference (two if a self-nomination) who can speak to the contributions the nominee has made to the mentorship of ethnic minority persons (see above criteria) -- at least one reference must be from an ethnic minority person who was mentored
3. A curriculum vita of the nominee.

Collaborative work with ethnic minority mentees, as well as other activities or
publications relevant to the criteria indicated above, should be highlighted.

**Evaluation process.** All nominations will be reviewed by an award committee constituted by the Council on Cultural, Ethnic, and Racial Affairs.

**Award recipient receives** a plaque awarded at the 2019 SCRA biennial conference.

**THE SEYMOUR B. SARASON AWARD FOR COMMUNITY RESEARCH AND ACTION**

This award was established in 1993 to recognize individuals working in the conceptually demanding, creative, and groundbreaking tradition of Seymour B. Sarason.

The criteria include
1. novel and critical rethinking, reframing, and reworking of basic assumptions, approaches, and issues in the human services, education, psychology, mental retardation and other areas of community research and action,
2. major books and other scholarship that reflect these new approaches within the context of historical wisdom, and
3. action-research and other action efforts that reflect these new approaches.

Those working both in academia and applied settings, including government, are eligible for this award, given biennially. The award winner is invited to present a major address at the Society for Community Research and Action biennial conference which takes place every other June. The address is published in the *American Journal of Community Psychology.*

**AWARD FOR SPECIAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO PUBLIC POLICY**

The purpose of SCRA’s Award for Special Contributions to Public Policy is to recognize individuals or organizations that have made exemplary contributions in the public policy arena. Those whose work contributes to public policy, whether from community agencies, academia, or non-government agencies, both national and international, are eligible for consideration. Priority will be given to a living member of SCRA, an allied discipline, or an organization involving individuals who have made important contributions to public policy, broadly defined.

**Nomination Process.** Both self-nominations and nominations by SCRA students or colleagues will be accepted. Those submitting nominations should send:
- **For an individual:** CV or resume (full or abbreviated), statement (maximum of four pages) regarding major social policy contributions of the individual, and up to three letters of support.
- **For an organization:** CV or resume for organization head or key individual, organization description/mission statement, statement (maximum of four pages) regarding major social policy contributions of the organization, and up to three letters of support.

**OUTSTANDING EDUCATOR AWARD**

The purpose of the Outstanding Educator Award is to recognize an SCRA member who has made exemplary and innovative contributions to the education of students about community psychology and community research and action. This award will be made biannually, in the years in which a Biennial Meeting of SCRA is held.

Specific criteria for the award includes two or more of the following: (1) Promotion of innovative strategies in education that integrate community psychology theory and action; (2) significant contributions to the structure and process of education in community psychology, research, and action (3) consistent, high quality teaching and mentorship contributing to the professional development of students and/or recent graduates involved in community research and action; and (4) contribution to fostering a positive climate that supports undergraduate and graduate students in their setting. Collaborative work with students,
activities, publications, and curricula relevant to the criteria indicated above, should be highlighted.

Nomination Process. Both self-nominations and nominations by SCRA students or colleagues will be accepted. Those submitting nominations should send:

1. A nomination letter (no more than 3 pages long) summarizing the innovative educational strategies promoted by the nominee, and how they contribute to the education of community psychologists and the development of the field of community research and action (and speak to the criteria listed above);
2. One letter of reference (2 letters if the nomination is a self-nomination);
3. Course evaluations and other types of evaluations from students/recent grads; and
4. A curriculum vita of the nominee.

EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION PROGRAM AWARD

The purpose of the Award for Excellence in Education Programs is to recognize an exemplary undergraduate and/or graduate program at the M.A. or Ph.D. level that has innovative structures, strategies, and curricula that promote development of the field of community psychology and community research and action.

Criteria for the award includes two or more of the following:

1. Promotion of innovative strategies in education that integrate community psychology theory and action;
2. Significant contributions to the structure and process of education in community psychology, research, and action;
3. Consistent, high quality teaching and mentorship contributing to the professional development of students and/or recent graduates involved in community research and action;
4. Contribution to fostering a positive climate that supports undergraduate and graduate students in their setting. Collaborative work with students, activities, publications, and curricula relevant to the criteria indicated above, should be highlighted.

Nomination Process. Both self-nominations and nominations by individuals or organizations outside the program will be accepted. Those submitting nominations should send:

1. A nomination letter (no more than 4 pages long) should describe the basis of the recommendation and summarize the features of the program that would qualify it for the award (in relation to criteria specified above). The nomination letter should also include a listing of the program faculty and other resources (e.g., community-based organizations, community expertise), relevant publications, and the ways in which they contribute to the education of undergraduate and/or graduate students; and
2. One letter of reference (2 letters if the nomination is a self-nomination). Reference letters should come from individuals outside the program and may include representatives of community agencies/organizations with whom the program is associated, graduates of the program (out for at least 3 years), or colleagues in other programs in the college/university or outside the college/university.

JOHN KALAFAT AWARDS

John Kalafat's life work integrated the principles and research of community psychology with their practical applications. John left a rich legacy in the published literature and in the many communities he helped strengthen. To continue his vision, two annual awards have been created in his honor.

The Community Program Award

This award will honor programs or initiatives that demonstrate a positive impact on groups or communities as validated by program evaluation; build foundational bridges between theory, research, and improving the world, and/or
demonstrate excellence in integrating training and program development in crisis intervention.

**Nomination Process.** Self-nominations and nominations by SCRA students or colleagues will be accepted. Those submitting nominations should send the CV or resume for the organization head or key individual, organization description/mission statement, statement (maximum of four pages) regarding major social policy contributions of the organization, and up to three letters of support.

**The Practitioner Award**

This award will honor an SCRA individual who exemplifies John’s unique characteristics as mentor, teacher, and advocate, and especially his passion in making the benefits of community psychology accessible to all.

**Nomination Process.** Both self-nominations and nominations by SCRA students or colleagues will be accepted. Those submitting nominations should send the nominee’s CV or resume (full or abbreviated), statement (maximum of four pages) regarding major social policy contributions of the individual, and up to three letters of support.

**DON KLEIN PUBLICATION AWARD TO ADVANCE COMMUNITY PSYCHOLOGY PRACTICE**

The Don Klein Publication Award to Advance Community Psychology Practice is awarded biennially at the SCRA Biennial. The purpose of the award is to encourage and acknowledge excellence in promoting the field and practice of community psychology through publications with strong dissemination potential across disciplinary lines. The award will be presented biennially to recognize the publication that best exemplifies the practice of community psychology.

The criteria for the award shall include:

1. A publication whose authorship includes at least one SCRA member. Authors may be researchers, faculty, students or practitioners or any combination thereof, from any field, from any country.
2. Publications may include books, handbooks, videos, periodicals, tools, journals, practice manuals, evaluation tools, video productions and web-based presentations and reference resources.

**Nomination Procedures.** Any member of SCRA may nominate and self-nominations are permitted. Initial nominations should include:

1. The title and full citation of the nominated publication and the names and contact information of all authors.
2. A description, not to exceed one to three double-spaced pages, as to how the publication promotes exemplary community practice, and is consistent with, or promotes, the values of the field.

**The award recipient receives** a $500 cash award presented to the authors of the winning publication at the Biennial Conference. The first author will receive complementary registration to the Biennial.

**SCRA FELLOWS**

**What is a SCRA Fellow?** SCRA seeks to recognize a variety of exceptional contributions that significantly advance the field of community research and action including, but not limited to, theory development, research, evaluation, teaching, intervention, policy development and implementation, advocacy, consultation, program development, administration and service. A SCRA Fellow is someone who provides evidence of “unusual and outstanding contributions or performance in community research and action.”

Fellows show evidence of (a) sustained productivity in community research and action over a period of a minimum of five years; (b) distinctive contributions to knowledge and/or practice in community psychology that are recognized by others as excellent; and (c) impact beyond the immediate setting in which the Fellow works.
If you are planning on applying for Fellow status please review the SCRA Fellows Criteria found at http://scra27.org/members1/member-awards/scra-fellows/.

Applications for Initial Fellow status must include the following materials:

1. A 2-page Uniform Fellow Application (available at http://www.scra27.org/members1/member-awards/scra-fellows/ and completed by the nominee);
2. 3 to 6 endorsement letters written by current Fellows,
3. Supporting materials, including a vita with refereed publications marked with an “R,” and
4. A nominee’s self-statement setting forth her/his accomplishments that warrant nomination to Fellow Status.

SCRA members who are Fellows of other APA divisions should also apply for SCRA Fellow status if they have made outstanding contributions to community research and action. Fellows of other APA divisions should send to the Chair of the Fellows Committee (fellow@scra27.org) a statement detailing their contributions to community research and action, 3-6 letters of support, and a vita.

It is highly recommended that applicants for Fellows status receive mentoring in the development of their application package from someone familiar with the SCRA Fellows review process.

**Nomination Process:** Complete nominations should be submitted electronically by December 1, 2018 to fellows@scra27.org.

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**From the 2019 APA Convention**

Each year at the SCRA Business Meeting held at the APA Convention there is a brief informal ceremony where the current president hands the gavel over to the incoming president. In this photo, Yolanda Saurez-Balcazar is handing the gavel over to Brad Olson. Congratulations to Brad and much thanks to Yolanda!

SCRA was a collaborative partner with Divisions 9, 32, 35, 45, 48, and the Association of Black Psychologists, National Latina/o Psychological Association and the idle East and North African Psychological Network to present a Symposium titled “An Ethics Code in Context – Challenges and Lessons Learned from Social Justice and Community-Based Psychology.”
In this picture Christiane Sadeler receives the plaque for the Distinguished Contributions to Practice in Community Psychology award.

In this picture Bianca Guzmán receives a plaque for the Ethnic Minority Mentorship Award.

SCRA Membership

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