

Jessica Henderson Daniel, PhD, ABPP

Candidate for APA President- Elect

Greetings,

I appreciate the opportunity to communicate with the members of Division 31. I am a proud Fellow in the Division. This commentary has two sections: first my statement as a candidate for APA President-Elect and second, my background as it relates to Division 31 concerns.

Part 1: My Statement

The discipline of psychology has great potential power—and it can become even more effective in exercising that power. As APA President, I would focus on moving APA into the “power lane” of influential organizations in this country.

Why use such strong language—because *psychology is every day in almost every way*. Nearly every aspect of the human existence and experience can be influenced by psychological science, practice, education and public interest.

Psychologists can create a stronger presence and exert greater societal and political influence than we have ever used before. I want to lead that effort.

My focus will be on leadership and collaborations as citizen psychologists both within our discipline and across local, state, and national networks.

First, as citizen psychologists within the discipline, we must sustain a pipeline of early career psychologists as new APA members. I propose focusing on ECPs and emphasizing two initiatives: ECPs and mentoring by building on my track record in this area.

- I chaired the first New Psychologist Program which was launched by the Massachusetts Psychological Association.
- Later, when APA formed a TF on New Psychologists—later to be re-named Early Career Psychologists, I served as the senior member. The ECPs came from across the spectrum of psychology and worked as respectful collaborators, not competitors. They are our future leaders.
- My record of success in fostering career development was demonstrated in the Centering on Mentoring Task Force which I chaired while serving on the APA Board of Directors.
- Many Divisions and SPTAs have followed through with mentoring awards at different career levels and in different spheres.

- Both an ECP Initiative and the Focus on Mentoring can fill and maintain the pipeline, nurturing those who will sustain the organization, and pulling them in as new members. I believe that APA must do this to remain a vibrant organization.

Next, as Citizen Psychologists across our communities and networks we must move well beyond our discipline. We must emphasize that *psychology is every day and in almost every way*, by collaborating and leading. Across community networks, institutions, and the halls of government our discipline of psychology should have a presence in the room, at the table and often at the head of the table in making policy decisions.

This will require a plan, passion and persistence.

Where do we need make our presence felt? We must be heard in health care and the advancement of human welfare. We must be heard in education, research, and social policy initiatives. We must be heard at the community level. We must foster the inclusion of the discipline in multiple venues.

Two examples come to mind. Every community has a school board. APA Divisions that focus on children, education and schools might work together to identify psychologists who have served on school boards or who want to learn how to become involved in this leadership role at the local and state levels. The experienced ones can mentor those who aspire to serve.

Healthcare and psychology—Integrated healthcare has highlighted the importance of behavior when addressing prevention and treatment issues. Psychologists need to be at the health care decision tables that address both fiscal and standards of care matters.

Education and training about leadership and collaborations will facilitate increasing the number of citizen psychologists. APA already has some leadership programs. As a faculty member of the Leadership Institute for Women in Psychology and the Diversity Leadership Program, I strive to help colleagues identify as empowered leaders.

Psychology as a discipline can be much more influential. I want to move us into the “power lane” of organizations in this country. I ask for your help in getting us there.

My Background

MPA--I have been a member of the Massachusetts Psychological Association since 1983, becoming a MPA fellow in 1985. The offices and positions I have held in MPA include: member Board of Directors (1994-1997), APA Council of Representative (1997, 1999-2004), and Co-

Chair of the New Psychologists Program (1995-1997) the first such initiative that led to the Early Career focus in APA.

The New Career Psychologists Initiative provided a support network for ECPs who were seeking employment and served as point of entry for MPA membership. One of my former post-doctoral fellows served with me as the co-chair. We held networking dinners for the participants as well as day long conferences that addressed important issues such as how to establish a private practice, dealing with feelings about charging for services, how to prepare for the licensing examination, how to publish a book etc. The conferences were well-attended.

As a MPA Board Member, I worked with the MPA CEMA (Committee on Ethnic Minority Affairs). One goal was to increase the number of EM MPA members. Saturday gatherings were held to introduce the attendees to MPA and to other graduate students, interns/fellows and psychologists. Speakers presented on a range of topics and attendees were encouraged to join MPA.

Board of Registration of Psychologists—I served on the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Board of Registration of Psychologists for nine years. The last four and a half years, I was the chair. During my tenure as chair, I met monthly with the Executive Director of MPA to facilitate communications and to address issues as needed. Under my leadership, new regulations were implemented. Instead of being able to apply for licensure based on having a certain number of psychology courses, the new regulation required specific courses across a range of topics (consistent with APA standards). During my term, the process involved the certification of 2,500 licensees as Health Service Providers.

Also under my leadership, the backlog of complaints filed against psychologists was managed by appointing all Board members as hearing officers and assigning all child custody complaints to specific hearing officers familiar with forensic practice.

These two actions addressed the practice of psychology in the Commonwealth. The first resulted in higher standards of education of psychologists, which would likely produce higher quality of services to the public. The second action meant that psychologists did not have to

wait for long periods of time for decisions about complaints filed against them and the public could feel that the Board was responsive to their concerns—a win-win situation.

APA—I served on CAPP (Committee for the Advancement of Professional Practice) from 2000–2004. During my tenure I chaired the Grants Subcommittee. The SPTAs submitted proposals to CAPP for funding to address the following: financial viability, maintaining the PhD as a requirement for designation as a psychologist, prescriptive authority, and support for lobbyists. I was a CAPP member when the C6 was formed and when the Diversity Initiative began.

As a CAPP member I provided advice and guidance as the SPTAs began to send diversity delegates to SLC and the delegates began to move into leadership roles in their respective SPTAs.

SPTAs—I realize that SPTAs are concerned about membership issues both in terms of their representing psychologists in their respective jurisdictions and financial viability. How to attract and sustain ECPs as members are major challenges.

As many SPTAs tend to have members who are in private practice, the issue of reimbursement is critical. Some more established senior psychologists will be able to maintain their private, independent practices depending on the demographics associated with their specific locations. This may not be the case for younger providers.

If elected as your president-elect, I will work with the Practice Directorate to continue support of state level advocacy, putting psychologists in the room, at the table and eventually at the head of the table when reimbursement and scope of practice issues are being addressed.

Second, I will strive to have our willing colleagues increasingly recognized as “citizen psychologists” who contribute to their respective communities by sharing their skills and knowledge. Having psychologists in communities means access to their services and contributions to the quality of life for the residents in general. Our discipline matters in the community and the message needs to be clear at the local, state and national levels.

“Psychology is every day in almost every way.” Through “Leadership and collaborations as citizen psychologists” we can make a difference.

I respectfully ask for your #1 vote.

Thank you.

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