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This report, including links to additional information about our activities, is available online at www.apa.org/pi
Fulfilling APA’s commitment to apply the science and practice of psychology to the fundamental problems of human welfare and social justice and the promotion of equitable and just treatment of all segments of society through education, training, and public policy.

Executive Director’s Message

I hear two comments fairly regularly when I talk about Public Interest: “I had no idea APA does all this!” and “It makes me proud to be a member.” As Executive Director, I am more familiar than most with what APA does through this directorate. And even more than most, I share our members’ pride in our work.

This report for 2011 frames our work in the context of APA’s strategic plan, primarily in expanding psychology’s role in advancing health and reducing health disparities, and also highlights ongoing efforts to promote social justice, diversity, and human rights. We also provide an array of training, continuing education, and mentoring opportunities for members, and other services and resources as well.

In my November column in the APA Monitor on Psychology, I highlighted a few initiatives focused on “advancing health and well-being.” Our work extends far beyond these few, however. Some initiatives are new—others have a long track record. In this report I highlight our 2011 successes.

In addition to serving our members, we know that we are reaching consumers and the general public as well. Top content pages on our website were Effects of Poverty, Hunger, and Homelessness on Children and Youth (with 92,700 page views in 2011); Executive Summary for the Report of the Task Force on the Sexualization of Girls (91,820 page views); Lesbian and Gay Parenting (78,456 page views); and Elder Abuse and Neglect: In Search of Solutions (68,264 page views).

I invite you to learn more:

→ Visit Public Interest websites

→ Subscribe to our free monthly e-newsletter, In the Public Interest

→ Follow my DrGwenPKeita Twitter feed

→ Read our many e-cards and forward them to interested friends and colleagues

→ “Like us” at APA’s Facebook page and Facebook pages for the ACT Raising Safe Kids and Socioeconomic Status Cancer Related Disparities programs.

Gwendolyn P. Keita, PhD
Executive Director
Public Interest Directorate
Initiated in 2011, the APA Strategic Initiative to Reduce Health Disparities works to increase support for research, training, public education, and interventions that reduce health disparities among underserved and marginalized populations. Plans in 2012 include appointment of a national steering committee; a focus on evidence-based and best practices within the health conditions of obesity, stress, and substance abuse; development of web and other materials; an interdisciplinary working meeting on promising evidence-based interventions and best practices; and development of collaborations and partnerships to promote integrated care.

The Inequity to Equity: Promoting Health and Wellness of Women With Disabilities conference in Washington, DC, on October 17–18, 2011, sponsored by APA, Gallaudet University, and the Howard University Women’s Health Institute, drew nearly 150 attendees.

2011 Socioeconomic Status Related Cancer Disparities Program activities (funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC]) included a Professional Development Training Resource Workshop for cancer-serving professionals and stakeholders at the Mille Lacs Indian American Reservation in Mille Lacs, MN; six capacity-building assistance matches between cancer-serving organizations and program Behavior and Social Science Volunteers (BSSVs); and selection of the third cohort of 30 BSSVs.

In September, over 360 aging and health service providers and local and state aging agency staff participated in a 2-hour webinar—“Mental Health Needs of Family Caregivers: Identifying, Engaging and Assisting”—cosponsored by the Office on Aging and the U.S. Administration on Aging.

In 2011 the Behavioral and Social Science Volunteer (BSSV) Program (funded by the CDC) trained 150 behavioral and social scientists via six online training sessions and 250 representatives from community-based organizations via seven face-to-face trainings.

The HIV Office for Psychology Education (HOPE) Program (funded by the Center for Mental Health Services, SAMHSA) trained 1,125 individuals in 2011.

The Office of Ethnic Minority Affairs (OEMA) coordinated grants to three 2011 awardees of Promoting Psychological Research and Training on Health Disparities (ProDIGs) small grants to early career faculty at minority-serving institutions.

The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Concerns Office (LGBTCO) worked with PI-GRO, in coordination with LGBT health care advocacy organizations, to meet with the National Institutes of Health and SAMHSA and continues to develop advocacy plans related to LGBT health, especially with regard to monitoring the NIH, CDC, and other federal agencies in their implementation of recommendations in the Institute of Medicine’s groundbreaking report released in March 2011: The Health of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender People: Building a Foundation for Better Understanding.

From left: Tarshia Stanley, PhD, Deborah Tolman, PhD, and Lyn Mikel Brown, EdD, at the April summit on creating healthier media images of women and girls.
Championing Social Justice, Diversity, and Human Rights

The APA Presidential Task Force on Preventing Discrimination and Promoting Diversity, established by 2011 APA President Melba J.T. Vasquez, PhD, submitted its final report to the Council of Representatives in February 2012.

The APA Presidential Task Force on Immigration, established by 2011 APA President Melba J.T. Vasquez, PhD, submitted its final report to the Council of Representatives in February 2012.

The Violence Prevention Office launched Effective Providers for Child Victims of Violence (funded by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office for Victims of Crime), a national training program to increase mental health providers’ awareness and knowledge of the impact of victimization and trauma on children and adolescents. The program also helps develop providers’ skills in providing effective trauma-focused, family-centered, culturally sensitive, developmentally appropriate, and evidence-based assessments and treatments. Train-the-trainer workshops offer continuing education credits.

Assessment of Older Adults With Diminished Capacity handbooks garnered over 20,000 hits on the APA website. The handbooks and their model forms are on the websites of 10 state courts and 20 national organizations.

In July, LGBTCO was awarded a 2-year $150,000 grant from the Arcus Foundation to enhance LGBTCO’s secretariat support for the International Network for Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Concerns and Transgender Issues in Psychology.

The first module of the DisABILITY Resource Toolbox for training directors and faculty—Students With Disabilities in the Social and Behavioral Sciences—was released. New toolkits will follow in 2012.

In February, 1 postdoctoral and 17 predoctoral psychology applicants were selected as new fellows for the Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (MHSAS) Fellowship.

OEMA released the final report of the NIGMS-funded project on Developing Minority Biomedical Research Talent in Psychology (the “APA/NIGMS Project”), which provided intensive research mentorships and supportive academic services to more than 700 ethnic minority undergraduate students over a 13-year period.

The APA Task Force on Trafficking of Women and Girls convened its first meeting in December.

James S. Jackson, PhD, and Patricía A. Areán, PhD, at a briefing in honor of Older Americans’ Mental Health Week in May 2011.
Forty-three members of the fourth Leadership Institute for Women in Psychology class participated in the 2011 Leadership Institute for Women in Psychology.


Twenty-two predoctoral, postdoctoral, and early career individuals, including 3 grantees from the Office of Ethnic Minority Affairs’ ProDIGS program, participated in the ninth annual Psychology Summer Institute (PSI), hosted by the Minority Fellowship Program.

PI-GRO administered the 38th year of APA’s Congressional Fellowship Program, with current fellows serving in the offices of Senators Jeff Bingaman (D-NM) and Jon Tester (D-MT).

PI-GRO partnered with Education GRO to sponsor the inaugural PsycAdvocate® Day in August, which included a continuing education advocacy workshop on effectively communicating with policymakers and over 100 participant meetings with congressional members and staff.

The CEMRRAT2 Task Force, with support from OEMA staff, awarded 22 small seed grants totaling approximately $74,900 in 2011 to individuals, organizations, and educational institutions committed to enhancing and/or increasing ethnic minority recruitment, retention, and training in psychology.

**Guidelines Adopted in 2011**

- Guidelines for the Evaluation of Dementia and Age-Related Cognitive Changes
- Guidelines for Assessment of and Intervention With Persons With Disabilities
- Guidelines for Psychological Practice With Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Clients

The Disability Resource Room provided resources to around 90 attendees at the 2011 APA Convention.

**Mentoring:**

- CyberMentors, which uses distance learning technologies for early career behavioral and social scientists in the areas of HIV/AIDS and health disparities.
- Disability Mentoring Program for psychology students with disabilities, disabled psychologists entering the field, and psychologists in the field who develop a disability.

APA Family Caregiver Briefcase for Psychologists provides 160+ pages of resources psychologists can use to assist family caregivers.

**Continuing Education online:**

- Drug Use and HIV and Trauma and HIV Disease (sponsored by the HIV Office for Psychology Education [HOPE] Program).
- 10-module End of Life Continuing Education program (sponsored by the Office on AIDS and eNURSING LLC).

Abigail Gewirtz, PhD, at National Children’s Mental Health Awareness Day in May.
Advocating on Behalf of Our Members

Public Interest Government Relations advocates on behalf of psychology and our members across a wide array of issues. In 2011, PI-GRO:

Hosted an April summit of 25 organizations representing researchers, clinicians, advocates, and government agency representatives to create a strategic plan to encourage healthier media images of women and girls.

Secured the participation of APA member Abigail Gewirtz, PhD, who spoke about child trauma issues at a May congressional briefing in honor of National Children’s Mental Health Awareness Day.

Cohosted a May congressional briefing with the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force on health disparities among older adults, in honor of Older Americans’ Mental Health Week.

Secured the testimony of APA member Pamela Deters, PhD, at a May hearing before the U.S. House Appropriations Subcommittee on the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies, where she addressed priorities for the Indian Health Service budget on behalf of the Friends of Indian Health Coalition.

Participated in a June Department of Health and Human Services strategy meeting on the priority uses of proposed FY 2012 new resources to support the National HIV/AIDS Strategy implementation.

Cohosted three September events with the University of Utah’s National Center for Veterans Studies focused on suicide prevention in military and veteran populations, including a dinner honoring Medal of Honor recipient Sal Giunta, a day-long best practices working group meeting, and two congressional briefings.

Submitted a statement for the record in May to the National Council on Disability on key disability issues in the federal budget for FY 2012.

Developed and disseminated a May action alert to APA members, urging them to contact Congress in support of the introduction of the Employment Non-Discrimination Act that resulted in over 600 emails to House and Senate offices.

Hosted a standing-room-only congressional briefing in October on The Power of Work: A Discussion on the Psychological Benefits of Work and the Impact of Joblessness on Individuals, Families and Communities, in recognition of World Poverty Day.

From left: M. David Rudd, PhD, ABPP, Heather O’Beirne Kelly, PhD, Salvatore Giunta, Melba J.T. Vasquez, PhD, ABPP, and Diane Elmore, PhD, MPH, at a reception honoring Giunta.
I wanted to understand how research could be used to help people and to change social policy. It is not surprising that within APA I am drawn to the issues that define the Public Interest Directorate. Becoming the Chair of the Board for the Advancement of Psychology in the Public Interest offers the opportunity to work with colleagues to forge ahead and to tackle the social issues that define areas of public interest psychology. In today’s political climate, the challenges are many for public interest psychology to make a difference in people’s lives. I look forward to working with BAPPI, the Public Interest committees, and the greater APA community in meeting these challenges.

—Karen F. Wyche, PhD
2011 Chair-Elect of the Board for the Advancement of Psychology in the Public Interest