NMPA President’s Message
Tim Strongin, Ph.D., ABPP

NMPA is strong, effective and growing! Our State Fair just ended, the scent of roasted chile is on the breeze, and the balloons are just around the corner. We’re in those lovely days when the swamp cooler and furnace are both at rest. Nature is about to put on a spectacular Autumn show and, on top of all that, our annual meeting just concluded, and now it’s time for the Fall Edition of the NMPA newsletter! Here’s just some of the news.

We recently learned that Medicaid rates in New Mexico will increase to 90% of the Medicare rate for many mental health services. This is an important step towards improving access to high quality care across the state. We’re also busy meeting with our legislators and administrators to achieve fair compensation for all providers. We’re collaborating with other professions to address taxation issues and to ensure that psychologists are compensated for their full scope of practice. In the next few weeks, we’ll meet with the State’s Behavioral Health Collaborative and plan to meet with our Congressional Delegates in concert with APA’s efforts.

But wait! There’s more! Our continuing education program is having its best year ever and the quality of programs continues to fill venues. The Association’s finances are in

(Continued on page 5)

Saturday Seminars
Thomas Sims, Ph.D.
Continuing Education Coordinator

This year we have focused on producing Saturday Seminars that reflect those aspects of current events relevant to psychological practice. Accordingly, a Saturday Seminar on the subject of Violence will be held on Saturday, November 2, 2019. NMPA member Simone Viljoen, Ph.D. will bring us up to date on the current state of psychological understanding of this complex topic and enhance our ability to consider both current events and client concerns from an empirical perspective.

Along with Dr. Viljoen, we are pleased to report that Representative Daymon Ely, co-sponsor of the “Red Flag” bill, has graciously agreed to be part of a panel discussion that explores the proposed legislation and how it might affect psy-
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Opinions and articles are welcome. All articles are subject to editing.

Please send articles and letters to:
nmpaoffice@gmail.com

Newsletter Editor: Julie Lockwood, PhD

Kevin Kinzie
Executive Director
New Mexico Psychological Association
2601 Wyoming Blvd. NE, Suite 116
Albuquerque, NM 87112

Email: nmpaoffice@gmail.com
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Upcoming Live CE Opportunities


Coming soon: Transgender Issues, Cultural Competence, and Learning Research & Adopting Small Scale Outcome Studies
Saturday Seminars — cont’d

Although the Red Flag Law died in committee last year, it is anticipated that the legislation will be re-introduced this year so this will prepare us for inevitable involvement should it pass. We believe this program will further our knowledge and enable us to better serve our communities when dealing with these difficult circumstances.

Additional specifics of the program are still being worked out so stay alert for further agenda information and how to register for this important event.

As always we are looking for Saturday Seminar presentations on topics related to current research and treatment approaches and invite anyone interested in making a presentation to please back channel me at tksims@comcast.net.

NMPA Travel Policy Revised

An addition to the NMPA travel reimbursement policy was recently approved by the executive committee. The new policy permits limited travel reimbursement to members of the NMPA Board of Directors traveling more than 75 miles to attend an official board meeting and is contingent upon appropriations by the board for annual funding. This policy update, along with continued use of video and teleconferencing, is designed to make board participation easier for all of our members.

This means ...

Board members can now attend meetings by phone, by video, and now even get reimbursed for joining us in person. No more excuses for not joining the Board!

Welcome New NMPA Members!

Full Members
Erica Castleberry, PhD
Melinda Garcia, PhD

Early Career Members
Krishna Chari, PsyD

Members in Training
Judith Saavedra, BS
Cory Cascalheira, BA
Trenton Owens, MS
Elena Stein, MS
Alejandrina Garcia, MA

New Member Checklist:

♦ Make sure you opt in (or out) of the Find-a-Psychologist page of the NMPA website.
♦ Use the listserv to reach out to colleagues—those who might be helpful to you, those for whom you might be helpful, and those you are just plain curious about. We are a friendly bunch.
♦ Consider submitting an article to our newsletter. If you have news, expertise, or evidence-based opinions, we want to hear from you. (Email Kevin at: nmpaoffice@gmail.com)
♦ Sign up for continuing education programs. They are top-notch, low-fee, and good networking.
Early Career Psychologists Update

Melissa Falkenstern, Ph.D. & Fritz Schoepflin, Ph.D.

We've had a slow summer with folks out enjoying their summer vacations, but managed to plan two social events nonetheless. ECPs met up at "Tasty Tuesdays" (which if you haven't checked out you definitely should—it's a fun, family- and dog-friendly, community-led gathering with food trucks, live music, and yoga in Nob Hill). Unfortunately, our first event in July got rained out, but we had a good turnout and a lot of fun at our August gathering.

We continue to offer our popular Peer Consultation Group for independently licensed ECPs. If you are interested in joining, contact Kevin Kinzie in the NMPA office and he’ll forward the message.

The ECP committee is hosting a happy hour following the NMPA Fall Conference (which will have happened by the time this is published). The conference promises to be outstanding and the happy hour will be a perfect ending to the day!

Lastly, we're putting together an NMPA Team for the Alzheimer's Association Walk to End Alzheimer's on Saturday October 19—ceremony starts at 9:30 and the walk begins at 10:00. This is open to ALL NMPA Members and their friends, families, and colleagues. If you'd liked to join us, you can sign up here: https://act.alz.org/site/TR?fr_id=12546&pg=personal&px=16581331 by clicking the "Join My Team" button. There's no cost to register and any donations are completely voluntary. This is a great way to support Alzheimer's research and for NMPA to be a part of our larger community. We hope to see you there!

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Graduate Students Update

Tara Noecker, Ph.D.
Graduate Student Committee Chair

Good News for Graduate Students!

The Graduate Student Subcommittee (GSC) worked diligently to be voted a permanent NMPA committee! Graduate students have representation within our state psychological association now and in perpetuity. This also means that our state association has an ongoing commitment to addressing the needs of students and interns in training and that there is a group of committed individuals who will advocate for graduate student interests and needs.

The GSC is also busy planning our yearly events. We anticipate on-campus events at UNM and NMSU this academic year. Details of these events will be posted on the graduate student webpage: https://nmpsychology.org/page/Grad. The NMPA poster session at the Fall Conference gave our student members the opportunity to network and share their work with our professional members. We are planning the annual ECP panel event for February 7, 2020. This is a relaxed evening in which a panel of seasoned and early career psychologists who work in varied settings, answer student questions and share the keys to personal and professional success. Details of this event will be posted on the ECP listserv and on the graduate student webpage.

Wishing you success in the 2019-2020 academic year!
great shape and we’re adding more student and early career members every week. NMPA’s Early Career Members are gathering for frequent social events and we’re looking at the youngest slate of candidates for the Executive Committee positions that we’ve had in my memory.

These are only a few of the great things happening with our association. Dozens of enthusiastic and effective volunteers are working across the state to make New Mexico better. Our Executive and Assistant Directors keep the business of the association running efficiently and effectively. Their creative efforts have brought well-deserved recognition to our association and its members. Kevin’s insight into governmental affairs has been priceless. I am deeply grateful to be part of this community of committed people. Thank you for all you do! This quote caught my eye:

“Volunteering is the ultimate exercise in democracy. You vote in elections once a year, but when you volunteer, you vote every day about the kind of community you want to live in.”

— Dr Syed Muhammad Zeeshan Hussain Almashhadi

Any success we have results from the efforts of committed volunteers, sharing time, talent and resources. If you’re already volunteering, Thank You! There’s not enough time or space to celebrate your commitments and successes. Your efforts are changing our profession, our communities, and the world. If you’re looking for a way to get involved, call me!

Wishing You a Beautiful Autumn,
Tim

In the spirit of full disclosure, I must, at the outset, concede that (a) I am Mr. TechnoKlutz, though I am learning... slowly, (b) My entire practice (save for emails about scheduling and a website for intake forms) is pen and paper—no electronic therapy notes, only paper claims to insurance companies, and (c) I had a flip phone until last year, got a smart phone after being phone-shamed, and only this year began a teeny tiny bit of texting.

I never noticed the impact on my clinical practice of computers, cell phones, social media, or technology more generally until about fifteen years ago. A couple in their 40’s, “Bob” and “Janet,” met at a country and western bar, enjoyed dancing, had separate homes, but spent much time at one another’s place. Therapy goal, as is the case with virtually all couples: Improved communication.

About the third session, shortly after Janet and Bob took their respective seats, Janet shows me a pile of sheets onto which she had transcribed, single-spaced, all the text messages Bob and she had exchanged since our previous session. She was “loaded for bear,” and clearly wanted to use this “evidence” against Bob, in a literal recounting of “he-said-she-said.”
Continuing Education Opportunities

SATURDAY SEMINARS

Saturday, November 2, 2019 — Violence!
Dr. Simone Viljoen will discuss what psychological science does, and does not, know about violence.
State Representative Daymon Ely will participate in a panel discussion of the Red Flag bill that will be re-introduced in the next legislative session. (More details to follow.)

Upcoming Saturday Seminar topics for which to watch your email Inbox:
Ethics, Transgender Issues, Cultural Competence, and Learning Research & Adopting Small Scale Outcome Studies

SCIENCE-BASED PRACTICE AND ADVOCACY

The 2019 NMPA Fall Conference was a tremendous success. Great turnout, at time mind-blowing ... For those who missed it, here’s a peek.

Dr. Elliott and Kevin Kinzie—Our fearless leaders corralling the horde.

Dr. Lilienfeld—Evidence Based Practice (EBP) is a three-legged stool comprised of best research evidence, clinical expertise, and patient values. We need EBPs so we are not fooled by our intuition.

Dr. Sims—Scientists have the skills to assess health and politicians define what’s good (i.e., reimbursable).

Dr. Ley—Be cautious about blurring the line between morality and science.

Dr. Goodkind—PTSD is a condition in which recovery has not happened.

NMPA ONLINE CULTURAL DIVERSITY CONTINUING EDUCATION

Category II credits

Cultural Diversity Credits (3/course unless otherwise marked)
- New Mexico History and Culture, Part I
- New Mexico History and Culture, Part II
- New Mexico Health Indicator Report
- New Mexico Substance Abuse Epidemiology Profile, 2018
- The State of Health in New Mexico, 2018
- Multicultural counseling competencies/research (2 credits)
- Awareness-based articles
- Knowledge-based articles
- Skills-based counseling articles

Ethics Credits (3 per course)
- Guidelines on Multicultural Education, Training, Research, Practice, and Organizational Change for Psychologists
- Psychological Treatment of Ethnic Minority Populations

Link to online cultural diversity courses
Once more I ask as a profession to address the issue of mass shootings in America. I make this plea to you not as the Executive Officer of the National Register or a Fellow of the American Psychological Association but as a colleague. I ask you to bring your professional knowledge and influence to bear in the discussion to enact sensible legislation to limit access to assault weapons and high-capacity magazines.

As I have done in the past, I begin my plea to you by acknowledging that I am a registered firearms owner and retired military officer. I have no animus against those who wish to possess firearms and use them legally. My plea is simple—that you join me in using our professional knowledge to attempt to influence the passage of laws banning assault weapons and high-capacity magazines and to insist on legislation enabling universal background checks.

As a healthcare provider and former military officer, let me once again be unequivocal. Assault weapons and high-capacity magazines have no role in reasonable discussions about firearms regulations. Their single purpose—to kill other humans—by definition restricts their use to those who we as a society have delegated to protect our safety and sovereignty: members of law enforcement and of the military. Ironically, as we all know, the controls imposed on the issuance and use of firearms in law enforcement and the military are far more stringent than those that apply to the ordinary civilian seeking to purchase an assault weapon. We see the ramifications of this with increasing frequency in our society. Episodes of mass gun violence, while still exceptional, are becoming more common. Our responses must in turn become more forceful and more common.

Here is what I am asking you to do:

As professionals, work with your colleagues, local, state, and national psychological organizations, and with individuals of other mental health professions to spread these messages. As citizens, contact your state and national legislative representatives with the same messages:

**Blaming mass shootings on mental illness is scientifically unfounded and stigmatizing,** as APA President Rosie Phillips Davis stated last week. The data are absolutely clear that the major firearms risk to mentally ill people is not harm to others but harm to self. Most suicides occur via the use of handguns, not long guns.

**Mental health screening as a deterrent to mass gun violence is not evidence based.** Such “Red Flag” proposals may have some limited efficacy in preventing suicide and certain domestic violence. Psychologists can and do save lives by notifying law enforcement and potential victims of gun violence when they are aware of threats made against self or others. I suspect it is a rare clinician indeed who has not at least once in their career had to intervene to prevent a suicidal patient from taking their life via use of a firearm. Many of us have also intervened to keep families or romantic partners safe when they have been made aware of threats of gun violence against them. As the American College of Physicians’ statement referenced below notes, extreme risk protection laws may have some efficacy in protecting potential victims, but again these can be utilized only in the context of a known threat. Absent clear evidence of intent, psychologists and other mental health professionals do not have the ability to predict future episodes of mass violence. Prospective mental health screening for such propensities, as has been suggested by some, is not a viable solution. Equally, engaging in debates about the sanity of mass shooters is nonproductive. While it can be reasonably argued that actions to take multiple lives (either targeted or random) represent a form of mental illness, it can equally be
Janet picks up this pile, “I’d like you to read this,” she says, shoving it toward me. I clutch the pile, saying, “Absolutely not,” and immediately return the pile to her surprised hands. Janet’s a bit taken aback. After a couple of sessions of generously accepting all of their spoken words, now I am rejecting their written words.

Instead, I say, “Janet, Bob is right here. Here’s what I would like to propose. Janet, would you mind swiveling your chair toward Bob?” She faces toward Bob. “Bob, would you mind facing toward Janet?” and he immediately complies. “Janet, I am now going to request the two of you engage in an ancient art form. It’s called, ‘Having A Conversation.’” Janet smiles politely as her eyes grow big with surprise, while Bob chuckles. “Okay, now, you can pull your chairs closer together. There. You can even hold hands.” They grasp one another’s hands. “Now I’d like you both to face one another and have eye contact.”

I kiddingly offer, “This won’t hurt a bit,” as they now are getting comfortable. “I’ll even start you off with what we call ‘sentence stems.’ So let me start with you, Janet. Just repeat the sentence stem I tell you, and you fill in the rest as you face Bob. Okay?” “Okay.” I then say, “Bob, one thing I wanted to tell you is.....” Janet repeats the stem, comes to a halt, silently thinks a few seconds, and fills it in. “Good start, Janet!” I tell her. “Bob, let me feed you with a sentence stem now, and you can fill in the rest to Janet.” And so their conversation, aided only a few times by my provision of sentence stems, is on its way. The session becomes rich with heartfelt emotion, depth, sincerity, and caring.

At session’s end, I say to Bob and Janet, “I’d like you both to consider living life in three, rather than two, dimensions, something, figuratively and literally, with depth.” They both knowingly smile in agreement as they leave.

In the fifteen years since Janet and Bob, it seems the sound of voice has diminished in frequency. “Why call when I can text?” Even the phrase, “We were talking,” means “We were texting.” And with the onslaught of social media, even good ol’ “visiting” seems to be going the way of melting glaciers. Touch, too. Consider this: Whether with close family members, friends, associates, or strangers, do you think you have had as much as 30 cumulative minutes today of eye contact? 15 minutes?

Have you heard that researchers recently found bone spurs shaped like horns growing from the skulls of young people due to excessive cell phone use? https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2019/06/20/horns-are-growing-young-peoples-skulls-phone-use-is-blame-research-suggests/

So I have this fantasy of the future, say, a thousand years from now, when vocal chords have long atrophied. The parent of a newborn baby goes to the hospital’s nursery. The nurse holds up the Little Charmer. The baby opens its mouth, and there, on the LED screen inside the baby’s mouth, it reads, “WAAAAAAH!”

By Angel Boligan
A Peek Behind the Diploma: Nechama Capland, PsyD

By Brenda L. Wolfe, Ph.D.

Dr. Nechama Capland is an early career psychologist and relatively new member of NMPA. I asked her to sit for the Peek interview because her introductory email to the listserv last winter piqued my interest. Having now met her in person, I’m feeling pretty pleased with my instinct for an interesting subject!

Dr. Capland (she goes by Diny) grew up in Columbus, Ohio in an orthodox religious community that provided a structured and sheltered environment. In fact, so much so that the odds were not in favor of her attending university, much less earning a doctorate. Nonetheless, having attended a private high-school which appeared primarily designed to keep her busy until marriage, Diny moved into the tail of the distribution and did not marry young.

Following high-school, Diny spent several years studying and working in Melbourne Australia, Crown Heights NY, Kiev Ukraine, Los Angeles, and Little Italy in New York City. At the first three locations, she lived in dorm-like settings and was still relatively cushioned by her community. When she moved to Los Angeles and into her own apartment, she was truly on her own for the first time—“lonely and liberating!” By the time she got to New York, Diny was in her early 20s and ready to embrace the wilder world. She worked with a community of peers as diverse as her native community was homogeneous.

When 9/11 hit, Diny had been in New York working in popular magazine art departments. Making decisions about who was attractive enough to appear in the magazines took on a new level of meaningless in light of the devastation wreaked on the nation. “What am I doing with my life? If I died right now…” she asked herself what purpose she would have fulfilled. Diny signed up for two online community college classes in an effort to complete a liberal arts degree and move into a ‘four year’ college. The psychology class was less than inspiring, but the Asian-American Literature class ultimately led to her becoming a psychologist.

At the conclusion of the Asian-American Literature class, the professor invited students to attend an in-person meet-up. It was there that Diny learned about colleges with programs for older students, particularly those encouraging women to engage in education. Long story short, she won a scholarship to Mount Holyoke College where she majored in psychology and education, won a fellowship to teach English in Vietnam, and then student-taught in the US. During student-teaching Diny realized she was more interested in what was going on with the smallest boy in the class who compulsively drew pictures of Freddy Kruger, than in teaching the roomful of tykes. She competed her BA, worked two years in a residential treatment center, and began a PsyD program at Widener University which she completed in 2013.

As if Diny had not already worked and lived in interesting enough places, she did her post-doc in the New Jersey State Prison and then moved to Alaska where she worked three years in tribal

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Once More I Ask — cont’d

argued that mass shootings show evidence of planfulness, foresight, and deliberation. What cannot be argued is that
we do not have the professional ability to predict actions of mass violence. Thus, calls for mental health screenings as
a component of gun control represent nothing more than a distraction.

Exposure to violent content in video games, films, and other media is not a predictor of gun violence. While as par-
ents, educators, and responsible members of society we have a right to be concerned about exposing children to vio-
lent content, we cannot conflate that concern with inaccurate claims of linkages between violent content and mass
murder. The issue is not access to violent media content, it is access to assault weapons with high-capacity magazines.

“Gag Laws” are cynical efforts to restrict the freedom of psychologists and other health care providers to serve their
patients. Such gag laws seek to criminalize the discussion of gun ownership between providers and patients. While
these laws have been aimed at physicians, psychologists and other healthcare providers should stand with physicians
in opposing them. A gag law introduced in Florida was overturned on appeal in 2017 as violating physicians’ first
amendment rights, but similar, albeit much weaker laws, exist in Montana, Missouri, and Minnesota.

We must support legislation reducing the lethality associated with untrammeled access to assault weapons. We can
do so by following the example of other courageous healthcare professions. The American College of Physicians (ACP)
has been eloquent in their support of such legislation, and released another update following the outrages in El Paso
and Dayton. It is compelling reading. In response to criticism from the National Rifle Association in 2018, the ACP,
speaking as those who are the principal lifesavers after gun violence, rightfully asserted that responsible gun legisla-
tion was indeed “in their lane.” As psychologists we are often called upon to address the psychological wounds—
enduring, if not fatal—that follow gun violence. It is “in our lane” to work with other healthcare groups to influence
the legislative and policy process. I quote from the ACP policy statement:

While mass shootings account for a small proportion of the nearly 109 firearm-related deaths that
occur daily in the United States . . . the escalating frequency of mass shootings and their toll on indi-
viduals, families, communities, and society make them a hot spot in this public health crisis. Mass
shootings create a sense of vulnerability for everyone, that nowhere—no place of worship, no
school, no store, no home, no public gathering place, no place of employment—is safe from becom-
ing the venue of a mass shooting. Mass shootings have mental health consequences not only for
victims, but for all in affected communities, including emergency responders. Studies also show that
mass shootings are associated with increased fear and decreased perceptions of safety in indirectly
exposed populations. Preventing the toll of mass firearm violence on the well-being of people in
U.S. cities and towns demands the full resources of our health care community and our govern-
ments.

Restricting the possession of assault weapons and high-capacity magazines will not end gun violence. Solutions are
multifactorial and inevitably incomplete. Most gun violence as we have said is directed against the self, not others.
Not all mass shooters have employed assault weapons. Gun violence is endemic, but we must start somewhere. Nu-
merous well-thought-out proposals to limit the effects of gun violence exist, including those of the Johns Hopkins Cen-
ter for Gun Policy and Research. Similar proposals address issues such as reducing accidental gun deaths in the
home by using safer gun storage, the Veteran’s Administration’s efforts to enhance safety by providing free gun locks,

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Once More I Ask — cont’d

or licensure for firearms ownership, including fingerprinting and enhanced training for gun purchasers, particularly for younger gun purchasers. All of these notions have merit and are worthy of debate. But a focus on banning the ownership of assault weapons and high-capacity magazines will have a more immediate effect on the issue at hand: the reduction of future incidents of mass gun violence. As psychologists, concerned citizens, and compassionate human beings, I urge you to act.
Classifieds

No listings this quarter.

To submit a classified ad, send your copy to Kevin Kinzie at: nmpaoffice@gmail.com.

Deadlines for copy submission and payment remission are below. Payment can be made by clicking “Online Store” on the NMPA website.

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You may not know ...

NMPA has a Facebook page where we share news of our activities as well as those of other organizations relevant to our membership.

We have been slowly increasing our Facebook presence over the past year or two so if you are a Facebook user, please ‘Like’ us!

If you have suggestions about how we can make stronger use of our page, or want to get involved in making that happen, contact Kevin at: nmpaoffice@gmail.com so he can put you in contact with the right person.