

# WHAT GPA IS DOING FOR YOU

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE 2019-20 FISCAL YEAR!

## ADVOCACY

### ✓ **Direct Advocacy to Local and Federal Legislators**

- Conducted in-person meetings in local offices with three Georgia Congressional Representatives who were identified as key to passing the Medicare Mental Health Access Act. They were Representatives Drew Ferguson, Buddy Carter, and Lucy McBath.
- Met with members of the Georgia Congressional delegation in Washington D.C. to discuss the following topics: full and equal recognition of psychologists as health care professionals in Medicare reimbursement in all settings; safeguarding psychologists' services from Medicare reimbursement cuts and funding appropriations for Graduate Psychology Education.
- Dr. Courtney Crooks and Dr. Anita Brown met with Senator David Perdue's staff regarding the Senator's interest in developing a clearinghouse of school safety resources.



### ✓ **Direct Advocacy to the Georgia Board of Examiners of Psychologists (BOE)**

- GPA Liaison to the Board of Examiners, Dr. Mike Rose, attended monthly meetings to exchange information and concerns for the benefit of Georgia psychologists.
- In mid-March, as soon as the impact of COVID-19 on the world, and GPA specifically, was clear, GPA engaged with the BOE around a number of issues related to the practice of psychology. The BOE made changes in the rules to allow psychologists to earn all of their CEs virtually for this license-renewal cycle. The BOE also addressed issues related to provision of supervision and other rules pertaining to training of psychologists.
- GPAGS prepared a position statement regarding EPPP2 for consideration by the BOE.

✓ **Supporting the Needs of GPA Members**

- Established a new position, Director of Professional Affairs. Dr. Anita Brown's primary responsibilities are to support the work of GPA in the areas of Insurance and Managed Care, Advocacy and Professional Practice issues.
- The Insurance and Managed Care Committee held multiple meetings with Behavioral Health staff of the four Georgia Care Management Organizations (CMO's) and the Department of Community Health to discuss care delivery by psychologists to Georgia Medicaid clients.



✓ **Protecting Your Interests Through Legislation**

- Offered expert testimony to Georgia legislative committees addressing issues of importance to the public and behavioral health care delivered by psychologists.
- In July, 2019, GPA joined APA and others to submit an amicus curiae legal brief in a case related to federal employment discrimination based on sexual orientation in three jurisdictions – including Clayton County, Georgia. The brief presents psychological research to support arguments related to the impact of stigmatization.
- Submitted GPA/PIRC statement and comments on HB580 prohibiting Conversion Therapy for Youth.

✓ **Provided Expert Testimony**

- Offered testimony to a Special subcommittee regarding insurance reimbursement.
- Dr. Laura Dilly offered testimony regarding the state budget to support increased funding for school counselors.

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

✓ **Developed and Supported Leadership Skills**

- GPA sent a delegation of 7 members to APA's Practice Leadership Conference in DC for training, development, and mental health advocacy.
- Established a Leadership Academy composed of 8 psychologists who were able to develop and promote valuable leadership skills.
- ECPs hosted a panel at the Georgia Intern Professional Development Seminar at Georgia Regional Hospital.



✓ **Created Task Forces to Meet Your Needs**

- A Psychologists in Organizations Task Force for psychologists practicing in organizations was established by the president to hear from and help develop programming of interest to

psychologists throughout GA in organizations such as WellStar, Shepherd Center, Atlanta VA, Medical College of Georgia, Augusta VA, Georgia Regional Hospital, Children's Healthcare of Atlanta, Kaiser Permanente, Georgia College and State University Counseling Center, Emory University, GA Tech Counseling Center, and Georgia Gwinnett Counseling Center.

- In response to the recommendations of the Psychologists in Organizations Task Force, Dr. Stella Nelms will head a new Health Psychology Task Force to help meet specialty specific needs of psychologists in Health Psychology.

## NETWORKING

### ✓ Hosted Networking Events

- To celebrate the passage of PSYPACT, GPA hosted an event at the office of our lobbyists, Nelson Mullins, which included two 3-hour workshops and a reception honoring the main sponsor of the PSYPACT legislation, Representative David Belton.
- Committee on Gender and Sexual Diversity held their 2nd Annual LGBTQ mixer (cocktails and appetizers)—purpose: to network, and support psychologists who identify as, and/or work with LGBTQ clients.



### ✓ Connected Psychologists from Around the State

- The GPA Listserv provides 300+ Premium and Platinum GPA members the ability to connect with each other, make and receive referrals, and share important information about coding, billing, office space, and more.
- The Senior Psychologists Network meets bi-monthly to support senior psychologists' interests, needs and concerns.

## CONTINUING EDUCATION

### ✓ Provided Free CE Workshops

- The Diversity Directorate hosted a free CE workshop with Dr. Linda Harvey addressing maternal health disparities and mortality trends in African American women.
- Dr. Nadine Kaslow offered a free 3-hour CE workshop on promoting resilience during COVID-19.



### ✓ Facilitated Continuing Education for Psychologists

- The Annual Meeting was converted into a virtual conference in two months and served 360 registrants.
- Provided 43 Continuing Education programs for 1,105 registrants.

## COVID-19 SUPPORT

### ✓ **Kept Members Updated and Informed**

- President Laura Dilly put together weekly updates with crucial information during March and April
- Leadership put together and continue to update a page on the GPA website with Coronavirus related resources.
- GPAGS hosted a “Covid-19 Question and Answer Session” for students to ask questions regarding the impact of COVID-19 on their training and professional experiences.

### ✓ **Supporting Your Mental Health**

- Dr. Betsy Gard hosts a weekly Virtual Support Group for psychologists to support each other during the COVID-19 crisis.
- Dr. Rabia Subhani created a free mindfulness series on YouTube to promote self-care.

