

## An Update from the OPA President-Elect

### BRIDGING THE GAP

By Dr. Lori Holmquist-Day

Using the words of J.F. Kennedy, "Change is the law of life. And those who look only to the past or present are certain to miss the future." This past year has certainly brought OPA and psychologist with a lot to think about and adapt to, given the ever changing climate of Medicaid/Medicare reimbursement rate reduction, loss or reduction of state contracts, and the seemingly endless fight to preserve our practice and at the same time improve quality and education of early career psychologists.

Despite the unexpected changes within the OPA board, we have remained vigilant and focused on the issues and concerns you as our members have brought forth. We remain active in legislative issues that impact psychologists, which thankfully this year has been seemingly calm. As promised we are building relationships with state associations and legislators that will help OPA in the future to get certain bills written and passed that address your desire to get prescription privileges in the state, and of course involve psychologists in new health care policies that arise. I think it was Helen Keller who once said, "Alone we can do so little, together we can do so much." I can assure you that your current OPA Board is cohesive, strong, and working together to improve communication (e.g., updating the website, monthly updates from an OPA Board member, and clearly defined use of the listserv), build alliances to improve our image and influence in the state, and expand the scope of its members (e.g., include academicians, researchers, etc.).

As your President-Elect, the majority of my time has been spent on putting together the annual OPA Conference. The focus or theme of the 2017 conference will be on "Bridging the Gap" between rural and urban mental health needs and access to services, integrative/wrap around services, and bringing together psychologists with a diversity of specialties. I am excited to say that the conference schedule is nearing completion, and we hope that the agenda will attract a diversity of health care providers (e.g., psychologists, physicians, master level providers, nurses, & educators) who will take advantage of the time to exchange ideas, build relationships, and learn from each other. The conference will also be offering one-day options for those who cannot attend both days. There will be a variety of vendors including test/book publishing companies, local state agencies, private nonprofit and for profit companies covering everything from children's services, surviving the climate, all the way up to geriatric patients; with the

intent to inform psychologists of what is available in our state and what current programs are active and in place, so we can better serve our patients needs and stay vigilant.

The conference will also be offering 3 CEU's for the Ethics licensing renewal requirements, and will entail discussions from the OSBEP on common mistakes psychologist make, administrative laws as it pertains to record keeping and our license, and more. There will also be workshops on ACT, DBT, R-PAS, geriatric populations, pediatric populations, and substance abuse populations. Our keynote speaker is Commissioner White from DMHSAS and a panel of speakers that will be discussing issues related to translational research, financial issues impacting our state and practice, in addition to current state programs. Stay tuned! The program will be out soon and I look forward to seeing you in November at the conference.

In sum, what a challenging time it is in our state for not just psychologists but for the general public as well. As we stand together as a cohesive group of psychologists who labor ahead with all these great minds and ideas, we are bound to come out of this year blessed. Remember, Gregory Peck once said, "Tough times don't last, tough people do." I'm looking forward to what's ahead and to serving you!

OPA President- Elect

Dr. Lori Holmquist-Day, Ph.D.

