

OSPA TODAY



Volume 26, Number 3
Spring-Summer 2003

President's Message

We Can Make A Difference

Greetings to each of you! As I look over the past year and we wind down one of the most difficult and challenging school years ever, morale is at an all-time low. Some school districts have been hit harder than others, but virtually all are feeling the negative effects of Oklahoma's financial crisis, which is not over yet. Even if our Special Services staffs have not been cut, most of us know teachers and/or support personnel who are losing their jobs. The personnel toll will affect not only those individuals and their families, but also class size, materials and supplies, guidance and counseling, school climate, safety, janitorial services, extracurricular activities, and so much more. All the hard-won progress in education in Oklahoma over the past thirty years is going down the drain, and it will not quickly be recovered. Instead of being passive victims, I challenge each of you to take action by contacting your legislators and demanding immediate emergency appropriations for education, short-term solutions for next year, and long-term solutions by fully funding education and revamping the antiquated school funding formula that has been historically tied to oil and gas. Phone calls and e-mails are often preferred to letters, which may be delayed since the anthrax scare, and are actually counted for or against an issue. Please take the time to help make a difference for your students, your profession, your school district and the future of public education in Oklahoma by calling the Oklahoma House Chamber 1-800-522-8502 or 405-521-2711 and the Senate 405-524-0126. Also, you can call or even meet with your U.S. Congressmen or their staff at their local offices, or quickly and easily send them messages which you can personalize through the NASP Advocacy Center <www.nasponline.org/advocacy>

OSPA was represented at NASP 2003 in Toronto by Dr. Marshall Andrew Glenn, Tracy Fenton, Joyce Lowrey, and myself, plus OSU school psychology professors Terry Stinnett, Gary Duhon, and Eric Mesmer and some of their students, who presented posters displaying their research findings. Braving SARS, snow on the ground in April, and a thinly veiled Canadian disdain for the U.S. war in Iraq, we did enjoy an outstanding convention with many excellent sessions with timely information on the changing role of school psychologists. On the very same day, I attended a detailed presentation on the changes and theoretical underpinnings of WISC-IV (no more Verbal or Performance IQs) in a very large room that was filled to overflowing; in contrast, later I heard Assistant Secretary of the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS), U.S. Department of Education, Robert Pasternack, Ph.D., who is a Nationally Certified School Psychologist, tell an even larger audience to stop giving intelligence tests, which in his opinion, were no longer necessary. He discussed the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (which is being pushed through the House at amazing speed) and how it will work with the No Child Left Behind legislation to improve educational and post-school outcomes for infants, toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities and their families. Needless to say,

his position was controversial but he did listen to differing opinions about the value of intelligence testing in the context of assessment. Although the Exhibit Hall contained fewer vendors than usual, it was still exciting to see the many new products, including the new Stanford-Binet V, the WISC-IV, the BASC Portable Observation program, the Bender II, the excellent NASP publications, and much more. While the NASP Convention is always outstanding, I could not help but wonder why we were supporting Toronto's economy (although the exchange rate was \$1 U.S. to \$1.50 Canadian) instead of a city in our own country.

If you have never been to NASP's Annual Convention, plan to attend the world's best school psychology conference next year in Dallas on March 30-April 3, 2004. Imagine so many excellent workshops, seminars, keynotes, poster and paper presentations that you can't possibly go to all those you wish to attend. Visualize all the very latest in school psychology assessment tools, products, technology, exemplary books, and more, all in one Exhibit Hall for you to see. The best giveaways at the All-Association Party, the Children's Fund Auction items from every state in every price range, the fabulous desserts at the Minority Scholarship reception, the International School Psychology Association's tantalizing trips, the wonderful networking opportunities and access to the top speakers and leaders in the profession will all be yours to enjoy. This time NASP will be close enough to drive, so let's all mark our calendars now.

Our Spring Conference was a big success. Not only did we have an outstanding and knowledgeable speaker and timely topic, but also we had a very nice facility, free parking, a yummy box lunch, and a very popular and fun Silent Auction. For our very first effort, the Silent Auction included a wonderful variety of items from professional books, various gift certificates to restaurants or for services such as beauty services or a massage, a rose bush, jewelry, a watercolor painting, Beanie Babies, creative gift baskets, a \$200 Riverside gift certificate, and much more. Altogether the Silent Auction netted OSPA over \$900. All who purchased \$1 tickets for the Silent Auction were eligible for a drawing for an ABAS Starter Kit from Psych Corp, valued at \$125. Also, we conducted our business and awards prior to the lunch hour, which was left free for visiting and relaxing. Elizabeth Hatcher received the Outstanding School Psychologist of the Year Award for 2002-2003, and gave an inspiring speech. Special thanks go to Tracy Fenton, Jami Haywood, Nancy Barton, Cindie Milford, Jane Bias, Sandra Reese-Keck, Jill Woodard, Tamara Mitchell, and all the other Board members and helpers, and everyone who brought items for the Silent Auction. (Please start gathering items for the next Silent Auction, which was so popular that we plan to have it at the Fall Conference...I already have someone getting an autograph for me...) Thanks to those who contributed to the Memorial Scholarship in memory of former NASP President (and our Fall 2002 Conference speaker) Deborah Crockett's husband, we were able to contribute over \$100.

The fable of "The Tortoise and the Hare" best describes what I have learned in our legislative efforts over the past four years. It seems that we take

three steps forward and two back, and sometimes they are baby-steps, but I feel that we have made progress. Certainly having a well known and respected lobbyist whom we have shared with the Oklahoma Speech and Hearing Association has helped. Both our House author Representative Barbara Staggs and our Senate author of our bill, Senator Johnnie Crutchfield, told me when I visited their offices in February, that had it not been for the financial crisis, our bill for the NCSP bonus would have passed this year. We also worked with our lobbyist and Senator Penny Williams on a bill for establishing a Provisional or Temporary Certificate for school psychologist's internship year so they could be paid (and have another year towards retirement) during that year; I also contacted Sandy Garrett's office and Cindy Marose about it. Dr. Marshall Andrew Glenn and I have worked with Dr. Rick Talbott of OSHA on the bonus bill, and have good support from several important legislative leaders, including Senate Pro Tempore Cal Hobson, who originally authored our bill the first year. I am learning the true meaning of patience.

I feel we have made gains in our relationship with the Oklahoma Education Association. When we naively attempted to get our bonus legislation passed in our own grassroots attempt when we began this effort, our first encounters with OEA were rocky and they opposed us that first year. The second year, OEA neither opposed us nor supported us, and our bill was killed in the House Appropriations committee. In trying to collaborate with them, we have had booths at each other's conventions, and I invited OEA President Carolyn Crowder to be a guest speaker at our Fall 2001 Conference luncheon, when we had Dr. Jerry Sattler and NASP President Charlie Dupree there too. Later, we had OEA's President Elect Roy Bishop and Central Region Rep. David Kueter attend an OSPA Board meeting, where they faced lively discussion and some criticism. On April 25-26, 2003, both Sandra Reese-Keck, OSPA's NW Rep., and I participated in the OEA Delegate Assembly. Prior to that, I attended a Delegate Training in OKC, where Carolyn Crowder discussed with me her recommendation that we use a study that she later faxed to me, to support our effort for our bonus bill, and charge the OEA legislative committee to advocate for and develop legislation for that. She told me then that there was growing support for us and that she would help me with any amendment or new business item that I wanted to submit, and she did. Sandra Reese-Keck is well known and respected in OEA, while I was new to most other delegates except my local ACT officers and a few others from neighboring school districts (although I had been an OEA delegate when I was a fourth grade teacher many years ago). I was warmly greeted by Carolyn, who remained helpful throughout the two days of Delegate Assembly as well as in our three telephone conversations in the two weeks prior; she even hand-wrote some minor revisions with me after consulting with their legislative chair. Our bonus bill has been hotly debated for the past three years in Delegate Assembly, and it was this year, too. Although my new business item charging the OEA legislative committee to advocate for and develop legislation for our bonus bill barely failed after much debate, and was so close that we had to stand and be counted, my amendment to the resolution

concerning National Certification passed so now the wording includes school psychologists and speech pathologists. Afterwards, OEA's new president, the executive director, and the chair of their legislative committee all gave me words of encouragement and pledged to help us next year. With OEA's political power with all education issues, we need them on our side. OEA has made a genuine effort to reach out to us school psychologists, so whether you are a former member who was angry with the way they treated us initially or someone who has never joined, I now urge you to consider joining OEA.

I want to encourage each of you to reach out to others during these difficult times, and let us hold each other up as we face perhaps more grim times ahead in our schools. Although Oklahoma faces a severe shortage of school psychologists whose services are desperately needed, there are school psychology students who are graduating with no jobs available for them. Also in homes across Oklahoma and the nation, may we be sensitive to those students and adults who have a military parent, spouse, sibling, other relative or friend involved in the war with Iraq, or who are grieving for one who sacrificed his or her life for our country. As school psychologists, we should use our training and skills to assist others in their times of need.

As my term as OSPA President ends, I want to thank you for this privilege and opportunity; this experience has enriched my life. I have been surrounded by the best Board, which is comprised of the finest colleagues in Oklahoma. Heartfelt thanks go to all OSPA Board members, who have selflessly given their time and energy to our organization, and who have touched my heart with inspiration and friendship. I would not have missed this journey for the world.

I encourage each of you to support OSPA and NASP with your dues, your time, and your service. These organizations are your lifeline to your profession; their publications will keep you abreast of the most up-to-date news in school psychology and provide you with well-researched information that is practical and useful in the work we do on the front lines with school children and youth every day, and professional ethics which guide our conduct as school psychologists. Upcoming professional development opportunities around the world are posted, as are employment ads. Both OSPA's and NASP's websites are very helpful and have links to other sites of interest. Your OSPA dues help provide our Fall and Spring Conferences, the newsletter, website, and more. We have tried hard to keep from raising the dues, and if more people will join OSPA, we can keep them the same. If you wish to make a difference in school psychology in Oklahoma, and want to be involved with some of the best in our profession, volunteer to be on an OSPA committee or to be an officer. **The best investment you can make, is in yourself.** Always be proud to put SCHOOL in front of PSYCHOLOGIST!!!

*Candis Hogan, Ph.D., NCSP, LPC
OSPA President*

I leave you with these words from Mother Teresa:

“People are often unreasonable, illogical and self-centered;

Forgive them anyway.

If you are kind, people may accuse you of selfish ulterior motives and suspect you;

Be kind anyway.

If you succeed, you will gain some false friends, and some true enemies;

Succeed anyway.

If you are honest and open, people may cheat you or take advantage,

Be honest and open anyway.

What you spend years building, an enemy could destroy overnight;

Build anyway.

If you find serenity and happiness, they may be jealous or envious;

Be happy anyway.

The good you do today, people will often forget tomorrow;

Do the good anyway.

Give the world your best, and it may never be enough;

Give the world your best anyway.

You see, in the final analysis, it is between you and God;

It has never been between you and them anyway.”

OSPA WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS

OSPA warmly welcomes our newest members. **Debbie James** is the Director of Special Services for Crooked Oak Schools and a student of school psychology at UCO.

Courtney Iordanescu, school psychologist, and **Saarah Joyce**, psychometrist, are both from Putnam City Public Schools and **Dow Greg McCarty, Ph.D.**, is the Director and Psychologist for the River Parks Developmental Center in Tulsa. **Jeannette Mather** is a school psychologist for the Oklahoma School for the Deaf and **Marcia S. Moore, Ph.D.**, is the Director of Psychological Services for Casady School in Oklahoma City. From Oklahoma State University, we welcome **Staci Cumming, Kim Dielmann, Kathleen Jeffers, Lara Mattingly, Myra Ragsdale, Allison Schneider, Mika Shelton** and **Erika L. Stevens**. **Keri Chaffin** is a Reading Specialist for Tahlequah Public Schools and is a certified Psychometrist pursuing certification as a School Psychologist through the program at Northeastern State University. From East Central University, **Susan Green**, a practicing School Counselor for Ada City Schools and **Shirley McDaniel**, a teacher for Velma-Alma Public School are participating in the school psychology program. New student members from University of Central Oklahoma are **Sherry Beck, Rouye Choquette, Crystal Clark** and **Deborah Davis**. **Helen McGrath** is a psychometrist for Norman Public Schools and **P. Brees Phillips** is a psychometrist for Coyle Public Schools. From higher education, **Eric Mesmer, Ph.D.**, joins OSPA. Again, welcome to each of you and we look forward to getting to know you better.

Should you need a new membership certificate, have any directory information changes such as address/email, or have any concern or question about OSPA membership, please contact Jami Haywood at jmehaywood@cox.net or OSPA, P.O. Box 665, Jenks OK 74037. Thanks so much to our new members as well as our members who have renewed their commitment to Oklahoma School Psychological Association. Your financial support ensures our ability to provide continued services such as professional conferences, public relations activities, legislative input, and newsletter production. OSPA is here to serve YOU.

Paul Warden & Mary Jo Keatley Graduate Studies Awards

The OSPA Executive Board is pleased to announce the 2003 recipients of the Paul Warden & Mary Jo Keatley Graduate Studies Awards. Rouye Choquette and Deborah Davis were recognized at the spring conference for their scholastic honors and professional goals. The awards were established in 1998 to recognize and provide financial support to two Oklahoma school psychology students. Monetary awards are presented annually in the amount of \$500 each to two selected students.

Rouye Choquette entered the School Psychology program at UCO in Spring 2003. She earned a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Psychology in 1999 at Tulane University in New Orleans. While at Tulane, Rouye worked as a program coordinator for the US/China Institute, the Biology and the Chemistry Departments. She prepared grant proposals, planned conferences and served as liaison to federal funding agencies. She has also participated in a research project dealing with exposure of children to violence. She has experience working with children with disabilities both in camp settings and through her church. She has served as a sign language instructor and interpreter. In her professional statement, Rouye expressed concern about the children who may “fall through the cracks” and not receive the educational services they need in which to be successful. She believes that it is important that the school psychologist be an advocate for such students.

Deborah Davis received her Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology from the University of Oklahoma in 1990. After spending six years in the corporate world, she entered the school psychology program at UCO. She is expecting to graduate from UCO this summer and would like to complete her school psychology internship during the following year. Deborah has volunteered with the American Red Cross, the Rape Crisis Center and has served as a Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA). She completed her first practicum at UCO and is currently completing a practicum with Edmond Public Schools. Deborah believes the school psychologist can expand her effectiveness by adding a preventative aspect to the consultation provided in order to prevent problems from arising or from becoming more severe.

We are pleased that these women have chosen school psychology as a profession and look forward to their continued relationship with OSPA.

*Elizabeth Hatcher, Chair
Awards, Honors and Scholarships Committee*

OSPA Fall Conference
October 2-3, 2003
WISC-IV and SB-V
(Location to be announced)

Looking Ahead to NASP Conventions

2004 March 30-April 3	Adams Mark, Dallas, TX
2005 March 29-April 2	Marriott Marquis, Atlanta, GA
2006 March 28-April 1	Hilton Anaheim and Anaheim Marriott Hotels, Anaheim, CA

Darla Griffin Retires from the OSDE, Begins New Role

In October 2002, Darla Griffin retired from the Oklahoma State Department of Education (OSDE). Over the last seven years, from 1995, she held the leadership position of state director of special education and related services in a time of significant educational reforms under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Additionally, in recent years, the Medicaid School Program, EPSDT, and the requirements of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act have been interrelated to IDEA implementation, regulatory, and policy issues for Oklahoma's special education and early intervention services. Previously, Darla was assistant director and technical assistance officer for the special education division of the OSDE.

Darla's earlier employment included the Moore Regional Education Service Center, Norman Public Schools, and Blanchard Public Schools. Her professional credentials include the NCSP and Oklahoma state certification as a school psychologist, psychometrist, special education teacher (learning disabilities and mental retardation), and school administrator.

In 1984-85, she was elected and served as president of OSPA and later as president of the National Association of State Consultants for School Psychology Services, which has since merged with NASP as an affiliated interest group. As one of Oklahoma's initial group of school psychologists to obtain the NCSP, Darla also received a NASP award of recognition after serving three years on the National Certification Board for School Psychologists. For many years, she has been an active participant and contributor in the NASP leadership network and the interest group of state agency contacts/consultants for school psychology services. Since her term as president of OSPA, Darla has served on the OSPA Executive Board on various committees, task forces, special projects, and in the advisory role of state liaison. She has continued to support the goals of strengthening the integrity and credibility of the organization, services to the membership, the professional standing of school psychologists, and of increasing the number of highly qualified school psychologists available to meet the needs of children in Oklahoma's schools.

During the course of her career, Darla has enjoyed many opportunities to learn from, share ideas with, and build lasting relationships with colleagues in local schools, professional associations, higher education, advocacy organizations, and across various state agencies, legislative and policy-making groups. She commented that an abiding intent for her has been to build trusting, collaborative relationships, based on mutual goals to continue improving the educational opportunities and comprehensive services which are needed for children in our schools. "We all have something to offer in these efforts; it can't be done alone. We have to reach out to others. We have to clearly tell others what we have to offer and in turn, then listen to clearly understand their needs."

Currently, Darla is a consultant and technical advisor for several federally funded and proprietary projects being conducted in other states, through multi-state regions, and on a national basis. This work involves “frequent flyer miles” and “telecommuting,” but allows her to remain a resident of Oklahoma. In her new role, she’s still learning, sharing, and building.

The Future of School Psychology: Michael Curtis Speaks on Trends and Implications

John M. Nomura, Erika L. Stevens, & Charlie W. Chastain

Oklahoma State University

The 2002 *Invitational Conference on the Future of School Psychology* was the first of its kind in 25 years. The purpose of this conference was to discuss and reflect upon the profession of school psychology: where it has come from, where it is going, and what that means. Substantial growth in the field of school psychology and changes in the goals and application of services, along with the challenges the profession is currently facing, requires that school psychology professionals come together and develop plans that will strengthen the future of school psychologists and those they serve. A key element in this conference was the development of an e-forum in which school psychologists from across the United States could 1) assess current demands for school psychologists and examine the profession's ability to meet them, 2) reexamine the practice of school psychology in terms of future shortages in the face of increasing demand for services, and 3) to use and improve upon current resources in order to optimize the benefits offered to the schools, children, and communities they serve.

Michael Curtis, PhD was among the invited speakers to present his work at the *Future's Conference*. The following is a synopsis of Curtis' presentation at the conference as well as the questions and responses that arose. Although citations are not included, all the proceeding information and ideas are derived from Curtis' presentation and not from the authors of this report. The speech is largely extracted from a National Association of School Psychology (NASP) study on demographics (Curtis, Grier, Abshier, Sutton, & Hunley, 2002).

Michael Curtis is a professor of school psychology and chair of the Department of Psychological and Social Foundations at the University of South Florida. He is a past president of NASP and currently is the director of the Research Committee for NASP. Much of the data presented in his speech originated in studies and research conducted by the committee and other NASP members.

The objective of Curtis' speech was to facilitate an understanding of the current status of the field of school psychology. To understand the current status, Curtis described many historical and contemporary trends in demographics, professional practice, and relevant conditions. The salient concern that pervaded much of Curtis' speech was the growing discrepancy between the availability of school psychology personnel and the increasing demand for school psychology services. Curtis described implications of this discrepancy in the context of the aforementioned trends.

Over the past 30 years, there has been a “feminization” of school psychology. In 1970, 41% of school psychologists were women whereas in 2000, 70% were women. Over the same 30-year span, female school psychologists who were employed by universities rose from 18% to 51%.

It is important to be cognizant of the fact that legislation in the 1970's, such as Public Law 94-142, created a surge in the demand for school psychology services. Coincidentally, this was the same time that many baby-boomers were entering the job market. U.S. Labor Department statistics show that from 1970 to 2000 there was a universal increase in female workers across this 30-year span (25% female in 1970 to 44% in 2000). As professional roles became more available to women, there appeared to be increasing shortages of women working in traditional jobs such as teaching, counseling, and nursing. This increase in available professional roles has resulted in more women entering the field of school psychology.

Unfortunately, efforts to integrate more minorities into the field have not been sufficient. Although 17% of school psychology trainers in 1996 were minorities, there are currently only 7.2% in the field. Why increased minority training does not translate into increased minorities in the field is a question that has proven difficult to answer.

The level of preparation of school psychologists has increased steadily over the past 30 years. In 1970, only 60% were trained to at least the Specialist level. That number has risen to 87% in 2000. Over the past 10 years, levels of certification and licensure of school psychologists have remained relatively stable (about 90% and 35% respectively). This may be misleading, as there have been increasing discrepancies among states as to which credentials are necessary for particular settings. 84% of school psychologists report working in the school setting. Only 1.5% report working in private practice when it is defined with a requisite 32 hours per week.

The data further suggests that there is a tidal wave of aging school psychologists moving toward retirement. During the past 10 years, the mean age of practicing school psychologists has risen 6.4 years to 45.2 years old. By 2000, one out of every three school psychologists was over the age of 50. During the last 10 years, there has been over a 10% increase in the number of school psychologists with at least 20 years of experience. The mean number of years of experience has increased by 5.8. School psychologists in the university setting tend to be older and more experienced than those in the schools, but even university positions are proving difficult to fill. For school psychologists, there are only an average of 14 years left to retirement. In 27 states, over half of all currently practicing school psychologists will be retired by 2012. Unfortunately, training programs are only producing an average of 1,750 new school psychologists each year. The shortages are the greatest in the South

Central region (including Oklahoma); they are the least in New England and the Mid-Atlantic.

Professional Practices

Recently, there have been interesting changes in the services delivered by school psychologists. Within the past ten years, the number of school psychologists working in schools with the NASP recommended student-to-psychologist ratio of 1000:1 almost doubled. The highest ratios have been reported in the South Central Region (including Oklahoma). They are markedly better in the New England and Mid-Atlantic regions. Lower ratios ($\leq 1500:1$) are associated with more intervention-based services and less assessment services. They are also associated with the availability of individual and group counseling for students. Higher ratios are more correlated with evaluations, re-evaluations, and special education activities. Therefore, a lower ratio allows school psychologists to engage in preferred professional practices.

School psychologists with more training and/or experience report engaging in more individual counseling, group counseling, and in-service training and tend to use more direct and indirect intervention services. Those with less training spend much more time completing assessment activities and special education services.

Fortunately, the data suggests that there has been a general movement away from special education evaluations and re-evaluations, possibly due to the increase in advanced training of school psychologists. Therefore, it would be reasonable to predict that there would be an increase in preferred practices. Strangely, this is not the case, as there have been similar decreases in consultation, counseling, group services, and in-services overall. One explanation for this finding is that the amount of time school psychologists spend in special education activities, including assessment activities, report writing, and meetings, has increased. Perhaps, as student ratios are reduced for overburdened school psychologists, they have more time to be thorough in the work that remains. However, they are not compensating for this decreased ratio by increasing their diversity of services. In other words, they have many fewer cases and are spending much more time working on them.

Supervision of school psychologists is another area of concern for the future of the field. When polled about the nature of their supervision, 47.2% of school psychologists reported receiving no professional supervision. Only about one in five school psychologists have supervisors who hold degrees in the field. The average number of school psychologists per supervisor is 16.9.

Implications There has been a movement within the field of school psychology to redefine the role of school psychologists in the schools. Decreasing ratios in the schools has allowed school psychologists to increase their effectiveness by allowing more time for consultation, intervention, etc. The greatest beneficiaries of this role change are the students, whose lives and academic achievement can be profoundly impacted by well-trained school psychologists.

Unfortunately, these promising trends may soon be reversed by widespread shortages of school psychologists. Shortages will result in school psychologists being overburdened with special education activities. Even more threatening to the future of schools is the fact that shortages may elicit pressure from state governments to lower standards for credentialing and provide emergency/ alternative credentialing. This introduction of relative incompetence will undermine decades of work in defining and demonstrating the potential of school psychology. The field may become diluted by lesser-trained professionals working as school psychologists or under different titles such as intervention specialists. It may be more advantageous for service delivery to be re-conceptualized so that school psychology is one component of an integrated service delivery system. Although school psychologists are capable of comprehensive service delivery, rising demands limit their availability to provide these needed services. Therefore, it may be beneficial for school psychologists to work with other professionals such as marriage and family therapists, behavioral analysts, psychometrists etc. This integrated model of service delivery would be more desirable than ignoring the rising vulnerability of schools to practitioners with emergency/alternative credentialing. The current situation is further exasperated by shortages of faculty to train school psychologists and the possibility that many new school psychologists will seek employment in alternative settings to avoid the worsening conditions in the schools.

There may be opportunities for experienced school psychologists to help alleviate some of these problems. For instance, universities may hire experienced school psychologists to help in training but not bind them to the traditional requirements of tenure and publication. Widespread budget deficits make financial incentives for potential trainees unlikely, thus other recruitment incentives should be explored.

Lastly, one cannot ignore the possible implications of "No Child Left Behind" and the President's Commission on Excellence in Special Education. It is likely that these political calls to action may influence school psychology, including the services delivered and the student/psychologist ratios. The aforementioned data can be of great value in informing legislators and policymakers of the importance of low student/psychologist ratios and the implications for delivery of more robust services to students.

The issues addressed by Michael Curtis during this conference have illustrated the current status of the profession of school psychology, especially in

terms of demographics and professional practice. Although this is a volatile time for our profession, opportunities remain for effecting change and overcoming challenges in areas of growing concern.

References

Curtis, M.J., Grier, C., Abshier, D.W., Sutton, N.T., & Hunley, S. (2002). School psychology: Turning the corner into the twenty-first century. *NASP Communique*, 30(8), 1-5.

Elizabeth Hatcher Named OSPA's School Psychologist of the Year

Elizabeth Hatcher is currently a school psychologist in Edmond. She received an M.S. in Educational Psychology from Oklahoma State University and is a Nationally Certified School Psychologist and a Licensed Professional Counselor. Elizabeth began her career working as a psychometrist for the North Central Regional Education Service Center in Stillwater. She later worked for the Mid-Del Public School District for twelve years before coming to the Edmond Public Schools.

In addition to her dedication to her work as a school psychologist, Elizabeth is very active in the community and her church. She has served as a volunteer at the CONTACT Crisis Help line since 1984, where she received the volunteer of the year award in 2001. She has also been a Choices Suicide Awareness Program Presenter. Elizabeth served on the OSPA Executive Board from 1981-84 and returned to the Board in 2002.

She is highly respected by her colleagues, peers, and students. Her dedication, hard work, and caring are evident in all that she does. It is easy to see why she is well deserving of the Oklahoma School Psychologist of the Year Award 2002-2003.