

# OSPA TODAY



Volume 28, Number 1  
Fall 2004

## **President's Message - A Different Perspective**

I want to welcome all of you to the new school year and hope that the first few months have been productive and the rest of the year promises to be even better. A special thanks to Tracy Fenton, past president for her energy, enthusiasm, knowledge and willingness to lead us as we attempt to implement the No Child Left Behind Act. Currently, OSPA is in the best financial position since I joined in the early 90's, our membership is at an all time high, and we continue to have opportunities to make a difference with children. Thanks also to Candis Hogan and Judy Oehler-Stinnett, both former presidents for their leadership prior to Tracy. As we all know change takes time and our previous leaders deserve credit for their efforts in helping us get to where we are today.

Thanks also to Jane Bias (School Psychologist of the year), Andrew Glenn, and Candis Hogan for their six year effort to get legislation passed for a \$5,000 bonus to those who have National School Psychologist Certification. Because of their willingness to take time away from their jobs and spend many hours of their own time, we are the second state in the nation to have such legislation passed. Yes, the bill is not funded yet but the future looks promising so hopefully it won't be long.

As I begin the year as your President and my 27<sup>th</sup> year in education I realize I have seen and been involved in many "mandates" as to how we are going to handle children and be accountable to the public. It is so easy to become jaded and think we tried that, that won't work, there is no money, there is no time and the kids won't respond anyway. But if you take a "different perspective" you might discover another way to impact children positively. So my challenge to you this year is take a "different perspective" on how you approach your job. In order to accomplish this you must begin by taking the time to care for yourself by balancing your personal life with your professional life. Once you develop a balance you can look at your job and ask "what's another way to approach the same problems I faced last year"?

I am attempting to do this with OSPA by encouraging those who have not been involved to become involved and give us a "different perspective" on issues we need to address such as recruitment and retention of practicing school psychologists and provisional certificates for those completing their internship year. I have been encouraged to do this by a poem I discovered by an unknown author 3 years ago. I hope this will help inspire you to take "a different perspective" in your own life.

## ***Autobiography in Five Short Chapters***

*I walk down the street  
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.  
I fall in.  
I am lost...I am helpless  
It isn't my fault.  
It takes forever to find a way out.*

*I walk down the same street,  
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.  
I pretend I don't see it.  
I fall in again.  
I can't believe I am in the same place  
But it isn't my fault.  
It still takes along time to get out.*

*I walk down the same street  
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.  
I see it is there.  
I still fall in... it's a habit  
My eyes are open  
I know where I am  
It is my fault.  
I get out immediately*

*I walk down the same street.  
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk  
I walk around it.*

*I walk down another street*

Good luck on your new year and your effort to develop a “different perspective” in your personal and professional lives

Nancy Barton, Ph.D.  
OSPA President

## **OSU Students Receive 2004 Graduate Studies Awards**

The OSPA Paul Warden and Mary Jo Keatley Graduate Studies Awards were established in 1998 to recognize and provide financial support to two students in school psychology training programs in the state of Oklahoma. The awards were named to honor Dr. Warden and Dr. Keatley, two of the pioneers of school psychology in Oklahoma and founding members of OSPA. The awards were developed in response to our professional commitment to encourage promising students to complete a school psychology program. Monetary awards are presented annually in the amount of \$500 to two selected students.

Based on the recommendation of the Awards, Honors and Scholarships committee, the OSPA executive board awarded scholarships to Michelle Atkins and Lezlee Greguson.

**Michelle Atkins** began studying psychology as an undergraduate at the University of St. Thomas in Houston. After earning a Bachelor of Arts degree at that university she earned a Master of Arts at the University of Houston. Michelle entered the doctoral program at OSU in the Fall 2003. She is interested in bringing empirically supported ideas to assist school personnel in developing interventions for both academic and behavioral problems. Michelle has had the opportunity to be involved in research projects in children's education and in breast cancer survivorship. She has an exemplary academic record and is dedicated to becoming an effective school psychologist.

**Lezlee Greguson** is also enrolled in the doctoral program at OSU. She came to Oklahoma after earning a Bachelor of Arts degree at the University of Nebraska and a Master of Arts degree at Minnesota State University in Mankato. Her decision to come to Oklahoma was influenced by the warm and genuine people she met. The profession of school psychology appeared to be a compliment to her interests and abilities. Lezlee's professional experience has included directing summer and after-school programs for children through YMCAs in Nebraska and Minnesota. She is currently assisting with several research projects at OSU as well as teaching beginning golf classes.

We are fortunate to have both these women as OSPA members and as future leaders in the profession of school psychology.

Elizabeth Hatcher  
Chair, Awards, Honor, and Scholarships

## **Is the NCSP Possible for Students from Certification Programs? Peggy Kerr, Ph.D.**

Oklahoma has a long history of offering School Psychology Certificate Programs at its universities. In fact, the majority of school psychologists practicing in Oklahoma came from such programs. According to the June 2004 NASP *Communiqué*, there are only 60 school psychologists in Oklahoma who are Nationally Certified School Psychologists (NCSP) and many of these were “grandparented” or moved here from other states.

Interest in obtaining the NCSP has greatly increased due to the recent Oklahoma legislation that provides additional salary to school psychologists who hold the NCSP. A number of Oklahoma school psychologists have applied for the NCSP and have been denied. The reasons for denial from NASP have varied from applicant to applicant; however, there seems to be some commonality. Often applicants are from a certification program rather than a degree program.

Historically, Oklahoma universities have taken two different approaches to preparing students for school psychology practice—degree programs and certificate programs. OSU is the only Oklahoma university currently offering the Specialist and Doctorate degrees in school psychology and is the only NASP-approved program in Oklahoma. ECU and UCO currently offer school psychology certification program. UCO also offers a 60-hour master’s degree in school psychology. NSU offered the school psychology certification program until the program was put in abeyance in 2003.

As of 8-24-2004, the NASP website lists NCSP application requirements for graduates of NASP and non-NASP approved programs. All school psychologists who are from certification programs or non-NASP approved programs degree programs must apply for the NCSP using the non-NASP information. Whether these school psychologists will actually be able to obtain the NCSP is still in question. There are at least five possible problems of which the applicant should be aware.

1) NCSP requires 60 graduate semester hours of study through an organized program of study that is officially titled “School Psychology.” For certificate programs, some of the required courses may have already been taken by the student as part of their master’s degree and judged adequate for the school psychology certificate program. Consequently, their program may not be judged by NASP as an “organized program of study.” The Graduate Catalog page showing the certificate program could possibly be used to prove the program was organized and titled “School Psychology.”

2) NCSP requires documentation of program completion. The Regents (for UCO) do not recognize certificate programs as actual programs—that is, they do

not allow transcript documentation of program completion. Transcript documentation is reserved for degree completion. Certificate programs are organized as a combination of courses which meet Oklahoma certification requirements. Consequently, the only documentation available to prove program completion is the Oklahoma certificate. (At UCO, the Dean of the College of Education will write a letter stating that the student in question has, in fact, completed such a program.)

3) Courses must meet the various NCSP subject area requirements. It is up to the applicant to provide syllabi or other proof that these areas were met. The NASP website encourages students to “hold on to the syllabi.” This is good advice for current and future students; however, former students may find it difficult to impossible to locate old syllabi. Syllabi might still be available from the instructors of the courses or the Graduate Catalog course descriptions could possible by used to prove course content.

4) A case study is required for school psychologists from non-NASP approved programs. Directions are detailed in the certification application booklet and should be followed carefully. (UCO has required a case study that follows the NASP guidelines for the last five years.)

5) A 1200-hour internship is required. Applicants are advised to contact the NASP Certification office to determine if there is an alternative means through which to meet this requirement. (UCO has required a 1200-hour internship since it was first required by NASP.)

I personally do not know of anyone from an Oklahoma certification program who has successfully navigated these requirements. If you are out there, please email (pkerr @ucok.edu) and let me know. Your information might prove extremely helpful to others who are preparing the NCSP application documents.

## NASP's Annual Conventions

March 29-April 2, 2005 Marriott Marquis Atlanta, GA
March 28-April 1, 2006 Hilton Anaheim and Anaheim Marriott Hotels Anaheim, CA
March 27-31, 2007 Hilton New York New York, NY
February 5-9, 2008 New Orleans Marriott New Orleans, LA
February 24-28, 2009 Boston Marriott Copley Place Boston, MA
March 2-6, 2010 Hyatt Regency Chicago Chicago, IL

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## **OSPA Attends State Leadership Conference**

OSPA was well represented at the 2004 State Department of Education's Annual Leadership Conference held in Tulsa, July 26th - 27th, 2004. Over 2,000 school leaders from across Oklahoma attended to learn about changes in education law, better practices, and to share ideas on improving Oklahoma's schools. OSPA was one of 140 booths representing services for schools. Our booth provided information to administrators on prevention and early intervention for both academic and behavioral problems, removing barriers to learning, and increasing student achievement.

OSPA members were present to promote the profession of school psychology and advocate for strengthening other school-based mental health programs. Participants at the convention received promotional items, and the opportunity to register for a NASP publication. Those who deserve thanks for assisting at the conference are: **Tracy Fenton, Nancy Barton, Mary Ellen Jones, Steven Crane, Shelley Geyer, Sandra Reese-Keck and Cindie Milford.**

Pictured are: Tracy Fenton, Mary Ellen Jones, and Steven Crane.

## **Jami Haywood Receives 2003-04 Faye Catlett Award**

The Faye Catlett award for Outstanding School Psychologist was established in 1986 to recognize an Oklahoma school psychologist who has made significant contributions to the profession. The award was named to honor Dr. Faye Catlett, then Central State University's leader in school psychology education. This year, the honor goes to **Jami Haywood**. Jami is a nationally certified school psychologist employed by Edmond Public Schools. In her position, Jami leads multidisciplinary teams to address concerns regarding student learning and behavioral problems. She provides diagnostic evaluations and assists parents and fellow educators in their understanding of children's issues. As an advocate for mental health, she regularly presents the Choices Suicide Prevention program to high school students.

Jami is a member of OSPA and NASP. She served on the OSPA Executive Board in 1985-86 and again from 1999 to present. For the past three years Jami has served as Membership chair. During that time she has spent countless hours updating and computerizing the membership list, developing the OSPA directory, working with the web page designer, communicating with the membership regarding their dues, and preparing the brochures for conferences. She is also a volunteer with Angel Flight of Oklahoma.

Jami received a Bachelor of Arts, a Masters of Education, and psychometry certification at Central State University in Edmond. She began her career in psychology working on the psychiatric units of Oklahoma Baptist and Oklahoma Children's Hospitals. She was employed as a school psychometrist/psychological assistant at Oklahoma Memorial Children's Hospital for five years. Jami received her school psychology certification through Oklahoma State University in 1987 and was hired as a school psychologist by Oklahoma City Public Schools. She began working for Edmond Public Schools in 1992.

Jami is respected and admired by all who know her. She has a gift of optimism and she sets a positive tone to the environment that she works. Her support and encouragement of colleagues and faculty allow them to meet high personal and professional standards. She also recognizes and reinforces parental strengths, thereby facilitating more positive parenting interactions and strategies. Her intuitive understanding of parents' perspective elicits their willing cooperation in coordinating home and school interventions. Jami is a wonderful role model for all of us. We are proud to recognize Jami as the 2003-2004 Outstanding School Psychologist and the Oklahoma nominee for NASP's National School Psychologist of the Year.

## **Fenton Meets with Congressman**

Tracy Fenton, Past-President of OSPA, recently met with U.S. Congressman Brad Carson to discuss education reform and the legislative possibilities to increase support, access, and resources to provide school-based services to all students in need. Specifically, more adequate funding investments in Title I and the Elementary and Secondary School Counseling Program (ESSCP), which is authorized under Fund for the Improvement of Education as part of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). The ESSCP helps school districts to establish or expand school-based counseling services through qualified school counselors, school psychologists and other qualified mental health providers. The program helps improve school safety and increase students' academic achievement by expanding students' access to mental health and counseling services.

Further, the President's New Freedom Commission on Mental Health report, recommends a comprehensive strategic plan. The report recommends strengthening school-based mental health programs and early intervention services for children at risk for school failure.

NIMH data shows that over 13.7 million children and adolescents are in need of treatment for emotional and behavioral disorders, but less than 1 in 5 ever receive it.