

**SIP APA Council of Representatives (COR) Report**  
**SIP Business Meeting, June, 2008**  
**Doug McDonald**

**Background.**

When Dr. Ron Levant was running for APA President five years ago, he asked a number of us in APA governance what sort of initiatives we would request in order to support his candidacy. At a meeting at the APA convention in Toronto, several of us posed the prospect of seating representatives from the four ethnic minority psych associations on the APA COR so that we – for the first time ever - could have an official voice in the operation of APA at the highest level. Ron agreed and it became one of his campaign platforms. Dr. Gerry Koocher supported it the next year and the four societies were granted a seat, but only as “Observers” – in other words we couldn’t vote, or even speak unless invited. I tolerated sitting at the “kids table” for one year and then initiated an effort to get our seats converted into actual full-fledged, voting, Member seats. It took a great deal of work on my and the other rep’s parts (mainly because the process is so damn complicated) but then as I reported last February, the APA COR had voted at our Summer, 2007 meetings to send out an initiative to the (APA) membership to change the APA By-Laws to allow for creation of four new COR seats, which would be filled by the reps from the four Ethnic Psychological associations. A 2/3 majority vote was necessary for the initiative to pass. Unfortunately, only about 63% of those responding voted FOR the change. “Close, but no cigar”. Many were shocked and embarrassed by this result, feeling it would be a “Slamdunk” and was a “Black Eye” for APA in terms of Diversity, which it was. Especially since, as I had reported, the vote that took place at the summer meetings was almost unanimous, with only two members voting “no” (out of 160). When the COR vote was held last summer, the four of us got a standing ovation and many pats on the back, as everyone thought it was a sure thing. Not quite – as it turned out.

So, the APA COR has enacted a number of initiatives to “educate” the APA membership (that they represent) as to the importance of this initiative, and at our Winter meetings in DC, the vote came around again, and this time it was unanimous. The four of us – once again – voiced our appreciation for the well-wishes and support from APA and the initiative will – once again – go out to the membership for a(nother) vote in November. As I said, many in APA were embarrassed by the outcome of the previous voting, suggesting many possible reasons for its outcome. In the end, the reps from the other three ethnic psych associations and I have been in constant contact with groups ranging from state psych associations, all the APA divisions, the APA staff, - basically anyone who might help us “get the word out” to APA members prior to the mailing in November in order to push us that slight margin over the top of 67%. As of this writing, we’ve not only gotten commitments, but been sent the drafts, power-point presentations, newsletters, workshop materials, mailings, etc, etc, of all of these groups’ efforts on our behalf. I can say it’s been heartening, and impressive. I reckon we’ll see how it all comes out. I want to officially recognize the following folks for their help and support in this struggle: Bertha

Holiday, Alberto Figueroa, Annie Toro, Daniel Dawes, Gwen Keita, Prez Alan Kazdin and CEO Norman Anderson from APA, John P, Beth and Mark for their SIP leadership (and Beth as Div45 Prez), Azara, Alvin and Bob as the reps from the other societies, and Martha Banks, Bill Parham and Guillermo Bernal as the Div 45 APA COR reps who worked so hard as well.

Another initiative that WAS successfully achieved was a vote by the APA COR that will cover the expenses of the APA COR reps of color to both meetings, which means SIP won't have to pay anything to send its rep to the two meetings per year.

Upcoming issues for the APA COR include a revisiting of APA's position on Torture (like listening to a John Peregoy lecture), Immigration, Child Education, mental health care for Homeless, as well as returning vets from the wars. I have not yet received the materials but will forward them when I do and I encourage folks to take a look at them and provide me feedback about anything you'd like me to speak to while there in August.

### **Current Status**

So, where do we go from here? We first need to find a copy of the SIP By-Laws to ensure the changes we voted in regarding the SIP APA COR Rep have been included so I can be accurate in reporting such to APA – let me re-list them to refresh everyone's memories (also - these items are consistent with those of the APA COR by-laws):

- 1. The SIP APA COR Rep will be selected by the SIP membership**
- 2. The SIP APA COR Rep will be a voting member of the SIP EC.**
- 3. The SIP APA COR Rep will not be the current SIP President**
- 4. The SIP APA COR Rep will serve a three-year term, can serve two consecutive terms but must wait at least one three-year term before running again.**

We will need to hold an election at the SIP Business Meeting in Logan as my first term as the SIP APA COR Rep expires at the end of this year. Since, in my opinion, the most significant task I undertook in representing SIP is still incomplete (achieving full APA COR representation), I plan to run again for a second consecutive term to – if y'all will have me back – see it through. If not, it has been a huge honor to represent and serve you all, I really mean that.

That's about it. Please contact me if there's anything more I can do to better represent us at the APA COR.

Toksa, Doug