



## **Governing Board**

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# **Society of Indian Psychologists**

## **SIP President's Report 2011-2013**

It's been a busy and challenging two years serving as your president. We've addressed many issues including regular executive council teleconferences, membership initiatives, comment on the DSM 5, commentary on the APA ethics code from a SIP perspective, a new website, updating the bylaws, our 25<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference, honoring of SIP elders, online voting, an amicus brief for the U.S. Supreme Court on the Baby Veronica Case, a mentoring initiative, participation in the leadership development institute through CNPAAEMI, participation in a meetings of the four ethnic minority psychological association presidents and the APA president, initial talks on the development of an organization to address common issues for the 5 organizations and the meeting at SIP for that organization. Through the many growing pains of the past two years we have welcomed the involvement of new leadership that has stimulated and carried forward ideas and initiatives to make us a larger, stronger, and far reaching organization.

The monthly teleconference for the SIP executive council that was conceptualized by our past-president, Pam Deters, was initiated and made a substantial difference in the follow-through on initiatives and ideas over the course of the year between business meetings. We were able to discuss and act on issues that were presented in a timely way. This year we also implemented an online voting process that allowed us to act on issues in the moment and not have to wait until the business meeting once a year to make those decisions.

The work of Membership Committee Chair, Kimberly Miller, and our new website designed by Wendy Peters contributed to our increase in membership over 150% in the first year. That reach of the initiatives have brought inquiries about partnerships from around the world and the Australian Indigenous Psychologists interested in working with us on common goals. With the institutional membership opportunities just established we are anticipating more growth to our budget so we will be able to support our president's travel to APA and SIP meetings and our LDI Fellow and Mentor travel. Increases in visibility and membership through the website and listserv have allowed participation by members who have not or are unable to attend the conference in Logan. This greatly extends our impact and our voice throughout Indian Country.

Melinda Garcia has put tremendous effort into first the commentary on the DSM 5 from a SIP perspective and then in pulling together the commentary for SIP on the APA Code of Ethics. These were two major projects that have a huge impact on our work in Indian Country and Melinda worked with the heart of a warrior woman to complete these activities. The DSM 5 letter has been transmitted around the world and has helped to generate many questions as to the validity of the DSM 5. NIH is now launching a study as to how diagnostic criteria should be conceived. Carolyn Barcus brought members of the APA Ethics Committee to SIP to have conversations about how the ethics code didn't fit for indigenous people. Melinda picked up the challenge and stayed after us to get responses to the APA Ethics Code to pull together a

commentary that represented the indigenous perspective. Thank you, Melinda, for all your hard work and dedication.

The 25<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference was a landmark event that allowed us to reflect on the path of our organization and the growth and leadership we have had to get here. We had a record attendance for the retreat and conference. There was an opportunity to honor those who had gone before and helped to build our organization and this conference. It was truly an extraordinary event!

When we selected a fellow for the CNPAAEMI Leadership Development Institute, the Executive Council felt it was unfair to totally leave out the others who were not selected. The executive council and two of our early career members, Kee Straits and Kimberly Miller have worked to build a mentoring plan from within SIP. In addition to the University of North Dakota Chapter of SIP, New Mexico has had an initial meeting and are filing their application to begin a chapter. About 25 psychologists and psychology graduate students gathered in Albuquerque to start the process in March of this year. Oklahoma is also in the process of developing a chapter. The addition of chapters are also a mechanism for growth, mentoring, and leadership development closer to home.

By having meals together at APA, SIP, the National Multicultural Summit, and the American Counseling Association conferences, colleagues and students who have needed mentoring, supervision and consultation from an indigenous perspective have been able to connect with SIP members who helped to provide that leadership. Many more are participating in the mentoring of our graduate students and early career psychologists in practice, research, teaching and leadership. Thank you to all who formally and informally encourage, guide, and empower our young ones to grow and give back to the community.

Carolyn Morris and Sid Davies have worked on a plan for SIP to become more involved in research through support of members research and developing partnerships between SIP and Universities with Native faculty and students for research projects. With this plan, we hope SIP will be at the center of research for the betterment of work with indigenous people. SIP has also accepted the Journal of Indigenous Research as our official journal. This online journal has had 6,422 full text downloads thus far this year. It has filled a gap in the peer reviewed and community research literature by providing research information back to indigenous communities.

SIP has joined with APA, the National Indian Health Board, and others as “Friends of IHS” to address the funding and needs of Indian Health Service before congress. We have assisted by providing information and testimony before congress as to the behavioral health needs in Indian country.

This spring SIP along with Association of Black Psychologists and Asian American Psychological Association submitted an amicus brief regarding attachment and bonding, culture, and needs of an American Indian child to the U.S. Supreme Court in the Baby Veronica case. The National Indian Child Welfare Association, Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma, and others submitted amici in this case. They are awaiting the outcome of the Supreme Court decision.

At the invitation of the APA the Ethnic Minority Psychological Associations (EMPA which includes the Association of Black Psychologists [ABPsi], the Asian American Psychological Association [AAPA], the National Latino/a Psychological Association [NLPA], the Society of Indian Psychologists [SIP]) delegates to the Council of Representatives (COR) have represented their respective associations at the bi-annual meetings and participated on the

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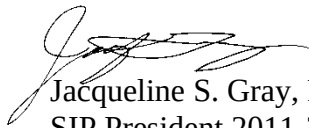
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caucuses that determine which issues get support within the COR. For the third time the APA membership has not voted for a by-law change that would provide a voting seat to the EMPAs on the COR, however; the EMPAs have the APA invitation to continue to sit at the COR meetings and participate in the caucuses. This is scheduled within APA through 2015. For the time being, we still have a voice at COR.

The presidents of the ABPsi, the AAPA, the NLPA, the SIP and the APA met in Houston, TX at the National Multicultural Summit for two hours to address how we could work together with mutual respect and equal power to find winnable wins of mutual concern. Given that in the two hour meeting everything could not be resolved, we viewed the discussion as positive and a first step. Since then several conference calls and a second meeting held yesterday, here in Logan, UT continued that work.

I want to thank you all for the opportunity to provide leadership to the Society of Indian Psychologists through these two exciting years. I know with our growth and vision the organization will continue to leave its mark and have a voice in the years to come.

Respectfully submitted,



Jacqueline S. Gray, Ph.D.  
SIP President 2011-2013