

*President's Letter*

*By*

*Crystal Smithson*



It is almost the end of this school year. Where has time gone? This school year has been an eventful year to say the least. Assessments, consultations, counseling, crisis management, student analysis, and meetings have kept us all busy. This year has also been difficult due to national tragedies such as the loss of our colleague, Mary Sherlach, from Connecticut, and the most recent Boston bombings and Texas explosion. It is important for us to familiarize ourselves with crisis material to handle the aftermath that comes with such devastation. Resources are always available from the nasponline.org website, as well as within our WVSPA community.

We have also had many legislative issues arise that involve our profession. Many of you have shared your views and concerns with our executive board members. Due to the mass casualties and fear invoked by school shootings, more attention has been drawn to the need for mental health services for the students we serve in the school system. We also have students requiring

extensive mental health services when they enter our schools at very early ages. Now is the time to advocate for our profession, as each of us has skills required to be effective change agents in the schools and to assist in meeting these needs. Please take the opportunity to review bills such as SB-603 to join in advocating for school psychologists and to share in this endeavor. I am very excited to have Dr. Dawn Flanagan sharing her knowledge of cross-battery assessment with us for our two day conference. This would not have been possible without assistance from the West Virginia Department of Education and from individuals pursuing this effort to bring a national speaker to us. Hats off to Lisa Gainer for initiating contact with Dr. Flanagan and to our current executive board for continuing in these efforts! A collaborative approach was necessary to bring such a renowned speaker to our organization. Thank you to our colleagues at the WVDE and to Pat Homburg for her support as well. What a great display of support for our profession!

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I have had the opportunity to attend several NASP meetings and conventions. Although our Mountain State has many issues to overcome, we are very advanced and unified as an organization. As members we understand the importance of state and national membership, attend conferences regularly to update skills and renew certifications/licensures, and seek professional information to further develop our skills. Many states do not have the strong membership alliance that we have in West Virginia. Thank you for the opportunity to serve as the President of such a wonderful association. I have gained knowledge, many networking relationships, and friendships throughout my time as President-Elect and President. There are many great School Psychologists in our state and across our country. I am very proud to work in this State and to be a member and officer of WVSPA. Thank you for all that you do!

### **Life as a School Psychologist Intern**

Submitted by Bryan Wilson

Life as a School Psychologist Intern is a constant learning process. From the moment you step foot in your school district, you are bombarded with new information. At first it is overwhelming, but as each day progresses, you become more and more comfortable in your own skin and start to find out who you are as a School Psychologist. Much of the information you learn as an intern will be crucial in the coming years. Learning about policies, procedures, paperwork, testing, and report writing are all tools of the trade that you need to master. Many things you practice and learn on internship vary in importance. Some things you learn you will cherish forever, some you may not use but once or twice a year. However, the learning experience that occurs is something every intern cherishes when that year is over. Additionally, there are many things you learn as an intern that are more about sanity and convenience throughout your week, month, and school year. You hear about some of these things as a graduate student, but learning the ōnwritten rulesö while working are invaluable. Some skills you learn are very serious. Often times though there are humorous skills that you learn. Skills and tools that people make jokes about at conferences and presentations with other school psychologists. Here are some of the tools and tips of the trade that you will

never learn in a textbook that some of us interns have discovered from each other and our supervisors:

Hand sanitizer and sanitizing wipes should be with you at all times!

Caffeine is your best friend.

Keeping a chiropractor on your phone's contact list will be helpful to ease the pain of carrying numerous test kits all over the place.

Google Calendar is a great way to find out where your colleagues have wandered off to.

Having a schedule means absolutely nothing once the day starts.

Don't ever assume that the student you are supposed to test or work with is in attendance..

Secretaries are your best friend.

Snow days are both sweet (time off work!!) and salty (those timelines keep creeping closer! )

Often times your desk or car serves as the lunch table.

Always expect the unexpected (for example, a student randomly vomiting during testing brings a whole new meaning to spoiling a subtest).

Post-It notes might be the greatest invention ever.

Testing protocols can be the perfect sneeze guard for yourself while working with your sick students.

While we all take our jobs very seriously and love what we do, it's nice to take a look at the lighter side now and then. Our jobs can be very stressful, and it's nice to take a laugh at the little things that keep us happy. Sometimes discovering these small yet life-saving tools can make your day run much more smoothly. Perhaps a push should be made to introduce a new class to the School Psychology Curriculum. I think I'd call it School Psychology 701 ó Tools for Survival.

### **Region Activity**

Region A (submitted by Holly Yoke)

WVSPA Region A will have a regional meeting the week of WESTEST, Wednesday, May 15 at 9:00 AM at the Wood County Schools board office. The purpose of this meeting will be to collaborate on current, upcoming, or past cross-battery cases.

Region B (submitted by Karen Edgell)

Region B held a regional meeting with speakers on April 12. Dr. Heather Clawges spoke on sleep disorders and gave a very informative presentation.

## WVSPA Executive Board

President - Crystal Smithson  
President Elect - Kim Waggy  
Past President - Lisa Gainer  
Secretary - Cheryl Winston  
Treasurer - Debbie Rolston  
Membership - Debbie Rolston  
Government and Public Relations - Angela Madia  
Ethics Chairperson - Karen Edgell  
Historians - Michael Powell/Tanya Cook  
Newsletter Editor - Gwendolyn Smith  
Awards - Jennie York  
Nominations - Sandra Stroebel  
Technology Representative - Holly Bond Ferrell  
Region A - Holly Yoke (RESA 5 and 6)  
Region B - Kristen Majewski (RESA 7)  
Region C - Christina Hare (RESA 8)  
Region D - Renee Hardy (RESA 2 and 3)  
Region E - Michael Powell (RESA 1 and 4)  
MUGC Representative - Sandra Stroebel  
MUGC Student Representative - Beth DeVilla  
Parliamentarian - Fred Krieg  
NASP Delegate - Fred Krieg  
NASP Futures Liaison - Susan Beck  
WV Board of Examiners - Toni Parsons  
WVDE Representative - Lanai Jennings

## Awards Criteria

**West Virginia School Psychologist Of The Year Award** is in recognition of an individual's exemplary provision of school psychological services.

**Exemplary Program in the Delivery of School Psychological Services Award** is in recognition of implementation of innovative practices or programs by an individual or county school system.

**Chloe Hollinger Award** is in recognition of an individual who has promoted school psychology in West Virginia through such things as publications, presentations and overall leadership.

**Special Friends of Children Award** is presented to a person who has demonstrated outstanding dedication to the children in West Virginia and has shown a commitment to the profession of school psychology.

**Government & Public Relations Award** is presented to a person who has demonstrated leadership in government and public relations.

WVSPA takes pride in recognizing our members each year for outstanding contributions to the field of School Psychology. We want nominations from our WVSPA members. Please review the criteria for each of the awards. Request a nomination form and complete it. Return the completed form to Jennie York.

## Join WVSPA

### Membership Categories

**REGULAR** ó Available to those currently certified by the State Department of Education, or persons who hold a current license in school psychology granted by the WV Board of Examiners of Psychologists. Fee \$50.00 annually

**STUDENT** ó Available to those actively enrolled in a psychology training program, taking a minimum of six semester hours. Student membership status is granted for no more than five years, requires annual verification from the University where they are enrolled, and is not granted to any person employed full time. Fee \$25.00 annually

**RETIRED** ó Available to persons holding regular membership for at least five consecutive years and who retired from professional activity. No fee, but requires annual application.

**ASSOCIATE** ó Available to those having at least a bachelor's degree and who have an interest in school psychology. Fee \$15.00 annually.

Dues are assessed on or near July 1st of each year. New and student members may be required to complete additional forms before membership is accepted. Please make checks payable to: WVSPA. Mail to:

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WVSPA Treasurer/Membership  
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