Spring Institute 2016
Attendees share their views on the successful event
By Raina LeGarreta, CASP Communications Specialist

“Across the board, the caliber of presenters and content was top notch. The networking opportunities were abundant and the weather was perfect.”

The aforementioned words from California NASP Delegate and CASP Spring Institute 2016 presenter Kristin Makena summarized what made Spring Institute a successful event.

Held at the Hyatt Regency-Monterey on March 31-April 1, attendees agreed that Spring Institute achieved its goal to, as its title stated, “Connect the Dots to Support the Whole Child.”

The city’s customary sunny and breezy—but not too cold climate helped foster the perfect atmosphere for the event. Workshops explored a variety of issues, including ways to assess children with reading disorders, evaluate a child based on contextual factors, and promote positive school climates were the highlight of the event. Attendees also learned how trauma impacts brain development, in depth executive functions assessment and interventions, law and ethics policies, and more.

The Spring Institute, along with the beautiful backdrop of Monterey, provided an atmosphere of both intellectual stimulation and relation. There was an extensive array of workshops, poster and paper presentations to enhance the ability of school psychologist to indeed “Support the Whole Child.” In addition, we found providing a Student Strand to the structure of the Spring Institute adds to the overall value of what we can provide to support our emerging group of future school psychologists. From the lounge like entryway area into the hotel, to the outdoor areas around the hotel and accompanying golf course, I enjoyed walking around and many small group gatherings of our attendees laughing and genuinely have a good time.

The historical trivia giveaway at our registration table was a wonderful opportunity to learn about our rich 66-year history as an active, as well as highly productive and successful professional association. Lastly, I wanted to thank Brett Duncan and his family for allowing the Alumni Club to meet in their family home. It was beautiful retreat-like setting with beautiful views and ambiance. The Alumni Club members were able to discuss CASP history, current issues in the field and how we can continue to steer the future of school psychology in a positive and meaningful way.

– CASP President, Troy Xavier Leonard

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Congratulations to CASP’s New Board of Directors

As of July 1, CASP will have new Board of Directors.

The following regional representatives have been elected for two-year terms starting with the 2016-2017 year: President-Elect – Pedro Olvera; Secretary-Treasurer – Seble Gebremedhin; Region II – James Hiramoto; Region IV – Jeannine Topalian; Region VI – Glenn Schumacher; Region VIII – Lillian Hernandez; and Region X – Maureen Schroeder.

Tom Sopp will begin his tenure as CASP President 2016-2017, while Troy Xavier Leonard will become past president, a position last held by Barbara D’Incau. Former Region IX representative Pedro Olvera was chosen as CASP president-elect. During this three-year term, Olvera will serve as CASP president in 2017-2018 and past president in 2018-2019.

All odd-numbered regions will hold elections for representatives next year.

Pedro Olvera (President-Elect)

Dr. Pedro Olvera is the Director and Associate Professor of the School Psychology program at Azusa Pacific University (APU). He is a published writer and he teaches coursework in the area of assessment of ELLs, cognitive assessment, and enhancing collaboration with Latino families. Before joining APU, Dr. Olvera was a practicing bilingual school psychologist for the Santa Ana Unified School District (SAUSD). He is currently in private practice and is frequently called upon to offer his expertise in matters related to the assessment of ELLs. Dr. Olvera is also Associate Editor for the Contemporary School Psychology (CSP) journal. As a future CASP president, he will provide leadership and advocacy for mental health experts; empowering school psychologists through professional development and ensuring that the voices of the culturally diverse are heard.

Seble Gebremedhin (Secretary-Treasurer)

A past president of the Los Angeles Association of School Psychologists (LAASP), Seble Gebremedhin has served as CASP secretary-treasurer since 2014. In her second term of the position, she will continue increasing visibility for CASP; supporting the executive committee and the executive director in making the most suitable and best decisions necessary for the organization. Gebremedhin would like to continue working on increasing membership, and give members knowledge on how CASP functions financially.

James Hiramoto (Region II Representative)

Current Region II representative and member of the Legislative, Assessment and Cultural Linguistic Diversity committees, Dr. James Hiramoto has been a member of CASP since 1992. Presently, he is a school psychologist at Diagnostic Center, Northern California and a certified trainer for both Crisis Prevention and Preparedness and

Crisis Intervention and Recovery for National Association of School Psychologists. Dr. Hiramoto’s second term as Region II representative sees him furthering his mission to further develop the Bay Area affiliate supporting Alameda, Contra Costa, San Francisco and San Mateo counties with the support of University of California, Berkeley; California State University, East Bay and Alliant. He would also like to revive Santa Clara County Association of School Psychologists and continue supporting Monterey County Association of School Psychologists, as well as foster a relationship with the new school psychology program at California State University, Monterey. Region II runs from Marin County south to Monterey County and inland to include Solano County.

Jeannine Topalian (Region IV Representative)

Los Angeles Unified School District school psychologist Dr. Jeannine Topalian has extensive knowledge of and experience in working with diverse youth and low-income families, having operated in the San Fernando Valley region for over 14 years. Dr. Topalian is an adjunct faculty member in the School Neuropsychology Certification Program at Alliant International University, Los Angeles. In her second term as Region IV representative, she will continue working collaboratively alongside other CASP board members to advocate for the profession at the local and state level. She recently worked with a group of school psychologists from throughout California on CASP’s Position Paper on the AB1369 (Dyslexia Bill). Dr. Topalian will continue to collaborate, advocate, and disseminate the recommended best practices in accordance with CASP and advocate for the school psychologists in her region to continue to increase CASP and LAASP membership as well as expand their roles.

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Students and others who were seeking careers in school psychology attended the CASP Job Fair. About 20 school districts, county offices of education, and employment agencies were seeking qualified school psychologists for their positions.

“Monique (Arbuckle) and I felt that that the CASP Job Fair was a very worthwhile opportunity for us as LAUSD representatives to meet and get to know perspective applicants in person, and vice versa. It was a positive relaxed atmosphere that added to great conversations and information gathering,” Dr. Larisa Crookston said. “We were able to connect with perspective candidates, which is always beneficial, as it affords us an opportunity to get to know candidates prior to their formal District interview. Interested candidates were also able to interview on the spot if they chose to do so. We feel that this type of early interview process facilitates both us and the candidates.”

The 90-minute Student Strand sessions that were developed specifically for school psychology graduate student and interns, and volunteer opportunities also added to the student attendees’ knowledge and experience.

“As a student volunteer at the CASP convention, I really appreciated being able to talk with other student volunteers about their current experiences in their respective programs. It was nice to hear what they are doing in their programs and all the commonalities the schools have and the differences in terms of what the programs emphasize as being a key role of a school psychologist,” said Carly Zarrow, a Spring Institute student volunteer who also attended separate sessions at the event.

“I also enjoyed being able to talk to ‘seasoned veterans’, school psychologists in practice, about their experiences,” she said. “I was able to hear them share stories of students in counseling, dealing with administration, and working with different types of populations. It helps to hear their actual experiences and maybe I will remember them and what they did when/if I experience them in my work. Moreover, it was refreshing to know that we don’t need to know or have the answer to everything; this is a field of lifelong learning.”

As keynote speaker for Spring Institute, NASP President Todd Savage’s address delved into efforts to improve school climate and safety. Attention was centered on students who struggle in school because they are bullied, teased, or ostracized as a result of their sexual identity, learning problems, or family situations. Savage reviewed fundamental elements that support positive school climates and discussed how school psychologists can strengthen these essentials through their advocacy and actions.

Leonard agrees that Spring Institute is just one of the significant ways that CASP helps its members network and continue to develop the field of school psychology.

“When catching up on our personal and professional lives or establishing new professional connections, these informal social exchanges are one of the many perks of attending both our Spring Institute and Fall Convention,” he said.

Carl D. Corbin, J.D. of School and College Legal Services of California returned to Spring Institute to present the “law” portion of the Law & Ethics workshops.
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Increasing attention is being paid to students’ social and emotional well-being, both in educating the “whole child” as well as in developing a foundation that is necessary for academic achievement. Under the federal government’s Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) states have greater flexibility to look beyond test scores and take on programs that equip students with 21st century skills, including those related to social and emotional functioning. Under California’s Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) requirements, Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) must explicitly address factors affecting school climate and many districts are using this opportunity to implement social and emotional learning programs. The CORE SEL Pilot project is the perfect example of this (see www.coredistricts.org).

In the first article of this series, we discussed the early stages in our development of the Promoting Academic and Social Success (PASS) program at our district’s middle school. As described in that article, a core component of the PASS class is daily mindfulness practice. Mindfulness can be simply defined as non-judgmental present moment awareness of one’s experience, including physical sensations, emotions, thoughts, and images. Cultivation of this ability allows one to stabilize their mind and quiet the continuous, and often unconscious, “chatter” that distracts one from the present moment. In our program, students engage in daily “mindful minutes” at the start of their PASS period and one day a week participate in a 30 - 40 minute lesson on mindfulness including mindfulness practices (e.g. mindful breathing, mindful walking, heartfulness), benefits of mindfulness, neural mechanisms underlying mindfulness, and applications in real life contexts.

While mindfulness is a simple concept, in practice it requires a significant amount of effort and training to cultivate. The benefits, however, may be well worth the effort. Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR), pioneered by Jon Kabat-Zinn at the University of Massachusetts Medical Center (Kabat-Zinn, 2013), and later Mindfulness Based Cognitive Therapy (Segal, Williams, & Teasdale, 2001) have been demonstrated to be effective in treating a wide range of mental and physical health problems and in promoting a general sense of well-being. Over the past 30 years, as mindfulness has gained acceptance as a secular practice in the west, it has increasingly been seen as a vehicle for training one’s ability to direct attention and regulate thoughts, emotions and actions. As a result, its use has spread from medical facilitates and mental health treatment centers to professional sports (Jackson, 2006; Jackson & Jackson, 2015), corporate business (Gonzalez, 2012), and public schools (Hassed & Chambers, 2015; Rechtschaffen, 2014).

In this article we discuss the benefits of mindfulness practice including its use in treating a variety of psychological conditions (e.g. ADHD, anxiety, and depression), its neurological substrates, and its use with school age populations. These, of course, are some of the reasons why mindfulness is a core component of our PASS program. We also provide recommendations for those interested in learning more about mindfulness practice including books, curriculum, internet resources, apps, and training programs.

The Neuroscience of Mindfulness

For more than 15 years neuroscientists at the University of Wisconsin-Madison have studied the effects of mindfulness and found that mindfulness training produces both cognitive and emotional benefits along with corresponding changes in the structure and function of the brain (Ricard, Lutz, & Davidson, 2014). These researchers have found that the posterior cingulate cortex and precuneus are activated during states of mind wandering or “mindlessness.” However, the anterior insula and anterior cingulate cortex (ACC), which act to detect salient information, both in our mind and our environment, recognize distractions during mindfulness practice (i.e. sensations, images, feelings, thoughts). The dorsolateral prefrontal cortex (DLPFC), among other networks, is then activated to disengage from the distracting thought and refocus attention to one’s breath or other objects (Mumford, 2014). The authors concluded that the mindfulness practice of disengaging from the distraction thought and re-focus on attention leads to improvements in attentional control that transfer across various situations. This is consistent with research from Posner (2009) who found that mindfulness training produced improved performances on cognitive measures of attention as well as increase activity in the ACC (midline frontal region).

Impact of Mindfulness on Attention and Impulse Regulation

The importance of self-regulation, in other words the ability to purposefully direct one’s attention and restrain impulses, is tremendously important to one’s success in school, both academically and socially. Yet, as much as we as educators remind students that they must pay attention, how much time do we spend teaching them how to do it? In my experience, not much. In a review of current research on the impact of mindfulness practice on the neural mechanisms of attention, Malinowski (2013) concluded that the mindfulness practice of focusing one’s attention on the breath leads to improvements in attentional control that transfer across various situations. This is consistent with research from Tang and Posner (2009) who found that mindfulness training produced improved performances on cognitive measures of attention as well as increases in the ACC (midline frontal region).
Fostering a better future for school psychology

By Raina LeGarreta, CASP Communications Specialist

CASP is regularly developing methods to foster the future of the profession by providing information on what it is that school psychologists do - and equipping current and future professionals with the tools they need to succeed. We do this in a variety of ways.

One way to do that is to make presentations to undergraduate psychology students. We are doing this by requesting that CASP Alumni Club members, comprised mostly of retired members, do brief presentations on school psychology for psychology undergrads at various California universities and colleges.

Alumni Club member and past CASP president Christine Toleson noted that her successful Chapman University presentation broadened students’ education and acknowledgment of the field. “It went very well,” she said. “My colleague Dr. Mary Barry (president of LAASP) went with me and we presented the PowerPoint and gave out flyers. I’m interested in doing it again; it was a lot of fun.”

The CASP Job Fair, held at the annual Spring Institute, gives students the opportunity to meet with school districts and other organizations that are seeking qualified candidates for open positions.

For example, the Elk Grove Unified School District is looking to hire between 4-6 school psychologists this spring. District Lead Psychologist Armando Fernandez said that he was pleased to meet at least three great candidates who expressed interest in submitting applications to the district via the online education job website, EDJOIN.

“With the current short supply of qualified school psychologists across the state, the CASP Job Fair is an excellent place to get to actually meet potential job applicants before you see their applications online,” he said. “Getting a face to face contact with a district representative, helps give candidates the opportunity to make their applications submitted to EDJOIN stand out. And it also helps districts put a face to the applications they may be screening in EDJOIN. I see it as a win-win situation for both parties. We certainly will look forward to interviewing them soon!”

School Psychology Graduate student Allison McFarland agrees that the Job Fair is a great opportunity to help students get a few steps closer to landing their first job. Currently in her final year at the University of California, Santa Barbara, McFarland obtained an on-the-spot interview at the recent Spring Institute Job Fair.

“It’s hard to really learn about a district from their website, so it was nice to be able to talk to school psychologists and ask them direct questions,” she said. “It’s important to me that I find a good match with a district, so I enjoyed having conversations with school psychologists about their personal experiences. The CASP Job Fair was an eye opening experience.”

Many of the CASP Spring Institute and Fall Convention Student Strand sessions center on the best practices to help students land their first job, building credibility for themselves when they get there, resume dos and don’ts, and more. CASP will continue to develop these programs and create new ones that are significantly helping the future of the field.

Editor’s note: A new school psychology graduate program is in the works. California State University, Monterey Bay, is starting a new School Psychology Graduate Program. The program plans to admit 15 students each year and will center on training that supports migrant students and English language learners. For more information, contact Cathy Draper-Rodriguez at cdraperrodriguez@csumb.edu

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A Message from the President

Troy Xavier Leonard shares views on term and objectives

By Troy Xavier Leonard, CASP President

As my presidency at CASP nears its end, I want to first say thank you to the membership, our dynamic board and our hardworking office staff for supporting me through this journey. During this transition period I am experiencing many moments of self-reflection. The very young and profound Mattie J.T. Stepanek once said, “Unity is strength and when there is teamwork and collaboration wonderful things can be achieved.” I think this pretty much sums up what I experienced during my term, and I am truly grateful for having had the opportunity. For some who may not know who Mattie was, he was a bright and wonderful child who died at the age of 13 from a hereditary disease called dysautonomic mitochondrial myopathy, which is a rare form of muscular dystrophy that also claimed the lives of his three older siblings. Despite his short time on Earth he made a tremendous impact in the lives of many through his courage, passion and spirit. He asked that he be remembered as a poet, peacemaker and philosopher who embraced the concept of play.

Like Mattie, I too like to express my passion for life; advocating for causes that impact the most vulnerable like many of the students and families we serve as school psychologists. And again, like Mattie, I also like to experience the joy of play; even in our professional roles. It enables us to get through the rough patches and connects us to each other in ways that formality cannot achieve.

So while I am proud of the fact that during my presidency – together we as an organization have achieved many goals, including steady and slightly improved membership, position papers, and legislative achievements around school support – I am equally grateful for the social exchanges that occurred at our Fall Convention and Spring Institute, and during my visits to different affiliates to show support from the executive board.

I am certain that CASP will continue on this positive trajectory with our new president, Tom Sopp and our new president-elect, Dr. Pedro Olvera. I will also continue to support our strategic goals as past president and begin exploring other ways to strengthen our association. One of those ways will see me learning about and assisting with the maintenance of our historical archives - and find more ways to share our rich history with our membership and beyond.

A Message from the Executive Director

California School Psychology Foundation: Keeping an Eye on the Profession’s Future

By Heidi Holmblad

School psychologist placed second in the U.S. News and World Reports’ 2016 list of Best Jobs in the Social Service category, and No. 57 in the overall rankings. According to the U.S. News report:

The Bureau of Labor Statistics predicts that this profession will grow at a rate of 20 percent between the years 2014 and 2024, which will equate to 30,500 new jobs for school psychologists. Rising school enrollment, as well as a heightened awareness of the stresses and disabilities that students face, is driving the demand for more school psychologists. However, this demand is tempered by state and local funding for schools, which is inadequate in some cases.

The profession has been ranked in that neighborhood for several years now, to the point in which one would think that all those psychology majors would be working toward their master’s degrees in school psychology. Except they’re not – at least not in California. Elsewhere in this edition of CASP Today, CASP Communications Specialist Raina LeGarreta explains what led up to the state’s school psychologist shortage and how CASP, its Alumni Club and others are working to increase the numbers in the profession.

One organization has been working quietly in the background since 1998 to keep those school psychologist numbers strong. The California School Psychology Foundation is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization that is trying to do something to ensure the future of school psychology – one Cultural and Linguistic Diversity Scholarship at a time. Every year, graduate students studying in California who are members of a culturally and linguistically diverse minority group apply for the $1,000 scholarship, which is renewable for up to two years.

One, two or sometimes more scholarships are awarded each year through the CSP Foundation. Many of these scholarship winners have gone on to positions in schools where they reflect the ethnicity of many in the student body. Students may relate better to them.

The CSP Foundation also awards scholarships to the annual convention. The registration, hotel and transportation costs for a grad student and a first-year school psychologist are funded by the Paul Henkin scholarship. Mr. Henkin, a school psychologist with the Los Angeles Unified School District, left this legacy scholarship several years ago to ensure that school psychologists understand the importance of continuing education and professional development.

As a charitable foundation, CSPF came through when a group of California professors was looking for seed money to assist in the establishment of school psychology in Vietnam. The movement to bring safe learning environments to the country is detailed in the article in this issue of CASP Today by Dr. Michael Hass. The foundation was one of the major funders of the program when it began in 2009. The CSP Foundation also has made contributions to other groups that offer mental health services to children and families and to disaster relief efforts. It also funds the Mini-Grant program, in which CASP members can apply for up to $1,500 for a special project or program that would not otherwise be funded by their schools.

But the CSP Foundation has reached the point in which much more money is leaving

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In 2010, Brent Duncan, Brian Leung, Phuong Le, and Michael Hass wrote an article describing the activities of the Consortium to Advance School Psychology in Vietnam (CASP-V). At the time, we had recently returned from our second trip to Vietnam to teach and engage in discussions with academics, practitioners and students about the value of school psychology and its potential to impact the well-being and school success of children and youth in Vietnam. CASP-V was formed in 2010, as the inspiration of Dr. Phuong Le, a school psychologist working in the Long Beach Unified School District. A practicing school psychologist and native of Vietnam, Dr. Le’s passion is to see all children in Vietnam have access to high quality educational and mental health services. The official signing ceremonies to form CASP-V took place in December 2009 at Chapman University and in January 2010 in Vietnam.

CASP-V’s mission, then as now, is to establish the profession of school psychology in Vietnam. In the years since our first trip in 2010 to Hà Nội, Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon) and Đà Nẵng, CASP-V members have made many trips to Vietnam to teach, present workshops, conduct research, and meet with our Vietnamese colleagues to encourage the establishment of graduate programs in school psychology. The membership of CASP-V expanded to include not only the founding California institutions of California State University, Long Beach, Humboldt State, Loyola Marymount University, Chapman University and Chicago School of Professional Psychology, but also institutions such as the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater. In 2014, it was decided to change the name of CASP-V to the Consortium to Advance School Psychology-International (CASP-I). Although the focus continues to be on our activities in Vietnam, the members wanted our name to reflect our larger promotion of school psychology worldwide, especially in Asia. Soon after, we were approved by the State of California as a 503c Non-Profit Corporation.

In addition to four international conferences, the consortium’s members have made over 20 trips to Vietnam, including two trips sponsored by the State Department’s Fulbright Specialist program. Over 50 school psychology graduate students have traveled to Vietnam and attended conferences and interfaced with their counterparts in Vietnamese universities. We speak for all of CASP-I’s members by saying that, during our experiences in Vietnam, the kindness of our Vietnamese colleagues and their dedication to promote the well-being of children and youth has both enriched and inspired us. At the first conference in the summer of 2009, the opening ceremony included a speech by then U.S. Ambassador to Vietnam, Michael Michalak, who stated:

... [Y]ou came up with this plan, and the idea of holding this conference, in response to needs you observed in the education system and in the lives of its students. It is not something that you have been told to do, but rather, you want to do, to improve the quality of life of students in Vietnam. I commend you for being innovative and proactive, for these are the actions of a modern society that values and cares for each other, and I support your efforts. You are doing an important work here and I will encourage other U.S. institutions, in addition to the California State University system and Chapman University, who are supporting you here today, to help you move beyond this conference to reach your educational goals.

We invite you to continue these efforts with us. Please join us this summer from July 27-29 in Đà Nẵng, central Vietnam, for the 5th Conference on School Psychology. Đà Nẵng University-College of Education will host this conference with the theme of “Developing School Psychology Worldwide.” The goal of CASP-I for this conference is to bring together policy makers, university faculty, leaders of non-profit organizations, continue on page 15...
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Many attendees registered early at the CASP registration booth on March 31; the kickoff day to Spring Institute 2016, Hyatt Regency-Monterey.

CASP Convention 2016

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KEYNOTE SPEAKER PEDRO NOGUERA

Pedro Noguera is a Distinguished Professor of Education in the Graduate School of Education and Information Sciences at UCLA. His research focuses on the ways in which schools are influenced by social and economic conditions, as well as by demographic trends in local, regional and global contexts. He is the author of eleven books and over 200 articles and monographs. He serves on the boards of numerous national and local organizations and appears as a regular commentator on educational issues on CNN, MSNBC, National Public Radio and other national news outlets.

CASP staff and board members prepare to host a CASP history quiz for Spring Institute attendees.

Dr. Savage’s discussion School Psychologists: Leading Efforts to Promote Positive School Climates for All Students reviewed the fundamental elements that support positive school climates and discussed how school psychologists can strengthen these elements through their advocacy and actions.

Spring Institute keynote speaker NASP President Dr. Todd Savage discussed ways that school psychologists can make schools safe and secure.

Keynote speaker Dr. Todd Savage and CASP president-elect Tom Sopp (third and fourth from left, respectively) shown with Jennifer Beasley and David Hill; winners of PAR’s test kit drawing held during the keynote luncheon.
In January, the California State Auditor presented its audit report concerning special education mental health services provided to students through Individual Education Plans (IEPs) to the Governor and the Legislature. The report, Student Mental Health Services: Some Students’ Services Were Affected by a New State Law, and the State Needs to Analyze Student Outcomes and Track Service Costs, was requested by Senator Jim Beall and focused on four LEAs and how they handled the transition of mental health services under AB 114.

The audit noted several key points: the most commonly offered types of mental health services and the providers of those services generally did not change; the number of students who received these mental health services remained steady or grew; the provider of the most common mental health services generally had already been, and continues to be, the local educational agency; the majority of changes to services were unrelated to AB 114.

The audit also noted that: local educational agencies removed mental health services from student IEPs in the two years after AB 114 took effect, yet some IEPs did not include the rationale for such changes; LEAs and the California Department of Education (CDE) do not know whether student placement or services.

The LEAs reviewed should annually use Education’s performance indicators to better understand the effectiveness of their mental health services.

To ensure that the State knows the amount LEAs spend to provide mental health services for student IEPs, Education should develop, and require LEAs to follow, an accounting methodology to track and report expenditures related to special education mental health services.

Senator Beall has introduced two bills in an effort to address some of the Auditor’s recommendations, SB 884 and SB 1113. Both bills are considered “works in progress” and are still under development as the Senator works with CDE, SELPAs, and statewide organizations to address concerns. CASP has a “watch” position on both bills.

SB 884 would require local educational agencies and special education local plan areas to collect and report specific information relative to mental health services, requires the California Department of Education to monitor and compare specific information, and expands the program to serve preschool and transitional Kindergarten students, and requires the Department of Education to use the Fund for the partnerships established by this bill.

The bill also requires CDE to expand its reporting system for mental health services to include academic performance outcomes and enter into an agreement with the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) to utilize the information in DHCS’ Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment mental health service performance outcome system.

CASP Legislation of Interest

In addition to monitoring Senator Beall’s mental health bills, the CASP Legislative Committee has taken active positions on the following education bills of interest and will be monitoring these measures during the Legislative Session.

AB 1644 (Bonta) would recast and rename the Early Mental Health Initiative (EMHI) as the HEAL Trauma in Schools Act, expands the program to serve preschool and transitional Kindergarten students, and establishes the program for four years to provide outreach, free regional training, and technical assistance for local educational agencies (LEAs) providing mental health services at school sites.

CASP has a support position on AB 1644.

AB 2246 (O’Donnell) would require each school district, county office of education (COE), charter school, and State Special School, serving students in grades 7 to 12, inclusive, to adopt a policy on suicide prevention before the beginning of the 2017-18 school year.

CASP has a support position on the bill.

AB 2443 (Baker), as introduced, would add the number of practicing school psychologists working on school climate issues to the reporting requirements for the Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) as required in Education Code section 52060. The bill was recently amended in committee to; instead, add the following

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Introducing the CASP Today Student Editorial Board

By Alyssa Loomer, Student Editorial Board Chair

CASP Today Editor Dr. Brian Leung has created a Student Editorial Board for the quarterly publication. The Student Editorial Board will promote student school psychology contributions to the publication, assist with feedback on submitted articles, and increase the presence and involvement of student members in the organization.

I am honored to be the first chairperson of the first ever Student Editorial Board for the publication. As a first year student in Loyola Marymount University’s School Psychology program, my training has added an almost infinite amount of reasons why I love our field. Yet, the more I learn the more these two factors stand out in my mind as why I chose this career path: school psychology’s perfect marriage of psychology and education and its inextricable relationship with social justice.

I am thrilled to share the opportunity with the Student Editorial Board to expand my knowledge of our field, learn from seasoned experts practicing in the great state of California and contribute to the quality work appearing in CASP Today as I evolve as a professional.

Joining me on the CASP Today Student Editorial Board are:

Dawn Raya: I am pleased to be named to the Student Editorial Board for CASP Today. I am currently in my second year of studies at Azusa Pacific University at the Orange County campus and in the process of applying for internships for the 2016-2017 academic year. I look forward to being a part of CASP Today as I continue to learn more about this fascinating field.

Andrea Corona: I am beyond excited to be a member of CASP Today’s Student Editorial Board. As a second year graduate student at California Baptist University’s School Psychology program, I am emerging into the field of school psychology with a desire to learn and a sincere hope to positively impact children and their success in the classroom – and in life. I am blessed to have this opportunity to contribute to our field, learn from experts and expand my knowledge as a future school psychologist in this exciting and ever-evolving field.

If you are a student interested in contributing an article to CASP Today, please contact Alyssa Loomer at aloomer2@lion.lmu.edu

If you are interested in assisting the Student Editorial Board with reviewing CASP Today articles submitted by students for appropriateness and offering suggestions for change as needed, please contact Brian Leung at brian_leung@lmu.edu

Get connected with CASP!
Impact of Mindfulness on Feelings of Sadness and Depression

The potential benefits of mindfulness practice extend well beyond improvements in attention. Biegel et al. (2009) found that compared to a “treatment as usual,” adolescents receiving outpatient services who participated in an MBSR program experienced reduced anxiety, depression, and somatic symptoms. Further, they experienced higher self-esteem and improved sleep quality. Mindfulness has also been shown, when combined with cognitive behavioral therapy, to greatly reduce the likelihood of relapse comparable to antidepressant therapy (Richard, Lutz, & Davidson, 2014).

Neurological studies have found experienced mindfulness practitioners to have thicker gray matter in the anterior cingulate, secondary somatosensory cortex, and right insula; areas of the brain responsible for perceiving somatosensory experiences, shifting attention, and regulating emotional responses (Grant et al. 2010). This corresponds with practitioners’ ability to experience sensations, feelings, and thoughts as they arise in the present moment, without further elaboration. This in turn lessens downstream thoughts and feelings associated with the future (i.e. anxieties) or the past (i.e. ruminating), in other words the secondary emotional response that maintains and intensifies feelings of anxiety and depression. Mindfulness also allows one to slow their thinking and create the cognitive space to “respond” in a thoughtful and functional manner rather than emotionally “react” in ways that may lead to negative outcomes for themselves and others.

Impact of Mindfulness on Feelings of Stress and Anxiety

For the reasons described above, mindfulness practice can also be tremendously helpful for those who are experiencing high levels of anxiety. In fact, the secular practice of mindfulness in the medical and mental health community began in large part with Jon Kabat-Zinn and the MBSR clinic at the Center for Mindfulness in Medicine, Health Care, and Society (Kabat-Zinn, 2013). Researchers are finding that different reactions to affective stimuli observed in individuals following mindfulness training is associated with different activation patterns along the cortical midline including greater activation in the right insula and somatosensory areas associated with body sensation (Farb, et al., 2010). This shift toward the processing of bodily sensations also resulted in a shift away from cognitive language based representations in the left hemisphere. Further, Goldin and Gross (2010) found that MBSR training resulted in new activation patterns in the amygdala when presented with anxiety provoking input. They found that the amygdala was activated faster but also deactivated faster, suggesting a shift from effortful attempts to control anxiety, often through self-talk, to a more automatic shift in naturally arising and diminishing emotional reactions.

As school psychologists, we understand the close relationship between one’s emotional state and their higher level cognitive processes. While mild levels of stress enhance cognitive processing, too much shuts down learning and problem solving. This is one of the reasons that the promotion of mental health and well-being in schools is so critical, and research is demonstrating that mindfulness is one avenue of achieving this. Jha et al. (2010) found that regular mindfulness practice supported the maintenance of working memory capacity and positive mood for individuals under high stress conditions. Given that stress has a deleterious effect on working memory capacity, which is of course critical to higher level cognitive processing, these findings may have important implications in terms of supporting students’ school performance.

Impact of Mindfulness with School Age Populations

Richard Davidson and his colleagues (2012) at the Mind and Life Education Research Network argue that the cultivation of mindfulness is a critical part of a 21st century education in that it develops self-regulation, empathy, and compassion. To date, much more research on the use of mindfulness training in promoting mental health has been completed with adult populations than with children and youth. However, emerging research with school age populations is consistently demonstrating its efficacy.

In one study, MBSR was found to be an effective treatment for juvenile delinquent populations, who present with a wide range of psychosocial challenges, and easier to implement than Dialectical Behavioral Therapy, which is often seen as a “go to” treatment for this group (Montgomery, Kim, Springer, & Learman, 2013). Further, Schonert-Reichl and Lawler (2010) found that pre- and early adolescents who participated in a school-based mindfulness program showed improvements in prosocial behavior, increases in their sense of optimism, and improved self-concept.

In addition, teachers implementing the program reported that it was easy to implement the exercises into their classroom routines while maintaining fidelity.

With this growing body of research, meta-analyses of mindfulness-based interventions in school have demonstrated positive effects across a wide range of areas including decreases in signs and symptoms of internalizing and externalizing disorders, as well as improved relationships and academic performance (Burk, 2010; Zoogman, Goldberg, Hoyt, & Miller, 2014). The benefits are not just for students. Roese et al. (2013) found that teachers who participated in a mindfulness training program showed greater attention, working memory capacity, and self-care along with lower levels of occupational stress and burnout.

Conclusion and Recommendation

A growing body of research supports the use of mindfulness training with children and youth for the purpose of promoting attention, self-regulation, well-being, and academic achievement. Given the immense challenges faced by students in school, and lack of available mental health resources (Rones & Hoagwood, 2000), the growing use of mindfulness training in school is tremendously exciting. In the final article of this three part series, we will reflect on our first year implementation of the PASS classes, including our use of mindfulness, and review lessons learned, both good and bad, as well as discuss steps for developing sustainability of the program. Below we have included a list of resources for those interested in learning more about mindfulness and, hopefully, implementing it as part of their school psychology service delivery model.

Books on Mindfulness

Mindful Learning: Mindfulness-Based Techniques for Educators and Parents to Help Students (Hassed & Chambers, 2014)

The Way of Mindful Education: Cultivating Well-Being in Teachers and Students (Rechtschaffen, 2014)

Mindfulness for Teachers: Simple Skills for Peace and Productivity in the Classroom (Jennings, 2015)

Sitting Still Like a Frog: Mindfulness Exercises for Kids (Snel, 2013)

Mindfulness Curriculum

The MindUP Curriculum (The Hawn Foundation, 2011)

Learning to Breath (Broderick, 2013)

A Still Quiet Place (Saltzman, 2014)

Inner Explorer (1440 Foundation, 2014)

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Mindfulness Training
Mindful Schools (www.mindfulschools.org)
UCLA Mindful Awareness Research Center (www.marc.ucla.edu)

Sara Madrigal is a licensed Marriage Family Therapist and credentialed School Counselor. She works full time for Byron Union School District. He is also a Senior Lecturer for Brandman University in the Department of Educational and School Psychology and the Director of Bylund Neuro-Educational Services.

Mindfulness Apps
Mindfulness
Insight timer
Sitting Still
Chill

Online Resources on Mindfulness
The Greater Good Science Center (http://greatergood.berkeley.edu/)
Resilient Kids (www.resilientkids.org)
Mindful (http://www.mindful.org/)

References
Davidson, R.J. et al. (2012). Contemplative practices and mental training: Prospects for American education. Child Development Perspectives, 0(0), 1-8.


Vietnam Revisited

practitioners, parents, and representatives of the media to advocate for building the profession of school psychology in Vietnam and to share experiences in developing and strengthening the field worldwide.

Objectives for the conference are:

- To increase understanding of how the evidenced-based practices in school psychology can effectively meet children’s educational and psychological needs.
- To promote and advocate for psychologists as professionals in educational and community settings.
- To increase collaboration between policy makers, researchers, clinicians, media, and parents to better coordinate school psychological services for children and youth.
- To engage key stakeholders throughout the world and especially in Southeast Asian countries in the development of and participation with the conference program; especially those who are concerned with children’s education and provision of psychological services.
- To bring together the world’s scientific experts and practitioners to share their knowledge and experiences in building school psychology and related disciplines in countries where these fields are absent.
- To promote effective action through leadership and shared responsibility at all levels of government and society, and foster leadership in the scientific and programmatic response to children’s needs worldwide among policy makers, scholars, professionals, and members of civil society.
- To increase the knowledge and skills of practitioners and community activists to develop, introduce, implement and advocate for effective school psychology programs and interventions in their communities and countries.

If you would like further information about CASP-I or the conference this summer, please feel free to contact Michael Hass, Vice President of CASP-I, at mhass@chapman.edu

If you are interested in presenting a paper, mini-skills presentation or poster, please contact Tracey Scherr, Secretary of CASP-I, at scherr@uwu.edu to request the Call for Presentations with proposal submission instructions. We look forward to hearing from you and hope to see you in Đà Nẵng.

Tracey Scherr delivering a keynote lecture at last year’s school psychology conference in Hanoi.
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The MHS Online Assessment Center provides busy professionals the ability to administer, score and generate reports on a wide range of MHS assessments, with just a click of a button.

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measure of school climate: “The extent to which pupils have access to school psychologists or counselors to address issues including, but not necessarily limited to, mental health concerns, conflict resolution, and bullying reduction.” CASP has a support position on the bill.

AB 2489 (McCarty) would require the California Department of Education (CDE) to develop a standard model to implement restorative justice practices on a school campus and make the standard model available on the CDE’s Internet Web site for use by any school district that chooses to implement restorative justice practices as part of its campus culture. CASP has a support position on AB 2489.

CASP Region III Representative Amy Balmanno was appointed to the Dyslexia Guidelines Work Group, the CDE group that is developing program guidelines so parents, teachers and administrators may identify and assess dyslexia, as called for under legislation signed by Gov. Jerry Brown last year.

Balmanno was also a member of a CASP ad hoc committee, chaired by Dr. Catherine Christo, professor emeritus of California State University, Sacramento, that developed a position paper on dyslexia and the legislation (known as the Frazier bill, or AB 1369). To read and/or download a copy of that CASP position paper, click the link:

CASP Member on Dyslexia Committee

Los Angeles Association of School Psychologists

LAASP will hold a LEP preparation workshop on April 30, 8:30 a.m.-1 p.m. (check in at 8:15 a.m.). Topics to be covered include: applying for the LEP, test taking strategies, areas covered on the test, and expectations for the day of the exam. The cost is $40 for LAASP members and $50 for non-members. The workshop will be held inside the UTLA Building, 3303 Wilshire Blvd. Los Angeles, 90010 at the corner of Wilshire Blvd. and Berendo Blvd. LAASP will also hold its End of the Year Awards Luncheon on May 14, 11 a.m.-3 p.m. at the Chart House, 13950 Panay Way, Marina del Rey, CA 90292. Register for the events at http://www.laasponline.org.

Foothill Association of School Psychologists

Register now to take advantage of Early Bird rates (visit Pay Pal Options for workshop and membership fees) at http://www.fasponline.org. FASP will also host a wine tasting social on Jun 18, 11 a.m. that will include a wine tour, lunch and tasting at Joseph Filippi Winery and Vineyards in Rancho Cucamonga. For more information, send an email to: fasponline@gmail.com
Executive Director
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than coming in. Time for some major fundraising opportunities.

Here are a few things you can do to ensure that the CSP Foundation continues its good works:

Renew your CASP membership.
When you renew online there is a box just below the box in which you record what type of membership you are purchasing. It’s called Donations. You can donate any amount to the CLD Scholarship, the Paul Henkin Convention and/or the Mini-Grants. (You can also give to the Political Action Committee, but that is not tax deductible.)

Visit the CSP Foundation page on the CASP website. There, you will find a “donate now” button for the CLD scholarship. You can also read comments from past CLD scholarship winners. (We will soon have donation buttons for the other programs, too.)

Follow in Paul Henkin’s footsteps. He knew of the importance of continuing education and professional development. Research leads to major changes in the way school psychologists do their jobs on a regular basis. Yet many school psychologists don’t know that they may be years behind. By leaving a legacy scholarship, you too can show a new school psychologist or student – or any school psychologist – the extreme importance of keeping up with changes in the profession. See your financial advisor on how to establish a scholarship or similar program though the CSP Foundation.

Go shopping. On the CASP website’s home page you will find a link to eScrip. Click on it and you will find a whole new way to shop and give – at the same time. If you already have your credit cards listed for other nonprofits, please add the CA School Psychology Foundation. Any little bit will help. After you sign up with eScrip, go through our site to shop at many online stores – from Amazon to Z Chocolat (which donates 12% of the cost of your purchase to the CSP Foundation.) You don’t pay any more for the donations – the merchants do. Percentage of how much of your purchase is donated varies, but every little bit helps!

Attend Casino Night! at CASP Convention 2016. Try your hand at blackjack and hold’em poker, spin the roulette wheel and the wheel of fortune. Come and try your luck while raising money for the CLD Scholarship and the Paul Henkin Convention Scholarships. The event promises to be a great time to play games with friends, enjoy appetizers, have a drink and relax after a day of intense presentations. More info to come!

Keep school psychology alive! Give today.

New Board of Directors
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within schools. Region IV is the Los Angeles Unified School District.

Glenn Schumacher (Region VI)
Longtime CASP Historian Dr. Glenn Schumacher is returning as a representative for Region VI. He spent two terms as the representative for the region in the 1990s. Some of the Hemet Unified School District school psychologist’s major goals this time around are in accordance with those of his previous terms, including: to be available for CASP members concerns, questions and issues, and to be able to refer those issues to appropriate CASP Committees or CASP Specialists; to work actively to insure that Region VI has at least one candidate yearly for the CASP Nadine Lambert Outstanding School Psychologist Award; and to increase CASP Membership in Region VI. This region includes Riverside and San Bernardino counties.

Lillian Hernandez (Region VIII)
Rio School District school psychologist Lillian Hernandez is the current president-elect of the Ventura County Association of School Psychologists. This is her second term as Region VIII Representative. The current president-elect for the Ventura County Association of School Psychologists will begin her second term as Region VIII representative. Hernandez believes that it is important for California school psychologists to know exactly how CASP advocates for professionals in the field and why becoming a member is beneficial to them and the profession. She will utilize her knowledge and experience to help fellow members and local affiliates promote CASP. Region VIII includes San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara and Ventura counties, plus a small portion of northern Los Angeles County.

Maureen Schroeder (Region X)
Returning Region X representative Maureen Schroeder has been a school psychologist for 16 years working for Stockton Unified School District, Escalon Unified and at her current district of Elk Grove. She is currently the vice president of Elk Grove Regional Association of School Psychologists (2015-2016). In her second term, Schroeder will continue to help develop EGRASP, as well as assist CASP in developing its Mentorship Program for new school psychologists, and follow through with the mission of CASP: keeping all members informed, providing members with sound information to better our ability to provide support and services to the students, parents, and school staff we serve and collaborate with. Region X runs from San Joaquin County, north and inland to the Oregon border.

CASP Alumni Club
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Benefits
Socials: At the Spring Institutes and annual conventions, Alumni Club members are invited to private social events. The event will be determined by the Alumni Club leaders, with the location of the institute or convention in mind. Plans are being made now for the Convention 2016 social.

Lapel Pins: Every Alumni Club member receives a custom Alumni Club lapel pin. A series of pins is being developed to denote the length of time in the Alumni Club.

Want to join? Click here. http://casponline.org/alumni-club/

Here is the current list of Alumni Club members.

Diane Donaldson Margaret A. Sedor
Lynne Aung-Levin Ellen Murphy
Betty Henry Barbara Fraley
Karen Eagan Rose DuMond
Jacquelyn Allen Elizabeth (Betty) Connolly
Jim Russell Roger McCoy
Barbara D’Incau Jean Ramage
Christine Toleson Catherine Christo
Judith Burkhardtsmeyer Susan Coats
Shirley Morano Stella Roqueblave
Helen Morris Susan Goldman
H. Spencer O’Neal, Dr.AD, LEP, CATC Genevieve Terrill
Barbara Thomas Katie Pettersen
Marcia Boden Dori Barnett
Brent Duncan Alnita Dunn
Give Back to School Psychology: Join the CASP Alumni Club

After a year of donating, presenting and socializing, the CASP Alumni Club is getting the word out about school psychology. The club, and its 31 members, are adding to the CASP Political Action Committee coffers and helping to fulfill the California School Psychology Foundation’s goal to publicize the profession and the need for more school psychologists.

You, too, can join CASP’s retired, leading and other interested members by taking a lead role in ensuring the future of the profession.

PAC Donations
With an annual donation of $100, Alumni Club members receive Legislative Updates from CASP, occasional requests to write letters of support (or opposition) regarding potential legislative and regulatory actions, and to consider visits to their state representatives regarding education and school psychology issues.

This is to assist with the revitalization of the CASP “For the Children” Political Action Committee.

Time Donations
“What School Psychologists Do” is the theme of this section of the Alumni Club program. Members visit two community college or university psychology classes each year to introduce the students to school psychology. When interest has been determined CASP will schedule the presentations, send materials to the club member and follow up on how well the presentation was received. The club member decides where and when to make the presentation. This program is designed to increase the visibility of school psychology as a profession, as noted in the California School Psychology Foundation Vision Statement.

School psychologists strive to improve the educational experience for all children. They are the school-based experts on many issues, including school violence, special education, learning disabilities, mental health and school and community-linked children’s health services.

CASPTODAY, the quarterly newsletter of the California Association of School Psychologists, reaches about 2,000 school psychologists. It features informative articles and important information for the school psychologist.

CASPTODAY offers the best opportunity to reach school psychologists in California to advertise your products and services. Place your ad in the next issue! Deadline for the Summer 2016 issue of CASP Today is July 8, 2016.

For advertising discounts, ask about our Corporate Membership.

Full Page …8” x 10.125” vert………….$$550
Half Page …8” x 5” horiz………………..$$450
2/3rd Page 5.25” x 10.125” vert……….$$400
1/3rd Page 2.5” x 10.125” vert…………$$350
1/3rd Page 5.25” x 5” square…………$$350
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MEMBERSHIP / RENEWAL APPLICATION

PERSONAL INFORMATION

☐ Check here if Home & Billing address are the same. I have been a school psychologist for _______ years.

First Name: __________________________ Last Name: __________________________

Home Address: ____________________________________________________________

City: __________________________ State: ________ Zip Code:____________________

Billing Address:* __________________________________________________________

City: __________________________ State: ________ Zip Code:____________________

District: __________________________________________________________________

County Where You Work: __________________________________________ Region No.: _________

E-mail: __________________________________________ Work Phone: ____________

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES (Please Check One)

☐ Status Change (Check here if this is a membership category change.)

☐ Regular Member - $155.00. Regular Members are persons who (1) are credentialed school psychologists employed in California, OR (2) are Licensed Educational Psychologists.

☐ Retired Member - $65.00. Retired Members are persons who are retired (age 65+) from active employment in the schools and are not employed in any capacity that would qualify for membership in any other category.

☐ Associate Member - $155.00 (Please Check One)

☐ Credentialed school psychologist employed in a state other than CA.

☐ Credentialed school Psychologist who is on leave of absence to personal or professional reasons, such as pursuing an advanced degree.

☐ A member of an allied profession, interested in the activities of CASP.

PAYMENT OPTIONS

I am interested in donating to the: *CASP charges $25. for all returned checks.

☐ “CLD” Cultural Linguistic Diversity Scholarship ☐ Mini-Grants Program ☐ “PAC” Political Action Committee

☐ PAYMENT IN FULL Membership Fee $ ____________

☐ Check # ____________ Mini-Grant Donation $ ____________

☐ CLD Donation $ ____________

☐ Visa / Mastercard CASP PAC Donation $ ____________

☐ Payroll Deduction (Regular Members Only)

Payroll deduction is the easiest way to pay your membership fees. Send CASP this completed form and start receiving membership benefits immediately.

Pursuant to Education Code 45060, to pay for CASP membership dues, I authorize the above-named school district to withhold $15.50 per month, for 10 months, from my salary during the school year.

☐ CASP is authorized to use my credit card for payment of member dues.

Security Code: ____________ Expiration Date: ____________/__________

Phone Number: (_________ )_________ – ____________

Signature: __________________________________________

CASP occasionally sells its mailing list to private and non-profit corporations related to the school psychology profession.

CASP does not offer for sale its members’ e-mail addresses, phone numbers or fax numbers.

Fall Convention 2016

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