



# **PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT**

**2008**

## 2008 PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The 2008 Annual Report has been prepared with contributions by the Ontario Psychological Association President, **Dr. Mary Broga**; the Executive Director, **Dr. Ruth Berman**; Chairs of Committees and Task Forces; alliance and liaison representatives; and the staff of Central Office.

The report reviews the Association's activities, projects, and accomplishments since the previous Annual General Meeting and, in accordance with the by-laws, contains the views of the President on the state of the Association's affairs.

The Report is tabled for acceptance at the 2009 Annual General Meeting to be held on February 21, 2009 in conjunction with the Association's Annual General Meeting at the Toronto Eaton Centre Marriott Hotel.

### *BOARD OF DIRECTORS*

During 2008, the OPA undertook several significant initiatives based on the results of the Membership Survey that was completed at the end of 2007. This work was guided by members of the Executive Committee which was comprised of **Drs. Mary Broga (President); Jack Ferrari (Past-President); Margaret Weiser (Financial Officer); Connie Kushnir (Toronto Regional Director); Andrew Matthew (Director-at-Large); and Diana Velikonja (Kitchener-Hamilton Regional Director)** and led by the creative efforts and commitment of the elected Board Members which included **Drs. Jeremy Frank (Director-at-Large); Cheryl Hartridge (Director-at-Large); Joyce Isbitsky (Thunder Bay-Sudbury Regional Director); Charles Nelson (Windsor-London Regional Director); Ron Warner (Ottawa-Kingston Regional Director); Vincent Lo (Health Practice Area Director); Jonathan Golden (Community, Family & Children's Services Practice Area Director), Brian Bigelow (Justice Practice Area Practice Director); Christina Lee (Independent Practice Area Director); Maria Kokai (Education Practice Area Director); Daliah Chapnik (Early Career Psychologist Representative); and Ms. Vivien Lee (Student Director).** **Drs. Kate Hays and Ruth Berman** sat as ex-officio members. The Association's Administrative Officer, **Ms. Carla Mardonet**, served as Recording Secretary for the Board and Executive meetings.

The Executive Committee met on the following dates: April 4, 2008; May 16, 2008; September 19, 2008; November 27, 2008; and January 30, 2009. The Board of Directors met 5 times over the past year: April 25, 2008; June 20, 2008; October 17, 2008; December 12, 2008; and February 20, 2009.

The Membership Survey was completed by Association members in late 2007. The results of that survey helped to prioritize the initiatives that guided the Board's work plan for 2008. First, and foremost, you – the members - told us that advocacy was one of the most important reasons for belonging to the Association. In 2008, the OPA began an ambitious political advocacy campaign. Mr. Gilbert Sharpe of the prestigious law firm of Fasken Martineau was hired as our

consultant. Mr. Sharpe has extensive knowledge of the legal and political systems in Ontario, having a long history of working as the Director of Legal Services in the Ministry of Health. He has a firm grasp on the workings of government and how policy decisions are made. The advocacy strategy has both long term and short term objectives. One immediate issue is the extension of the psychotherapist title, which due to the passing of the Psychotherapist Act, would be limited to registrants of the new College of Psychotherapists, even though psychologists have access to the controlled act of psychotherapy. On the longer term, the advocacy strategy is a broad based one which is focused on relationship building with government and key decision makers, such as HPRAC, which would pave the way for dialogue on the role of psychology, its current and future scope of practice, and its role in public institutions. In 2008, the OPA met with Minister Smitherman (former Minister of Health & Long-term Care); Minister Best (Minister of Health Promotion) and staff from her office; Premier Dalton McGuinty and his assistant Dr. Sacha Bhatia; Minister David Caplan (current Minister of Health and Long-term Care) and a number of his senior staff; Sophia Ikura-MacMillian, Senior Policy Advisor in the Office of the Deputy Premier – Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care; Dr. Joshua Tepper (Assistant Deputy Minister); and Shabnum Durani, Senior Policy Advisor on Health Professions from the Ministry of Health and Long-term Care. These meetings focused on requesting the continuing ability of psychologists to use the psychotherapist title, as well as informing the government representatives on ways psychology can help to improve the health care system through involvement on Family Health Teams; interprofessional collaboration; and planning tables for Mental Health initiatives. Again, the longer term objective of the advocacy campaign is to develop psychology's opportunities in the future for greater integration in healthcare delivery systems.

The Communications Committee, chaired by Dr. Cheryl Hartridge, developed a Psychology Narrative and Key Messages which are being used in our advocacy efforts. A Power Point presentation was also produced which can be used to update members on the advocacy campaign.

In 2008, HPRAC issued a Discussion Guide on Interprofessional Collaboration. Our RHPA committee, along with Mr. Sharpe, reviewed and prepared a written submission to the questions posed in the Discussion Guide. The OPA submission focused on the role psychology could provide in a model of care which is based on interprofessional collaboration.

There is a legislative requirement to review PHIPA after 5 years. Drs. Nicholson and Berman met with representatives from the Ministry of Health on PHIPA and Dr. Carole Sinclair presented a brief outlining OPA's position to the Standing Committee.

Along with the very active efforts of the Auto Insurance Task Force, all of these activities have supported the OPA advocacy campaign.

The Membership Survey recommended that the Association develop partnerships with other stakeholders. One such partnership is the OPA Student Assessment Project with the Ministry of Education which was begun over 2 years ago and is reaching completion. This year, the Project created and distributed a "Promising Practices Resource Guide" which highlighted case studies

from 12 school boards. A “Promising Practices” conference was held in October with participants from Education from across the province. The Ministry of Education has indicated that it sees the project as having been very successful and is looking forward to future partnerships with the OPA.

Through the Membership Survey, you also indicated that we need to grow the membership. From a sustainability perspective, as well as from an advocacy perspective, it is imperative that the Association is viewed by Government and consumers as the voice of psychologists in Ontario. The Membership Committee recommended to the Board that the fee structure be adjusted to attract new members, especially new registrants and students, as well as psychologists who have never joined the Association. The new recommended fee structure was approved by the Board at its December 2008 meeting. Letters to new registrants, non-members, and students were distributed inviting them to join at the new rates. In addition, to encourage the next generation of psychologists to be part of the Association, the OPA in partnership with the ECP committee have started to host “meet and greet” events at Ontario universities to explain the benefits of membership to graduate students and their faculty.

As members, you also clearly indicated through the Membership Survey the importance of communication, and that one of the main reasons for membership is the ability to receive timely and accurate information. For this reason, under the leadership of Dr. Andrew Matthew, the Board approved the reconstruction of the OPA Website. You indicated to us that the Website needed to be more user friendly in its design, as well as having more current information. Discovery Commons was hired to redesign the Website and provide training to the office staff.

Through the Membership Survey, you indicated that the OPA needs to be more visible. One way of getting out into the community has been through our Psychologically Healthy Workplace Award Program. We presented our first award in 2008 to the Toronto Police Services. This program brought recognition to the Association. As well, the Ministry of Health Promotion expressed interest in this program which might lead to a future partnership with this Ministry.

You also indicated that continuing education and networking are major reasons for belonging to the association. Our 2008 Annual Convention was hugely successful. The DRN hosted an evening workshop this fall. Dr. Douglas Salmon organized a new Diversity Taskforce in 2008, and a member of that Task Force was selected as a Diversity delegate to the APA State Leadership Conference which will be held in Washington in March 2009. The Ethics Course continues to be popular and there is a possibility of again partnering with York University in providing this learning opportunity. The Board is also considering various other ways that continuing education opportunities can be made available to members.

On behalf of the 2008 Board of Directors, I wish to thank all members who completed the 2007 Membership Survey. Your input does matter. I extend to each Board Member my heartfelt gratitude for their active involvement, support, and commitment to the Association.

Submitted by: **Dr. Mary Broga**, President

## ***INTERNAL AFFAIRS***

### ***FINANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE***

The OPA Finance & Audit (F&A) Committee is responsible for the management of the association's fiscal affairs that includes preparation of an annual budget, production of an annual audit, investment management, fiscal policies, fund development, and budget management.

The F&A committee met quarterly by teleconference to review the financial statements and to plan prudently for the future of our association.

In 2008 the F & A committee included past-presidents **Drs. Donald Rudzinski, Brian Wilson,** and current president **Mary Broga,** as well as our executive director, **Ruth Berman.** The wisdom and continuity of our continuing committee members was our most valuable resource.

We were also most ably assisted by our efficient administrative officer, **Ms. Carla Mardonet,** who showed resilience and perseverance while our accounting software was brought into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Submitted by: **Dr. Margaret Weiser,** Chair, Finance and Audit Committee

### ***HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE***

I would like to acknowledge **Dr. Jack Ferrari** and **Dr. Margaret Weiser** for serving as members of the Human Resources Committee and **Dr. Ruth Berman** as ex officio member. The HR Committee met by teleconference on three occasions: May 2/08; September 29/08; and January 15/09. Over this time period, the annual Performance Evaluation of the Executive Director took place. Performance Goals for the Executive Director were determined for the coming year. In addition, the committee began the task of succession planning. A survey tool was developed to help the committee chart a course for the selection process to be put in place when the Association is ready to search for a new Executive Director in the future.

Submitted by: **Dr. Mary Broga,** President

### ***MEMBERSHIP TASK FORCE***

The Membership Committee is made up by the following very committed and hard-working volunteers: **Drs. Daliah Chapnik; Cheryl Hartridge; Vincent Lo; Maria Kokai;** and **Andrew Matthew.** The Committee is grateful of the assistance it received from the Central Office staff, particularly **Dr. Berman** and **Ms. Mardonet.** As the Association is a member based organization, ensuring a vibrant and strong membership is imperative. Based on the results of the 2008 Membership Survey, the committee developed a work plan. One area of the plan concentrated on students and early career psychologists. Working in conjunction with the Early

Career Psychologists Committee, various universities were targeted for “Meet and Greet” events. These events would provide graduate students and their faculty the opportunity to meet with OPA representatives to learn about the benefits of membership. The 2008 Membership Survey also indicated the high value members placed on communication. Based on this finding, the construction of a new, more user friendly Website became a priority. The Board approved the financial resources needed to make the new Website a reality. The 2008 Membership Survey also highlighted that the cost of membership can be a barrier. In order to expose as many current and future psychologists to the benefits of membership, the committee recommended changes to the current fee structure. The Board approved these changes at its December meeting. Student fees were reduced from \$75.00 to \$25.00. Any new member who is neither a Student nor an ECP, will have a reduced fee of \$195.00 for their first year of membership. Any new College registrant will be invited to join the Association at no cost for one year. The goal is to increase our membership base so that the OPA can truly be the “voice of Ontario psychologists”.

Submitted by: **Dr. Mary Broga**, Chair, Membership Task Force

#### ***IT/WEBSITE TASK FORCE***

The IT/Website Taskforce completed a proposal for a complete upgrade of the OPA website. The redesign calls for a conversion to a contemporary database and content management system. The new website aims to: 1) be more reflective of the province’s diverse population; 2) offer psychologists a “gathering place” for information and issues pertinent to the practice of psychology in Ontario; 3) offer the public a friendly and educational introduction to understanding psychology and psychological services; and 4) provide the public with easy access to psychologists through an on-line referral selection tool.

The OPA has contracted the services of Discovery Commons for the website upgrade. The private sector section (private contracts) of Discovery Commons grew out of the Information and Technology Department for the Faculty of Medicine, University of Toronto. Discovery Commons specializes in providing cutting edge interface and graphic design, construction, and data management systems for organizational websites. OPA and Discovery Commons have agreed upon a 4 phase approach to the website construction: 1) Foundation- needs assessment, project planning, and interface design and construction; 2) Content analysis and migration; 3) Programming of the database for data integration, and Admin User and User administration, functionality and interface; 4) Admin User training regarding data manipulation, hosting and site maintenance. Currently, phase one of the project has been completed and phase two is near completion. The IT/Website Taskforce would like to acknowledge Ms. Rachel Adelson of Live Wire Communications for her diligent work on content revisions, and within website navigation.

*Task Force Chair:*     **Andrew Matthew**

*Members:*           **Ruth Berman, Connie Kushnir, Christina Lee, Carla Mardonet,  
Doug Saunders, Jeremy Frank**

Submitted by: **Dr. Andrew Matthew** – Chair, IT/Website Task Force

## *ETHICS AND POLICY COMMITTEE*

In 2008, the Ethics and Policy Committee membership included: **Dr. Harvey Brooker, Dr. Ron Frisch, Dr. Carole Gentile, Dr. Joyce Isbitsky, Dr. Christian Keresztes, Dr. Ian Nicholson (Chair), Dr. Doug Reberg, Ms Erin Ross, Mrs. Judy Schapira, Dr. Carole Sinclair, and Dr. Lynn Wells.** The committee met five times during the year.

Members identified a number of issues which were discussed by the committee over the past year. One major issue was the requirement under the Personal Health Information Protection Act that all research be approved by a Research Ethics Board, which is causing problems for some members who do not work in an institution that has such a board. The committee has reviewed different alternatives to address this issue and discussion continues. Discussion also continues on concerns brought forth by members relating to the use of “declarations of competence” by the College of Psychologists of Ontario. There were a variety of questions raised, such as the degree to which these declarations might be interpreted as declarations of “specialization” or a declaration of “proficiency”, and how prescriptive and restrictive in relation to clinical services such declarations might be interpreted. Discussion will further continue in 2009 on this topic. A third major area of consideration has been the potential need for an updating of the OPA Custody and Access Guidelines.

The committee has also begun regular contributions to “*PsychBytes*” on issues of interest. **Dr. Reberg**, who used to write a similar column in the past for “*Ontario Psychologist*”, will take the lead in these columns.

There has also been recognition from our members of the need for a renewal of the OPA/York University Seminar Series on “*Legal, Ethical and Professional Issues in Psychology*”. However, this 4 day seminar was lengthy, logistically complex, and very demanding on the time of the previous organizers/leaders (**Drs. Berman and Brooker**). The committee is reviewing the curriculum to see if it can be reduced and plans to re-engage York University for the organization of the course.

**Dr. Sinclair** led a review/revision of the OPA “*Guide to Fees and Billing Practices*”. A draft document has been put out to the membership for review.

**Drs. Berman, Nicholson, and Sinclair** presented to the Ontario Standing Committee on Social Policy on its Review of the Personal Health Information Protection Act (PHIPA) in August 2008 and drafted the formal written submission to the committee.

**Drs. Berman and Nicholson**, along with **Dr. Faith Kaplan** and **Mr. Gilbert Sharpe**, and College of Psychologists of Ontario registrar, **Dr. Catherine Yarrow**, met with representatives of the Privacy Commissioner’s office to discuss questions relating to when provincial versus federal privacy legislation would be required of psychologists.

Submitted by: **Dr. Ian R. Nicholson**, Committee Chair

## *CONVENTION COMMITTEE*

The OPA's 61<sup>st</sup> Annual Convention saw us return to the Toronto Eaton Centre Marriott Hotel. Along with the change in venue, the 2008 convention brought with it a change in the program format and a reduction in the total number of programming days. Held over the first Family Day holiday weekend (Sunday and Monday), the convention generated a significant increase in attendance, with well over 400 registrants. It was also a success financially, producing a profit for the conference, the first in many years.

The new workshop-oriented format seemed to have appealed to many, offering both the opportunity for a more intense study of the topics presented and a greater flexibility in terms of cost selection. Only three educational events were simultaneously offered in any given time slot, each geared towards a different thematic stream; either adults, children or a topic of more broad professional interest.

Sunday's program included a full day workshop with **Dr. Karen Stoibert** called "ABA in Action" on the Functional Assessment and Intervention System" (FAIS) for challenging behaviours in autism spectrum disorders and other behaviourally challenged children. Sponsored by the Psychology Corporation, a second Sunday workshop introduced attendees to the new 4<sup>th</sup> edition of the Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale, as well as the new Wechsler Memory Scale. OPA's newly created Diversity Task Force focused on broad issues related to the subject of diversity and its future action agenda, and **Dr. Carol Goodheart** presented a keynote address on "Evidence-Based Practice" from the APA policy perspective. The latter was followed by an afternoon workshop led by **Drs. Doug Saunders, Paul Kelly and Andrew Matthew**, in keeping with this theme, on "Outcome Informed Professional Practice." Sunday's luncheon was unique in its Town Hall format, enabling those in attendance to hear about, and dialogue with, representatives of the new Federal Mental Health Commission.

Also new to the 2008 convention was a special Sunday night event that combined the President's Reception, the Annual General Meeting, and our Award presentations, with dinner and a presentation by a team from Faskens Martineau on OPA's new strategic agenda for political advocacy.

Monday's program saw the return of **Dr. Thomas Marra** in a follow up full day workshop on Dialectical Behaviour Therapy, and two half day events focusing on children; a morning program with **Dr. Keith Connors** on "Critical Issues in Diagnosis of School Aged Youth"; and an afternoon session on "Evidence-Based Pediatric Psycho-Pharmacological Interventions" with psychiatrist **Dr. Peter Jensen**. And finally, we again presented our annual Auto Insurance Update, followed in the afternoon by **Dr. Brent Van Dorsten's** workshop on "The Assessment and Treatment of Pain." Rounding out Monday's program was a luncheon address by **Dr. Susan Pinker**, psychologist and Globe and Mail columnist, on "Extreme Men, Gifted Women and the Real Gender Gap."

The success of the 2008 convention was a product of the efforts of many and thanks are to be extended to the other members of the Convention Committee: **Drs. Joel Goldberg, Kate Hays,**



**Cheryl Pohlman, Greg Hamovitch and Doug Saunders;** along with the rest of the OPA staff **Carla Mardonet, Anna DiDonato and Jenna Barclay.**

Submitted by: **Dr. Ruth Berman,** Chair, Convention Committee

#### ***EARLY CAREER PSYCHOLOGIST TASK FORCE***

Committee Members include **Drs. Andrew Matthew, Jeremy Frank, Michael Cheng, Silvina Galperin, Sandra Doyle-Lisek, Marlene Taub-Schiff, Marnee Maroes, Nikki Fitzgerald, Paul Basevitz, Brent Hayman-Abello and Parmjit Sanghera**

The Early Career Taskforce has focused on creating educational and social opportunities for new members at the Convention, as well as during informal evening get-togethers for early career psychologists. In partnership with the Membership Taskforce, we have launched a series of graduate school visits so as to encourage students to become familiar with the mandate of OPA and, thereby, increase student membership. A new fee structure was developed in 2008 and implemented in 2009, with the ECP payment schedule extended by one year, beginning with a free year for all new psychologists.

Submitted by: **Daliah Chapnik,** Chair, Early Career Psychologist Task Force

#### ***NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE***

Positions open in 2009 for our Board of Directors included President-Elect, Director at Large, Justice Director, Early Career Psychologist, and Directors for Region 2 (Windsor-London), Region 3 (Toronto), and Region 5 (Kitchener – Hamilton).

Results from the Call for Nominations mailed to all members in October 2008 were reviewed by the Nominations Committee to develop a slate of candidates to be brought forward at the Annual General meeting in February 2008. Names of individuals willing to serve on the OPA Board of Directors for 2009, and any remaining vacant seats, will be presented to the membership at the February 2009 Annual General Meeting.

Submitted by: **Dr. Margaret Weiser,** Chair, Nominations Committee

#### ***GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE***

In 2009 the OPA Governance Committee included **Drs. Maria Kokai, Ruth Berman, Cheryl Pohlman,** and **Margaret Weiser.**

The Governance Committee met on 14 April, 8 September, and 1 December, 2008. Activities and discussion considered board membership and development.

Bylaw amendments were approved by the Board regarding the former CHRSSP seat on the Board, with modifications to be ratified at the Annual General Meeting in February 2009.

Submitted by: **Dr. Margaret Weiser**, Chair, Governance Committee

## ***EXTERNAL AFFAIRS***

### ***PUBLIC HOSPITALS ACT TASK FORCE PRESCRIPTIVE AUTHORITY TASK FORCE***

The Prescriptive Authority Task Force and the Public Hospital Act Task Force, while remaining informed via e-mail and occasional teleconference, have not met formally in the last year. Their activities have been subsumed under the more general advocacy activities the organization has embarked upon, especially with respect to the ongoing relationship with the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care.

An edition of Psychology Ontario will address some of the professional issues associated with the quest for prescriptive authority. Liaison with both the Ministry and with HPRAC will continue to allow dialogue around the need for specific referrals to study legislative changes, and expansions or reconfigurations of scope of practice.

Submitted by: **Dr. Jack Ferrari**, Task Forces Chair

### ***HEALTH PROFESSIONS REGULATORY ADVISORY COUNCIL TASK FORCE***

The HPRAC Task Force membership currently includes **Drs. Berman, Broga, Ferrari, Josefowitz, and Nicholson**. **Mr. Gilbert Sharpe** serves as an advisor to the Task Force.

In May 2008, this Task Force made a submission to HPRAC on questions it posed concerning interprofessional collaboration. These questions were posed after The Minister asked HPRAC to *"recommend mechanisms to facilitate and support interprofessional collaboration between health Colleges beginning with the development of standards of practice and professional practice guidelines where regulated health professions share the same or similar controlled acts, acknowledging that individual health Colleges independently govern their professions and establish the competencies for their profession"*.

Submitted by: **Dr. Ian Nicholson**, Task Force Chair

## ***ONTARIO PSYCHOLOGICALLY HEALTHY WORKPLACE AWARDS COMMITTEE***

In 2008, OPA's Psychologically Healthy Workplace (PHW) Committee successfully completed its inaugural PHW Awards Program with a Ceremony and Luncheon convened during the 2008 National Mental Health Awareness week. The Awards ceremony was organized in collaboration with the Canadian Mental Health Association, Ontario region, with assistance of collaborators from the Universities of Western Ontario, Waterloo, McMaster and Toronto, as well as the Psychology Foundation of Canada. The Program was financially supported by Desjardins Financial Group.

The 2008 Award winner was the Toronto Police Service (TPS) for their efforts in the areas of employee growth and development, health and safety, employee recognition, employee involvement and work-life balance to minimize the negative effects of the inherently stressful and, at times, mentally unhealthy duties of their staff. Among these efforts is an innovative employee and family assistance program for staff and their families coping with the aftermath of traumatic incidents. Further information about the Award was made available on the OPA website [www.psych.on.ca](http://www.psych.on.ca).

The Ontario program continues this North American wide initiative of State and Provincial Psychology Associations under the auspices of the APA to recognize and promote organizations and companies that make a commitment to developing psychologically healthy workplaces. A psychologically healthy workplace is one that makes a commitment to programs and policies that foster employee health and well-being, while enhancing organizational performance and productivity. The awards ceremony was repeated during the first Toronto Police Services Board meeting in September 2008 at the request of TPS and their corporate psychologist, **Dr. Carol Vipari**.

Members the 2008 PHW Committee were OPA Board members **Drs. Connie Kushnir** and **Christina Lee**, **Jeremy Yip** of the Rotman School of Management, University of Toronto, **Dr. John Michela**, University of Waterloo, **Dr. John Meyer**, University of Western Ontario and **Dr. Aaron Schatt**, DeGroote School of Business, McMaster University. **Natasha Teoli** provided invaluable part-time administrative and organization staffing.

Submitted by: **Dr. Doug Saunders**; Chair, Ontario PHW Awards Program

## ***COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE***

This year the Communications Task Force, with input from and approval of the Board of Directors, developed a "psychology narrative". This document describes who we are as professionals, how we are different from other health practitioners, and our vital role and contribution. This document serves as a starting point for the OPA Board and its advocacy partners to develop more formal statements for intended audiences. The Task Force also produced an Advocacy Statement which describes the current major health issues in Ontario and

how psychologists are uniquely qualified to meet the current challenges. The Psychology Narrative and the Advocacy Statement also served as the basis for a PowerPoint presentation which can be used by members in dialogue with other clinicians, professionals, politicians, and the public.

Submitted by: **Dr. Cheryl Hartridge**, Chair, Communications Committee

### ***FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE***

The Fundraising Committee was an ad hoc committee established in late 2007 in order to support OPA initiatives through active revenue development. It was thought that with the securing of professional governmental relations (ala Fasken Martineau), additional revenue could support greater advocacy and marketing initiatives.

The Fundraising Committee met in March 2008 to brainstorm accessible streams of revenue that could be investigated to supplement membership revenues. In reviewing the history of OPA efforts to raise money, it was found that the OPA's charter limited fundraising efforts. Specifically, as a professional association without charitable designation, fundraising via the conventional sources of revenue generation were inaccessible. This greatly limited fundraising plans, and it was decided that the committee could best serve the OPA by supporting and strengthening ongoing and traditional fundraising strategies. In particular, effort was directed toward bolstering paid seminar/conference type promotions, and assisting the Membership Committee derive and carry out enhancements to increasing revenues.

**Dr. Margaret Weiser** (Disaster Relief Committee –DRN), and the Fundraising Committee liaised throughout the summer in preparation for the Fall 2008 presentation by **Dr. Jacques Gouws**. The goal was to use the presentation as an opportunity to broaden attendance, and make the event revenue positive. However, the event was focused on a limited number of attendees and proved to be revenue neutral.

In December 2008, the Fundraising Committee joined forces with the Membership Committee to brainstorm novel approaches to increasing and sustaining membership revenues. The Board has approved a number of innovative plans based on this meeting and it is anticipated that additional work in this area will be necessary to represent OPA to its full and diverse members.

For 2009, the Fundraising Committee will serve as a support and reminder to all OPA committees to generate revenues within their own auspices in order to cover their expenses. This way, precious and limited resources can be directed towards important advocacy and public promotion initiatives.

Submitted by: **Dr. Charles Nelson**, Chair, Fundraising Committee

## ***PUBLIC EDUCATION INITIATIVES***

**Committee Members: Drs. Joyce Isbitsky, Maria Kokai, Christina Lee, Pat Mc-Garry Roberts, Doug Saunders, Connie Kushnir (Chair), Ruth Berman and Ms. Vivien Lee.**

The Public Education Committee (PEC) focused on three major initiatives during 2008: Psychology Month, the Psychologically Healthy Workplace Award, and revamping of the website in co-ordination with the Website Committee.

PEC also recommended two new initiatives: the establishment of a Media Award, as well as the development of an Electronic Newsletter. In December, the Board approved the establishment of the OPA Media Recognition Award. This Award is in recognition of excellence in reporting by an individual or organization in the media in the promotion and enhancement of public awareness of psychological health. We plan to present the first award at the Convention in February 2009. With the Board's approval, the PEC will explore the use of an electronic newsletter to facilitate a more effective distribution of psychological information to the public through OPA membership.

PEC has continued to provide information about timely topics which may be of interest to the general public through the website. This information has been accessed through the "OPA Helpline" button on the main page. **Dr. Maria Kokai** has continued to provide the relevant information.

In addition to these initiatives, individual psychologists provided direct service in the form of workshops, seminars and talks, as well as being involved in mental health coaching at a large scale community event. Members have also continued to remain active with print and broadcast media.

**Drs. Connie Kushnir, Maria Kokai and Doug Saunders** attended the State Leadership Conference in Washington in March.

## **PSYCHOLOGY MONTH 2008**

In November and December of 2008, information about Psychology Month 2009 was sent to all members and information was posted on the website.

A number of Psychology Month events were reported by OPA members for 2008.

### **School Boards:**

Psychology Departments in school boards held a variety of activities:

- \* Presentations and symposia were provided to parents, teachers and students on a variety of topics.
- \* An article for parents written by staff psychologists was published in school newsletters.
- \* Workshops were conducted for educators on recognizing the signs and symptoms of mental illness in students and responding appropriately to them.

- \* A presentation was provided to other board departments to showcase the work of psychologists and the discipline of psychology.
- \* Information was sent electronically to school administrators and service department managers on how Psychology Works to help people, and the OPA resource list was provided.
- \* A newsletter was sent to all staff about children's mental health.
- \* Information booths were set up in school board foyers and displays of psychology related books were set up in the school board library. One psychology department focused on positive psychology/positive thinking and invited everyone in the building to share, by writing about their experiences and/or people in their lives that gave them a good feeling.
- \* A number of "fun" activities were organized: the "Great Psychology Trivia Game" where participants in the audience used hand held devices to register their answers; a poster contest for students to create posters for the Psychology Department.

### **London:**

Psychology students from the University of Western Ontario provided a free lecture series on the psychology of everyday life on three Saturdays in February at the Central Library in London.

### **Sault Ste. Marie:**

**Drs. Joyce Isbitsky and Pat McGarry-Roberts** arranged a local networking and training session on electronic resources for psychologists. **Dr. McGarry-Roberts** also promoted Psychology Month at the Algoma Treatment and Remand Centre with posters and reading material.

## **PSYCHOLOGICALLY HEALTHY WORKPLACE AWARD**

**Dr. Doug Saunders** has been chairing this initiative and his report was prepared separately. An award was presented to the Toronto Police Service in May of 2008, and TPS submitted their name to be considered for a Best Practices Award by APA for March of 2009.

## **WEBSITE**

PEC hired a consultant, Ms. Rachel Adelson, to revamp the OPA Web site by reviewing, reorganizing and improving its content. **Drs. Connie Kushnir and Andrew Matthew (chair of the Website Committee)** consulted with her regarding her recommendations.

## **DIRECT SERVICE**

A number of psychologists offered direct service by providing workshops and seminars, and by participating on the Boards of community agencies.

**Dr. Ester Cole** continues to chair the Parenting for Life-Psychology Foundation of Canada initiative. Among other activities, they developed a facilitator's guide for parent groups, "Parenting the School-Age Child." She presented to parent councils and teachers about adolescent development and building resilience.

**Dr. Kate Hays** spoke to 20 runners at the Running Room to prepare them for a marathon and spoke to 9 graduate students at the University of Toronto Faculty of Music on Optimizing the Singing Mind. She presented two sessions about Mental Preparation for Optimal Performance at the School of Toronto Dance Theatre. (50 students)

Several OPA members were involved in mental health coaching at the Toronto Marathon. **Dr. Kate Hays'** role was to recruit, organize, direct, and evaluate the functioning of the Psyching Team. There were 36 members, including the following OPA members: **Drs. Lynne Beal, Alison Day, Mario Faveri, Kate Hays, Peter Mallouh, Rhonda Nemeth, Michael Oosterhoff, Carol Sander, Mona Tsoi, and Anne Vagi.** These psychologists worked with approximately 500 runners directly, and approximately 500 indirectly.

**Dr. Maria Kokai** presented to a community group about mental health.

### **PRINT AND BROADCAST MEDIA**

**Dr. Lynn Beal** gave an interview to Global TV about fear and Halloween.

**Dr. Ester Cole** consulted about, and gave TV, radio and print interviews about teaching kids time management, building positive communication skills in families, facilitating effective coping skills for children at school and at home, coping with transitions and stress. She continues to be on the Advisory Council for TVOParents.com.

**Dr. Kate Hays** had interviews with the following newspapers/Web: yourneighborhoodnews.com and WebMD. She had interviews with the following magazines: Oxygen, Sweat Magazine, Vim & Vigor, APA Monitor on Psychology, Quick & Simple, Fitness, Runner's World, and MarieClaire.

Submitted by: **Dr. Connie Kushnir**, Chair, Public Education Committee

### ***DIVERSITY TASK FORCE***

The work of the OPA Diversity Task Force has predominantly occurred through the following subcommittees, with full group meetings comprising all subcommittee members.

**OPA Convention Workshop Sub-Committee: Judith Pilowsky (Chair), Doug Salmon, Christina Lee, Natasha Williams.**

This year's full day pending workshop will be divided into two parts:

#### **A. An Integrative Framework for Cross-Cultural Psychotherapy:**

With leader Dr. Ka Tat Tsang, this morning workshop introduces an integrative framework for conducting psychotherapy cross-culturally. This integrative framework critiques the cultural literacy approach, which makes assumptions about the homogeneity of ethno-cultural groups. Instead, it

recognizes intra-group diversity and engages with the dynamic processes of acculturation, internalization, and situation-specific performance of culture. The framework aims at supporting practitioners in managing the complex challenges they encounter in cross-cultural psychotherapy. Practitioners can utilize this framework in their own attitude modification, knowledge building, skills development, and integration of clinical research.

**B. Applying Cross-Cultural Concepts, Foundational Knowledge and Specific Applications in Working With Ontario's South-Asian Communities.** This panel discussion (Arun Pillai, Pushpa Kanagaratnam, Arpita Biswas) aims to provide the audience with foundational knowledge of the broad socio-cultural context, immigration history, and acculturation status of various groups within the local South-Asian communities. Picking up on a theme from the morning session, this afternoon session serves to provide subgroup-specific and intra-group diversity knowledge, reflects upon the level of acculturation within and between subgroups, and addresses pragmatic implications for maximizing therapeutic alliance and outcomes. Case studies will be included in order to provide a practical learning experience and to apply the integrative framework from the morning session. Finally, psychological resources are limited for this community, necessitating that many non-South Asian psychologists/psychological associates will need to conduct assessment/treatment through the use of interpreters. As such, a professional cultural/linguistic interpreter (Arun Ananthanarayanan) from this community will address: common communication challenges; challenging psychological terms to convey through interpretation; and, cultural interpretation considerations.

### **Cultural Interpreters Sub-Committee**

**Committee members:** Madhu Bhardwaj (Chair), Christina Lee, Arun Pillai, Pushpa Kanagaratnam and Arpita Biswas. New members are welcome.

The Cultural Interpreters Sub-Committee was formed with the objective of developing best practices in use of cultural interpreters to assist psychologists in working with diverse communities who experience cultural and linguistic barriers in accessing psychological services.

Members of the Committee discussed the extensive work required for:

- A literature review compiling existing practices and recommendations regarding the use of interpreters in psychology, social work and psychiatry; current practice in universities offering professional interpreter degree, for example York University. The review would include publications in journals, books and internet search covering jurisdictions in Canada and the United States and other countries.
- A survey with the OPA members to examine current practices in the use of interpreters in such areas as psychological assessment and therapy; the type of interpreters used, models, and issues and concerns.
- Consultation with interpreter service providers and multicultural community organizations regarding issues and concerns in their work with psychologists and clients.



In the interim, members felt that a study group would be established to identify currently available existing guidelines and related resources and to identify the need for funding for research assistance. In March '09, the subcommittee will re-convene from its study period to ascertain further actions.

### **Disability Issues Sub-Committee**

**Committee members:** **Tammie Ricci** (Chair); **Lott Mababolo**; **Patricia Minnes**; new members are welcome

### **2009 GOALS:**

- **Recruitment of Members**

We discussed the possibility of recruiting more members for the committee, given the scope of tasks involved.

- **Development and dissemination of surveys**

- We will develop a survey of graduate and undergraduate programs re: students with disabilities; surveys will be mailed out to offices for students with disabilities in universities across Ontario
- We will develop a survey of practicing psychologists – what services do they offer people with disabilities; what assessment tools do they use with individuals with various disabilities; it would also be interesting to find out how many psychologist in Ontario have a disability
- Once information is gathered, we will then find ways to disseminate (e.g., booklet; guide of some sort) to psychologists and students of psychology in Ontario, with heavy emphasis on web access through OPA, with potential cross-link to CPA

### **Further Directions 2009**

In order to foster an international perspective, the National Academy of Neuropsychology (NAN), Diversity Committee Chair, has invited the Task Force to participate in NAN Grand Rounds in Nov 2009 during the NAN Annual Convention, by way of presentation of a case study focused upon diversity issues. The Task Force is currently considering appropriate cases towards this end.

The Task Force has also scheduled a full day retreat in mid March in order to receive the recommendations of the Cultural Interpreters Subcommittee, reflect upon audience input regarding the convention workshop, prioritize adding one or more of the following topics to its 2009 operational objectives (and developing related budget submissions): Review of OPA and possible CPO language/treatment focus listings by “cultural expertise”; perhaps disability specific (SCI, Tourettes, MS, etc.); religious expertise, etc.; evolving an OPA “Diversity Lens”; Media policy review re diversity representation; new immigrant facilitation; and, training barriers re diversity representation.

Submitted by: **Dr. Douglas Salmon**, Chair and **Dr. Judith Pilowsky**, Co-Chair, Diversity Task Force

## ***DISASTER RESPONSE NETWORK (DRN)***

In 2008, the Disaster Response Network included the following OPA members: **Drs. Ester Cole (chair), Anna Baranowsky, Linda McLean, Gerald Goldberg, Douglas Saunders, Margaret Weiser, Lori Gray and Ruth Berman.** The Canadian Red Cross continued to be represented by John Saunders, Manager, Disaster Services, International and Youth Programs. The Committee held several meetings related to planning professional development, review of resources, networking and consultation.

The partnership with the Canadian Red Cross focuses on strategic planning, exchange of information, and the training of volunteer OPA members throughout the province. The core DRN goals center on: the coordination and provision of pro bono services to communities impacted by disaster and/or crisis situation(s); the dissemination of information and access to DRN mental health training for OPA members; support of members in their provision of disaster response services; upholding professional standards regarding disaster mental health care; and collaboration with other organizations providing disaster relief services and short-term volunteer interventions.

The DRN Committee organized a professional development event in October, 2008. The lecture “The Effects of War on Veterans and Their Families after Deployment” was supported by the Psychology in Education Section, and the Section on Independent Practice. **Dr. Jacques Gouws** was the keynote speaker for the event. About 40 attendees had the opportunity to expand their network with colleagues, and meet early career psychologists. **Dr. Luis Oliver** of the Canadian Health Services Centre in Ottawa was additional presenter. His talk focused on the services provided at The Operational Trauma and Stress Support Centre. Both PowerPoint presentations were posted on the OPA website. Alexandra da Costa, a recruiter for Health Services – CALIAN displayed materials and information related to employment opportunities.

DRN chair and members consult with APA, provincial coordinators and national Red Cross and psychology organizations, including CPA, in order to share relevant information and potentially coordinate training and volunteer efforts. Ontario remains among few Canadian provinces forming and operationalizing DRN partnerships with the Canadian Red Cross. Related psychological first aid training opportunities and information about deployment resources are posted on the OPA website.

The following provide but a few examples of DRN services and learning opportunities by OPA members:

**Dr. Diane Sander** took an on-line course through Academic Review, entitled Disaster Response Handbook for Mental Health Professions. **Dr. Margaret Weiser** has been active with her local Canadian Red Cross Disaster Management group during week-long 24/7 on-call (typically house fires), and also during the flood evacuation for the James Bay evacuees in the spring who were housed in CRC shelter operations in St. Mary's and Stratford. Related to his professional services, **Dr. Gerry Goldberg** provided presentations on preparing emergency workers for

disasters to the following organizations: Ontario's Ministry of the Attorney General; APA's "Work, Stress, and Health 2008"; Canadian Red Cross's Peer Support Team. He also organized and provided workshops on emergency workers and family relations, and participated in the following teams - Pearson Airport Crisis Support Team and Toronto Triservice CISM Team (Toronto Police, Emergency Medical and Fire Services). **Dr. Ester Cole** coordinated a professional development for OPA members; provided consultations' and feedback on tools to the APA/DRN coordinators' network.

During 2008, OPA members updated their volunteer information questionnaire. They are encouraged to contact the local branch of the Ontario Red Cross for training sessions, and attend a First Aid Course. Members are asked to notify the Association office about their local training. Copies of the Memorandum of Understanding between OPA and the Canadian Red Cross continue to be available to the membership. Related materials will be shared with interested participants at the 2009 OPA Convention.

The OPA/DRN website information is available to the membership at <http://psych.on.ca/index.asp?id1=102>. This page will be updated from time to time. The website contains links to other resources on disaster response literature, and helpful services. For example, the new APA Deployment Kit, and a document on Tips for Culturally Informed Communication have been posted. Members are also asked to share information on the DRN / OPA listserv. The committee welcomes new members.

Submitted by: **Dr. Ester Cole**, Chair, OPA/DRN.

#### ***MINISTRY OF EDUCATION LIAISON COMMITTEE***

The Ministry of Education Liaison Committee for 2008 included the following members: **Drs. Lynne Beal, Ruth Berman, Ian Brown, Ester Cole, Maria Kokai (Chair), and Cheryl Pohlman**. As per the OPA BOD decision, an affiliate member representing OAPA, **Tina Agrell**, joined the Committee in October 2008.

The role of the Committee is to share information and discuss issues with the Ministry of Education concerning the provision of psychological services and related programs for school age children enrolled in publicly funded schools in Ontario.

Committee meetings: In 2008 the committee requested and collected input regarding issues to be addressed with the Ministry from SecPE Council and from the Association of Chief Psychologists of Ontario School Boards. Two committee meetings were held via teleconference in order to prepare for meetings with the Ministry of Education.

Meetings with the Ministry: the Chair of the Committee and the Education Officer designated by the Special Education Policy and Program Branch of the Ministry set up the meetings for the Committee. In 2008 two meetings were held::

1. March 20, 2008: one of the Ministry of Education's three main priorities, reducing the achievement gap, was discussed. Addressing the needs of students with mental health issues is a pressing concern of school boards, and the Committee offered assistance to the Ministry in addressing this issue by providing teacher education on children's mental health issues as a first step. (Drafting and submitting a proposal to the Ministry was offered.)
2. December 9, 2008: The agenda included discussions about how psychological services have been supporting Ministry initiatives aiming to enhance student performance within Ontario schools; how psychologists can continue to assist the Ministry with current and future initiatives; and how the OPA-MoE project has facilitated sustainable change that supports relationship building among professional service providers and educational staff, and building capacity to move assessment to effective instruction. The topic of student mental health was also discussed: systematic board-wide teacher (secondary) training under Student Success implemented in some boards has led to better understanding of students' mental health issues. A follow-up meeting was set up for April 21, 2009.

Other activities:

1. Input was collected from the Chief Psychologists of school boards on psychology's involvement in various Ministry initiatives in education, and it was forwarded to the Special Education Policy and Programs Branch (May and December 2008);
2. Information was provided to the Ministry about current issues in school psychology via SLATE (newsletter of the Section on Psychology in Education);

Ministry requests for consultation:

The Committee responded to two requests for input from OPA:

1. Consultation with the Safe Schools Action Team regarding creating a safe school environment for ethnically diverse, minority and special needs students (**Dr. Kokai** attended the consultation session in May 2008).
2. Consultation regarding the creation of a Ministry document based on "Education for All" to cover grades from K to grade 12. (**Dr. Pohlman** attended the consultation session in June 2008).
3. Consultation regarding the creation of a Ministry resource guide for school administrators on Safe and Caring Schools K - 12 to support a positive teaching and learning environment for all students including students with special education needs; consultation to take place in January 2009.

Submitted by: **Dr. Maria Kokai**, Chair, Ministry of Education Liaison Committee

***WSIB TASK FORCE***

The OPA continued its engagement with the WSIB throughout 2008, through its ongoing representation on the Fee-Setting Advisory Committee. Central to the work of this committee has been the development and roll-out of "Programs of Care (POCs)". Activity in this area slowed considerably this past year, with more of a focus on the wider acceptance and utilization

of existing POCs, along with their evaluation, rather than on development of new POCs. One exception to this has been the development of a POC on Chronic Low Back Pain, which is currently undergoing pricing and plans for a pilot study, prior to any broader roll-out of the program. A note of appreciation is owed to both Drs. Warren Neilson and Rhonda Nemeth who participated in various stages of the development of this latest POC.

It is also noted that 2008 saw an across-the-board increase in professional service fees, with psychological services receiving an approximately 6.6% increase in its rate. Nevertheless, no changes have, as yet, been introduced to alter the types of services for which we are paid eg. reports, despite our repeated efforts to have this changed, along with similar requests from other professions. One change that was advocated for with some success was a “cease and desist” request that adjudicators put an end to the misleading communication to psychologists that its current fee schedule is the product of a negotiated agreement with the OPA.

Outstanding issues still remain in terms of our relationship with the WSIB and will continue to be addressed both within the context of the Fee-Setting Advisory Committee, as well as outside of it.

Submitted by: **Dr. Ruth Berman**, on behalf of the WSIB Task Force

#### ***AUTO INSURANCE TASK FORCE***

The Auto Insurance Task Force was founded in 1989 prior to the introduction of Ontario’s first No Fault insurance law (the OMPP) in 1990. We wish to thank the OPA Board and **Dr. Berman** for their continuing support. This year we also have required and obtained ongoing legal advice regarding legislative initiatives and health policy

Subsequent to the well attended, indeed, jam packed, program at the Annual meeting in February 2008, the Task Force has been extremely active in 2008. We participated in the “Five Year Review of Auto Insurance” mandated in the 2003 Bill 198 legislation. This included submissions, briefing documents and presentations to FSCO. The OPA also worked with the coalition of regulated health professionals. Our advocacy effects have included a continuing focus on psychologists’ ability to provide services for accident victims with psychological impairments and brain injuries. The OPA’s and other submissions are available at [fSCO.gov.on.ca](http://fSCO.gov.on.ca)

The five year review of auto insurance is occurring after an extended period of rate reduction and subsequent stability in auto insurance premiums. This stability appears to have been supplanted by premium rate increases in 2007 and 2008. Insurers are reporting substantial increases in accident benefit costs. Thus, there will be pressures on insurance premiums and pressures to control costs by reducing accident benefits in 2009.

The OPA Submission was based in part on a survey of members of the association which provided valuable information about problems our insured patients and members were

experiencing with the current system. The submission made a number of suggestions for reform of the assessment application process. Additionally, we provided critiques of proposals from various parties to introduce discrimination against patients with psychological impairments and brain injuries, including for example, in the catastrophic impairment threshold, access to the courts, and in creating caps on assessment and treatment for those with psychological injuries, classified as “minor”.

Another area of task force activity during 2008 was in regard to the HCAI (Health Claims for Auto Insurance), [hcaiinfo.ca](http://hcaiinfo.ca), system of electronic submission and data collection implementation. However, this system was suspended due to overwhelming technical problems. The IBC has spent the year enhancing the system with an expectation to bring it back on line in a staged fashion. It will ultimately be the required method of submission of information to insurers, so we encourage practitioners to keep current with the requirements. At the Task Force presentation in February at the OPA 2009 Annual Meeting, the implementation process will be discussed.

Submitted by: **Dr. Ron Kaplan**, Co-chair, Auto Insurance Task Force

#### ***COALITION OF REGULATED HEALTH PROFESSIONALS ASSOCIATION (CORHPA)***

CORHPA was established a number of years ago under its current name as a collective forum for the RHPA professions. It is designed to provide for the exchange of information and viewpoints among the professions in a spirit of collaboration and cooperation, as well as for the public expression of a common voice on matters of mutual concern that impact the professions as a whole. It serves as a counter-balancing organization to the Federation of Regulatory Colleges, whose focus is principally geared to the public interest and on regulatory matters. Over the year 2008, CORHPA has attended to a number of issues, including Bill 171, and the recent reports released by HPRAC, all of which potentially impact on health professional organizations and their members.

To assist CORHPA in its efforts, terms of reference have been developed and approved, as well as the introduction of a organization membership fee to cover the costs of our associated administrative and secretarial functions that CORHPA may require for its ongoing activities. The OPA Executive recently approved our continuing participation in CORHPA and payment of the prescribed membership fee.

Submitted by: **Dr. Ruth Berman**, OPA Representative to CORHPA

#### ***APA COUNCIL OF REPRESENTATIVES***

During 2008, the APA Council of Representatives met twice: in Washington DC in February, at its mid-winter meeting, and in Boston in August, during the APA Convention.

APA continued its engagement in a long-term strategic planning process. At the August meeting, a new mission statement for APA was revised and approved: *The mission of the APA is to advance the creation, communication, and application of psychological knowledge to benefit society and improve people's lives.*

In fiscal matters, even though the meetings were held prior to the major economic downturn, APA was paying careful attention to setting specific priorities as well as limiting new projects. Minor increases were approved in member, graduate student, and affiliate fees; journal prices; and Convention fees. Major expenditures were approved for the 2009 Presidential summit on the future of psychology practice (May, 2009); psychology's involvement in the WHO revision of the mental health chapter of the current International Classification of Diseases and Related Disorders (ICD-10), through contract with the International Union of Psychological Science (IUPsyS), which will retain a psychologist consultant to work on the core revision team at WHO. At each meeting, Council voted to underscore and clarify APA's prohibition against torture or other forms of cruel, degrading or inhumane treatment.

Council adopted the report of the 2007 Presidential Task Force on Integrative Health Care for an Aging Population, *Blueprint for Change: Achieving Integrated Health Care for an Aging Population.*

The following reports were received:

- The report of the Task Force on Mental Health and Abortion
- The report of the Task Force on Resilience and Strength in Black Children and Adolescents
- The report of the Task Force on Evidence-Based Practice with Children and Adolescents
- The report of the Task Force on Gender Identity and Gender Variance
- The report of the 2007 Presidential Task Force on Institutional Review Boards and Psychological Science
- The report of the Board of Educational Affairs Task Force on Strengthening the Teaching and Learning of Undergraduate Psychological Science's final report, *Teaching, Learning and Assessing in a Developmentally Coherent Curriculum*

Council adopted a Resolution on the American with Disabilities Act.

Council adopted the revised Principles for the Recognition of Specialties in Professional Psychology.

Two new division journals were approved:

*Industrial and Organizational Psychology: Perspectives on Science and Practice* (Div. 14, Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology) and  
*Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research and Practice* (Div. 56, Trauma).

The field of Police Psychology was established as a Proficiency, while there was renewal of: Psychological Treatment of Alcohol and Other Psychoactive Substance Disorders [proficiency] and Forensic Psychology [specialty]. Extension of recognition was awarded to Psychopharmacology [proficiency] and Behavioral Psychology [specialty].

In regard to divisional activity, Division 56 (Trauma) was approved as a permanent APA division. A proposal to create a new division for qualitative inquiry was defeated.

Although Council approved, for the second time, a proposal to add new seats on Council for the four ethnic- minority psychology organizations (the Asian American Psychological Association, the Association of Black Psychologists, the National Latina/o Psychological Association, and the Society of Indian Psychologists) (and OPA voted to endorse this proposal), the membership voting on this proposal in the autumn of 2008 defeated this plan.

As I have mentioned before, in addition to my tasks in representing OPA at the Council meetings, I envision the Council Representative as offering a link between OPA and APA, in relation to both services and governance. To that end, I continue to make extensive use of the OPA members' email list to keep members informed of APA activities, opportunities, and information; have provided information, linkage, and support to those OPA members seeking information about APA; and continue to inform APA of relevant OPA activities and participants. I can be reached most easily @ [drhays@theperformingedge.com](mailto:drhays@theperformingedge.com).

Submitted by: **Dr. Kate F. Hays**, APA Council Representative

#### ***COUNCIL OF PROVINCIAL ASSOCIATIONS OF PSYCHOLOGISTS (CPAP)***

CPAP (the Council of Provincial Associations of Psychology) in its current form become formally established in January 2008. It is composed of eleven Provincial and Territorial Psychology Associations (PAs) and the Canadian Psychological Association. CPAP's goals include developing and implementing a national advocacy strategy for psychology; supporting the advocacy efforts of the member PAs within their own jurisdiction; and maintaining on-going communication with ACPRO, which is the Association of Canadian Psychology Regulatory Organizations. In January 2008, Public Relations Post (PR Post), a Media Relations organization, was hired to develop a media campaign to brand psychology nationally; to monitor news and help CPAP and CPA to act on it; to increase the public's understanding of psychology; and to raise psychology's profile in the media. PR Post was involved in the preparation of media releases regarding the lack of access to psychologists, especially in schools, during the time of the federal election. In January 2009, PR Post provided media training to CPAP delegates and observers, and facilitated a session on developing a "brand" for psychology. PR Post will continue to work with CPAP and CPA to coordinate media opportunities, especially during Psychology Month. At its June 2008 meeting, CPAP delegates participated in a strategic planning exercise. In order to fulfill its mission of promoting the profession of psychology, it became clear that CPAP did not have the human or financial resources needed to move its advocacy agenda and activities forward. To support multi-directional collaboration and communication among Canada's jurisdictions of psychology, it became clear that there was a need for infrastructure. To this end, a proposal was developed and debated by CPAP delegates regarding the creation of a Practice Directorate through CPA. CPAP accepted the creation of a Practice Directorate in principle. The proposed Practice Directorate will be further explored by each PA and the CPA Board during the coming year.



Submitted by: **Dr. Mary Broga**, CPAP Representative

### ***OPA STUDENT ASSESSMENT PROJECT***

The OPA Student Assessment Project had another extremely busy and eventful year.

In January 2008, plans were underway to develop the “Promising Practices Resource Guide”. The purpose of the guide is to provide a source of inspiration and guidance for all those involved in student assessment processes within school boards, in their ongoing efforts to enhance and sustain these processes. The project team selected 12 school boards to develop detailed descriptions of the promising practices resulting from their school board projects. Candidates were selected to highlight some unique approaches, as well as to provide a representative sample of promising practices from school boards that varied in size, region, English / French and public/catholic designations. The remaining school boards were asked to provide a brief description of their projects and, ultimately, all school board projects were represented in the resource guide. Gerry Clarke and Dr. Jean Hewitt met with the 12 school boards, guided them in documenting their projects, and began to develop the overall framework for the guide.

January was a good month for project communications, as the OPA published a special edition of Psychology Ontario, “Perspectives on the OPA Student Assessment Project”. The publication contained articles contributed by school board staff and other OPA project stakeholders, outlining some key findings and lessons learned from their experience with the project. The special edition was also translated into French. Copies of the special edition were distributed to all Ontario school boards.

By early February, school board assessment capacity building plan updates had been received and approved, and a third allocation of funding was provided. At this point, the OPA project team was preparing to receive data from each school board that would measure results / progress against each of the four project objectives. In order to manage the significant amount of data we would be receiving, in April 2008 the OPA worked with Trios Corporation to create a web-based software application so that school boards could input their data on-line. The application was designed with a secure, password protected front end so that confidentiality of school board results would be maintained, and with a reporting capability, so that results could be summarized provincially, and by school board size, geography and language.

Also in April, the school boards submitted descriptions of their promising practices for input to the resource guide. Contracts were signed with service providers to translate the guide into French, and to provide French and English editing services, and negotiations were underway for the design and printing of the guide.

In May the school board results data began to roll in, and the team was busy analyzing the data and developing the results report. Also in May, school boards were notified of the good news that they would be receiving an additional allocation of \$10,000 minimum for their projects, and

that they had until August 31, 2009 to spend their project funds. They were also invited to register for the conference, “Sharing Promising Practices”, which was scheduled for October 15, 2008 at the Renaissance Toronto Airport Hotel.

Over the summer, planning for the conference was in full swing, and finishing touches were being put on the results report, and the resource guide – both of which would be released at the conference. The conference would be the culminating event of the OPA project, as this was the opportunity for school boards to showcase their project outcomes to their peers. By September, there were more than 300 delegates registered, including staff from the English and French language district school boards, Ministry of Education staff, and other OPA project stakeholders.

The conference on October 15<sup>th</sup> was a great success! After the conference, delegates were invited to provide anonymous feedback on their satisfaction with the conference in three areas, and here is what they reported:

1. Pre-Conference Communications: 99.6% of respondents reported that their expectations were met or exceeded
2. Conference Information and Content: 94.1% of respondents reported that their expectations were met or exceeded
3. Logistical Components: 97% of respondents reported that their expectations were met or exceeded.

*OPA Student Assessment Project - Sharing Promising Practices – A Resource Guide: Kindergarten to Grade 4* was very well received and approximately 500 copies were distributed at the conference. Subsequently an additional 5500 copies were shipped to school boards, faculties of education and other OPA project stakeholders. After the conference, school boards requested a total of approximately 600 additional copies over and above the number shipped directly to their school boards. As a result, the supply from the first printing was depleted and the OPA ordered a second printing of 1500 English copies to meet the demand.

*Summary of Key Results Areas – Critical Findings – May 23, 2008* was presented at the conference and approximately 350 copies of the report were distributed. Many thanks are extended to Dr. Beverley Terrell-Deutsch who worked long and hard to produce a first class report!

The results report, together with promising practices as documented in the resource guide, demonstrate the powerful and positive outcomes of the OPA student assessment project. Key stakeholders have declared the project to be a success with ninety-seven (97) percent of all Ontario school boards “strongly” or “mildly” agreeing that the project was a success in their school board and three (3)% reporting success as “neutral”:

- o increased opportunities have been provided for early intervention for young, at-risk students
- o wait-times for professional assessments have been reduced
- o capacity of school board staff (e.g., teachers, professional services staff) to provide effective programming for students has been enhanced

- teachers have reported increases in student literacy and numeracy as a result of professional assessments
- teachers have also reported improved student well-being and behaviour
- student assessment processes have been enhanced and
- partnerships between schools and parents have been strengthened

School boards are making good progress in implementing and internalizing the activities critical to sustaining assessment process improvements. However, a number of gaps remain with many school boards reporting some of the high priority sustainability activities to be in the early stages of implementation. For priority sustainability activities to become deeply embedded in the culture, school boards must continue to make progress or risk the loss of assessment process quality and efficiency gains afforded by the OPA student assessment project.

You can see review the full results report on the OPA website at:

<http://www.psych.on.ca/?id1=117>

Looking ahead, 2009 will be the final chapter of the OPA student assessment project. School boards have been submitting their final reports; the last grant distribution cheques will be mailed out, and a final report will be made to the Ministry of Education, including recommendations from the OPA based on their experience and lessons learned over the past 2-1/2 years. In February the OPA project is being presented at the Ministry of Education's 2009 Ontario Education Research Symposium as an example of a project that is closing gaps in achievement for students with special needs.

The OPA project has supported school boards through the change process by encouraging school board project teams to create a new vision of what the student assessment process might look like, and to involve their key stakeholders. School boards were provided with an opportunity to describe both their successes and their challenges, and to share in their promising practices. Most importantly, school boards were given an opportunity to describe what they need in order to enhance the student assessment process over the long term.

By challenging the existing culture, involving and getting commitment from stakeholders, supporting and monitoring changes as they occur, and by being innovative and forming partnerships, good progress is being made so that more students will have an opportunity to learn and reach their potential.

Submitted by: **Marg Pepler**, Project Manager

## ***CONCLUDING REMARKS***

As my first year as President of the OPA draws to an end, I reflect on how privileged I am to have worked with such a knowledgeable and inspiring group of individuals who serve as staff, on the Board of Directors, and on the Association committees. The Central Office staff, under the leadership of **Dr. Ruth Berman**, work on the member's behalf to support the mission of our Association. Hats off to **Carla Mardonet, Anna DiDonato, and Jenna Barclay** for a job well done. Your support and assistance are indispensable to the work of the Association.

The Executive Committee, **Drs. Ferrari, Weiser, Kushnir, Velikonja, and Matthew** have been a source of insight and wisdom, effectively guiding decision making to ensure the best use of human and financial resources. The Board of Directors has worked as a team, united in meeting the goals of the Association. Again, the input from you – the members- was essential in helping the Board to set its priorities and to ensure that our resources are put to the best use.

I would also like to thank **Mr. Gilbert Sharpe**, whose commitment to the Association is unwavering. With his knowledge both of political systems and the people in those systems, we have been able to begin developing relationships with key government representatives which hopefully will position psychology in the role of a valuable and respected profession within relevant ministries.

I must congratulate all those who contributed their time and talents to the OPA Student Assessment Project. The work that resulted from this project not only strengthened the Association's partnership with the Ministry of Education, but also supported the students of Ontario, not only directly, but in years to come as the projects live on in the "Promising Practices Resource Guide".

In the coming year, I look forward to working with **Dr. Margaret Weiser**, President-Elect and the 2009 Board of Directors. I bid adieu to **Dr. Jack Ferrari**, who has now completed his term as Past President. I will miss his thoughtful input and knowledge. I look forward to another exciting year and will continue to press ahead to elevate the profile of our profession.

**Dr. Mary Broga, President**

