

ABPP To Hold 2009 Convocation In Toronto; Pryzwansky And Simon Are Awardees

The 2009 ABPP Convocation will be held on Saturday, August 8, 2009 from 2:00 PM to 3:50 PM in the Frontenac Room of The Westin Harbour Castle, One Harbour Square, on the lakeside in Toronto, Ontario. Please join us there.

ABPP is delighted to announce that Walter B. Pryzwansky, Ph.D. will receive the Distinguished Service and Contributions to the Profession of Psychology 2009 Award and that Norma Simon, Ed.D. is the recipient of the 2009 Russell J. Bent Award for Distinguished Service and Contributions to ABPP.

During the APA Convention, we also invite you to visit the ABPP Booth, #620, which will be located at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre, Halls D & E, in the South Building. The hours are 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM (Thursday – Saturday) and 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM (Sunday).

Prior to the Convocation, the BOT, Specialty Boards, and Academies will be holding their annual Governance Meeting on Saturday, August 8, from 8:00 AM to 12:00 PM in the Marine Room of The Westin Harbour Castle.

A message from the president:

ABPP is Not a “Four-letter” Word

Christine Maguth Nezu, Ph.D., ABPP

As the title of my message implies, I have experienced some surprising and provocative reactions from colleagues when the acronym “ABPP” is mentioned, often similar to what one might expect after dropping a “four-letter” word. In an attempt to understand such reactions, I have discovered that several lingering myths about our organization and board certification continue to persist. Hearing others describe their perceptions and ask questions about ABPP, it seems clear that such myths often partially account for their reaction. As board-certified specialists, we all have a responsibility to continue to dispel and correct these myths with accurate information whenever the opportunity presents itself.

In this final message as President, I would like to focus attention on some of the myths about ABPP and professional board certification, why they tend to periodically re-surface, and how we can all work to reduce them in the future. Although I realize that I am “preaching to the choir” when underscoring the need to reduce these myths (as they serve as barriers to our goals of growth within ABPP), I have come to realize that myths about board certification in general are also destructive to the future of our entire profession. I recently discussed this very issue with individuals who were contemplating applying for board certification in order to provide accurate information to debunk these myths and

appealing to their concern about the future of psychology. It’s my hope that this message, by correcting false and ubiquitous certification myths, may be of some help to those of you who continue to educate and mentor your colleagues. Let’s begin with what the myths are and a few “myth-busting facts” that can be offered to refute misinformation when it occurs. Although the list below does not represent all of the myths about ABPP, they are some of the most frequent that I have heard.

Myths about ABPP and Board Certification in Professional Psychology

Myth 1. ABPP is a Largely Academic and Elitist Organization.

Myth-busting facts. The mission of ABPP is to board certify individuals in various psychology specialties. As such, board-certified specialists are first and foremost, competent professionals who are responsible for the delivery of best practices of their specialty. It is true that, in addition to their commitment to providing competent services to the public, some psychologists who hold leadership positions on the various ABPP boards and academies also hold leadership positions in various clinical training or academic institutions. However, this is not elitist, rather, simply attests to their active par-



Dr. Nezu

ticipation in the growth and improvement of the field. Board-certified specialists are individuals who are interested in promoting competent practice, at all levels of experience, from the full range of professional service settings, and from all theoretic orientations. Since when did the aspiration of competent practice cease signifying responsibility and start signifying elitism?

Myth 2. If one is Licensed, There is No Need for Further Evaluation of His or Her Abilities.

Myth-busting facts. Technically, in order to legally and ethically engage in independent

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Winter 2008/2009 Executive Officer report

REMINDER: Please be sure to update your ABPP contact information with the new address and phone numbers.

David R. Cox, Ph.D., ABPP

California State Hospitals request ABPP workshop

In January I had the opportunity to visit with the psychology departments of each of the hospitals in the State of California Department of Mental Health (DMH) in order to present on competency in psychology and the ABPP. The visits arose following a call from a hospital in which it was indicated that many of the psychologists there had an interest in pursuing board certification through ABPP. It turned out that the group was no small lot; 70 some psychologists at that one facility. One discussion led to another and before I knew it ABPP had been asked to present to each of the five hospitals. Across the hospital system, there are some 300+ psychologists, and several reported that the staff size was positioned to increase significantly over the next year or two. Not all of the psychologists were interested, nor ready, to pursue board certification; however many were. Since that visit, ABPP Central Office has seen a number of applications come through, from different hospitals in the DMH system. Perhaps more importantly, the California DMH is setting a standard that perhaps other such systems will follow – encouraging education about, if not pursuit of, board certification through ABPP.

The workshop presented was not solely about ABPP. Rather, it focused on the Culture of Competency in Professional Psychology, with emphasis on the development of competencies as worked on by the various workgroups within and across APA, APPIC, ABPP and other professional organizations. A developmental history was presented, including an outlining of competency areas and the integration of that into ABPP's model of competency examination. It was well received and, as one might expect of a topic of this nature, could have gone yet more in depth than the two hour time slot that we allotted for each site.

The California state hospitals all house individuals who have been involved in the legal system, yet not all of the psychologists working their view their specialty as forensic psychology. The variety of interests included clinical psychology, forensic psychology, clinical neuropsychology, rehabilitation psychology and cognitive and behavioral psychology. I was particularly impressed with the vision and enthusiasm that the leaders of each group of psychologists had – they were all keenly interested in making sure that their departments got information about advances in psychology, genuinely encouraged staff to attend the workshop provided and asked about return visits in the future to provide similar information to new staff psychologists. This



Dr. Cox

was a dedicated group of psychologists who clearly hold quality service and professionalism in high regard. They are to be commended for their interest in establishing a culture of competence within their settings!

Russian Psychologists Visit ABPP Central Office

ABPP Central Office was one of several sites that psychologists from Russia asked to visit while in the United States learning about licensing, credentialing and professional psychology. The purpose of their trip was to study the sys-



tem of licensing and certification used in the United States for professional psychologists so that they might implement a similar system in the Russian Federation. As well, they hoped to learn about the educational and training system for psychologists in the United States. The group met with ABPP, APA, ASPPB, the National Registrar, the State of North Carolina Psychology Licensing Board, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and others.

They visited the ABPP Central Office on

March 5, 2009 and I spent several hours talking with them about various aspects of psychology training, licensure and the ABPP board certification process. They were very interested in our models of credentialing and eager to learn. It was interesting to realize how much emphasis we place on maintaining our high standards of quality and consumer protection – almost taking them for granted, while other countries may not even have basic licensure models adequately in place. We have a lot to learn from one another as psychology becomes more globalized.

The visitors from Russia were:

Dr. Sergey Alekseyevich Manichev is the Chair, Department of Ergonomics and Engineering Psychology, School of Psychology, St. Petersburg State University. He holds a Ph.D. with a specialization in Engineering Psychology. He was elected to be the Director General of the newly established National Institute for Certification of Professional Psychologists (its registration is in the process now), St. Petersburg, Russia. He was asked to help establish the National Institute for the Certification of Professional Psychologists and become its Director General, at the request of the General Committee of the Russian Psychology Society. Dr. Manichev graduated from the School of Psychology of St. Petersburg State University where he is currently the Chair of the Department of Ergonomics and Engineering Psychology. He serves as a researcher and consultant in organizational development.

Mrs. Natalia Olegovna Mastinen is the Chief Manager, National Institute for Certification of Professional Psychologists, St. Petersburg, Russia. She has three Specialist degrees (equivalent to U.S. Master's degree) including degrees in management and psychology. She is responsible for management of the National Institute for Certification of Professional Psychologists. The Institute is just beginning the process registration, and Mrs. Mastinen is responsible for creation of certification policies, principles, and rules. Much of this will be established based on what she and the others learn from their visits with foreign entities such as ABPP. Her role includes cooperative interaction with foreign institutions, representing the National Institution for Certification of Professional Psychologies, and managing the National Institute. Responsible for the day-to-day management of the Institute, her education and experience are in the fields of management and psychology.

Dr. Larisa Aleksandrovna Tsvetkova is the Dean of the School of Psychology at St. Petersburg State University. She holds a Specialist Degree (equal to a Master's Degree) and Ph.D.

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