APA Emphasizes the ‘Urgent Need for Action’ to the Department of Education on Behalf of Argosy University’s Students

On March 1, APA CEO Arthur Evans, Jr., PhD, sent a letter to the Secretary of Education, Betsy DeVos, expressing serious concerns for doctoral psychology students enrolled at eight APA-accredited programs at Argosy University institutions. Evans requested DeVos “immediately establish a Real Time Response Center” within the Department’s Office of the Ombudsman, staffed by knowledgeable representatives. He stressed that APA does not “believe the current resources are adequate to provide students in crisis with the roadmap or solutions they need.”

“Students enrolled in APA-accredited programs at Argosy are preparing for careers as psychologists. Their commitment to this profession comes at a critical time as our nation faces growing shortages of behavioral health providers; and individuals, families, and communities face increasing challenges because of trauma, depression, suicide, and the devastating opioid epidemic,” Evans noted. He underscored the “urgent need for action as many of these students are facing financial hardship, unsure about their graduation, and potentially unable to secure employment.”

On March 10, APA President Rosie Phillips Davis, PhD affirmed the association’s plans to support the transition of psychology doctoral students affected by Argosy University to accredited programs in receiving institutions. Davis stressed that APA has been working with programs, institutions and the Department of Education to ensure that psychology doctoral students affected by Argosy’s alleged misdeeds can complete their degrees.

APA also created a webpage of responses to frequent questions received by the association to direct members of the Argosy community to appropriate resources.
APA, Japanese-American Leaders Discuss Trauma of Family Separation

The American Psychological Association (APA), in collaboration with the Japanese American Citizens League, Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation, and the Japanese American Confinement Sites Consortium, hosted a Congressional briefing examining trauma caused by family separation on February 28th.

Briefing participants discussed Japanese-Americans incarceration during World War II and current U.S. immigration policies. Rep. Mark Takano provided introductory remarks. Former Rep. Norman Mineta (D-CA), former Secretary of Commerce and Transportation in the Clinton and Bush II administrations, respectively, and former prisoner at Heart Mountain shared his experience.

APA CEO, Arthur C. Evans Jr., PhD, discussed the lasting psychological effects of separating children from their families, racial/ethnic discrimination and other types of trauma. Evans visited Heart Mountain in October 2018. Lastly, Sam Mihara, imprisoned as a child at Heart Mountain, also discussed his incarceration and shared the effects the experience had on him and his family.

APA Commends House Labor, HHS Subcommittee Chair Rosa DeLauro for Highlighting the Psychological Impact of the Administration’s Family Separation Policy

On February 26th, APA sent a letter to the House of Representatives Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies of the Appropriations Committee Chair Rosa DeLauro (D-CT). APA’s letter highlighted the psychological research showing that separating families is detrimental to the mental health of children and their families. DeLauro quoted APA’s letter at the beginning of unaccompanied children hearing she led on February 27th.

APA Writes to Attorney General; Friends of the National Institute on Drug Abuse Holds Congressional Briefing on Cannabinoid Research

On February 27th, the Friends of the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), in cooperation with the Addiction, Treatment and Recovery Caucus, sponsored a Congressional briefing entitled, *Opportunities and Challenges in Cannabinoid Research*. APA is a member of the coalition.

The speakers included:

- **Nora D. Volkow, MD**, Director of NIDA, National Institutes of Health
- **Alan Budney, PhD**, Professor of Psychiatry, Dartmouth College Geisel School of Medicine
- **Margaret Haney, PhD**, Professor of Neurobiology, Columbia University Irving Medical Center
- **Elise Weerts, PhD**, Professor of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, The Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine

Rep. Andy Harris, MD, (R-MD) provided opening remarks. The presentations focused on the current state of cannabinoid research and the associated regulatory challenges. The expansion in the number of states legalizing marijuana for recreational and/or medicinal purposes, increases in the potency of marijuana, and changes in how marijuana is consumed all underscore the need for additional research in this area.

The standing room only event was incredibly well-received by the Hill, more than 100 individuals in attendance.

Timed to coordinate with the briefing, APA sent a [letter to Attorney General William P. Barr](http://www.apa.org) requesting action on cannabis grower applications to increase the range of cannabis products available for scientific research.

APA and STAR Coalition Sponsor Hill Briefing on Non-Human Primate Research

APA and partner scientific societies with the Supporting Truth About Animal Research (STAR) Coalition sponsored a Congressional briefing on March 6 to explain the importance of non-human primate research. **Allyson Bennett, PhD**, of the University of Wisconsin-Madison moderated the event. Speakers included **Marina Emborg, MD, PhD**, University of Wisconsin, **Sandra Comer, PhD**, Columbia University, and **Andrew Schwartz, PhD**, University of Pittsburgh.

Dr. Emborg explained how research with nonhuman primates was instrumental in understanding the neuroanatomy and neurophysiology underlying Parkinson’s disease and the continuing...
search for an effective treatment. She also shared less well-known facts about non-motor deficits of the disease, such as cardiac abnormalities that long precede the motor symptoms. Dr. Comer’s talk focused on the opioid crisis and the pressing need for research with nonhuman animals, particularly nonhuman primates, to better understand the pharmacology of fentanyl and its myriad, more potent and deadlier, variants. Dr. Schwartz discussed how thirty years of research with nonhuman primates led to the development of a prosthetic arm controlled by microelectrodes implanted in the motor cortex of the brain.

APA through its Committee on Animal Research Ethics (CARE) provides the expertise behind APA’s advocacy for research with animal models. APA arranged visits with members of their Congressional delegations for CARE members and other STAR coalition society representatives to amplify the education messages of the briefing.

HRSA Releases GPE/OWEP/GACA Notice of Funding Opportunities

The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) recently released the FY 2019 Notice of Funding Opportunities (NOFO) for the Graduate Psychology Education (GPE) program ($18 million), the Opioid Workforce Expansion Program (OWEP) Professionals program ($39 million), and the Geriatrics Academic Career Awards (GACA) program ($2 million).

The GPE program fosters an integrated and interprofessional approach to addressing access to care with specialized training in the provision of OUD prevention and treatment services. Through these efforts, the GPE Program transforms clinical training environments and is aligned with HRSA’s mission to improve health and achieve health equity through access to quality services, a skilled workforce, and innovative programs. Applications are due May 7, 2019.

An archived version of APA’s Grant Writing Master Class Webinar | Graduate Psychology Education Program is available. The webinar speakers shared their advice for preparing a successful application. The recording is available on the APA Online Platform. Please note, you will need to register to gain access to the recording as well as download the webinar slides (PDF), a copy of the previous NOFO, and a copy of HRSA tips for applying for the GPE NOFO.

The OWEP Professionals program is designed to foster an integrated and interprofessional approach to training through academic and community partnerships for increasing the number of professionals trained to transform integrated behavioral health and primary care teams as well as to effectively prevent and treat OUD and other SUD in community-based practices. Applications are due May 7, 2019.

The GACA program is designed to support the career development of individual junior faculty in geriatrics at accredited schools of allopathic medicine, osteopathic medicine, nursing, social work, psychology, dentistry, pharmacy, or allied health as academic geriatrics specialists and to provide clinical training in geriatrics, including the training of interprofessional teams of health care professionals. Applications are due April 16, 2019.
Congress Finalizes FY 2019 Spending After Longest-Ever Government Shutdown

The omnibus spending legislation recently signed by President Trump includes seven individual appropriations bills: the Agriculture; Commerce, Justice, Science; Interior and Environment; Homeland Security; Financial Services and General Government; State and Foreign Operations; and Transportation and Housing and Urban Development bills. The bill includes funding for several programs important to the social and behavioral sciences including the National Science Foundation, Department of Justice, and the Census Bureau.

The Departments of Veterans Health, Defense, Health and Human Services, Labor and Education were funded in earlier legislation signed in September 2018. All federal agencies are now funded through September 30, 2019, the end of the fiscal year.

Highlights of the omnibus spending bill:

Ψ The National Science Foundation received $8.1 billion, a 4 percent or $307 million increase above the FY 2018 funding level.
Ψ The Census Bureau’s funding increased by $1 billion, ramping up for the 2020 census.
Ψ The National Institute of Justice received $37 million, and the Bureau of Justice Statistics received $43 million, each $5 million below the FY 2018 funding levels.

Now the focus turns toward FY 2020. The Trump Administration will release its FY 2020 budget request in two installments beginning March 11, 2019. The Administration’s budget is expected to include a five percent cut in all non-defense discretionary accounts (including science programs). The House and Senate will develop their budget and spending proposals, which will not be very much influenced by the President’s budget. Yet the President’s budget remains a significant document, reflecting the priorities of the Administration.

Because the Budget Control Act of 2011 is still in effect, Congress has by law specified ceilings, or caps, on federal spending which it cannot exceed without a new budget agreement. Under the terms of the FY 2020 spending caps, budget cuts of 9 percent to all nondefense accounts and 11 percent to defense, are slated to take effect on October 1. APA and many organizations are urging Congress to raise the caps and fix the unworkable budget process.

Congress Takes First Step in Moving Gun Background Checks Bill

The House of Representatives recently took an important step forward in addressing the gun violence epidemic with H.R. 8, the Bipartisan Background Checks Act of 2019. The bill requires a background check on every gun sale or transfer with carefully defined exceptions for gifts to family members, hunting and self-defense. APA supported the legislation and issued a press release lauding its passage in the U.S. House of Representatives. The measure now goes to the U.S. Senate for its consideration. Universal background checks will remain a top policy priority for APA in the 116th Congress.
APA Calls on Congress to Pass Bipartisan Legislation to Raise Spending Caps

APA has called on Congress to pass bipartisan legislation that waives the Budget Control Act’s FY 2020 and FY 2021 spending caps and establish new overall spending caps that allow for strong investments in K-12 education programs that support student learning and success.

In a jointly signed letter, more than 155 organizations asked Congress to pass a budget deal that will head off sequester (a cut in spending) and prevent jeopardizing funding for important programs like the Student Support and Academic Enrichment (SSAE) block grant under Title IV-A of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). The SSAE program supports investments in students and student learning including activities promoting student safety and health; comprehensive mental and behavioral health services; violence prevention programs; trauma-informed care; and school safety training in addition to a focus on a promoting a well-rounded education and access to technology.

APA Submits Comments on NICHD’s Strategic Plan

On February 14, 2019, APA offered comments on the recent Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) Request for Information (RFI): NICHD Strategic Plan Fiscal Years 2020-2024 (NOT-HD-18-031), soliciting feedback on the scientific themes, goals, and opportunities under consideration for the new NICHD strategic plan.

In its comments to NICHD, APA emphasized that the draft strategic plan take a more integrated approach on the critical role of the cognitive, behavioral, emotional, social, and environmental processes, in addition to biological and genetic processes, that affect human development. Specifically, APA provided additional feedback on the need for NICHD-supported research to:

Ψ Better incorporate the role that social determinants play in the health of individuals;
Ψ Support longitudinal research on behavioral and biobehavioral developmental trajectories within all age groups in normative and at-risk environments;
Ψ Expand and incorporate work on disability under each of the research themes;
Ψ Broaden the framework of development from infancy through adolescence;
Ψ Increase research on the influences of technology use on children; and
Ψ Expand the efficacy, usability, and access to new therapeutics and devices.

Additional information is available on the NICHD Strategic Plan website.
Additional APA and Coalition Advocacy Activity

APA actively participates in numerous coalitions with other scientific and professional organizations to pursue shared advocacy goals. Below are the letters APA initiated or signed on to as part of a coalition.

Ψ APA Letter to Rep. Rosa DeLauro (D-CT) – express APA’s appreciation for the February 27, hearing on “Reviewing the Administration’s Unaccompanied Children Program.”

Ψ APA Letters to Reps. Grace Napolitano (D-CA) and Tom Reed (R-NY) in Support of H.R. 1109 – express APA’s strong support for the Mental Health Services for Students Act of 2019, which amends the Public Health Service Act to revise and extend projects relating to children and to provide access to school-based comprehensive mental health programs.

Ψ APA Testimony – Committee on Health & Committee on Public Safety Joint Public Oversight Hearing: The District Government Strategy and Actions to Combat the Opioid Epidemic Submitted for the Record.

Ψ Title IV-A Coalition Letter – urges passage of bipartisan legislation waiving the Budget Control Act’s fiscal year (FY) 2020 and FY 2021 spending caps and establishing new overall spending caps that allow for adequate investments in K-12 education programs.

Ψ Community Letter requesting the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) to examine an additional area of potential new state tools through a Request for Information (RFI) in its next Notice of Proposed Rulemaking: mental health, substance use, and related services provided in and coordinated with schools and early education programs.

Ψ Children’s Budget Coalition (House/Senate) – welcome letter to the new members of the 116th Congress from 75 children’s advocacy organizations with priorities across a diverse range of issues collectively advocating for children to be a top priority in federal budget and appropriations decisions.

Ψ Mental Health Liaison Group (MHLG) – letter to Senator Lamar Alexander (R-TN) and Senator Patty Murray (D-WA), Chair and Ranking Member, respectively, of the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) providing recommendations for Congress to strengthen parity enforcement, stabilize the health insurance marketplace and promote behavioral integration. MHLG’s letter responds to Senator Alexander’s request for specific recommendations. APA is an active member of MHLG.

Ψ APA Continues Advocacy to Oppose Medicaid Work Requirements – APA joined more than 50 national organizations in a letter to Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) to express concern over its consideration of approving section 1115 waiver requests that would impose work-reporting requirements on low-income parents and caregivers covered by Medicaid.

ICYMI: News You Can Use

Webinar - Public Service Loan Forgiveness: How You Get It, and Why We’re Fighting to Preserve It

The APA Office of Early Career and Graduate Student Affairs within the Education Directorate sponsored a webinar to discuss the Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program (PSLF). A non-captioned recording link to the PSLF webinar is available here, along with the webinar slides and Hill Visits Talking Points for PSLF.
Federal Funding and Other Resources

Department of Education
- Grants and Funding

Health and Human Services Office of Minority Health
- HHS Grants to Prevent Teenage Pregnancy – April 15

Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality
- Funding & Grants
- Special Emphasis Notice (SEN): AHRQ Announces Interest in Health Services Research to Address the Opioids Crisis

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- Notice of Funding Opportunity
- CDC Research Grants to Identify Effective Strategies for Opioid Overdose Prevention – April 8

Health Resources & Services Administration
- Grants and Cooperative Agreements
- Faculty Loan Repayment Program
- Rural Communities Opioid Response Program-Implementation (RCORP-Implementation)
- Save the Dates: Virtual Job Fairs for SUD Clinicians and Employers – through March

National Institutes of Health
- Grants and Funding
  - The Future Research Leaders Conference (FRLC) (May 20-21) – March 15th application deadline
  - NIH Grants to Translate Research into Clinical Practice – April 15
  - NIH Intervention Research to Improve Native American Health – May 14
  - Predoctoral Training in Advanced Data Analytics for Behavioral and Social Sciences Research (BSSR) - Institutional Research Training Program [T32]
- NIH Loan Repayment
- Research Training and Career Development Programs
- NIMH Programs to Enhance Workforce Diversity
- Office of Disease Prevention – How to Apply for Funding

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
- Grant Announcements and Awards
- Minority Aids Initiative: Substance Use Disorder Treatment for Racial/Ethnic Minority Populations at High Risk for HIV/AIDS

National Science Foundation
- Funding Opportunities
- Dear Colleague Letter: Expanding the NSF INCLUDES National Network
- Small Business Technology Transfer Program Phase I (STTR)
- Small Business Innovation Research Program Phase I (SBIR)
- Dear Colleague Letter: Fundamental Discipline-Based Education Research (DBER) Focused on Undergraduate and Graduate STEM Education within the EHR Core Research (ECR) Program
- Harnessing the Data Revolution (HDR): Institutes for Data-Intensive Research in Science and Engineering - Frameworks (I-DIRSE-FW)
- Harnessing the Data Revolution (HDR): Transdisciplinary Research in Principles of Data Science Phase I
- Growing Convergence Research (GCR)
• Dear Colleague Letter Supporting the Re-Entry of Women and Women Veterans in the STEM Workforce through NSF INCLUDES
• Cyberinfrastructure for Sustained Scientific Innovation (CSSI): Elements and Framework Implementations
• Graduate Research Fellowship Program (GRFP)
• Mid-scale Research Infrastructure-2
• Dear Colleague Letter: Mid-Scale Research Infrastructure (Mid-scale RI) Opportunities
• EHR Core Research (ECR): STEM Learning and Learning Environments, Broadening Participation, and Workforce Development (NSF 19-508)
• Improving Undergraduate STEM Education: Education and Human Resources (NSF 17-590)
• Faculty Early Career Development Program (CAREER) (NSF 17-537)
• Future of Work at the Human-Technology Frontier: Core Research

National Institute of Justice

• Current Funding Opportunities
• Investigator-Initiated Research and Evaluation on Firearms Violence
• Research and Evaluation on Violence Against Women: Sexual Violence, Intimate Partner Violence, Stalking, and Teen Dating Violence, Fiscal Year 2019
• Graduate Research Fellowship in the Social and Behavioral Sciences

Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention

• Funding Opportunities