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ACTION
NETWORK

AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

EDUCATION ADVOCACY LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

JANUARY 2018

- 1) TAKE ACTION TO PROTECT FINANCIAL AID FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS
- 2) FY 2018 BUDGET PROCESS CONTINUES
- 3) PRESIDENT'S FY 2019 BUDGET EXPECTED IN FEBRUARY
- 4) NEW NIMH RESOURCES ADDRESS SUICIDE SCREENING AND PREVENTION
- 5) ICYMI: RECENT SAMHSA FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Welcome to 2018!

2017 was a banner year for [advocacy engagement](#)! Collectively, you and your APA colleagues sent more than 50,000 messages to Congress. Your advocacy efforts will continue to be critical in 2018. To keep you informed and prepared to take action on crucial policy issues, we are moving to monthly news updates to provide you additional information about federal funding opportunities and resources for your programs and students. Your continued commitment to advocacy will be critical to our success once again in 2018!

1) Take Action to Protect Financial Aid for Graduate Students

In 2017, APA and a coalition of advocates successfully stopped Congress from eliminating key tax provisions (student loan interest deduction and tuition remission tax waivers) critical to graduate students that would have made graduate study less accessible and affordable. Unfortunately, student financial aid for graduate education continues to be at risk!

[Congress needs to hear from you!](#) Your continued action is needed as Congress begins the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act (HEA). Now is the time to let your Representative and Senators know that programs like the Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) Program, Grad PLUS, and Federal Work Study (FWS) are important to graduate students with financial need and ultimately to the future strength of our nation!

On December 13, 2017, the House Education and the Workforce Committee approved, via a party-line vote, the Promoting Real Opportunity, Success, and Prosperity through Education Reform (PROSPER) Act, HR 4508. Graduate students are especially hard hit in this House Committee-passed legislation. This

legislation would make significant changes to the federal student financial aid system. Most important, the proposed changes would have a negative impact on accessibility to and affordability of post-secondary study. Your Representative needs to hear from you! Please contact them and let them know that HEA reauthorization must protect programs that help students pursue graduate education, including doctoral degrees in psychology.

The Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee has also begun its HEA reauthorization process. The Committee has held several hearings on key higher education issues including simplification, accountability, transparency, and free speech. Now is also the time to let your Senators know of your concerns regarding any proposals that would decrease support for graduate students and retreat from our nation's commitment to accessibility and affordability of post-secondary study.

[Take Action here!](#)

2) FY 2018 Budget Process Continues

Four weeks into 2018 and one government shutdown later the Federal government is currently operating on a short-term Continuing Resolution (CR), [H.J.Res 125](#), which expires February 8. It is the fourth CR since fiscal year (FY) 2018 began October 1, 2017. The current CR maintained level funding for education, health, and research agencies. It also reauthorized the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) for six years. However, Congress failed to reauthorize and fund key expired health programs, including the National Health Service Corps (NHSC), the Maternal Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program (MCHVIE), and the Community Health Centers (CHC) Fund. On January 29, APA joined 75 organizations in a letter to Congress strongly urging the House and Senate leadership to prioritize the continuation of these programs and to "take the appropriate steps to ensure that each is reauthorized and funded as part of the next government funding bill."

3) President's FY 2019 Budget Expected in February

If Congress can complete the fiscal year (FY) 2018 budget, the FY 2019 budget process will kick off with the release of the Trump Administration's FY 2019 proposal, currently slated for February 12. As in the FY 2018 proposed budget, the President is expected to call for significant cuts to education, health, and research programs, including the Graduate Psychology Education (GPE) and Behavioral Health Workforce Education and Training (BHWET) programs. As Congress will ultimately decide the final funding levels, they need to hear from their constituents that these programs are critical to their communities. Stay tuned for action alerts on these issues as the appropriations process gets underway in the coming months.

4) New NIMH Resources Address Suicide Screening and Prevention

NIMH Adolescent Suicide Prevention Workshop: Recognizing Teens at Risk & Responding Effectively

The National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) Division of Intramural Research Programs (IRP) held a January workshop on adolescent suicide prevention which addressed techniques for early detection and management of individuals at risk of suicide between the ages of 10 – 24. In addition to discussing screening for risk of suicide, the workshop featured discussions on clinical assessment and management of suicidal youth, current research strategies, and the neurobiology of suicide. Workshop speakers included: David A. Brent, MD, University of Pittsburgh, NIMH's Elizabeth Ballard, PhD, Lisa Horowitz, PhD, MPH, and Argyris Stringaris, MD, PhD, MRCPsych. The workshop is available for viewing [here](#).

NIMH Suicide Screening Toolkit Available

The National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) Division of Intramural Research Programs (IRP) recently released - [Ask Suicide-Screening Questions \(ASQ\) toolkit](#) which provides screening questions for use in medical settings to identify young people at risk for suicide. ASQ, developed by the IRP, is designed to help those in medical settings screen children and adolescents at risk of suicide and provide the tools to manage those found to be at risk.

5) ICYMI: Recent SAMHSA Funding Opportunities

In case you missed it (ICYMI) below are several funding opportunity announcements released by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) that may be of interest:

- [GLSMA](#) -- SAMHSA recently announced a new competition for the **Garrett Lee Smith Memorial Act's Campus Suicide Prevention Grant (GLSMA)** program. **Applications are due February 20, 2018.**
- [Clinical Support System for Serious Mental Illness](#)-- This program is designed to provide technical assistance (TA) for the implementation and provision of evidence-based treatment and recovery support programs for individuals living with serious mental illness. The program's goal is to establish a national Center to provide this TA to providers, programs, and communities across the nation. **Applications are due March 19, 2018.**
- [Treatment for Individuals Experiencing Homelessness](#) -- SAMHSA in conjunction with the Center for Mental Health Services (CMHS), is accepting applications for its 2018 *Treatment for Individuals with Serious Mental Illness, Serious Emotional Disturbance or Co-Occurring Disorders Experiencing Homelessness* program. The program is designed to “support the development and/or expansion of the local implementation of an infrastructure that integrates behavioral health treatment and recovery support services for individuals, youth, and families with a serious mental illness, serious emotional disturbance or co-occurring disorder and substance use disorder [SUD] or a serious emotional disturbance [SED] and SUD who are experiencing homelessness.” **Applications are due March 9, 2018.**

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