

Naked Truths, Champions, and More

July 09, 2019



APS Student Caucus (APSSC) events at the 31st APS Annual Convention in Washington, DC, provided students at every career stage with opportunities to gain valuable insights into a variety of topics, from how to survive graduate school to how to get published. Panelists shed light on different professional paths open to psychological science graduates, including those outside of academia. Students also had the opportunity to network with one another at a student social and to participate in informal conversations with some of psychological science's most prominent researchers.

The APSSC student programming kicked off with a student social that provided undergraduate and graduate students an opportunity to meet and network with one another in a casual setting. The venue was packed with students enthusiastically discussing their research and experiences in psychological science.

A full day of student programming began with a series of "Naked Truth" panels designed to provide attendees with information about the graduate school process, covering everything from applying to programs to graduating and navigating the job market inside and outside of academia. In "The Naked Truth I: Getting into Graduate School," chaired by APSSC Undergraduate Advocate Kelly Bielonko of Eastern Connecticut State University, six graduate students shared their experiences in applying to graduate school and the admissions process. Irina Kuzmich (The Graduate Center, City University of

New York), Jamie Striler (University of Central Florida), Parco Sin (University of Guelph, Canada), Adam Smith (Auburn University), Viann Nguyen-Feng (University of Minnesota), and Duygu Gulseren (Saint Mary's University) provided attendees with advice on how to reach out to potential mentors, seek experiences that make for competitive graduate applications, and prepare for the interview process. The panelists emphasized the importance of narrowing one's research interests before applying to graduate school, underscoring how critical it is to select a graduate program that aligns with those interests.

In "The Naked Truth II: Surviving Graduate School," chaired by APSSC Graduate Advocate Lauren Drandorff of Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science, the panel offered attendees a look into some of the most common difficulties encountered by graduate students and highlighted examples of how others navigate these obstacles. Panelists Vivienne Badaan (New York University), Chenlu Gao (Baylor University), Matthew Bahnson (North Carolina State University), and Ceren Sönmez (Teachers College, Columbia University) discussed the importance of organization, setting aside time for writing, and being realistic about the length of time that tasks will take to be able to budget time effectively and be productive while managing stress. They all agreed that, in graduate school, you have to do your best while accepting you can't do everything. Graduate student panelists also highlighted the value of establishing support networks with people in other departments or universities.

APSSC Past President Amy Heard Egbert of Loyola University, Chicago, chaired the next session, "The Naked Truth III: Navigating the Job Market After Graduate School," which presented attendees with advice on how to prepare for applying for postdoctoral and faculty positions. Panelists Elisa Di Rosa (Washington University in St. Louis), Kelsie Forbush (University of Kansas), Catherine Hartley (New York University), and Jeffrey Girard (Carnegie Mellon University) came from a range of research areas, but they all agreed it is essential to discuss your career goals with your advisor early and often to pave the way for the next step in your journey. Although it may be scary or uncomfortable, the panelists added, you need to take chances, say yes to opportunities, and not be afraid to network and reach out to researchers about positions within their departments.

The standing-room-only "The Naked Truth IV: You're Working Where?" event, moderated by outgoing RISE Coordinator Tim Valshtein of New York University, featured four panelists who found careers they are passionate about outside of academia. The panelists discussed the experiences that ultimately swayed them to pursue these careers, as well as how they went about finding jobs outside of academia. All of the panelists, including Joel Dubenitz of the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation in the US Department of Health and Human Services, emphasized the importance of networking with other psychological scientists who had pursued careers beyond academia. Nonacademic jobs for psychological scientists are out there but can be difficult to find unless you know where to look, they noted.

Emily Hanson of the ACLU, a doctoral candidate in her final year at Washington University in St. Louis, and Natasha Thalla of Facebook discussed their experiences with searching for jobs as early-career scientists and recommended looking for internships or volunteer opportunities as a way of getting a foot in the door. William Klein of the National Cancer Institute at the National Institutes of Health offered some reflection for the graduate students in the room, saying, "Things are changing. Twenty years ago, if you didn't go into academia, you were marked. Now people realize you can leave academia and still do meaningful things."

In “How to Get Published: Guidance from Journal Editors,” outgoing APSSC Student Notebook Editor Ryan Thompson of Palo Alto University moderated a discussion with journal editors Paul Frick (Louisiana State University; Editor of the *Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology*), Lisa Harlow (University of Rhode Island; Editor of *Psychological Methods*), and Derek Issacowitz (Northeastern University; Associate Editor of *Psychology and Aging* and *Emotion*). The editors discussed the most common reasons for rejecting articles, how to best approach a “revise and resubmit” decision, and the importance of targeting the appropriate journals and adhering to journal guidelines.

APSSC events continued with the Student Research Award and RISE Research Award addresses. The Student Research Awards are given each year to recognize APS student affiliates for outstanding contributions to psychological science. Winners this year included Sophia Seonyeong Park (Temple University), Haowei Wang (University of Massachusetts Boston), Emily Starr (Northwestern College), and Adi Wiesel (Arizona State University). The RISE Research Award is given to students each year who conduct research on socially and economically underrepresented populations. This year’s recipients of the RISE Research Award included Cindy Chang (Rutgers University), Gabriel Camacho (University of Connecticut), Mercedes Zapata (University of California, Berkeley), Rebecca Cipollina (Rutgers University), Akash Wasil (Harvard University), Caroline Cummings (University of Nevada, Reno), Mariam Reda (University of Michigan), and Monica C. Perez (University of Notre Dame).

The APSSC student programming ended with the annual “Champions of Psychological Science” event, which gave students the opportunity to meet and speak with some of the most prominent psychological scientists in the world in an informal setting. This year’s champions were James McKeen Cattell Fellows George A. Bonanno (Columbia University) and Robert J. MacCoun (Stanford Law School), William James Fellows Elizabeth A. Phelps (Harvard University) and Janet F. Werker (University of British Columbia, Canada), and Keynote Address Speaker Betsy Levy Paluck (Princeton University).

The APSSC thanks all of the panelists and attendees for making the student programs at this year’s Convention such a great success.