

# State of the APS Student Caucus

January 01, 2010



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The APS Student Caucus Executive Board held its annual Fall Meeting at APS headquarters October 2-4, 2009 to discuss how to best serve student affiliates and advance the mission of APS. After much deliberation, we went forth from Washington, D.C. with renewed energy and increased focus upon our initiatives for the year. I would like to share with you four highlights from our annual meeting.

## **The Value of APS Membership**

As of November 2009, 4,123 graduate and undergraduate students maintain current APS memberships. Student membership has held relatively steady from 2007-2009 at approximately 4,000 student affiliates. Consistent with past years, nearly 75 percent of these members are graduate students and 25 percent are undergraduates. To retain our student members and strengthen our Caucus, APSSC programs and resources must be available for all students of psychological science.

I would like to emphasize that APS and the APSSC represent all students of psychology, regardless of location and level. Currently, 18.9 percent of our student membership is international. The four countries outside the United States with the greatest representation are Canada, the United Kingdom, Singapore, and Germany. It is my hope that more of our international colleagues will apply for APSSC grants, win awards, and attend APS Conventions.

Furthermore, the APSSC also provides resources and programs for all students, graduate and undergraduate alike. We have established an Online Funding Database of grants and fellowships primarily geared toward graduate students. Our bi-annual online publication, the *Undergraduate Update*, is especially for undergraduates in their journey toward post-baccalaureate study. All of our grants and competitions provide reviewing opportunities for graduate students and undergraduates. We have also attempted to encourage a culture of mentoring and community through our Convention programming (e.g., the Naked Truth series), in Facebook discussion threads (e.g., Ask a Graduate Student), and in the APSSC Mentorship Program of graduate student mentors and undergraduate mentees. I encourage all student affiliates to take advantage of these opportunities.

It is especially encouraging to see an all-time high in submissions for the APSSC Student Grant Competition. We expect similar growth for our Student Research Award and RiSE-UP Research Award this year. The APSSC Graduate Advocate, Kelly Buckholdt, and RiSE-UP Coordinator, James Vaughn, have developed their respective Reviewer Mentoring Programs to match experienced APSSC reviewers with newer junior reviewers. We believe that this program will provide a reviewing experience that will prepare students for their future scholarly service as faculty and researchers. This is another example of how APSSC programs provide tangible rewards and value to APS membership.

### **The Vital Role of Campus Representatives**

Approximately 100 campus reps disseminate APS/APSSC information to their departments and programs on a monthly basis. The APSSC is especially encouraged by the enthusiasm of our group this year. The 2008 APSSC Rally Week produced 216 new members, and this year's effort led to 302. Let me congratulate Tatyana Kholodkov of Old Dominion University, who recruited 27 members during the week of October 5 -9, 2009. Tatyana will receive a complimentary APS Annual Convention registration for her accomplishment. I would be remiss to forget about the other campus representatives who were runners-up: Katie M. Edwards (Ohio University), Julie L. Hall (University of Michigan), Anne Totero (Northern Michigan University), and Melissa Knight (Iowa State University). To our campus representatives not mentioned here, we thank you for your hard work and service.

Our Membership and Volunteers Officer (MVO), Kris Gunawan, has fully enacted the Regional Representatives structure conceptualized last year. Regional Representatives play a key role in increasing APS's reach into new institutions. I would like to acknowledge our Regional Campus Representatives: Israel M. Beren, Roehampton University (International); Nathaniel Ring, Holy Cross College (Midwest); Courtney A. Meyer, Lock Haven University of Pennsylvania (Northeast); J. Rudine, Texas Tech University (Southeast); and Tara C. Dennehy, San Francisco State University (West). If you are reading this article and do not have an APSSC Campus Representative at your institution, I encourage you to become part of the program ([http://psychologicalscience.org/apssc/about/campus\\_rep\\_app.cfm](http://psychologicalscience.org/apssc/about/campus_rep_app.cfm)).

### **Timely Convention Programming**

The APSSC organizes a series of student events at each Convention. These events range from "once in a lifetime" opportunities (e.g., the Champions event), chances for networking, (e.g., the Convention Kickoff and Student Social), research presentations (e.g., Student Research Award Addresses, RiSE-UP Symposium) and practical advice panels (e.g., How to Get Published: Guidance From Journal Editors,

Naked Truth).

The Naked Truth series is one of our most well-attended events, featuring three one-hour panels that address *Getting Into Graduate School*, *Surviving Graduate School*, and *What To Do After Graduate School*. The first two panels feature graduate students who share their experiences and answer questions from the audience. This year, the third panel of the sequence will be greatly shaped by student responses on the annual APSSC Student Survey conducted this past July. Students revealed great concerns about the academic job market given the current economic climate. As a result, APSSC Past President Kelli Vaughn-Blount will chair a variation on the *The Naked Truth: Life After Grad School* theme. This year's panel, *Navigating the Academic Job Market in Tough Economic Times*, will provide an overview of academic hiring practices and offer suggestions on how to secure an academic position.

This event illustrates the importance of student feedback on the annual APSSC Student Survey, so please set aside some time to share your thoughts and suggestions with us. Remember, the Caucus exists to serve you.

### **Identifying New Leaders and Transitioning Officers**

One of the recurrent concerns of any organization is the identification of new leaders and the process of officer transitions. We are aware that, in the midst of all that students do in their personal and professional lives, it is difficult to find time to serve others. However, many of our current and former board members will attest that the experience was well worth the time and effort expended.

In the next two months, the APSSC will be publishing a series of "Where Are They Now?" pieces in the eNews. We will be spotlighting former APSSC officers who have gone on to successful careers in academia and industry. It should come as no surprise that many former APSSC officers have gained confidence and refined their leadership abilities as a result of their involvement with the APSSC. Furthermore, they serve as prime examples of how scholarly work and service can go hand in hand. If you share a similar philosophy and would like to help lead the APSSC, I hope you will consider running for a position on the board.

One especially noteworthy decision from our Fall Meeting is the implementation of an earlier APSSC election cycle. Student affiliates will now have a deadline of January 25, 2010 to declare their candidacy. Online voting will commence in the middle of February. Please visit <http://www.psychologicalscience.org/apssc/about/bylaws.cfm> for more details on APSSC Board positions and duties of officers, and feel free to contact me or any of the APSSC officers if you have any questions.

As soon as the 2010-2011 Executive Board is determined by election, the APSSC will welcome its successors and begin the proverbial passing of the torch. All newly elected officers will communicate with and shadow their mentors in a virtual sense for the months leading up to the Convention. It is my belief that this final initiative will contribute to the continuity of APSSC operations and maintain the overall quality of our programs and initiatives.