

The APS Campaign for Psychological Science

September 01, 2003

I just wrote a check to the American Psychological Society for \$1,000. I didn't do it because I am President. I feel sure I would have done it anyway, had I been asked as a "civilian" to contribute to the new annual (and fully tax-deductible) APS Campaign for Advancing Psychological Science (CAPS). Why? Because APS is that worthy of our attention and support to do more great work on behalf of psychological science. I would give more if I had it to give. Current and previous Presidents and Board Members of APS also are giving generously to start our campaign. We are on our way to a nearly 100 percent commitment among our officers and former officers. This is a great start, but we need the help of the APS membership in raising significant additional money.

The American Psychological Society is barely 15 years old, but it already has a rich history and has been a strong, positive force for psychological science in all its varieties. We now have three very strong journals (*Psychological Science*, *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, and *Psychological Science in the Public Interest*) that have established themselves as top journals in very short order. *Psychological Science* is perhaps the major outlet in the world for brief reports of cutting-edge research in psychology. Plans for another potential journal are now being considered by the Publications Committee.

Alan Kraut has served as Executive Director for our entire history and it is impossible to overstate the many achievements that he has helped to make in this position.. The National Science Foundation has a separate directorate for social and behavioral science that simply would not have been created without APS. Alan (along with our colleague Alan Leshner, then at NIH) was instrumental in beginning the highly successful B/START program that has supported hundreds of young researchers at the National Institutes of Health. Alan has provided powerful testimony to many committees in both houses of Congress., and language from APS briefs has found its way into many pieces of legislation that have enhanced psychological research, owing to Alan and the staff in Washington, who work tirelessly on our behalf on a number of fronts.

The list above is selective; APS has done much more for psychological science – in teaching, clinical and applied settings, and many other areas. However, I believe we can hope to attain even greater levels of service to the field. The organization, its employees, and its officers are unparalleled. One stumbling block is the lack of financial resources to move strongly into new arenas. Hence we are launching CAPS – the APS annual fundraising campaign to which I hope you will contribute.

When I tell people about APS and what it has accomplished, they often assume we have a large corporate structure and staff. However, this is not so. APS has a relatively modest set of offices in Washington and the entire staff consists of 14 people! They are dedicated and hardworking and get much done – but there is a limit to how much more we can accomplish with our current level of support. The Board of APS does not want to raise dues drastically, so we are hoping to make further strides in advancing psychological science by appealing to those of you who are in a position to make donations to

support psychological science through CAPS.

If we are successful in raising money, we can accomplish much more for the science of psychology. Some of the activities we hope to accomplish include a greater outreach in explaining scientific psychology to the public, to distinguish it from the pop psychology that dominates our image. We would start new programs to, for example, better translate our research into more publicly accessible news stories or magazine articles. We would hope to sponsor lectures for the public as well as at APS and at other meetings. With additional funds we may be able to establish a larger awards program that might give significant awards for outstanding scientists, for outstanding applied and clinical research, for outstanding teachers, and for outstanding efforts in public dissemination of psychological science. We also hope to begin a number of new programs for students. Other ideas include leadership summits on various areas in psychological science, such as the successful Human Capital Initiative program. These are just some of the ideas that the APS Board would like to implement, but for which we currently do not have funds.

I realize that many organizations vie for your donations, but I hope you will hold a special place for APS, which is truly a special organization and which has done so much during its brief life to advance psychological science in all its forms. Please join me and the collective leadership of APS by making as generous a donation as you can when you receive the upcoming appeal letter and response envelope. If you would like to do so now, you may write a check to:

The Campaign for Advancing Psychological Science (CAPS)
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