

The State of the APS Student Caucus

January 11, 2011

The Executive Board of the **APS Student** Caucus (APSSC) met in Washington, DC for its annual Fall Meeting. We received the results of the annual member survey and discussed the progress and challenges affecting the many APSSC run programs and APSSC.

Membership

I am pleased to announce that, as of December 2010, APSSC boasts a total membership of 4,930 graduate and undergraduate students from over 1,000 institutions. While our member retention is down 7 percent from last year, I speculate that this is at least partially the result of the recession and its effect on students' stipends and employment and that we can expect these numbers to increase as the world economy begins to recover. The academic level of these members is roughly consistent with prior years: 33 percent are undergraduate students and 67 percent are students at the graduate level. Eighty-six percent of our members live in the United States, but we represent students of **psychological science** from 47 other countries. Currently, we have APSSC Campus Representatives active on 92 campuses worldwide, and five Regional Representatives coordinating activities overseen by the APSSC Membership and Volunteers Officer (MVO), Andy DeSoto. I am also pleased to note that 1,523 (33.1 percent) of our **student** members attended the past year's Convention held in Boston, MA.

Convention Programming

The **APS** Convention this past May saw a return of a number of APSSC events proving opportunities to network, share information, and recognize some of the exceptional work of the **student** members. The annual **Student**Social, held this year at McGreevy's Irish Pub, drew a standing-room-only crowd of graduate and undergraduate students. The trio of *Naked Truth* panel discussions aimed to help students navigate the graduate school application process, life as a graduate **student**, and the post-school job market. The perennially well-attended *How to Get Published* panel provided guidance for graduate students and early-career professionals looking for tips and tricks when submitting their work to peer-reviewed journals. The two symposia hosted by APSSC, the RiSE-UP (now RISE) *Research Awards and Student Research Awards*, included presentations of original research from APSSC award winners. Additionally, the APSSC *Champions of Psychology* event gave students the unique opportunity to meet some of the preeminent scholars of scientific psychology. The 2009-2010 Executive Board did a fantastic job of planning and hosting these events and I would like to thank Jeremy Houska, Kelli Vaughn, Mandi White-Ajmani, James Vaughn, Kris Gunawan, Kelly Buckholdt, and Kim Lowe for all of their hard work. Preparations by our current Board are already underway for the **2011** Convention in Washington, DC.

Communication and Publication

Each month, APSSC sends the eNews that serves as a direct means of communication from the APSSC Board to the students of APSSC. The APSSC Communications and Marketing Officer (CMO), Nathan Medeiros-Ward, compiles the various sections each month to ensure that this communication remains strong. To further stay connected with our membership, APSSC maintains Facebook

(facebook.com/apscc) and Twitter (twitter.com/apsstudents) pages. Utilizing this fast and interactive social media allows us to quickly send updates and inform students about events and developments in the world of **psychological science**. Currently, 279 (5.8 percent) APSSC members follow us on Facebook, and 614 (13.2 percent) are members of the Facebook group.

The **Student** Notebook, published monthly in the *Observer*, has continued under a second year of Editor Mandi White-Ajmani's guidance. This column publishes articles written by and for **APS student** members on a variety of topics, including unique research experiences, professional issues, and career advice. In the fall of 2010, the sixth issue of the *Undergraduate Update* was also published, edited by Undergraduate Advocate Nate Ring. This twice-yearly online newsletter is yet another way to provide APSSC undergraduates with timely and relevant information.

Funding and Recognition

This year, APSSC is again offering a number of opportunities to fund and recognize the work of its members. The APSSC Graduate Advocate, Jessica Wong, is busy coordinating the **Student** Research Award (SRA) and **Student** Grant Competition (SGC). The SRA recognizes winning APSSC members' excellent empirical research, with a monetary award and an opportunity to present their work at the Annual Convention. The SGC provides funding for promising research studies, enabling **APS student** members to produce high-level work. Additionally, the RISE Research Award, organized by RISE Coordinator Paul Schroeder, recognizes meritorious **student** research that is focused on underrepresented populations and minorities. One of most valuable aspects of all three awards is that the students serve as the reviewers. This is an excellent opportunity for our members to contribute to APSSC while gaining valuable experience with the peer-review process. In order to encourage and enable our members to attend the annual Convention, APSSC is also able to extend travel stipends to a small number of students who serve as volunteers at the Convention. Our MVO, Andy DeSoto, will be overseeing this process as the Convention approaches.

Future Directions

In addition to the existing programming and services provided by APSSC to its members, I am excited to announce some changes. As you may have already noticed on the APSSC website, RiSE-UP is now RISE. Originally, the Ethnic Minority Concerns Committee was formed within APSSC in 1994 to provide opportunities for members researching underrepresented populations and minority groups. It has seen many changes over the years, including being renamed Research on Socially and Economically Underrepresented Populations (RiSE-UP) in 2002, and the addition of the RiSE-UP Research Award to recognize the excellent scholarship of its members. In the past couple of years, the group has re-dedicated itself to the task of recognizing and encouraging members' research. To reflect this new chapter in the group's history, its name has been changed to Researching Injustice and Social Equality (RISE). A new mission statement was also drafted that embodies the goals and aspirations of the group: The mission of RISE is to encourage, assist, and disseminate **psychological** research that seeks to understand and improve the lives of members of underrepresented populations and minorities. It is the hope of the Executive Board that RISE will continue to serve as a valued resource for students of scientific psychology whose research focuses on underrepresented populations.

Another important and exciting change is the formation of a new ad hoc committee to update and expand the Online Funding Database (OFD). As a co-Chair, along with APSSC Past-President Andrew Butler, of the original OFD Committee, the database has been important to me. Feedback from both the

annual survey and informal comments suggests that our members value this resource as well. One of the challenges posed by the OFD over the past several years has been keeping it up to date. Many details of the funding opportunities have changed. Some have succumbed to the economic downturn and ceased operations, and others have updated their web pages, leaving the links in the OFD inaccurate. This has made updating the database a little like attempting to hit a constantly moving target (or, to be exact, just over 150 moving targets). As a result, the new committee, chaired by APSSC CMO Nathan Medeiros-Ward, will be checking the accuracy of the current funding sources contained in the database, as well as adding as many new grants and fellowships as possible. The goal of this committee will be to ensure that the OFD remains a viable source of up-to-date information for years to come.

Serving APSSC and its members for the past several years has been a wonderful experience for me. As President, I have endeavored to lead with transparency and accountability. If you have feedback, suggestions, or questions, please do not hesitate to email me

(apssc.president@psychologicalscience.org). I would like to offer my thanks to the current APSSC Executive Board (Andy DeSoto, Jeremy Houska, Nathan Medeiros-Ward, Nate Ring, Paul Schroeder, Mandi White-Ajmani, and Jessica Wong) for all they have done to make APSSC what it is. And most importantly, thank you for your support as a **student** member of **APS**!