

The State of the ABPsi – 2014

Taasogle Daryl Rowe, Ph.D.
President (2013-15)

2014 marks our 46th year of service to the Black community and our ongoing efforts to effect change within our communities. The Association of Black Psychologists and its members have played *the* critical role in advancing the importance of culture in understanding human behavior. Due to the legacy of damaging historical and intergenerational trauma, and the continuing assaults against our dignity, our aim continues to be focused with clarity, commitment, courage and compassion – on the **restoration of our dignity and humanity** and the rebuilding of our families and communities.

The fundamental task in implementing our mission is to reclaim, restore and re-authorize our collective and personal senses of **humanity or human agency** – a humanity that although never completely lost, has been under such a consistent and devastating coordinated assault that far too many of our brothers and sisters, fathers, mothers and children have forgotten. Our approach to psychology must maximize efforts that place us at the center of study – our work must be to help our people remember our human agency.

ABPsi Publications

The *Journal of Black Psychology* (JBP) continues to provide substantial revenues, and has gained national and international recognition in prestige and prominence under the leadership of Dr. Kevin Cokley and his team of capable associate editors. SAGE continues to manage the marketing and distribution for publication and sales of *JBP*.

We are initiating a recurring section in the *Journal of Black Psychology*, scheduled to debut in August 2014. ***The Hilliard-Jones Forum on African Centered Psychology*** will promote excellence by highlighting and disseminating outstanding scholarship in African centered psychology. Through the *Hilliard-Jones Forum on African Centered Psychology* scholars will be provided with a regular platform to showcase their empirical or theoretical work in the field of African centered psychology. Dr. Suzette Speight will serve as the action Editor for the Forum.

We have new Editors of the ***Psych Discourse***: Drs. Mark Bolden, as Editor, and Faruq Iman, as Associate Editor, have agreed to continue Dr. Hal Fairchild's efforts to strengthen the *PD* as ***the*** place where we engage each other, other organizations and everyday Black people at home and abroad with the numerous policy, professional and service needs that impact our people.

The ABPsi has launched an **ABPsi Blog** with Adisa Ajamu serving as our initial blogger. The blog will serve to stimulate conversation about ABPsi and the work that we are doing and

help us continue to shape policy by giving us additional data to process as we embark on this new endeavor for our organization. The Blog can be accessed through our website – abpsi.org.

ABPsi Position/Policy Papers

The ABPsi prepared several position papers (available for use by the membership via the ABPsi web site) through the industrious efforts of the Public Policy committee of the General Assembly, under the leadership of Drs. Theopia Jackson, Le Ondra Clark, Donald Knight and Renee Robinson. We produced a number of policy statements for the Association, as follows:

- A response to the George Zimmerman verdict, and the Association's subsequent joining the boycott of Florida;
- A response to the 50th Anniversary of the March on Washington;
- A response to the Supreme Court Decision on the Voting Rights Act;
- A position on the death penalty, and the African American community;
- A tribute to Elder Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela;
- A position statement on the effects of hunger in Black communities; and
- A position statement on Imprisoned Mothers and Implications for Black children

Each of these statements helps us to be more responsive to more of the issues that affect the lives of ordinary Black people. Working with our public policy committee is a clear point of entry for members wanting to help the Association be responsive to the relentless barrage of assaults.

Restructured ABPsi Capital Campaign.

The ABPsi Annual Fundraising Campaign was restructured, by benchmarking our internal and external fundraising to the **1% Capital Campaign**. This campaign asks all members to donate 1% of their annual, gross pretax income to sustain the fiscal viability of the ABPsi. The primary aim for our annual fund campaign is to continue to build out our organizational infrastructure – we need to substantially increase the number of staff whose primary job is to work for the ABPsi.

ABPsi Ongoing Collaborations

The Association continues to collaborate with a number of entities to strengthen the scope and impact of our mission and programs.

- Institute of the Black World (IBW)
- The Casey Foundation
- National African American Drug Policy Coalition (NAADPC)
- The National Alliance of Faith and Justice and the CARES Mentoring Movement to support culturally grounded, group mentoring of African American children

- The Alliance – an ongoing collaboration with the Presidents of: The Asian American Psychological Association (AAPA); The National Latina/o Psychological Association (NLPA); The Society of Indian Psychologists (SIP) and The American Psychological Association (APA).
- CNPAAEMI – Leadership Development Institute
- Summit on Obesity in African American Women and Girls, October 2013 – co-sponsored with American Psychological Association: the final report is currently being completed.

ABPsi Education/Training

Our Education and Training Committee co-chairs – Drs. Theopia Jackson and Dennis Alexander – have formulated policies and procedures to best ensure the continued integrity and viability of the continuing education for the psychologists’ re-licensure program. Work is underway to regain authority by the California Board of Psychology to recognize and approve ABPsi to perform accrediting functions in California.

The ABPsi is re-launching the Licensing, Certification and Proficiency Program (LCPP), which manages the ABPsi Board Certification in African Centered/Black Psychology (ABPBC).

ABPsi Signature Initiatives

- *Emotional Emancipation Initiative*: The ABPsi continues working to extend and refine our joint initiative with the Community Healing network to build a grassroots movement to overcome the myth of Black inferiority and the emotional legacies of enslavement and racism. A key element of our collaboration is the development of *Emotional Emancipation Circles*, culturally grounded, evidence-based support groups through which we as a people can work together to develop essential emotional wellness skills and compassionately examine our community, family, and personal histories to decide which of our attitudes and behaviors are worth taking with us--and which must be left behind--as we move forward to build a future in which we can thrive, not just survive.
 - Dr. Chante Deloach is serving as National Liaison of the Emotional Emancipation Initiative, working closely with Past-President Cheryl Tawede Grills.
 - We have trained teams of psychologists who have launched EE Circles in more than 20 cities across the African Diaspora and provided webinar trainings to local leaders to launch additional EE Circles around the country.
 - Sent letters to over 100 National Black Organizations announcing our EEC initiative.
 - Developed brief marketing tool through Pepperdine Magazine, entitled “Healing History” to announce EEC initiative – distribution 88,000.
 - Florida HBCUs are interested in folding the EECs into their criminal justice curriculum.

- Finally, through the ongoing efforts of Past-President Grills, we have just been accepted with our partners – The Community Healing Network - to participate in the upcoming ***Congressional Black Caucus Annual Legislative Conference, September 24-27, 2014 in Washington, DC.*** Our session will take place on Thursday, the 25th, from 2-4 PM sponsored by Representatives Karen Bass (D-CA) and Eddie Bernice Johnson (D-TX) to include the Emotional Emancipation Circle Initiative. Our National Board meeting will occur in conjunction with this historic participation.

- ***ABPsi Global Pan-African Psychology Initiative:*** The ABPsi is inviting and joining with more of our sisters and brothers around the world in our work to restore African human agency and dignity. Under the combined leadership of Past-President Wade Nobles, Ph.D. and International Relations Representative (IRR) Niambi Hall-Campbell, Ph.D., the Association is spreading our mission through a number of efforts and activities, as follows:
 - Adoption of the New Orleans Accord, and creation of the **ABPsi Global Pan-African Psychology Initiative**, where we accepted the challenge to further build a psychology congruent with the culture, context and humanity of African peoples with the ***Pan-African Psychology Union (PAPU)***, where representatives of eleven African countries came together to develop a stronger focus for the role of Psychology within Africa;
 - Continued engagement and participation in several international convenings,
 - Past-President Grills represented us at the 6th Intercontinental Convention on Psychology, HOMINIS 2013, in December 2013 in Havana, Cuba and has continued to facilitate planning for our upcoming 2015 meeting in Cuba;
 - Dr. Shawn Utsey, Past-President Nobles, and I represented us at the 1st International Congress of African Psychology in Polokwane, Limpopo Province, South Africa in March 2014;
 - Past-President Nobles will represent us at the VIII COPENE - Brazilian Congress of Black Researchers, in the city of Belem in the state of Para from July 29th to August 02nd of 2014, its theme is Affirmative Action: Citizenship and Ethnic-Racial Relations;
 - We have a delegation scheduled to attend the inaugural Caribbean Alliance of National Psychological Associations (CANPA) Conference to be held November 11 to 14, 2014 in Paramaribo, Suriname; and lastly,
 - We are working with our partners, the Institute of the Black World, to join the efforts of CARICOM in demanding reparations for enslavement and genocide.

- ***ABPsi HBCU Initiative:*** The ABPsi has established a work group, under the shared leadership of Drs. Lennell Dade and Timothy Moore, to address the refinement of HBCU psychology department curricula to incorporate training in African-centered psychology and to strengthen the pipeline of psychology students into the ABPsi. Our HBCUs still graduate upwards of 60% of African American undergraduate majors

in psychology. We must do a much better job at reaching them and grounding them in ACP, so that we minimize the amount of retraining that must occur and so that we increase our yield of bright minds “working long and steadily as a group”. So one aim is to hold summer training institutes for HBCU psychology faculty.

- Asa G. Hilliard African Psychology Research Institute (AHAPRI): The ABPsi is working to consolidate work in African-Centered Psychology/Black Psychology to stimulate new research under the leadership of Dr. Shawn Utsey. Look for more information as the year unfolds.

Current Challenges

In spite of the considerable accomplishments we have made this year, there are a number of challenges with which we have had to struggle.

- We are challenged to recruit and sustain professional members and their engagement – as a membership organization, our capacity to continue to move forward is directly tied to your support and active recruitment of other Black psychologists. It takes four graduate students and/or six undergraduate students to equal one professional member’s dues. So, for ABPsi to generate adequate resources to sustain our programming, we must recruit and retain an increasing number of professionals to support our Student Circle. I invite each of you to commit to recruiting at least three professional members during the remainder of this year;
- Internal disputes – sap limited available resources that could be directed towards continued growth. We have had a number of challenging issues with which we have had to grapple.
- Succession planning – We are continuing our efforts to encourage and support early and mid-career members to become more active in shaping the future of the ABPsi. Promoting the effective transition of leadership and identifying and preparing a new cadre of leaders – the 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th generations of Black psychologists – willing to serve is **critical** to the overall functioning and longevity of The Association.
- Fiscal viability – There are a number of changes that we have made to continue to address our fiscal viability
 - Membership recruitment remains critical
 - We need your human capital, as well – we continue to solicit members to serve the Association in a variety of ways, please consider our requests to serve
 - We continue to pursue extramural funding and ask individual members will seek to fold the Association into your efforts
 - We continue to examine and implement critical cost-cutting measures to assist us in becoming more nimble in our efforts to meet our operational and programmatic aims

Finally, I ask each of you to join with me as we *all* accept our destiny to restore agency and dignity to African peoples here and around the world – this is our effort to operationalize our mission: the liberation of the African Mind, empowerment of the African Character, and enlivenment and Illumination of the African Spirit. This is *our* time for review, renewal and renaissance – join us today!