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## Louisiana Psychologists, Researchers Present at American Psychological Assn

Louisiana psychologists will present at the American Psychological Association Annual Convention, to be held August 8-11 in Chicago, with highlighted keynote on "Deep Poverty," a theme that current APA president, Dr. Rosie Phillips Davis has made a focus.

An array of Louisiana psychological scientists, professors and practitioners from Louisiana will be presenting at the convention.

Bonnie Nastasi, PhD, Tulane University, will co-chair the Symposium: "A Child Rights Empowered School Psychology—Toward a Better Future," along with Stuart N. Hart, PhD, Independent Practice, The Villages, Florida.

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*Dr. Bonnie Nastasi, Professor in Tulane Psychology, will co-chair a symposium at the American Psychological Association this month. Nastasi is an international expert in children's well-being.*

*Many psychologists and psychological scientists from across the state will be presenting in Chicago.*

## La. No Longer "Incarceration Capital of Nation," Says Gov. –\$12 Million in Savings

"Louisiana is no longer the incarceration capital of the nation, we have saved over \$12 million which is more than double what was projected and are reinvesting those dollars into programs that are helping to reduce recidivism, improve public safety and support crime victims," Gov. Edwards said in a July 19 press release.

"Everything we have put in place is based on data-driven policies that are successful in other southern states and are now having the same impacts in our state," Edwards said. "It is still early in this process and there are more lessons to learn and more challenges to meet, but we are taking significant steps toward improving our criminal justice system."

Cont'd pg 4

*Summer Re-run: From the February 2014 issue of the Times*

## Building Court Systems That Understand Children's Needs

"In the 1980s the Louisiana family court system was an adversarial arena," explained clinical psychologist Dr. Alan Taylor to the *Times*. "Parents fought over children as if they were property, and joint custody was rare, as was the use of psychological experts."

"A psychologist who became involved in the family court arena could expect to have his or her professionalism, objectivity, and motives questioned," said

Cont'd pg 10

## Gov. Edwards Appoints Dr. Gina Gibson and Dr. Michelle Moore to LSBEP

On July 23, Governor Edwards announced that he appointed Dr. Gina Gibson of Lafayette and Dr. Michelle Moore of New Orleans to the Louisiana State Board of Examiners of Psychologists. Both were nominated by the Louisiana Psychological Association.

Dr. Moore received the top number of votes in a regular election held this past February to fill the opening left by the normal completion of service by Dr. Jesse Lambert. Dr. Gina Gibson (who has since changed her last name from Beverly) was nominated and ran in an April special election to fill an unexpected vacancy caused by the resignation of Dr. Leah Crouch.

Dr. Gibson is a neuropsychologist with the Department of Veterans Affairs, licensed in

Cont'd pg 3



Dr. Jesse Lambert (L) completed his service on the state board. Here Dr. Leah Crouch (C) and Ms. Jaime Monic listen to the discussions at a past board meeting.



# Editorials and Opinions

## Who's an Expert in the Science of Human Behavior?

by Times publisher, J. Nelson



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Media Pundits

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Attorneys

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### The Psychology Times

Member, Louisiana Press Association

Published monthly  
by Nelson News, LLC.  
[psychologytimes@drjulienelson.com](mailto:psychologytimes@drjulienelson.com)

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Everybody thinks they're an expert when it comes to psychology, a factor that makes it hard to maintain our brand as the elite providers in the science of human behavior.

One reason for this, explained Scott Lilienfeld when he was here last year, is because of the "little psychic psychologist" that everyone already has built-in from birth. We have evolved an automatic analysis of the inner emotions and motivations of other humans to help us adapt. We trust that inner psychologist a lot more than an expert. So, notwithstanding that we seem to do our best to make things even worse for ourselves, psychologists are up against serious odds in our branding efforts.

Once upon a time, the banner for psychology was carried by scientific minds like Eysenck. It is demoralizing now to watch standards in the public forum drop to modern lows, and it is also wretched to watch others take a swing at an analysis of human behavior with no clue as to how flawed their efforts are, at the core.

After watching 10 minutes of the nightmarish group process and testimony by Robert Mueller before Congress, I decided to stop procrastinating and read the report. I've never needed confirmation that Russia and the U.S. spy on each other every chance they get, at least as far back as Goldwater. What is *From Russia with Love* or *Bullwinkle's* Boris & Natasha about after all? It would be news if Russians hadn't found a way to goof with us. So that leaves Volume II and Trump's emotions and motivations.

The Mueller report is as bad as the Hoffman Report, which was paid for by APA to deal with internal conflicts. In neither of these analyses is there any quantification of data, or frequency tables or collapsing of themes. There are no methods for coding or use of standardized measures—but of course without themes, what is there to measure? The "process" amounts to reviewing millions of documents and interviewing thousands of people, which of course is not a process or method, but a list of actions. In short, there is no quantitative reasoning.

In the Hoffman report, observations were mixed with opinions, opinions mixed with conclusions, and unproven hunches about inner motivations and personality characteristics. The Mueller Report is not quite that bad but is still full of vague ideas and anecdotal scenes that seem more like teenager gossip than actual "evidence" of something.

Psychologists have been trained to guard against intuitions, even in qualitative research, that sneak ad hoc into our explanations. We know that a couple of solid categories and a 2 X 2 table can help us avoid what our minds naturally do—which is to truncate, delete, and distort, which make our final judgments no better than dart-throwing chimpanzees.

It concerns me that these attorneys who have no training in the science of human behavior, and no understanding of the pitfalls of observing human behavior, have so much power and influence.

[Julie Nelson is a licensed psychologist, journalist, and organizational consultant, and publisher of the Times. She also holds other various positions in the community. However, her opinions here are those of her own, and do not represent any group or association. She and the Times receive no compensation other than paid advertising. Email her at [drj@drjulienelson.com](mailto:drj@drjulienelson.com), —she welcomes feedback.]

### Corrections & Clarifications

We did not receive corrections for last month's issue.  
Send your corrections to:  
[psychologytimes@drjulienelson.com](mailto:psychologytimes@drjulienelson.com)



State & National News

Gov. Edwards Appoints Dr. Gina Gibson and Dr. Michelle Moore to LSBEP

2008. She lists her specialty as Counseling/Clinical Neuropsychology. Her training is from Louisiana Tech University and employment is with Dept. of Veterans Affairs and also private practice. She is a member of the National Academy of Neuropsychology and the American Academy of Clinical Neuropsychology.

In her statement, Dr. Gibson wrote that "there are numerous critical issues facing psychology, including revising the complaints process," and "exploring the use of healthcare designations in place of specialty classifications."

"Moving forward," she wrote, "I believe that the board's primary obligation is to the public consumers of our services and psychologists themselves. Examining these issues and finding balanced solutions that work to support and advance the profession should be at the forefront. My goals for the psychology board are to be an advocate for psychology as a progressive and critically important discipline that is well-suited to use our collective knowledge and training to help others and solidify our place in the current healthcare environment."

Dr. Michelle Moore is an associate clinical professor at the LSU Health Science Center. She has served as Clinical Associate Professor of Psychiatry, LSU Health Sciences Center, New Orleans, LA, Department of Psychiatry, Section of Psychology, and Training Director of Clinical Psychology Internship Program.

From 2016 to present her research and scholarship has included: Working with ReNEW Charter School Network to provide needed clinical services to students either in special education or seeking evaluations for possible special education services; Primary Investigator and Mentor, Asian-American Mental Health among Medical Students; and Primary Investigator, Collaborating with Community Partners.

She is a member of the American Psychological Association; Association of Psychologists in Academic Health Centers; Louisiana Psychological Association; Southeastern Psychological Association; and Association of Psychology Postdoctoral and Internship Centers. "In my current role as Training Director for the internship program at LSU Health Sciences Center, School of Medicine," Dr. Moore said in her statement, "I have the pleasure of directly training students and trainees who are the future of our profession. Being in this position, I would bring a unique perspective to the Board from the graduate program applications we review, the training of psychology interns and fellows and how we are preparing individuals for independent practice. [...]"

Among other appointments announced in July 23 press release, the Governor also reappointed Bambi Polotzola of Opelousas, the executive director of the Governor's Office of Disability Affairs, to the Statewide Independent Living Council. "Bambi has been a leader in disability issues for over a decade working with people with disabilities and their families as an educator and as a home and community-based service provider. She has served on state councils and boards of numerous disability-related non-profit organizations. Her work has primarily been centered in capacity building and systemic change that supports people with disabilities and their families to be fully included and valued members of their communities," said the author of the announcement.



Dr. Michelle Moore at a past convention with poster award winner Elena McSwain.

Dr. Moore and Dr. Gina Gibson have just been appointed by the Governor to serve on the LSBEP.

Defense Rests in Bellwether Case Against Opioid Drug Industries

The last arguments from the defense were heard in the \$17.5B bellwether opioid crisis lawsuit against Johnson& Johnson, reported the Courthouse News Service last month.

The state Oklahoma sued Johnson & Johnson, Janssen, Teva Pharmaceutical Industries and OxyContin maker Purdue Pharma in 2017 on claims of fraud, unjust enrichment, public nuisance and violation of state Medicaid laws for allegedly pushing doctors to prescribe opioid painkillers while downplaying the addiction risks and overstating their benefits.

Purdue settled in March for \$270 million. Israel-based Teva reached a similar settlement in May for \$85 million – two days before the trial began, according to Court House News service.

Johnson & Johnson and its subsidiary are the only remaining defendants. In the

weeks before trial, the state dropped all claims except its public nuisance claim to prevent further delays caused by defense appeals, said Courthouse News.

"For its last witness during the seven-week bench trial, the defense called Dr. Terrell Phillips of Oklahoma City. He explained that many insurers and workers' compensation laws reimburse doctors for only "reasonable and necessary" treatment that excludes physical therapy, counseling, injections and surgery. He said that leaves doctors with no choice but to prescribe opioids over the excluded treatment options.

"Phillips testified the situation leaves him effectively 'handcuffed.' He said patients with chronic pain are left improperly treated, leading to even depression and suicide.

CMS Releases 1st Rule on Transparency

The Trump administration proposed a rule Monday that would require hospitals to post online the health-care prices they have negotiated with insurers, reported the *Washington Post*. This comes one month after President Trump's executive order requiring medical services and especial hospitals, give more information about the cost of health services.

"Health insurers and providers have fiercely opposed having to publicly reveal their negotiated prices, which they say would stifle competition," noted the *Post*.





# La. No Longer "Incarceration Capital of Nation," Says Gov.— \$12 Million in Savings

*continued*

The comment followed the release of the Justice Reinvestment Reforms 2019 Annual Performance Report, presented to the Legislature in June. The report listed the following:

- **Reduced Prison Population:** Louisiana’s total prison population has continued to decrease. It has fallen from a peak of 39,867 individuals at the end of 2012 to 32,397 individuals as of the end of 2018. As an immediate result of reduction in nonviolent offenses, Louisiana no longer has the highest imprisonment rate in the nation.
- **Sentence Length Down for Nonviolent Offenses:** The State has seen significant decreases in sentence length for nonviolent offenses. Drug offenses have seen the largest decrease by the end of 2018 with a drop of 17%, followed by property offenses with an 8.3% decrease. The average sentence length for new felony admissions decreased from 76.6 months to 73.2 months (3.7%).
- **Decrease in Use of Habitual Offender Enhancements:** The use of Habitual Offender enhancements, which allow for increased penalties for crimes based upon the existence of previous convictions, decreased significantly (-74.3%). This reduction is attributed to both prosecutorial and judicial discretion as well as legislative changes which limited the scope of its application.
- **Reduction in Probation and Parole Population and Officers’ Average Caseloads:** The State has seen a significant decrease in the total supervised population as well as the average caseload of Probation and Parole Officers; from 149 in 2016 to 123 by the end of 2018. The reduction is attributed to new incentives that allow people to earn time off supervision based upon compliance with supervision conditions.

The report can be found at <http://gov.louisiana.gov/assets/docs/CJR/2019-JRI-Performance-Annual-Report-Final.pdf>.

Psychological science and practice has played an important part in the Governor's reforms.

Dr. Susan Tucker, the 2019 recipient of the Award for Psychology in the Public Interest, has been a key figure for innovations in the state correctional system. She is Psychologist and Assistant Warden at the Bossier Sheriff's Office.

Dr. Tucker has focused on treatment and research innovations that reduce recidivism and that are based in the fact that most inmates have a substance abuse problem and few get the right kind of treatment.

She launched the Steve Hoyle Intensive Substance Abuse Program to offer intensive treatment, skill development, educational opportunities, and post release support and care. Her approach has achieved a significant reduction in recidivism, from an expected first year rate of 18 percent to only 3 percent.

Tucker has earned state and national recognition for these achievements, including from the Vera Institute of Justice. Dr. Tucker was also commended by Louisiana legislators for her work and the related cost savings of \$15 million by earned "good time credits" through participation and successes in the psychological programs designed by Tucker.

Laura Brooks (L) and Dr. Susan Tucker wait to begin graduation ceremony at the Bossier Sherriff's Office facility.

*“The philosophical approach to our treatment,” Dr. Tucker explained, “includes focusing on the thinking patterns, emotional reactions, and behavioral events that often lead to self-defeating patterns and eventually to criminal activity.”*

Photo by Britney Waters



## Louisiana is 10th Fastest-Growing Economy in the Nation says Gov. in July 25 Statement

Gov. Edwards released a statement on Louisiana’s record high GDP of \$256.45 billion, an annual growth rate of 3.8% in 2019Q1. According to the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA), Louisiana has the 10th fastest growing economy in the U.S., the Governor's Office said on July 25.

“This latest ranking is further proof that Louisiana’s economy continues to grow and move in the right direction,” said Gov. Edwards. “Just this month, we have seen the largest unemployment decline since last year of any state, the lowest it has been in 11 years, personal income is at an all-time high and for the first time in a long time, our state debt is declining.”

"We are continuing to attract new business and industry while retaining and expanding our existing businesses and implementing programs in Louisiana to further strengthen our workforce."

Louisiana's GDP is at a new record high: \$256.45 billion, compared to \$247.2 billion in 2018Q1 and \$255.5 billion in 2018Q4.

Non-durable goods manufacturing was the main contributor to growth, contributing 2.09 percentage points.

Retail trade contributed 0.82 percentage points and mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction contributed 0.80 percentage points.

In a related story, the Governor's Office announced that Louisiana has the largest drop in unemployment rates of all states since last year.

Louisiana’s seasonally adjusted unemployment rate in June 2019 is 4.3 percent, which is a .7 of a percentage point decline since June of 2018, the largest such drop for any state.

Louisiana’s unemployment rate is the lowest it has been since January 2008.



# MoCA Test Under Scrutiny After President Trump "Aced" White House Physical

By JoNel Aleccia  
Kaiser Health News

Last year, Dr. Ronny Jackson, then the White House physician, gave Donald Trump a standard test to detect early signs of dementia — and said the president had scored a perfect 30. “There is no indication whatsoever that he has any cognitive issues,” Jackson said at the time in front of TV cameras.

Trump’s team embraced the result, with Donald Jr. boasting on Twitter: “More #winning.” The publicity sparked a wave of interest in the screening tool. Much was written about what the test showed — or didn’t — about the president’s mental acuity. A media outlet even posted its questions online, suggesting readers could measure whether they were “fit to be U.S. president.”

Dr. Ziad Nasreddine, the creator of that test, the Montreal Cognitive Assessment, went with it. Within weeks, the Lebanese-Canadian neurologist and his colleagues were working on “mini-MoCA,” an online exam for anyone to take who was worried about his own cognitive decline. Nasreddine said at the time that he might charge the masses \$1 or \$2 per test.

Now Nasreddine has changed course. He says growing worries about the validity of test results — and possible liability for errors — have pressed him to require those who administer the test to pay for mandatory certification to make sure the results are accurate.

Further examination of the results called into question even perfect scores. “I’ve seen so much variability, which might make us reconsider some of the decisions made based on the MoCA score,” said Nasreddine, who has reviewed hundreds of exams administered to patients in recent years.

Training and certification have been voluntary for years. But starting Sept. 1, most clinicians who administer the MoCA will be required to complete a one-hour, \$125 online course, said Nasreddine, who holds the copyright to the test.

Nasreddine, director of the MoCA Clinic and Institute in Quebec, Canada, wouldn’t speculate about whether Trump’s test was accurate. Officials with the White House and the Navy, where Jackson is a rear admiral, did not respond to questions about the issue. Jackson did not reply to an email seeking comment.

The move to require certification — and particularly to charge for it — sparked outrage among geriatricians like Dr. Eric Widera of the University of California-San Francisco. He accused Nasreddine of creating a “pay to play” scenario that profits from a growing need and the test’s ubiquitous use.

“It raises huge red flags,” Widera said. “This is a growing issue, the

monetization of tools that we promoted as the standard.”

It’s a controversial change for an exam that is used by doctors and other health professionals in nearly 200 countries to screen people for potential problems with memory and thinking.

In the U.S., the MoCA is a go-to tool used in about 8,000 visits each year to the 31 Alzheimer’s Disease Research Centers funded by the National Institute on Aging. The 30-question test assesses various cognitive domains through exercises that include drawing a cube, drawing a clock with hands set at a specific time, naming certain animals, memorizing a series of words and calculating numbers in a certain way.

# Clinical Psychologist Making \$8M/Yr. for Public Speaking

Dr. Jordan Peterson, the Canadian clinical psychologist and psychology professor from the University of Toronto who rocketed to fame after opposing legislation that would have criminalized a person's use of certain unwanted gender pronouns, disclosed in a recent interview how much money he is making. According to Peterson, he is making approximately \$80,000 a month on YouTube, \$120,000 a month in book sales, \$35,000 to \$50,000 per lecture, and in his small business and other sources of income, he makes \$225,000 a month. So depending on his tour schedule he makes between \$600,000 in \$800,000 a month, totaling somewhere around \$8-\$10 million per year.



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# Louisiana Psychologists, Researchers Present at American Psychological Assn

*continued*

Dr. Nastasi will also present on, "Conceptual Foundations for School Psychology and Child Rights Advocacy." Presenters will include discussions on, "Promotion of Family Support," "Child Rights, Enlightened Child Protection," and "Toward a Preferred Future for School Psychology."

Nastasi is active in the promotion of child rights and social justice within the profession of school psychology and is an Associate of the International Institute of Child Rights and Development. She has conducted work in Sri Lanka, India (Mumbai), and New Orleans, and was the lead partner on an international study of psychological well-being, with colleagues at 14 sites in 12 countries (New Orleans is one of the sites). She has served as President of the International School Psychology Association, as president of Division 16 of APA, and as co-chair of APA's Committee on International Relations in Psychology, among many other positions. In 2015, she spoke at the 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Psychology Day at the United Nations, held at the UN headquarters in New York City, on, "Promoting Psychological Health and Well-Being of Children, Youth, and Families Under Stressful Conditions: Engaging Local Communities in Cultural Construction of Programs."

Dena Abbott, PhD, Louisiana Tech University, and Victoria Rukus, MEd, also from Louisiana Tech University, will discuss "Isn't Atheism a White Thing? Centering the Voices of Atheists of Color," for the APA Symposium: "Atheist Research in Psychology—Current Trends and Future Directions."

For the APA Symposium, "The Cost of Caring—An Examination of Healthcare Providers' Recovery in Puerto Rico Post-Hurricane Maria," Jen Scott, PhD, from Louisiana State University along with others will discuss, "Post-Traumatic Stress and Burnout Among Healthcare and Social Service Providers Post-Hurricane Maria."

Dr. Scott will also discuss, "Long-Term PTSD Symptoms Among Health and Psycho-Social Workers Hurricane Maria Survivors," and "Coping Styles and Resilience of Health and Psycho-Social Service Providers Who Are Also Disaster Survivors."

Sarah Black, PhD, University of New Orleans, will participate in a discussion of "Is This Treatment Helping My Patient? Utilizing Modified Brinley Plots to Measure Clinical Change," for Symposium: Secondary Analyses in Randomized Trials of Psychosocial Treatments for Pediatric Mood Disorders. Dr. Black runs the Biological and Environmental Risk for Affective



Dr. Bonnie Nastasi (center) working with the research-intervention team in Mumbai, India. Nastasi and her colleagues have developed methods for applying psychological science in other cultures. She is presenting at APA this month. *(Courtesy photo)*

Disorders Lab at UNO and is interested in how "parenting, parental psychopathology, and stress may interact with biological processes to leave children and adolescents especially vulnerable to psychopathology across the lifespan."

Stacy Overstreet, PhD, Lea Petrovic, MS, and Whitney Davis, MA, from Tulane University, will present, "Advancing an Equity Agenda in Trauma-Informed Schools," for the Symposium, "The Social Justice Implications of Trauma-Sensitive Schools—A Critical Dialogue." Dr. Overstreet has led a group of psychologists and community partners in a

first-of-its-kind study for learning how schools can best meet the needs of traumatized youngsters. She and her team received a \$2.1 million grant from The Institute of Justice.

Alexandra E. Bookis, from Tulane University, will present, "Practicing and Teaching Parental Control," in the Skill-Building Session: Leading Parenting Groups—How To Teach the Art of Balancing Warmth and Control.

Julie Arseneau, PhD, Southeast Louisiana Veterans Health Care System, New Orleans, will join Penelope Asay, PhD, Illinois School

**Cont'd next pg**

*Dr. Stacy Overstreet, from Tulane, is presenting research for a symposium at the APA convention.*





Science & Education

# Louisiana Psychologists, Researchers Present at American Psychological Assn, cont'd

of Professional Psychology for the Roundtable Discussion V, "Addressing Sexual Harassment of Clinical Trainees in an Ethical, Empowering, and Compassionate Way."

In the Paper Reading Session: III—"Social Value and Social Justice," Pallavi Singh, PhD, and Tracey Rizzuto, PhD, Louisiana State University will present, "Understanding Partnerships in a Policy-Mandated Environment Through Social Network Analysis." Dr. Tracey Rizzuto is Associate Director at the LSU School of Leadership and Human Resource Development and has worked in violence prevention at the Baton Rouge Area Violence Elimination (BRAVE) program and Crime Strategies Unit (CSU). She has helped build a partnership with the Centre for Counter-Intelligence in Denmark where they have a jihadi re-entry program very similar to the BRAVE program and was selected by the Department of Justice to participate in the Office of Justice Programs Diagnostic Center.

For the APA Poster Session: I Kimberly Hutchinson, PhD, Lawrence Dilks, PhD, and Billie Myers, PhD, of the Southwest Louisiana (SWLA) Psychology Consortium, Lake Charles, Louisiana; Burton Ashworth, PhD, University of Louisiana at Monroe; and Mindy Stutzman-Moore, PhD, SWLA Psychology Consortium, will present research on, "Mixed Dementia: What Does It Really Look Like?"

For a Poster Session: Early Career Research and Innovation, Michael V. Garza, MA, Louisiana Tech University; and Ashley C. Santos, BA, Northwestern University, and Lore M. Dickey, PhD, North Country HealthCare, Bullhead City, AZ, will present "Functions of Self-Injury in a Transgender Sample: Exploratory Factor Analysis."

In Poster Session: II, Keoshia Harris, MA, Louisiana Tech University, will present, "A Qualitative Examination of the Strong Black Woman Schema in Black College Women," with co-researchers.

"Cognitive Variability Is Related to Cognitive and Functional Status: Findings from the Civa Study," will be presented by Alyssa N. De Vito, MA, Matthew Calamia, PhD, Scott Royce, MA,

Ashley Pomes, Kristen Chedville, Lainey Henican, and Gabriel Daniels, all from Louisiana State University.

Eric Deemer, PhD, Purdue University; Stacey Duhon, PhD, Grambling State University; and DiLean Saint-Jean, MS, Louisiana Tech University; and Seoyoung Lim, MS, Purdue University, will present, "Validation of the Stereotype Threat in Science Scale-Race (STSS-R)," in the Poster Session: II—"Theory, Methods, and Measurement."

Theresa A. Wozencraft, PhD, Manyu Li, PhD, Thomas Cain, BS, Marissa Pitt, BS, Alexandra G. Nordman, and Caroline Wegener, from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, will present, "Coping, Distress, and Well-Being in Gulf Coast Natural Disaster Victims."

Christopher Monceaux, MS, Louisiana Tech University; Melanie Lantz, PhD, Oklahoma State University-Stillwater; and Dena M. Abbott, PhD, Louisiana Tech University, will present, "The Relationship Between Bisexual Counseling Competence, Moral Reasoning, and Attitudes."

In Poster Session: III—Contemporary Issues in Counseling Psychology, Dena

M. Abbott, PhD, Louisiana Tech University and co-authors will present, "Sexuality Training in Counseling Psychology."

Yang Yang, PhD, Hung-Chu Lin, PhD, and Manyu Li, PhD, from University of Louisiana at Lafayette, will present, "Resilience and Gender Moderating the Relation Between Paternal Rejection and Health-Risk Behaviors."

Jarrad D. Hodge, BS, and Michael Cunningham, PhD, from Tulane University, will present "Academic Achievement, Youth Experiences, and the Role of Academic Self-Esteem as a Potential Buffer," for Poster Session: I—Assessment and Intervention to Improve Mental Health and Behavior Across Contexts.

Dr. Cunningham is Professor of Psychology at Tulane University, who holds a Joint Appointment as Provost in the African and African Diaspora Studies Program. Dr. Cunningham's work is uniformly esteemed and he was honored in 2013 with the Distinguished Contributions Award from the prestigious Society for Research in Child Development, among others. He is Editor for *Research in Human Development* (2018-2024), Associate Editor for *Child Development* (2007 –

present), and on the Editorial Board Member *Journal of Negro Education* (2011 – 2017), among many other scholarly activities where his expertise in the psychology of racially diverse individuals is utilized. He is the 2018 recipient of the 2018 Award for Psychology in the Public Interest by the Louisiana Psychological Association.

For Poster Session: IV—Critical Topics in Data-Based Decision-Making and Professional Issues Kathryn A. Simon, MS, MEd, Lea Petrovic, MS, Stacy Overstreet, PhD, and Courtney N. Baker, PhD, from Tulane University will present, "The Cost of Caring: Predictors of Compassion Fatigue Among Urban Public Charter School Teachers."

In Poster Session: III—System-Level Assessment, Intervention, and Consultation, "Assessing the Association Between Teachers' Emotional Regulation Strategies and Self-Efficacy," will be presented by Jason S. Frydman, PhD, MA, Courtney N. Baker, PhD, and Stacy Overstreet, PhD, Tulane University.



Dr. Darlyne Nemeth (L), Dr. Lucinda DeGrange, and Dr. Michael Cunningham at a previous APA event. Dr. Cunningham and co-authors are presenting research at the upcoming event.

(Courtesy photo)



# Stress Solutions

by Susan Andrews, PhD

## Using Aromatherapy to Reduce Stress

Among the countless ways to reduce stress, Aromatherapy has been growing in appreciation as a viable and easy to use method. Aromatherapy has been around for approximately 6,000 years. The history of aromatherapy is believed to have begun with the burning of fragrant woods, leaves, needles, and tree gums in ancient times. Some oils were used by the ancient Chinese, Indians, Egyptians, Greeks in cosmetics and in perfumes. The Oracle of Delphi is supposed to have entered a semi-conscious state from the aroma of gases coming up from a fissure in the rock under the Temple of Apollo. No one is quite sure what the aroma was composed of, but information provided today in Delphi states that leaves were burned. There is now evidence that the gases were actually toxic hydrocarbon and the Oracle often died. The practice of aromatherapy today is much less toxic and as we learn more about different essential oils that are now extracted from the roots, leaves, and blossoms of certain plants and trees, we find that aromatherapy can be used as a complementary or alternative therapy for stress, anxiety and pain. Aromatherapy is often used in connection with massage therapy, yoga and meditation. The exciting thing is that research is now revealing that smelling certain aromas sends signals to your brain that can affect your moods, emotions, and even physical health. Some scents or oils rubbed into the skin can boost your immune system and ease anxiety. There are receptors in the olfactory bulb that connect with the limbic system and the amygdala. Topical application of certain oils has an antibacterial and even anti-inflammatory effect of the body. The research that I have reviewed seems to miss an important connection to certain memories. Many a smell is associated with old memories, some wonderfully relaxing and even comforting. Some may even have the ability to alarm or stress a person due to a connection to a past negative incident.



Lavender fields have been grown for centuries by the monks at L'Abbaye de Senague in Provence. Photo by Dr. Andrews.

Where are those neural connections are stored?

Cynthia Deng in *Yale Scientific* (November 2011) explains, “When you smell lemon oil, some molecules dissolve in the mucus lining of the olfactory epithelium on the roof of the nasal cavity. There, the molecules stimulate olfactory receptors. Olfactory sensory neurons carry the signals from the receptors to the olfactory bulb, which filters and begins processing the input signals of the lemon scent. Mitral cells then carry the output signals from the olfactory bulb to the olfactory cortex, which allows you to perceive and recognize the tangy scent of lemon. Interestingly, the mitral cells do not only lead to the olfactory cortex, they also carry the signals from the lemon scent to other areas in the brain’s limbic system.

Some mitral cells connect directly to the amygdala, the brain structure involved in emotional learning and memory.”

“The researchers found that Sandalore, a synthetic sandalwood oil used in aromatherapy, perfumes, and skin care products all bound to the receptor, triggering cells to divide and migrate, processes characteristic of skin healing.” Sandalwood is also known to positively affect depression and anxiety. Lavender has positive benefits for many things, helps to induce sleep, headaches, skin burns and relieves stress. It is a main ingredient for mosquito repellents. Topical use is considered safe, but it is not recommended to be ingested.

It is important to learn how to use essential oils in aromatherapy. Books are published on this and there are ways to train in the safe use of oils. The National Association of Holistic Therapy is a good resource for finding aromatherapists that are properly trained or to find out how you can learn more about aromatherapy and include it in your practice or use it for yourself to reduce stress or any number of other benefits.



Seat of the Oracle of Delphi in the Temple of Apollo. The Oracle sat in the space where the grass grows now by the columns. Photo by Dr. Andrews.



Dr. Susan Andrews is a Clinical Neuropsychologist, an award-winning writer/author (her book *Stress Solutions for Pregnant Moms*, published in 2013, has been translated into Chinese,) and 2016 Distinguished Psychologist of the Louisiana Psychological Association.



People

# Dr. Coulter, Dr. Reuther to Serve as President, President-Elect for Louisiana Psychological Association

The Louisiana Psychological Association announced its newly elected officers to their Executive Council, who began serving last month. The 2019–2020 Council are Drs. Alan Coulter (President), Dr. Erin Reuther (President-Elect), and two new Directors, Dr. Christopher Parkinson and Dr. Amanda Raines. Returning officers are Dr. ValaRay Irvin (Secretary), Dr. William Costelloe (Treasurer), Dr. Bridget Sonnier-Hillis (Director) and Dr. Kim VanGeffen (Director).

Dr. Alan Coulter will serve as the 2019–2020 President. He is the Director of Program Area for the School of Allied Health Professions, Human Development Center, at LSU Health Sciences Center. He is the Director of Educational Innovations for the Human Development Center and LAS\*PIC, and the Principal Lead for the TIERS Group. Dr. Coulter served on the President's Commission on Excellence in Special Education, was a member of the National Monitoring Stakeholders Group, a recipient of Child Advocacy Award from the National Association of School Psychologists, and a past president of the National Association of School Psychologists.

Dr. Erin Reuther will serve as President-Elect. She is a Pediatric Clinical Psychologist at Children's Hospital-New Orleans and obtained board certification (ABPP) in Clinical Psychology in 2015. Dr. Reuther earned her doctoral degree from Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge where she focused on research in anxiety and cognitive-behavioral treatment with children and adults. She completed her clinical internship at the University of Florida-Shands Hospital in the child/pediatric track, where she further specialized in exposure with response prevention for OCD, CBT for anxiety, and health psychology working with inpatient and outpatient pediatric and adult clients with medical illnesses including gastroenterology disease, pediatric diabetes, and those preparing for surgery.

For her service, Dr. Reuther will focus on "... communication of all that LPA does to advocate for the profession, including direct coordination and communication with APA and national efforts, interacting with governmental agencies to educate and advocate for the profession, keeping psychologists in Louisiana informed of best practices, and organizing psychologists together."

Newly elected were Dr. Christopher Parkinson and Dr. Amanda Raines.

Dr. Parkinson is a Clinical Psychologist with an emphasis in Health Psychology from Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine & Science. He completed his internship at the Gulf Coast Veterans Healthcare System and his postdoctoral residency in Health Psychology and Pain at the Southeast Louisiana Veterans Healthcare System. He currently holds a staff position at the SLVHCS as the Palliative Care Psychologist engaged in clinical care, program development, training, and research. He also serves as adjunct clinical instructor within the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences of the Tulane University School of Medicine. He is the 2018 recipient of the LPA Early Career award.

Dr. Raines serves as a Clinical Investigator at the Southeast Louisiana Veterans Healthcare System and as Assistant Professor in the Department of Psychiatry at Louisiana State University. Her doctorate is in clinical psychology from Florida State University and her internship and residency was with LSVHCS. Her research focuses on identifying and empirically examining risk and maintenance factors as well as the development of novel interventions that can be used to treat and prevent anxiety and related pathology. She has published over 75 peer-reviewed manuscripts and was the Early Career Psychologist delegate to the 2019 Practice Leadership Conference of the American Psychological Association.



Top: Dr. Alan Coulter at a conference. He is currently serving as President of the LPA.  
Below: Dr. Erin Reuther presenting. She is the current President-Elect.

# Leslie Todd to Serve Again as AFCC State Chapter President

The Association of Family and Conciliation Courts announced in its July news that Leslie Todd, LCSW, ACSW, will again serve as the President of its Louisiana Chapter. Todd is a founding member of the state chapter, along the husband, psychologist, Dr. Alan Taylor.

Todd has been in private practice since 1990. She been a child custody evaluator for 20 years and has served several times on the Louisiana State Board of Social Work Examiners' Custody Evaluations Task Force, said the report.

In 2007, she rallied Baton Rouge professionals to start an AFCC Chapter and served on the Louisiana State Law Institute's Parenting Coordination Committee to enact the law, making Louisiana the 13th state to have Parent Coordinators. Except for a two-

year hiatus, she has been on AFCC-LA Board since its first planning meeting in 2009 at the 46th AFCC Conference in New Orleans.

In addition to her work as a Parent Coordinator, mediator, custody evaluator, and therapist, Leslie travels the state offering Family Court-related workshops, encouraging young mental health professionals to enter the field, said the report from AFCC.

Association of Family and Conciliation Courts is an interdisciplinary, international association of professionals dedicated to improving the lives of children and families through the resolution of family conflict.

[See related story page 1 and 10-12.]



Leslie Todd is a charter member for the state chapter of AFCC, along with husband Dr. Alan Taylor.



Summer Re-run

# Building Court Systems That Understand Children’s Needs, continued

Taylor, whose Baton Rouge clinic has served families since 1985. “Judges and attorneys had little or no understanding of the role of psychological science. Custody evaluators were considered as either dangerous or as pawns to be used. There was no contact at all between attorneys, court judges and experts; the first meeting would take place in the court arena.”

Taylor explained that at that time, both sides attacked, and the best an evaluator could hope for was a neutral or somewhat sympathetic judge. “However,” he said, “judges were almost as suspicious as attorneys, and mental health experts were seen as mysterious or irrelevant.”

“Part of my goal in meeting the needs of children was to attempt to avoid the damage that would be done with highly-contested, bitter divorces,” he explained. “I began to take on cases in which I would either be appointed by the court or requested by attorneys to perform a custody evaluation. There were practically no other types of family court services involving mental health professionals at the time.”

Taylor met the harsh realities of the adversarial, legal system when he scheduled a meeting with a father involved in a custody battle. The father happened to be an attorney, and he brought along his own attorney to the interview.

“He then proceeded to announce that they were going to conduct a deposition of me,” explained Taylor, “and that, unless I provided the kinds of information they expected or wanted, I could expect to be sued or prosecuted.”

Taylor took an “immediate hiatus” from performing custody evaluations and spent months thinking hard about the conundrum.

“I was determined to approach family court work in a different manner,” he said, “and to reduce my stress levels. I decided to provide custody evaluations as part of a team involving myself and a female social worker, which allowed two disciplines, two genders, half of the work load, and half the stress,” he said. “This not only made a significant difference in the stress on the evaluators, but we found that families and children under evaluation were greatly relieved to have a man and a woman who would sit with them and listen to their stories, which were often being told for the first time.”

He enlisted his friend and colleague Marcla Cox, LCSW, for this prototype. “We began to try to humanize and make the evaluation process more friendly to everyone involved,” he said. “We took a collegial approach and began to talk with attorneys and to



Fotila

encourage all of the parties involved to provide all the information they wished.”

Their efforts paid off. “This one decision almost immediately produced a significant change in the family court atmosphere and the relationships between the disciplines,” he said. “Court appearances were significantly reduced, and judgments were much more often stipulated than decreed.”

Taylor later married Leslie Todd, LCSW, whose own practice focused on families. He convinced her to try forensic work.

“Like almost every social worker I knew, I was terrified of court,” says Todd. “But I added in my family systems approach and began every one of our evaluation sessions with a genogram of both households. Not only did the families like it, but the attorneys started catching on to family dynamics. They *loved* it.”

The husband and wife team have now been doing child custody evaluations together since 1998. They think they have more credibility with clients when they introduce themselves as professionals who are also together in a stepfamily.

“But as a social worker,” said Todd, “I was bothered by the lack of resources available to the parents *after* the evaluation. Once the two households were established, who would help these people learn how to drop their hostilities and move on?”

While researching the problem, Todd discovered the Association for Family and Conciliation Courts (AFCC), an international, interdisciplinary association with a mission to improve the lives of children and families, mostly through the positive resolution of family conflict.

Taylor and Todd joined AFCC in 2002 and began attending as many conferences as they could. “My first thought in walking into the conference was, ‘*These are my people*,’” Taylor said. “There was an immediate sense of understanding, shared goals, and the sense of being among the best and brightest as well as the most dedicated mental health and legal professionals working in the family court arena.”

“AFCC is the highest quality professional organization I have ever seen,” Taylor said. “Family court work can be extremely difficult and stressful, and AFCC provides valuable backup on a number of fronts.”

Working together, Taylor and Todd brought what they learned from the AFCC to the Louisiana family court system.

Todd explained, “We came up with a decision tree for judges regarding the ‘menu of services’ mental health people could provide in cases of mild, medium, or high conflict divorce. This was a new paradigm for them, and they liked it. We modeled collegiality to the attorneys and told them we could help them manage their clients better. We modeled positive language-- like “parenting plan” instead of “custody”-- and we asked attorneys to tone down their inflammatory rhetoric. We emphasized mediation over litigation.”

In 2003, Todd approached Chief Family Court Judge LaVergne about trying Parenting Coordination work on an experimental basis. “This hybrid model was developed by AFCC to help redirect parents locked



Summer Re-run

# Building Court Systems That Understand Children’s Needs, continued

in high-conflict divorces,” she explained. “The purpose was to cut down on litigation and more importantly, spare the children from more emotional damage.”

While Judge Keaty and several professionals in Lake Charles were promoting Parent Coordination, Todd began working to bring the methods to Baton Rouge. Judge LaVergne soon named Todd to the Louisiana Law Institute’s Parenting Coordination Committee. Todd also joined the local Collaborative Divorce group, another niche for collaborative-minded professionals.

**Birth of the Louisiana AFCC Chapter**

In 2007, the Louisiana legislature passed the Parenting Coordination law. “This provided a new niche for mental health professionals, and another reason to organize a Louisiana chapter of AFCC,” Todd explained.”

In May 2009, in a show of post-Katrina recovery, AFCC held its 46<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference in New Orleans. “The timing was perfect for us,” Todd said. And the new group began to develop. Todd served as chairperson through this three-year process and became the founding President of the new Louisiana chapter.

Todd’s contributions were acknowledged by AFCC when they named her an “AFCC Ambassador,”

a designation for those who help expand the organization’s reach while exemplifying the collegial and collaborative spirit of AFCC membership.

“Today,” said Todd, “AFCC-LA has over 100 members, evenly split between legal and mental health professionals, with a few financial experts as well. We have one of the highest percentages of judge members in the nation. Our Board is interdisciplinary; our second President was a judge, and our third is an attorney-mediator.”

Many members serve on national boards and the Louisiana Law Institute, she said. The group provides training, and free continuing education for members attending regional lunch and learns in Metairie, Baton Rouge, and Northshore.

**The Future Looks Bright**

For the incoming President, Terri Campesta, Licensed Professional Counselor and Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist from Kenner, educational activities will be a continued focus for the growing Chapter.

“My goal is to expand the education opportunities offered in this state. I foresee additional seminars and workshops for Parent Coordinators, Custody Evaluators, Domestic Mediators, psychotherapists, and attorneys to improve their skill sets as we move forward to embrace conflict resolution.”

Campesta, a Child Custody Evaluator, Domestic Mediator, and Parent Coordinator, notes many improvements. “Mental health professionals and family law practitioners are having conversations about what is truly in the child's best interests,” she said, “not just giving the concept lip service. Child custody evaluators are asked to determine the full scope of what parenting time arrangements will work best and attorneys are developing Consent Judgments based on the evaluator's knowledge, avoiding lengthy, expensive and stressful trials that further escalate conflict.”

“Attorneys are asking mental health professionals who serve as Parent Coordinators how they can assist and are beginning to trust the Parent Coordinator's input,” said Campesta. “Through conversation, mental health professionals have a better understanding of the attorney's role and duty to represent their client.” The exchange continues to grow, she explained. “In the end, the family is better served.”

Todd, who still runs the Chapter’s website and publishes the quarterly newsletter, explained, “One of our goals is to make our website the state’s central resource to find databases of professionals, agencies, and programs to help children in divided homes,” she said. “We are actively promoting the work of Child Advocacy Centers and LAPEN [Louisiana Parent Educators Network]. We want to help family-

Cont’d next pg



*Some of the AFCC-LA members attending the AFCC 2012 Chicago Conference.*

*(L to R) Alan Taylor, PhD, Leslie Todd, LCSW, Pam Martin, PhD, Alyson McCain, PhD and Don Hoppe, PsyD.*

*(Photo, courtesy Leslie Todd.)*



Summer Re-run

# Building Court Systems, continued

focused agencies to network across the state and become known to the Court.”

**Still Much to Do**

There is still much to do. “There has been a real need for experienced, well educated, and competent professionals who work together to serve children and their families,” Campesta. said. “Parents and children need legal representatives whose actions consider the nuances associated with parenting relationships.”

“Domestic Mediators can be utilized to facilitate custody and property division disputes. Child Custody Evaluators are needed to formulate recommendations regarding how the child's best interests are served in the unique situations presented in each family dynamic. Parent Coordinators are needed to help high conflict parents navigate and implement parenting plans.”

Dr. Sally Thigpen, a licensed psychologist in Monroe, and a Chapter member finds many differences when compared to the past. “I’ve been working in the field of family psychology for years, but when I learned about AFCC, I found a new family of people working together to make life better for parents and children who are participating in nontraditional families. I see a strong need for support for families in terms of solving problems before they get to the litigation stage.”

Todd noted, “We need to have standards of practice—and provide training to meet those standards of

practice— particularly in child sexual abuse forensic examinations and reports, domestic violence and substance abuse evaluation and intervention, child custody evaluations, and court-involved therapy.”

“We need child visitation centers, parenting education programs, stepfamily and grandparents-as-parents support programs.” And she said, “We need mental health professionals who are confident and competent in working in teams with attorneys in creative ways, such as in divorce mediation in which the attorney does the property settlement and the clinician does the parenting plan.”

“We need Parenting Coordinators—lots of them, all over the state,” Todd said. “We need mental health professionals who also like to work at the level of systems change, helping us separate out ‘Family Court’ from court. We are interested in seeing more judgeships devoted solely to family court work.

**An Important Niche for Mental Health Professionals**

Dr. Sally Thigpen noted, “In north Louisiana there are not many therapists trained in mediation or parenting coordination,” she said, and thinks that more could be helpful.

Dr. Taylor explained the opportunities for those interested in this challenging work. “I believe that affiliation with AFCC provides a wonderful opportunity for young professionals,” he said, as a way to develop skills and professional competence. “Family court work is a rapidly evolving and developing field that can be very fulfilling and rewarding,” he said. And he believes that older, more experienced mental health professionals

would be valued and welcomed into this area. “To do family court work requires a great deal of clinical background in addition to familiarity with the legal system.

There continues to be a need for more seasoned clinicians who can bring their knowledge and experience into this field and secure the rewards of being challenged and stimulated to use all the abilities they have developed in their education and training on a day-to-day basis.”

“I am very proud to have been associated with the initiation and development of the Louisiana state chapter of AFCC,” said Taylor, “which for once finds Louisiana in the forefront of national change in quality services for a population who greatly needs improved services.”

“The mission of AFCC-LA is to be a resource center and act as a change agent in the areas of family law,” said Taylor. “Its goal is to transform the family court system into a more efficient and humane support system for those who are encountering serious conflicts and adverse effects on children and families.”

“Justice should be tempered with mercy,” said Todd. “Family court officers bring justice; mental health professionals bring mercy—we educate parents about children’s needs for peace between households, and we can teach them the skills to achieve it.”

*[Editor's Note: This article ran in the February 2014 issue of the Times. For those interested in AFCC, Leslie Todd can be reached through the AFCC website.]*

Psychologists Alyson McCain (L), Alan Taylor, and Pam Martin share a cab at an AFCC conference.

(Photo, courtesy Leslie Todd.)





# A Shrink at the Flicks

## *Spider-Man: Far From Home*

### A Review

by Alvin G. Burstein, PhD

This film is a many-layered confection, like a pousse-café or a Dobosh Torte. At one level, it is the latest link in the seemingly inexhaustible Avenger series of Marvel world films. As such it provides the hectic action and mind-boggling special effects that characterize the super-hero film genre. That is the genre that, in our age, offers the infra-human special powers of super-heroes to allay the woes that beset the human world, a striking contrast with genuine heroes who inspire ordinary humans to struggle against them. Super-heroes may offer a modern alternative to religious belief, as it were.

Then, too, the film is a nostalgia fest for devotees of the Avenger series. Deeply involved with its characters, they have an opportunity to relish references and reminders of what has gone before.

On another level, it is a hokily comic account of a high-school class on a whirlwind end of semester tour of Europe. They do the tour of obligatory sights and activities and doubtful accommodations. Leadership is in the hands of their teacher, a guide who insists they are having the time of their lives and an experience they will never forget.

Guest Columnist,  
Dr. Alvin Burstein

Burstein, a psychologist and psychoanalyst, is a professor emeritus at the University of Tennessee and a former faculty member of the New Orleans-Birmingham Psychoanalytic Center with numerous scholarly works to his credit.



courtesy photo

He is also a member of Inklings, a Mandeville critique group that meets weekly to review its members' imaginative writings. Burstein has published flash fiction and autobiographical pieces in e-zines; *The Owl*, his first novelette, is available at Amazon. He is, in addition to being a movie fan, a committed Francophile, unsurprisingly a lover of fine cheese and wine, and an unrepentant cruciverbalist.



On a third level, the film is a sweetly romantic teen age love story, touching on the anxieties, conflicts and gratifications that characterize puppy love.

A fourth, elaborate level, is an almost post-modern one, calling into question the meaning of reality. To avoid a spoiler, I am limited to saying I that it manages to echo the question posed by Magritte's famous pipe painting labelled "Ceci n'pas une pipe."

The topping is the movie's gnomonic element. In the original Spider-Man film, Peter Parker's Uncle Ben's dying words were "With great power comes great responsibility." That becomes the super-hero's mantra. In this latest film, Mysterio, dying, says to Spider-Man, "People, they have to believe. Nowadays, they'll believe anything." Uncle Ben's adjuration is a pretty clear one. But is Mysterio bewailing modern gullibility or is he saying the need to believe outweighs the nature of what is believed?

Maybe, at least sometimes, as Freud pointed out, "A cigar is just a cigar." And maybe it's important to know when a pipe *is* a pipe.



# Up Coming Events

## Southern Pain Society to Meet in New Orleans in September Dr. Datz Coordinating, "Integrated Pain Care: New Perspectives"

Geralyn Datz, PhD, Clinical Health Psychologist and Past President of the Southern Pain Society, told the *Times* that the Society will hold its 33rd Annual Meeting in New Orleans next month, September 13 to 15, at the Astor Crowne Plaza Hotel. The theme is "Integrated Pain Care: New Perspectives."

Dr. Datz is a Clinical Health Psychologist and a nationally recognized speaker, previously with New Orleans Veteran Affairs Medical Center and Pennington Biomedical Research Center. Currently she is Clinical Director of the Pain Rehabilitation Program at Southern Behavioral Medicine Associates in Hattiesburg, Mississippi. She is the co-chair for the conference. Dr. Datz has spoken at Pain Week, American Pain Society, American Academy of Pain Medicine and Past President of the Southern Pain Society.

Objectives for the conference include helping attendees Identify the current recommendations for the prescribing of controlled substances; discussing how the psychology of pain management, opioid risk assessments and psychiatric diagnoses impact care; and practicing the Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) model.

"No matter the source, chronic pain affects a person's whole life," Datz said in a previous article. "It affects their thinking, which often becomes negative, depressed, or involves feelings of helplessness and

frustration. That is because at its core the experience of chronic pain is one of physical and emotional suffering," she said. "Chronic pain can also affect a person's quality of life, relationships, ability to work, and even enjoy pleasant things. So all of these things point two ways in which I can work with patients to overcome the physically and emotionally overwhelming effects of pain."

"A large body of research," said Datz, "has shown that use of structured cognitive behavioral therapy, and in particular cognitive behavioral therapy combined with physical therapy, as happens in functional restoration programs, are extremely effective ways of dramatically improving physical function, mental health, and overall well-being in patients with chronic pain," she said.

"Unfortunately, these methods have been sorely underused, partly due to insurance coverage issues. With the advent of the ACA however, this is getting a lot better. Also, I think providers and patients are more open to these ideas now that the opioid epidemic has become such a hot topic nationally," she said.

To register online at  
[www.mahec.net/sps](http://www.mahec.net/sps) or  
[www.southernpainsociety.org](http://www.southernpainsociety.org)



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