

## Governor's Budget Includes Help for Higher Education

On Jan. 24, Gov. Edwards announced his budget priorities for the next fiscal year, which include new, recurring investments in education at every level, from funding better opportunities for Louisiana's youngest learners to increasing salaries for K-12 teachers, support staff and higher education faculty.

In higher education, the Governor's proposal dedicates \$31.7 million for higher education faculty pay raises, in addition to an increase of \$97.2 million in other funding increases. The Governor's

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## Dr. Matthew Holcomb Receives Majority in LSBEP Election

Dr. Matthew Holcomb captured the majority of votes in a state psychology board election conducted online by the Louisiana State Board of Examiners of Psychologists, reported at the board's long-range meeting last month. Holcomb received 152 votes of the 256 votes cast. Eligible voters, those licensed under the state board as psychologists, total 820 individuals. Dr. Jesse Lambert received 78 votes. Both names will be submitted to the governor by the Louisiana Psychological Association, with their customary recommendation that the

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### Science & Education

## Dr. Cherry Distinguished Speaker at Southwestern Psychological Assn to be Held in Baton Rouge

The Southwestern Psychological Association will hold its annual convention in Baton Rouge, April 8 through 10, at the Crown Plaza Hotel. Dr. Katie Cherry, the Emogene Pliner Distinguished Professor of Aging Studies at Louisiana State University, and the Director of Research and Community Outreach, LSU Life Course and Aging Center, is this year's Psi Chi Distinguished Speaker at the event.

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## La Psychological Association to Host APA Past-Pres. Dr. Jennifer Kelly at Convention

The Louisiana Psychological Association will host Dr. Jennifer Kelly, clinical health psychologist and past president of the American Psychological Association, at their 2022 Spring convention to be held April 8–9 in New Orleans. The event is a blended in-person/virtual conference, according to Drs. Nathan Brown and Chris Leonhard, co-chairs of the LPA convention committee. Dr. Kelly will deliver the *Janet and Lee Mathews Invited Address*.

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## Dr. Thomas Takes Top Position at Louisiana Tech

Dr. Donna Thomas has been appointed Chief Academic Director for Partnerships at Louisiana Tech University, reporting to the Provost, Dr. Terry McConathy.

Dr. Thomas has served as chair of the Psychology and Behavioral Sciences Department at LaTech for almost 10 years and is the George and Jean Baldwin Endowed Professor.

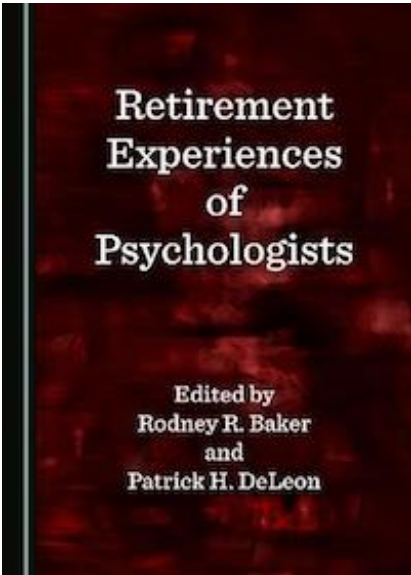
In the announcement, Dr. McConathy said, "Dr. Thomas will be responsible for the oversight and direction of development and implementation of academic programs that support Louisiana Tech University's mission, vision, and strategic objectives.

"As Chief Academic Director for Partnerships, Dr. Thomas will manage academic partnerships with external stakeholders and funding efforts for academic partnerships and curricula design; enhance and

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Dr. Donna Thomas  
(courtesy photo)



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# Editorial Page – Opinions

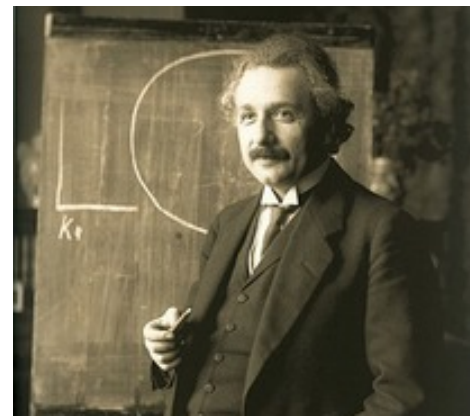
## *Policing the information channels*

by J. Nelson

I've followed four experts along the Covid trail. One of them is John Campbell, PhD, who trained nurses for much of his career. He has developed a very popular YouTube channel with over two million subscribers.

It's no wonder that he skyrocketed in popularity. His critical-thinking is on display and he expects you to use yours. He shows you the data that he has used to draw his conclusions, and is scientifically cautious about jumping to premature decisions. His prudent, thoughtful style syncs up nicely with his non-autocratic educational approach.

For credibility alone, this would suffice. But Campbell can also be entertaining. With his understated comments, dry wit, and British accent, he sometimes points out ironies that are hilarious—if you're listening closely.



Last week he was targeted by a BBC reporter, who claimed that Campbell was spreading misinformation when he reviewed the data on number of Covid-only deaths compared to those with comorbidities. Among other criticisms, the BBC reporter said "It has become a weapon of the cruel and heartless to dismiss the deaths of the people we love."

In his reply, Campbell pointed out that the reporter took everything out of context, misquoted him, said the BBC contacted him when they had not, and accused him of not caring about deaths.

To that last criticism about heartlessness, Campbell told his audience, "The idea that I don't take death seriously, is, well—." He then shared his feelings on the issue which is rare for him.

"I've been sufficiently fortunate—indeed, or you could say immensely privileged—since I was 18 years old. The first person I looked after died when I was 18 years old. I remember, I'm not going to say names, but I remember the three people concerned. These things are branded and seared into your memory. I remember their diagnoses. I remember their approximate age. I remember their faces. I remember their names, when I was a first year student psychiatric nurse. I had these three deaths, patients during my care. And I've sat with patients many times as they've left this life, by the bedside, by the emergency trolley, on a bamboo platform in a refugee camp," he said. "The idea that I would take human death lightly or use it as a—you get my message, I'm not going to go on with that."

It's stunning and a little bit horrifying that today's so-called journalists are no longer reporters, but rather try to police the avenues of information flow. They target individuals for their opinions.

This could be the unfortunate outcome of a change in business models. Or maybe it's in part due to an alliance between media and the big monopolies. Or perhaps it's a simple result of the corrupting influence of power causing false moral superiority. The reporter feels the need to be the thought police and to help make other people's decisions for them.

Having been raised in a newspaper family with classic journalism principles, individuals' opinions were not a target. The solution was clear. The answer to "misinformation" was always more information, more free speech, not less. The journalist's job was not to police the information channels, but to enhance them.

There is no middle ground. You either are supporting freedom of information or you're supporting the cancel culture.

It is the same in science. Albert Einstein even said it. "Science can flourish only in an atmosphere of free speech." He understood that something is "misinformation"—until it is not.

*[Julie Nelson is a licensed psychologist, journalist, and publisher of the Times. She also holds other 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.]*

## The Psychology Times

*Member, Louisiana Press Association*

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

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## Corrections & Clarifications

No corrections were received for last month's issue.

Please send your corrections to:

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State & National News

Governor's Budget Proposal Includes Help for Higher Education, continued

budget proposal includes an increase of \$5 million for Title IX offices across the state, \$15 million increase in GO Grants, \$25 million into the Higher Education Initiatives fund. The proposal also includes depositing \$10.5 million into the MJ Foster Promise Program Fund, which provides financial support for non-traditional students to earn credentials from community and technical colleges that align to high-demand jobs in growing industry sectors across Louisiana.

The budget proposal includes \$148.4 million for K-12 teacher and staff pay raises. The proposed teacher pay raise of \$1500 is significantly higher than the raise teachers received in the current year, and the fifth proposed by the Edwards administration. In addition, the Governor supports using additional revenues recognized by the Revenue Estimating Conference later this spring to increase these proposed raises for teachers and staff.

"Louisiana's educators have always deserved more pay ... but the coronavirus pandemic has further highlighted the need for high quality, well-teachers at every level of education in Louisiana," Gov. Edwards said.

For early childhood education, the Governor is proposing a \$43.4 million increase, which includes more than a \$17 million increase for the LA-4 Early Childhood program. In addition, the Governor will be recommending a significant investment into the Early Childhood Education Fund.

Gov. Signs Posthumous Pardon of Civil Rights Leader Mr. Homer A. Plessy

In January, Gov. Edwards took the historic action of signing Louisiana's first posthumous pardon of Mr. Homer A. Plessy, who was convicted of violating Louisiana's Separate Car Act of 1890, the purpose of which was to ensure racial segregation as a means to promote white supremacy. Gov. Edwards was joined by descendants of Homer A. Plessy, Justice John Harlan, and Judge John Ferguson, as well as by Southern University Professor of Law Angela Bell, Orleans District Attorney Jason Williams, civil rights leaders and a number of state and local elected officials.

Plessy's criminal conduct in 1892 was virtually the same as Rosa Park's courageous protest sixty-three years later in Montgomery, Alabama in 1955 when she refused to leave a seat designated for white riders, said the press release.

"This historic posthumous pardon is proof that 125 years after his conviction, the state of Louisiana, recognizes and honors Plessy for his role in opening the gates of the Civil Rights Movement of the 20th century," said Keith Plessy, descendant of Homer Plessy.

The Governor's budget proposal also includes more than \$1.1 billion in funding for critical infrastructure, including \$500 million for a new Mississippi River Bridge in Baton Rouge, \$100 million for I-10 Calcasieu River Bridge in Lake Charles, \$100 million for the I-49 Lafayette Connector, and \$500 million for water and sewer improvements statewide

The Governor's budget proposal also dedicates \$550 million in federal American Rescue Plan funding to replenish Louisiana's Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund, which had a historically high fund balance prior to the global coronavirus pandemic. If the fund is not restored to a balance of \$750 million by September of this year, taxes will automatically be raised on businesses to replenish the fund.

"This is a budget I am proud of, this is a budget the Louisiana people can be proud of, and this is a budget I believe the Legislature can proudly support," Gov. Edwards said.

Mortgage Relief for La Homeowners Hit by COVID-19

On Jan. 10, Gov. Edwards announced the launch of the Louisiana Homeowner Assistance Fund, a federally funded relief program for homeowners financially impacted by COVID-19 who are behind on their mortgages and at risk of foreclosure. The program is funded through the American Rescue Plan Act, which provides \$10 billion in federal relief for vulnerable homeowners. Louisiana is set to receive \$146.7 million in funding to provide up to \$25,000 per eligible homeowner. The program is available statewide to homeowners experiencing financial hardship after Jan. 21, 2020, and earning less than 150 percent of the area median income or 100 percent of the national median income, whichever is greater, based on U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development income data. The Louisiana Office of Community Development is administering the program.







**Dr. Matthew Holcomb Receives Majority in LSBEP Election, continued**

Governor appoint the individual with the most votes.

The Gov. may appoint any individual submitted on the list, however.

The individual who is appointed will fill the position to be vacated by Dr. Gina Gibson, currently the chair and who will finish her service in June this year. Dr. Gibson filled the unexpired position of Dr. Crouch when she had to unexpectedly relocate.

Dr. Holcomb is from New Orleans and was originally licensed in 2015. His specialty is clinical neuropsychology and he works with the Jefferson Neurobehavioral group. he is also a Consulting Clinical Psychologist Pine Grove Behavioral Health Assessment Clinic. He earned his degree in 2012 from Ball State University in school psychology.

On his candidate statement he said, "The main function of our licensing board is to protect the people of Louisiana from the "unqualified and improper application" of psychology. That's a broad mission statement, which often puts our board in a position to affect change within the field of psychology. There can be no doubt that the next few years will see additional and potentially major changes in our field. Affecting change and having a voice when those changes are discussed are a motivation for serving on the LSBEP.

"Nationally, organizations like ABPP often push agendas that may not benefit psychologists or the public in Louisiana. Issues such as the EPPP-2 and PsyPACT could harm the practice of psychology in Louisiana. LSBEP has a history of standing against efforts which would not benefit our state, and I wish to continue that legacy. Locally, our board faces financial issues and concerns of over-reach. I want to serve on the LSBEP to be a positive force for change.

"I have served on LPA's legislative affairs committee for several years and am currently the Treasurer of the Louisiana Psychological Association (LPA) and a member of the Executive Committee. [...] I believe I am prepared to sit in the LSBEP."

*Dr. Matthew Holcomb captured the majority of votes in a state psychology board election conducted online by the Louisiana State Board of Examiners of Psychologists, Here, he is shown (R) with Dr. Chris Leonhard in 2015.*

**New Human Trafficking Statewide Public Awareness Campaign and Resource Center Website Announced**

On Jan. 25, Gov. Edwards joined by First Lady Donna Edwards and Dr. Dana Hunter, officially announced Louisiana's first Human Trafficking Prevention Resource Center and advocacy campaign. Through these efforts, victims, survivors, service providers, stakeholders and citizens will be able to learn about human trafficking, how to identify when someone needs help, how to report this heinous crime and about more specific services for victims. The campaign, Stop Trafficking LA: Human Trafficking is R.E.A.L. The R.E.A.L stands for Recognizing the signs, Educating others, Acting immediately, and Listening to victims and survivors.

"Eradicating human trafficking, preventing any more suffering and helping survivors regain control of their lives is something that Donna and I are committed to achieving," said Gov. Edwards. Thanks to Donna using her platform as well as the state legislators, I am proud to say that our efforts here in Louisiana are making a difference and we're gaining national and international attention about the need to educate people about this heinous crime. I'm grateful to Dr. Dana Hunter for leading our new Office of Human Trafficking Prevention. She has demonstrated a strong commitment and expertise in programs and practices to help those who are vulnerable. Under her leadership, Louisiana has secured nearly 2.7 million federal dollars to improve outcomes for child and youth victims of human trafficking. And with this new website, I'm confident our efforts will continue to connect

resources with those who need them and help us fight this scourge on our society."

The coalition's first big event is The R.E.A.L public awareness campaign, which will be held in April during the NCAA Men's Final Four Championship tournament in New Orleans. More information on the educational campaign and resources to help identify and report cases of human trafficking are available at [www.stoptraffickingla.com](http://www.stoptraffickingla.com)

***Dr. Paulette Grey Riveria New Capital Region Medical Director/Administrator***

Dr. Paulette L. Grey Riveria has joined the Louisiana Department of Health as the Regional Medical Director/Administrator for the seven parishes of the Capital Region. Dr. Grey Riveria is a board-certified family medicine physician who most recently served as a consultant to the Office of Public Health, conducting a novel statewide assessment of healthcare worker attitudes and experiences related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Capital Region (Region 2) is one of Louisiana's nine administrative regions that include all 64 parishes in the state. These regions, known as Human Services Districts and Authorities or local governing entities,

are established by Louisiana State Law to direct the operation and management of public, community-based programs and services relative to mental health, intellectual/developmental disabilities and addictive disorders. She has diverse work experience that includes utilization management and entrepreneurship, as well as global health experience in Ghana, India and Senegal.

Dr. Grey Riveria received her bachelor's degree from Louisiana Tech University, a medical doctorate from Johns Hopkins, a master's in public health from Harvard and a master's in business from the University of Illinois at Chicago.



# Psychology Board Discusses MP Supervision, Registration of Assistants, & Continuing Ed

The Louisiana State Board of Examiners of Psychologists (LSBEP) met for their annual Long Range Planning Meeting, held virtually on January 20 and 21. The members discussed several topics including supervision by medical psychologists and the regulations to certified assistants, according to a report by Dr. Kim VanGeffen, Co-Chair of Professional Affairs of the Louisiana Psychological Association.

The Board discussed an ongoing issue regarding medical psychologists, who are not licensed by LSBEP, and supervising candidates for licensure, explained Dr. VanGeffen. There is concern that LSBEP does not have legal authority to regulate the supervision of these candidates. If there was a complaint made against the supervisor or the person being supervised, LSBEP would have no authority to investigate the complaint or to take action on the complaint.

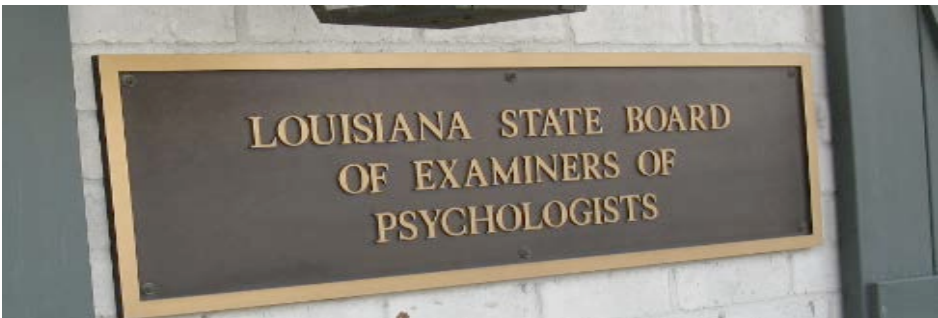
As a result, the Board has decided not to approve supervised practice plans where the proposed supervision is by someone not regulated by LSBEP. Ms. Amy Lowe, the general council, suggested possible remedies for this situation such as dual licensure under the psychology and medical boards. In the past, LSBEP and LSBME also had a memorandum of understanding [MOU] regarding how the two Boards would interact. This memorandum expired and LSBME did not want to renew it. A new MOU could be made, reported Dr. VanGeffen.

Dr. Glenn Ally, representing the Louisiana Academy of Medical Psychologists, stated that medical psychologists are not interested in dual licensure but may be willing to consider a new MOU. He noted that LAMP could consider an antitrust lawsuit against LSBEP if medical psychologists are not able to supervise psychologists toward licensure.

It was noted that LSBEP does not require a candidate for licensure to have pre approval of their supervision plan before undertaking the supervision, reported Dr. VanGeffen. This is already occurring where candidates for licensure obtain their supervision by a psychologist in another state before they move to Louisiana such as on a post doc. The Board would consider this supervision after the fact if it met their requirements. This would also apply to those individuals being supervised by medical psychologists.

The Board also discussed possible Rules for the registration of assistants to psychologists, said Dr. VanGeffen. The Board discussed an annual application fee of \$50.00 with an annual renewal fee of \$40.00. The Rules will require that all assistants pass criminal background checks before they can be employed by a psychologist. There was discussion of whether there should be a minimum education requirement and what this requirement might be. There was also discussion of possible supervision requirements. The Board decided to allow the Assistants to Psychologist Work Group to discuss these issues and to write Rules for Board approval, reported VanGeffen.

In matters of Continuing Professional Development the Board voted to require that psychologists obtain two of the required 40 biennial CPD hours in the area of Multi Culturalism or Diversity in addition to the two required hours in Ethics or Law. There was discussion of whether the Board should require pre approval of all non-sponsored CPD. There was also discussion of whether the Board should drop the required CPD hours from 40 to 30 but require that all of the 30 hours be obtained through sponsored offerings. The latter suggestion would make it easier for the Board to determine the appropriateness of CPD which psychologists are reporting. This issue will be discussed further by the CPD Work Group, said Dr. VanGeffen.



## From the Minutes

### Selected Items from Nov. 2021 Minutes of the Louisiana State Board of Examiners of Psychologists (LSBEP)

NOVEMBER

**Finance Committee** – Ms. Monic presented a Financial Report prepared for the period 10/1/2021 – 10/31/2021 as follows: [...] **Income: Renewal** \$258,290 [...] 87.2% of the budgeted amount has been collected. This category includes renewal of assistants to psychologists, projected to be \$5000 which was not been implemented as projected. The number of licenses lapsed this period also impacted this amount. However, we have collected 2.5% more than the previous FY. **Line Item Expense: Compliance Officer** This position is currently vacant. The Board was required to pay out annual leave on resignation of this position so it is higher than previous years. A leave payout may be reimbursed by another state agency for unused leave on return to state service. Additionally, it is projected this line item will come in underbudget since the position is currently unfilled.

**Legislative Oversight Committee** – Dr. Gormanous reported that the 2022 Regular Legislative session was approaching and if changes to the practice act needed to be considered, now is the time to begin collaborating with associations. Dr. Gormanous suggested that the Board look at what other state boards are doing and give consideration to removing the “oath” required in attesting U.S. Citizenship during the application process since it would have impacts on the ability to facilitate an online application. Mr. McNeely stated that legislators would not be limited to the number of bills they could propose during the upcoming session and that redistricting would be a primary focus of the session.

**Staff Development: Administrative Assistant Position** – The Board discussed salary and posting for this position. Additional staffing issues were discussed including the unfilled unclassified position for an in-house attorney. Mr. McNeely reminded the board of the intent to create the position was to implement cost control which is better managed through employment rather than contracts. The Board discussed the viability of retaining an attorney for the currently budgeted amount. Dr. Gormanous moved in favor of budgeting \$40K for the Administrative Assistant Position and posting for a position that seeks qualified individuals that can be utilized as an operations person. It was also moved that the Board post for the in-house attorney position at 60K, but for budgeting purposes leave funding for the attorney position under the contract attorney position. If and when the board has a viable candidate to fill the unclassified position for an in-house attorney, the Board will reconsider its budget to allocate funds from the contract attorney position toward a salaried position. The Board discussed the motion. The motion passed by unanimous roll call vote of the members present as follows: In favor: (5) Gormanous, Gibson, Moore, Harness, Sam; Against: (0); Abstained: (0); Absent: (1) McNeely.

**Legal Opinion Regarding Supervision by Medical Psychologists** – The Board discussed this matter to resolve concerns in Pre-approving Supervised Practice Plans and issuing Provisional License to Applicants for Licensure who are under the supervision of Medical Psychologists who are not licensed with LSBEP. Following consultation with legal counsel certain statutes were identified that appear to conflict with rules and previously issued opinions. The statutory provision in question RS 37:1360.55(A)(1) and (B)(1) which states clearly that a medical psychologist can only receive a medical psychology license from the “board” (LSBME as defined in 37:1360.52(1)) if they hold a “current and unrestricted license in good standing to practice psychology issued by the LSBEP.”; and 37:1360.58 which requires that a renewal of the license for a medical psychologist meet the “qualifications provided in this Part” (i.e., have a current license with the LSBEP). Following discussion and guidance from LSBEP Attorney Amy Groves Lowe, the Board determined that LSBEP cannot pre-approve a plan of supervision or issue a provisional license to an applicant whose supervisor is not regulated by LSBEP. However, the determination raised more complex questions that potentially impact LSBEP’s ability to pre-approve supervision, issue provisional licenses, as well as perform other regulatory functions. Recognizing the potential impacts, Dr. Gormanous moved that the Board authorize the following course of action: 1) have the Chair and/or Executive Director reach out to LAMP’s Liaison to summarize the issues; 2) request a collaborative meeting of stakeholders including representatives from LSBEP, LSBME, LPA and LAMP; and 3) report findings and recommendations to the LSBEP on changes to regulations or opinions, if any are needed. The Board discussed the motion. The motion passed by unanimous roll call vote of the members present as follows: In favor: (5) Gormanous, Gibson, Moore, Harness, Sam; Against: (0); Abstained: (0); Absent: (1) McNeely.





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Science & Education

# Dr. Donna Thomas Takes Top Position, Chief Academic Director for Partnerships, at Louisiana Tech continued

implement non-traditional student engagement opportunities; organize and support faculty expertise for curricular delivery in emerging program areas; and organize programmatic approvals and accreditation of transdisciplinary programs," Dr. McConathy said.

"The Chief Academic Director for Partnerships will collaborate with division leaders, deans, associate deans, unit heads, and faculty to identify extension, dual enrollment, online and remote programs, and academic pathways that explore, develop, implement, and integrate programs supporting the University's mission," he said.

Dr. Thomas has served as the Department Chair of the Psychology and Behavioral Sciences from 2012. In this position, she managed and coordinated all the activities of the department including instruction, research, services, and administrative activities. She was also the Director of Training for the counseling psychology doctoral program from 2006 to 2012. She has chaired and participated as a committee member for numerous dissertations, and has taught psychology at the undergraduate and graduate level.

Since 2014 she has also served as the NCAA Faculty Athletics Representative. In this position she represented Louisiana Tech University and its faculty in the relationship between the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), Conference USA (C-USA), and the campus. She represents LaTech as the voting delegate to NCAA and C-USA meetings and serves on NCAA councils, cabinets, and committees as appointed. She has assisted with interpretation of NCAA and C-USA legislation and policies.

In this role, Dr. Thomas reports to the faculty and administration on the academic well-being of student-athletes. And she ensures, either directly or indirectly, that student-athletes meet all NCAA, conference, and LaTech requirements for eligibility to practice, financial aid, and intercollegiate competition.

Dr. Thomas also monitors the student-athlete experience and is involved in the personal and academic welfare of the student-athletes. She works with the athletic director and senior staff to educate student-athletes about NCAA rules, and devise and implement compliance programs within the athletics department. She meets regularly with the Director of Athletics and serves as the Senior Faculty Advisor on athletics to the university president. She is a liaison between the faculty and administration and the intercollegiate athletics program. She also provides periodic reports to the President's Athletics Council relating to matters of academic integrity, performance of student-athletes, rules compliance or violations, and other matters related to the athletics program.

Dr. Thomas meets with the Student-Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC) and serves as



*Dr. Donna Thomas has been appointed Chief Academic Director for Partnerships at Louisiana Tech University, reporting to the Provost, Dr. Terry McConathy. Since 2014 she has served as the NCAA Faculty Athletics Representative. In this position she represented Louisiana Tech University and its faculty in the relationship to the National Collegiate Athletic Association.*

chair of the President's Athletics Council. She was a member of the council beginning in 2007. The Council reviews intercollegiate athletic programs and activities and makes recommendations to the President for his consideration. Athletics Council members are appointed by the President. She has also served on the Student Athlete Welfare Committee.

In her duties for the psychology department, Dr. Thomas has participated in funding and grants including Increasing Diversity in the Doctoral Student Populations at Louisiana Tech University, BoR/SREB Doctoral Fellowships to Promote Diversity, and Third Judicial District Drug Court Treatment.

Her collaborative publications include, "Psychological effects of intensive and comprehensive training centers on blind and visually impaired adults. *Journal of Blindness Innovation and Research*, "Facebook and Romantic Relationships: Intimacy and Couple Satisfaction Associated with Online Social Network Use," *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking*, "Measuring students' perceptions of faculty competence in professional psychology: Development of the Perceived Faculty Competence Inventory. *Training and Education in Professional Psychology*."

Dr. Thomas's professional service includes serving as Member of Editorial Board for the *Journal of Rural Mental Health*, published by the American Psychological Association; Regional Advisory Committee member for MacArthur Models for Change

(Louisiana) grant; Ad hoc reviewer for Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking; Reviewer, proposals for annual convention, American Psychological Association, Division 17; Executive Board Member, Council of Counseling Psychology Training Programs; LaTech College of Education Administrative Council, Special Initiatives Committee, Committee on Recruitment, Diversity, and Global Issues. She has been affiliated with the American Psychological Association, Council of Graduate Departments of Psychology, Council of Counseling Psychology Training Programs, Louisiana Psychological Association, Louisiana Counseling Association APA Division 17-Counseling Psychology.

She has received the Outstanding Service Award, College of Education, and the Outstanding Service Award, Department of Psychology and Behavioral Sciences numerous times, including the Special Award of Merit for Outstanding Service.

In the past, Dr. Thomas also served as clinical associate for the Counseling and Psychology Clinic in Monroe, and as administrator and owner for Rehabilitation Services of Louisiana LLC.

Dr. Thomas earned her master's degree in experimental psychology from the University of Louisiana Monroe, and her doctorate in counseling psychology from Louisiana Tech.



Science & Education

Dr. Cherry Distinguished Psi Chi Speaker at Southwestern Psychological Association (SWPA) to be Held in Baton Rouge, April 8–10, continued

Dr. Cherry will present, "Severe Weather Events and Psychosocial Well-Being: Variables that Matter after a Disaster."

Dr. Cherry will discuss the impact of hurricanes and flooding on various health indicators across the adult lifespan. She will present findings from her research program on disaster stressors in connection with the 2016 flooding in south Louisiana, and outline suggestions for managing post-disaster stress and strategies for long-term recovery after severe weather events.

Dr. Cherry, expert in the stress impact of natural disasters, has been at the center of research about how people come through disasters. In her most recent book, *The Other Side of Suffering: Finding a Path to Peace after Tragedy*, published by Oxford University Press, she builds on and extends her previous work with those who have been caught in natural disasters.

Dr. Cherry crafted *The Other Side of Suffering* to be helpful for the general public by sharing her academic and experiential knowledge gained from her multiple projects with Katrina and Rita survivors, and how they built back their lives, spirit, and resilience.

"Many perished after Katrina. Those who survived have a breadth of life experience that is wider and possibly deeper than those who have yet to live through a disaster," she writes. In *The Other Side of Suffering*, Dr. Cherry explains the process of grieving, how recovering routines may be of central importance to healing after disasters, and how traditions solidify a sense of "rightness with the world." *The Other Side* is an insider's view of life and

suffering, and the elements of the human journey back.

Dr. Cherry and her colleagues were in the third year of a multiyear project, funded by the National Institute on Aging, to study the determinants of longevity and healthy aging, when the 2005 Atlantic hurricanes Katrina and Rita hit Louisiana and shattered lives.

"In the years after the Katrina disaster, " she writes, "I wondered what had happened to the displaced coastal residents ... ". She knew that more than a million US Gulf Coast residents were displaced. "Knowing how disaster survivors were faring in the years after the 2005 Hurricanes Katrina and Rita was important to me." *The Other Side of Suffering* helps answer that question.

Dr. Cherry has also presented her work in, *Traumatic Stress and Long-Term Recovery: Coping with Disasters and Other Negative Life Events*, and in her 2009 book, *Lifespan Perspectives on Natural Disasters: Coping with Katrina, Rita and other Storms*.

She has studied coastal residents with severe property damage from the 2005 Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, and those with exposure to the 2010 British Petroleum Deepwater Horizon oil spill. Dr. Cherry and scholars from around the world have looked at the stresses from natural and technological disasters, acts of terrorism, wars, and interpersonal violence, and how stress and prolonged suffering threatens health and well-being. Dr. Cherry focuses on the long-term effects of disaster exposure, the consequences for peoples' daily lives, and the means for recovery and healing.

According to organizers at the Southwestern Psychological Association, "Severe weather events are happening with increasing

frequency today. Hurricanes, floods, and other tragedies that impact peoples' lives are disruptive and stressful events that may threaten health and well-being. Consequently, there is a great need for knowledge to understand the immediate and long-term consequences of natural disasters and tragic events for people of all ages."

At LSU, Dr. Cherry teaches undergraduate courses on adult development and aging, lifespan human development, and a graduate seminar in developmental psychology. She is also an adjunct professor at Tulane University School of Medicine where she teaches advanced research methods and design to PhD students affiliated with the Tulane Center for Aging.

Dr. Cherry is actively involved in research with middle-aged and older adults to understand challenges to healthy aging after disaster. She has over 185 publications including peer reviewed journal articles, book chapters, three edited volumes, and one solo authored book. Her work has been funded by the National Institute on Aging, the Louisiana Board of Regents, the Gulf of Mexico Research Initiative, and most recently by the National Science Foundation.

Other keynote speakers at the Southwestern Psychological Association convention include Dr. Susan Clayton, who will present, "Psychology and climate change: Understanding and responding." Dr. Clayton has authored or edited five books, including the Oxford Handbook of Environmental and Conservation Psychology.

Dr. Tanecia Blue will deliver the Inaugural Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Keynote Address - "*Psychology's role in the race construct*." Dr. Blue is the current Diversity and Inclusion Officer for Society for Health Psychology and her primary initiative is educating health psychologists about the role of psychology in improving health equity.

Dr. Susan Raiford will deliver the Woodcock Institute Keynote Address, "Pandemic Impact on Performance-Based Psychological Assessment of Children: What We've Learned and How We Can Respond." Dr. Raiford is a senior research director at The Psychological Corporation/Pearson. She has been a primary developer of the Wechsler Intelligence scales.

*Dr. Katie Cherry, (L) the Emogene Pliner Distinguished Professor of Aging Studies at Louisiana State University, and the Director of Research and Community Outreach, LSU Life Course and Aging Center, is this year's Psi Chi Distinguished Speaker at the event. Here, she speaks at a past science cafe.*

(courtesy photo)





Science & Education

*La Psychological Association  
to Host APA Past-Pres. Dr.  
Jennifer Kelly at Convention  
continued*

Dr. Kelly was elected the 2021 President of the American Psychological Association. She most recently served as Co-Chair of the newly formed Advocacy Coordinating Committee of the American Psychological Association Services, Inc. She served on the Board of Directors as Recording Secretary for APA from 2013-2018. Prior to that, she served on the Board as a member-at-large.

She has held other leadership positions within APA including service on the Council of Representatives for six years, Past-Chair of the Board of Professional Affairs, member of the Committee for the Advancement of Professional Practice (CAPP), Past-Chair of the Committee of State Leaders, Past-President of the Division of State, Provincial, and Territorial Psychological Association Affairs (Division 31), Division 29 Member-at-large, and numerous task-forces. She served on the Board of Trustees of the Association for the Advancement of Psychology (PAC) and was Chair of the Board 2008-2009.

Dr. Kelly was recognized at the 2019 APA Services, Inc. Practice Leadership Conference for her Leadership in Advancing the Profession of Psychology through Federal Advocacy. Other Advocacy recognitions include the 2011 State Leadership Award, Karl F. Heiser Advocacy Award and Legislative Award of the Georgia Psychological Association in 2000, and the Federal Advocacy Award by the APA Practice Organization in 2004.

She was the 2012 recipient of the APA Division of Health Psychology/American Psychological Foundation Timothy B. Jeffrey Award for Outstanding Contributions to Clinical Health Psychology. In 2011 she was presented with the Diversity Award from the Committee of State Leaders of APA. She received the Outstanding Psychologist Award from Division 31 of APA in 2006.

Dr. Kelly served as a member-at-large of the American Board of Professional Psychology Foundation from 2014-2019. She is a graduate of the 2003 class of Leadership Atlanta. She is a member of Lions Club International. She served on the Board of Directors of ChrisKids and Project Interconnections, in Atlanta, Georgia. She belongs to numerous professional organizations, including the American Psychological Association (Fellow), Georgia Psychological Association (Fellow), and International Association for the Study of Pain.

She was an Associate Editor of *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice* from 2006-2011.

Her publications include, "Chronic pain: Clinical application," in L. Grossman and S. Walfish (Eds.), *Translating Psychological Research into Practice*. New York: Springer; "Integrated health care and professional psychology: Is the setting right for you?" in *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*; and "Diversity within African-American, female therapists: Variability in clients' expectations and assumptions about the therapist," in *Psychotherapy: Theory, Research, Practice, Training*.

Dr. Kelly writes a blog, "Immune-Boosting: Stress, Mood, and Environment," where she notes, "Internal factors such as stress have been shown to be related to a deficient immune system because of the nature of the body's response in dealing with this problem. The capabilities of the immune system are frequently diminished after frequent activation of the autonomic nervous system in the case of chronic stresses. The immune system is downgraded to be able to continuously function."



*The Louisiana Psychological Association will host Dr. Jennifer Kelly, clinical health psychologist and past president of the American Psychological Association, at their 2022 Spring convention to be held April 8–9 in New Orleans.*

*Dr. Kelly will deliver the Janet and Lee Mathews Invited Address.*

*(courtesy photo)*

A native of Gulfport, Mississippi, Dr. Kelly earned her doctorate degree in Clinical Psychology from Florida State University in 1987. She earned her undergraduate degree in Psychology and her master's degree in Counseling Psychology from the University of Southern Mississippi.

Dr. Nathan Brown and Dr. Chris Leonhard, convention organizers for LPA, said, "Additionally we are working on a strong group of featured speakers and presentations to make this an exceptional event for continuing professional development. The Scientific Poster Session, the Science Cafe, Lunch and Learns, Breakout Sessions, and Awards Ceremony will provide many opportunities to learn from and reconnect and network with psychology colleagues from across the state."



Researchers to Present at  
Southeastern Psych Assn  
March 23-26, South Carolina

The Southeastern Psychological Association will hold its 68th Annual Meeting March 23-26 at Hilton Head Island, South Carolina.

Among those presenting from the Louisiana, Taylor Standberry & Dr. Erin Dupuis (Faculty Sponsor), from Loyola University will present, "The Association Between Online Gaming Relationships, Social Support, and the COVID-19 Pandemic."

Adrian Ridley & Erin Dupuis (Faculty Sponsor), Loyola University, will present, "The Relation Between Differing Kinds of Fear and Compassion."

Dr. Dupuis has presented and published research in the areas of religious beliefs, illusory judgments of control and prediction, attributions of responsibility for acquaintance rape, perceived social support in massive online gaming, and other social attitudes. In 2016, Dr. Dupuis received the Excellence in Community Engaged Teaching Award from Loyola.

Kelsey Coulthard, Kristen Hollas, & Dr. Mary Lou Kelley, from Louisiana State University, will present, "Coping Behavior Across Adults and Genders."

Kristen Hollas, Kelsey Coulthard, & Dr. Mary Lou Kelley, Louisiana State University, will also present, "Posttraumatic Stress and Familial Support on College Students' Academic Achievement."

Dr. Kelley's research has focused on the behavioral assessment and treatment of children and adolescents. Topics of interest have included ADHD, home and school interventions for children with externalizing problems, and the psychological effects of violence exposure. She has been involved in the development of several assessment measures for the child and adolescent population.

From the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, Taylor Johnson, & Dr. Manyu Li, "Fandom Communities' Engagement in Black Lives Matters Digital Activism: A Study of Intragroup Processes."

Dr. Manyu Li's research spans the areas of social, community, and cross-cultural psychology, including the topic of place attachment, or the psychology connections that people form with specific places. She is also interested in cross-cultural studies of migration and immigration. Dr. Manyu Li is a recipient of the 2020 Outstanding Master's Mentor Award.

Presenting "Cross-Cultural Dyads and Accent in Psychotherapy.," will be Sebastian Del Corral Winder, Louisiana State University, Kiriana Sanchez, Samantha Gray, & Mixalis Poulakis, University of Indianapolis.

And presenting, "Providing Full Scale DBT to Autistic Adolescents: Neurodiversity Affirming Multifamily DBT, A Case Series," will be Erynne Shatto, Austin Peay State University, Alexandra Lee, Louisiana State University, & Kristyn Troyer, Seaport Psychological Consortium.

Stress Solutions

by Susan Andrews, PhD

Stress Can Increase Your Risk of  
Mortality

Researchers at King's College London examined data on the effects of stress on mortality (Hotopf, Henderson, & Kuh, 2008). The subjects self-reported their stress levels. The chilling finding was a strong association between higher levels of self-reported stress and all causes of death. Stress can affect the body in so many different ways that finding the means by which stress leads to death at earlier ages is complicated.

Nonetheless, one important connection needs to be examined. Research on telomeres may hold an answer. Telomeres are distinctive structures at the ends of our chromosomes. They are sections of DNA. They form like a cap, much like a plastic tip on shoelaces, that works to protect the chromosome. The telomeres allow the chromosomes to be replicated in cell division. Every time a cell carries out DNA replication, the telomeres are shortened. As we age, telomeres get shorter. They play a major role in cancer as well as in aging.

Oxidative stress, such as diet, smoking, and stress, make telomeres shorter, too. Many studies have now demonstrated links between chronic stress and higher oxidative stress. In addition, the chronic stress is associated with lower telomerase activity and shorter telomere length. Shorter telomere length is associated with advanced aging of the body. When a telomere gets too short, after many replications and possibly increased oxidative stress, it reaches a 'critical length' and can no longer be replicated, triggering the cell to die.

Newborn babies usually have long telomeres. Telomeres get shorter as we age. There are ways that have been found to increase the length of existing telomeres or reduce the shortening effects of stress. Obviously, avoiding chronic stress is one way to reduce or slow down the shortening of the telomeres. However, one of the ways that many people choose to deal with stress has been shown to be highly effective at actually lengthening telomeres. Aerobic exercise lengthens telomeres and reduces stress according to several studies (Puterman et al, 2018). In the Puterman study, high stress caregivers completed 40 minutes of aerobic exercise 3-5 times a week for 24 weeks.

Aerobic exercise is an excellent way to reduce built-up muscle stiffness from sitting at your computer all day working. "Working" may not seem like stress to some, but if working means thinking, then it is definitely stress. At the end of each day, the built up stress should be reduced and aerobic exercise is a good way to do it. Apparently, there is an added benefit of increasing your chances of living a longer, happier, and more productive life.



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.



Science & Education

Hondas, not Lamborghinis:  
Providing Effective but Less  
Costly Family Court Services

by Leslie Todd, LCSW, ACSW  
Correspondent, Assn of Family and Conciliation Courts

In Louisiana, where the 2020 median household income was \$50,935 (Statistica), a full child custody evaluation meeting the model standards of the Association of Family and Conciliation Courts (AFCC) is out of reach of most families. Equally pressing, there are very few professionals in the state willing or able to provide them. Many parishes have no evaluators, and judges and attorneys are sending families from all over the state for evaluations to a handful of professionals.

Determining “the best interest of the child” after parents separate is often a difficult task. The MMPI results are often considered in a full child custody evaluation, but adversarial attorneys weaponized the full report to focus on pathologies, and the mental health professional was often called as an expert witness in a war of parent-bashing which had nothing to do with the best interest of anybody, especially the child. No wonder most professionals stayed away from forensic work.

One less expensive alternative is to “catch the family upstream.” Courts should use mental health professionals early in the separation process, before litigation is even possible. Using problem-solving approaches instead of adversarial ones, courts could triage cases into the appropriate resolution approach and facilitate resolution by using unbundled volunteer attorneys, mediators and settlement judges.

Courts can resolve 80% of contested divorce and custody cases with this early intervention as shown by Stacey Marz, in “Faster and as Satisfying: An Evaluation of Alaska’s Early Resolution Triage Program,” *Family Court Review*.

Also, courts can employ mental health professionals within the Court (as with the parenting coordinators in the 22nd JDC (St. Tammany Parish). However, according to Family Court Judge Patti Oppenheim (22nd JDC), there is still a tremendous shortage of parenting coordinators and custody evaluators in agencies or private practice.

But more appealing to most psychologists, LCSWs, and LPCs is to provide a "Honda" version of a child custody evaluation which focuses on psychosocial, not legal issues and remains realistic regarding the resources at hand.

In 2007, the Association of Family and Conciliation Courts created a Task Force to craft and publish Guidelines for Brief Focused Assessment (BFA). The BFA is meant to be a much more narrowly focused assessment of “parenting time and responsibility” disputes. THE BFA also helps the problems of access to services and costs.

Benjamin Garber, author of *Developmental Psychology for Family Law Professionals*:



*Theory, Application and The Best Interests of the Child*, stresses, “Family law questions are about relationships, not individuals. They are about dynamics, not diagnoses.” This speaks to our professional ethics and plays to our strengths: to help families—not add to their distress—by using our knowledge of attachment theory, family systems, developmental needs of individuals and families, and parenting competencies rather than intrapsychic data.

The difference between a full-scale child custody evaluation (CCE) and a BFA is that the brief model requires a narrow focus of inquiry. Judges can ask psychologists and other mental health professionals to focus on problems such as:

- Is it advisable for children to move with one parent out of state?
- Is it in a child’s best interest to be introduced to a heretofore uninvolved parent?
- Should a parenting plan be changed from a 50/50 arrangement to some other time-sharing arrangement?

By focusing on parenting competencies and relationship strengths and deficits, mental health professionals can answer these questions without relying on psychological testing. The briefer model requires fewer hours of interviews and therefore costs less. It is still a multifactorial approach but avoids pathologizing individuals, emphasizing instead parenting attunement and skills and children’s qualitative experiences with parents.

A good example of a practical BFA model comes from LaCrosse County Wisconsin, where Family Court employs an assessment team which renders an assessment based on state statutes and Dr. Bruce Perry’s Six Core Strengths:

attachment, attunement, self-regulation, affiliation, tolerance and respect. (Personal communication with Program Manager, Lisa Goings Stablier, 1/15/22). This would be an excellent model for Louisiana practitioners to adopt. It speaks perfectly to the skills of social workers and LPCs who have knowledge of genograms, attachment issues, and family systems and who might previously have believed that forensic evaluations were beyond their expertise.

A Brief Focused Assessment is appropriate for many Louisiana families because it is a Honda, not a Lamborghini: practical, reliable, and within budget. And the AFCC will release a 2022 update of the 2006 Model Standards of Practice for Child Custody Evaluation later this year.

Anyone providing a BFA should of course be fully trained in child custody assessment. For the first time, the AFCC will offer a live webinar program: “The Fundamentals of Conducting Child Custody Evaluations,” March 15-17 and March 23-35. The training team consists of four nationally-acclaimed experts: Robin Deutsch, PhD, ABPP, April Harris-Britt, PhD, Sol P. Rappaport, PhD, ABPP, and Arnold T. Shienvold, PhD.

On February 8, I will also be offering a one-hour webinar for AFCC illustrating the short model I’ve used for many years. Those interested, can find more information about these training opportunities at [www.afccnet.org](http://www.afccnet.org)

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[Editor’s Note: Leslie Todd served as the founding President of the Louisiana chapter of the Association of Family and Conciliation Courts (AFCC).]



# International Doctors in Alcoholics Anonymous: A Welcoming Place to Turn

by Kelley Pears, PhD  
Correspondent, IDAA

Turning to substances and addictive behaviors is at an all time high. Pressures and stresses on psychologists, physicians, and other healthcare workers are higher than ever in today's medical environment.

Yet, substance misuse and addiction rates are no different among healthcare workers than they are in the general population. According to researchers, up to 15% of healthcare professionals will misuse substances during their lifetime. Rates of prescription drug abuse and addiction are five times higher among physicians than in the general population, researchers have found, cited by the Hazelton Betty Ford Foundation.

While the stigma of addiction for doctors and other healthcare professionals is far less than it was 30 years ago, the stigma for seeking help is alive and well. With doctors and healthcare professionals the problem is compounded by an extra layer of stigma—related to the false idea that somehow we are “supposed to know” things that others do not know and are able to avoid the human problems that others encounter.

There is professional shame experienced when someone in the healthcare profession struggles with addiction. In general, healthcare professionals are held to a higher standard. And knowing much often leads to doctors treating themselves—or not treating themselves—for conditions that are misdiagnosed. There's an old adage that says, “Self can't see self.” This is especially so when it comes to addictive disorders.

Addiction affects not only the immediate family members, but extended family, friends and co-workers. Keeping secrets, protecting the family name, and even protecting the job becomes a massive

undertaking and the wave of destruction reaches far and wide. There is an enormous fear of being “found out” and losing everything that has been worked so hard for.

Many do not know where to turn for help.

International Doctors in Alcoholics Anonymous (IDAA) can be just that place to turn. According to their website (idaa.org), “The mission of IDAA is to carry the message of recovery to health care professionals and their families.” The organization is described as a “worldwide fellowship” of healthcare professionals and their families whose sole purpose is to foster recovery. Membership is open to all doctoral level healthcare providers and has recently broadened membership to include physician assistants and nurse practitioners.

Of course, confidentiality and anonymity are paramount. According to IDAA's Executive Director, Robert Lindsey, the membership list is “secure and protected.” Those applying for membership in IDAA go through a vetting process to insure the individual's status as a health care provider. IDAA pledges to create and maintain a safe and secure environment so the seeds of recovery can grow and flourish.

IDAA offers several avenues to connect with others. The annual meeting is held each summer. Typically, the convention starts on Wednesday evening and closes on Sunday morning. There are various breakout meetings geared to different specialties (e.g. psychologists, surgeons, internal medicine, etc.). Also, there are breakout meetings for groups such as LGBTQ+, woman in recovery, early career and a “back to work” group.

Process addictions, such as gambling or sex addictions are also provided a home in IDAA. As noted above, recovery affects the entire family, so AI-anon is an integral part of IDAA. Additionally, there is programming for children ages 6-12 and teenagers 13-19. The teen program has been so popular, that graduates of that program kept going back to IDAA and started a 20's group. Also included in the meeting's programming are fun activities such as golf, a fun-run as well as local attractions. Further avenues to connect with others in recovery are the Cyberdocs list-serve as well as numerous Zoom meetings held around the globe. A list of these meetings is provided on the members-only portion of the website.

IDAA also offers a Help Line, found on the website. Actually, the help line is not a single phone number but a net of weblinks to individuals in each state in the US and countries around the world. The Help Line is a listing of IDAA members who serve as personal contacts for healthcare professionals and their families seeking another doctor to talk with about recovery from alcoholism and/or other addictions. These member contacts also provide information on AA or Caduceus meetings in their local areas for members visiting their city.

Membership is open to any doctoral level healthcare provider who desires to stay sober, employed or unemployed. Many have lost jobs as a result of their disease. It is welcoming to know that the spouse and/or children of a healthcare provider “may themselves be members even if the qualifying professional is not yet in recovery.” This emphasizes the welcoming nature of IDAA and the value it places on family recovery.

*Dr. Pears earned his doctorate in Counseling Psychology from the University of Southern Mississippi in 1994 and has been doing trauma work for over 25 years. He was a staff psychologist at Central Louisiana State Hospital in Pineville, and later served as the Chief of Psychology. He's been at the Alexandria VA for 14 years, serving on the Post Trauma Stress Disorder Clinical Team as the PTSD/Substance Use Disorders Specialist. He is a certified provider of Prolonged Exposure, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Insomnia, Motivational Enhancement Therapy as well as Cognitive Processing Therapy. He's also a Regional CPT trainer for VA. In his spare time, he enjoys singing in the church choir, riding motorcycles and traveling with his wife, Chawn.*

(courtesy photo)







The fundamental changes that began in 2020 with the COVID-19 crisis are continuing to cause dramatic shifts in the culture that will be with us for years. Experts agree that the social, economic, and psychological impact of the pandemic will reshape aspects of our society, and this seems especially true in the area of health and behavior. We scoured the available information and what the experts had to say, and meshed it with a psychological perspective on individual and cultural change, pinpointing seven trends that appear to be solidly with us for now.

## **#1 Health, Prevention, and Behavioral Psychology Have Taken on New Meaning**

While we often think the United States has a class act medical service delivery system, Covid has fully exposed that we deserve our low rank in health when compared to other countries. The pandemic has caused a shift in awareness, from the medical model to prevention, behavioral and lifestyle factors, especially those that impact natural immunity. Sunlight, vitamin D, sleep, sitting, microbiome, diet, stress— have all been put on the radar. Additionally, 94% of companies are making significant investments in their well-being programs and they have increased their mental health benefits by 85%. Psychologists will have an opportunity to take the lead in this area.

## **#2 Opportunities for Consulting Psychologists Continue to Expand**

Who you gonna call? Psychologists are uniquely positioned as problem-solvers in a culture that is increasingly in a state of flux. As elite providers, with their broad-based knowledge of human behavior and scientific training, psychologists will continue to be in high demand. The shortage of and the skill set of most psychologists enhances their desirability in healthcare, in government, in industry. APA says, "...psychologists are finding themselves with bigger, more visible roles in government and media, on movie sets, in tech startups, and elsewhere. Even the most traditionally macho of athletes are looking for psychological support, ..."

## **#3 Leveraging New Innovations and Technologies**

From telehealth, to online education, to remote work, to artificial intelligence, the rate of new technologies will not be slowing down. Psychologists will need to leverage these new technologies. Telehealth has boomed with virtual health care visits of over one billion. in 2020 and Medicare reporting a 63-fold increase for 2021. Educational services are impacted for those who teach, those who learn, and those who deal with students of any sort. The virtual world is continuing to take on a share of all connections between human beings and psychologists have the opportunity to reach more people, help individuals balance the demands, and create ways for coping with change.

## **#4 Managing the Coming Mental Health Crisis**

Similar to last year's trends, experts predict a tsunami of problems coming due to the stress and changes that will continue regarding individuals' work, relationships, childcare, education, and health. Understanding what is happening to children will be critical. In one survey, 71% of parents said the pandemic had taken a toll on their child's mental health, and 69% said the pandemic was the worst thing to happen to their child. Prioritizing emotional well-being is critical for all citizens and psychologists are essential in helping develop ways of delivering mental health services.

## **#5 The Financial Crisis**

Federal debt is reaching \$30 trillion and inflation is piling up. The rich and poor gap is greater than ever. The average middle income has stayed the same but the average cost of a house is over \$400,000 dollars and a car over \$45,000. Financial health will be a growing and dramatic problem.

## **#6 Embracing Both Worldviews**

The country is increasingly being referred to as "Two Americas," with two different sets of values, perspectives, and goals. Psychologists can help provide a transcendent view of these two sides, working toward a consensus that includes the best of both political approaches. And, help others in detoxing from extreme positions.

## **#7 Facilitating Authenticity, Human Connection, and Spiritual Meaning**

The void left by high-tech and Covid adaptations will need to be filled for many people by something positive— something other than drugs and alcohol. Psychologists will have the opportunity to provide services that enhance relationships, focus on home life, nature, creativity and the inner experience of being human. A renaissance in humanistic approaches might be important.





# The Psychology Times' BOOKSHELF

Who's Writing What?

## *Retirement Experiences of Psychologists*

*Edited by Rodney R. Baker and Patrick H. DeLeon*

*2021 Cambridge Scholars Publishing*

Drs. Rodney Baker and Patrick DeLeon have put together a fascinating combination of stories from the generation of psychologists who are currently retiring from active practice, service, and teaching. The effort stems from a brain child of their symposia presented at the American Psychological Association (APA) running from 2014 through 2019. *Retirement Experiences of Psychologists* captures a patchwork of different perspectives from high-powered psychology professionals. Contributors those of the various ethnic identities, persons of color, and gender, each who are in a different phase of retirement, with a different career path and unique story.

Editors are Rodney Baker, PhD, retired as mental health director and chief of psychology at the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Medical Center in San Antonio, Texas, and Patrick H. DeLeon, Ph.D., MPH, JD, a well-known friend of many in the Louisiana psychology community. Dr. DeLeon is a former president of the American Psychological Association (APA), member of the National Academy of Medicine, and honorary fellow of several national nursing associations.

The editors explain that clinical practice was primarily a post-World War II activity and so many of the experiences of today's retirees is a first experience event. Not only do retiring psychologists have very few, if any, role models for retirement, but the complexity and variability of psychology practice creates a rich tapestry of experiences and choices that gives the book its depth.

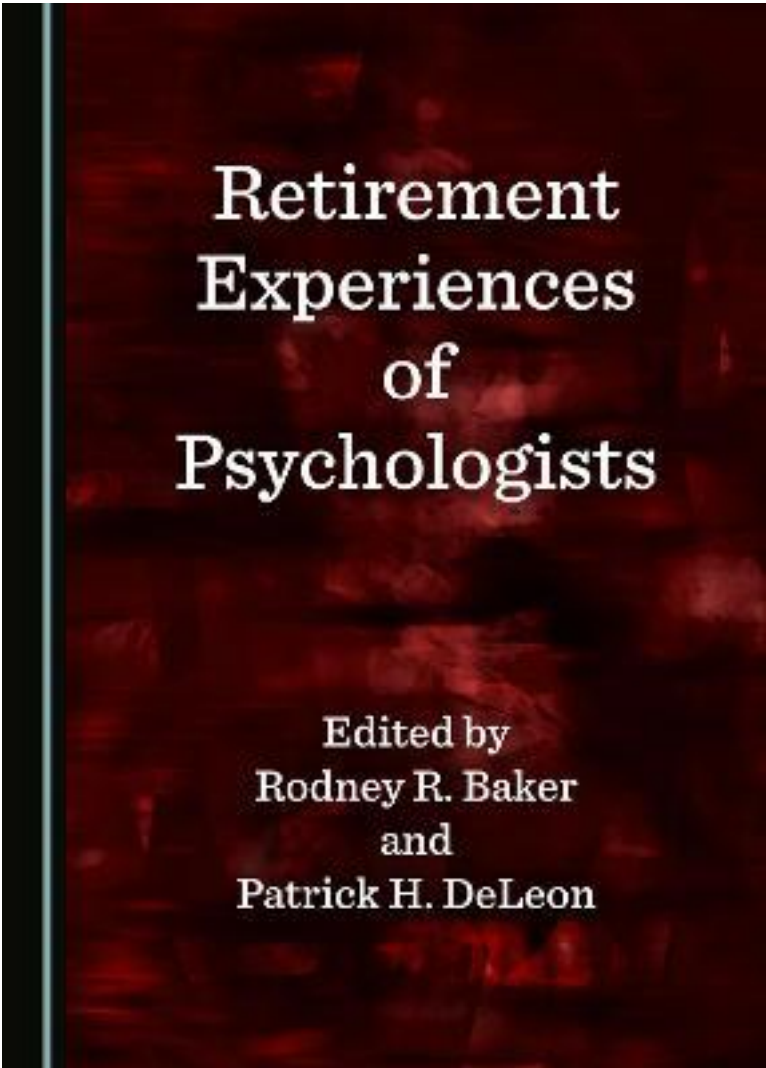
The writing and personal essays do not disappoint. The psychologists explain their career journeys in candid, intimate and revealing ways. They share elements of their experience that are enjoyable and insightful, providing the reader personal details and often profound conclusions about the journey.

The book design includes sections on "Retirement Stories from Institutional Professional Activity (Non-Academic)," on "Retirement Stories from Academic Professional Activity," another on "Retirement Stories from Independent Private Practice," and a fourth on "Retirement Stories from Psychology Organizations."

*Retirement Experiences of Psychologists* brings together an interesting combination of psychologists, including Merry Bullock, PhD, retired as international affairs director at the APA, Ellen Cole, PhD, author of *Older Women Who Work*, and Thomas Grisso, PhD, emeritus professor of at the University of Massachusetts Medical School in Worcester, MA, where his research contributed to developmental and mental health policy and law in the juvenile and criminal justice systems.

Contributors also include James M. Jones, PhD, who directed the Minority Fellowship Program and served as executive director for Public Interest at the APA, Ronald F. Levant, EdD, MBA, ABPP, another former president of the APA, and a key person responsible for creating the new field of the psychology of men and masculinities, and Ruth Ullmann Paige, PhD, retired from independent practice and a past APA Recording Secretary and member of APA Board of Directors.

Gilbert O. Sanders, EdD, who served 37 years in the U.S. Air Force, Army, and Public Health Service, Michael J Sullivan, PhD, APA's "citizen psychologist," and Melba J.T. Vasquez, PhD,



ABPP, another former APA president are also among the contributors.

The essays are full of tidbits of wisdom and humor and insights. Dr. Baker writes, "... I didn't want to die at my VA desk still worrying about performance standards, workload, budgets, and the myriad of other things that always faced me in addition to the things I liked doing. There must be something else to consider in my future."

"My chief losses in retirement include loss of sleep deprivation—I really enjoy my afternoon nap—..."

Dr. DeLeon writes, "From one perspective, there never is a good time to leave a position that allows one to advance a deeply held vision for bettering society—especially one that allows regularly visiting the White House, Supreme Court, and Hawaii."

"And yet, an appropriate analogy might be playing in the National Football League. The games are exciting. If you survive, you know that you must be good. And yet, at some point, your knees simply can no longer take the daily pounding."

Dr. Willis writes, "I realize that a part of my difficulty adjusting to retirement is that I have been working since I was a child, and it is hard not to be busy all the time."

In, "I retired from my job but not my profession," Dr. Levant writes, "The move out of my second deanship was one of the best choices that I have made in my life. It felt like unloading an 80-pound backpack, ..."

In, "Retirement has an Existential Identity," Dr. Jones tells us, "One thing keeps coming back to me...get things in order. I resist that to some degree because it feels too much like the end game." [...] "The past is long and getting longer, the future is short getting shorter, and the present is not an instant but the prolonged consciousness that fuses the two."

A wistful theme from Dr. Baker emerges, "If I had a complaint about retirement it would be what I vaguely remember as someone calling the lament of the elderly: 'Now that I know all the answers, no one asks me the questions.'"

And reflected from Dr. DeLeon, "And yet, somewhat embarrassingly, from time to time, as one becomes more senior and reflects on the past, there is a subtle feeling that wouldn't it be nice if only more people were aware of what one has accomplished ..."

While a little hard to get hold of through Amazon, *Retirement Experiences* is available from the publisher and well worth the price.



# A Shrink at the Flicks

## *The Power of the Dog* A Review

by Alvin G. Burstein, PhD

*The Power of the Dog* is a remarkable movie, dense, complex, and twisted, like the rawhide lariat one of its protagonists works to prepare as a gift. Filmed in New Zealand, the story is set in 1920's Montana. The cinematography captures the sweep of plains, the towering mountains, the thunder of cattle herds, and the ardors of a hard scrabble herding existence. The beauty of the equine creatures who play supporting roles is impressive.

There appear to be four main protagonists: brothers George and Phil Burbank, who run the ranch, widowed Rose Gordon, who works at an inn where the herders stop during a drive, and Rose's teenage son Peter. However, there is a fifth character, one who has died before the movie opens, Bronco Henry. He had served as a mentor to Phil, who treasures Bronco's saddle as a memento. Another memento is a kerchief of Bronco's that Phil uses while pleasuring himself.

The action opens with the herders flocking into Rose's establishment, tired and hungry for food and thirsty for entertainment. Rose scurries to get the drovers fed at tables adorned by paper flowers that her young son, Peter, has fashioned. Lank and grimy, Phil makes ongoing jibes at his "fatso" brother and at George's preference for mufti—a fedora rather than a sombrero and eschewing chaps. Once at the inn, Phil jeers at Peter for his prissiness. When Phil sees that George is attracted to Rose, he sneers at her as a gold digger looking for an easy touch.

Despite Phil's obdurate disapproval, George and Rosa marry. A crisis erupts in the new household of four when George invites the brothers' parents for a celebratory meal. George, eager for social status, also invites the governor and his wife. To entertain and impress his guests, he has purchased a fancy

Guest Columnist,  
Dr. Alvin Burstein

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



courtesy photo

*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.



piano, on which Rose—having played piano at the local movie house—is to perform. Rose is terrified by the challenge. Phil tortures her by mocking her stumbling piano practice with a virtuoso rendition of her practice piece on his guitar. George, blind to the tension Rose is feeling, feels constrained to warn Phil that he should bathe before the dinner and dress appropriately.

When the guests gather around the piano, Rose's stage fright overcomes her, requiring red-faced apologies. Phil shows up late, begrimed and work worn, declining to shake hands or socialize "because I stink."

Although scruffy, dirty Phil had earned an honors degree at Yale, but he has transformed himself into someone who parades his dirtiness and mocks social convention and its niceties. The ideal that shaped that transformation was Phil's mentor, Bronco. This tension between social convention and a rejection of it is a central theme.

Phil decides to teach Peter to ride and lures him into explorations of the mountains. The counterpoint to this development is Rose's slide into alcoholism fueled by her feelings of social inadequacy and fear of losing her son to Phil.

During one of their mountain excursions Phil tells Peter that Bronco saved his life in a bitter winter storm by warming his body with his own. Though Phil avoids the question of whether they were naked together, Peter has discovered a trove of male nude photos belonging to Bronco. Peter responds to Phil's story by confession that as a young boy, he had discovered his father having hanged himself, and had to cut the body down.

Their mentoring relationship feeds Phil's decision to fashion a braided rawhide lariat for Peter, who supplies him with rawhide for the project. Unknown to Phil, the hide came from a steer that had died of anthrax. Phil dies of the infection, suffering, the doctor tells the family, dreadful pain and convulsions at the end. We see Phil's face being carefully shaved and his body dressed in a conventional suit for his burial, finally conforming to social convention.

Peter does not attend the funeral. He has acquired the lethal lariat. Carefully avoiding its touch, he hides it under his bed. He reads, aloud, Psalm 22:20: "*Deliver my soul from the sword; my darling from the power of the dog.*" The film closes with Peter looking through his window, watching his mother and stepfather embrace, leaving the audience to ponder his motivations and the meaning of his recitation.



## Governor Makes Appointments

Last month, Gov. Edwards announced his appointments to several Louisiana boards and commissions.

Bora K. Sunseri of Baton Rouge has been appointed to the Louisiana State Board of Social Work Examiners. Sunseri is a project director at the Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services. She will serve as a licensed clinical social worker engaged in a practice specialty other than clinical.

The Louisiana Rare Disease Advisory Council offers expert and clinical advice to the Louisiana Department of Health, the Governor and the legislature to help address the needs of persons diagnosed and living with rare diseases. Kelly Rouse of Shreveport has been reappointed to the Louisiana Rare Disease Advisory Council. Rouse is a behavior analyst with a private practice. She will serve as the chair appointed by the Governor and as a member appointed by the Speaker of the House.

The Louisiana Developmental Disability Council's mission is to lead and promote advocacy, capacity building, and systemic change to improve the quality of life for individuals with developmental disabilities and their families. Bambi D. Polotzola of Opelousas has been reappointed to the Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council. Polotzola is the executive director of the Office of Disability Affairs for the Office of Governor John Bel Edwards. She will serve as a representative of the Governor's Office of Disability Affairs.

The Louisiana Rehabilitation Council listens to the concerns of those with disability issues, reviews, analyzes and evaluates the state rehabilitation program, collaborates with other state agencies, organizations, and consumer groups. Suzanne S. Lentz of Covington has been reappointed to the Louisiana Rehabilitation Council. Lentz is the founder of TASS Brain Injury Rehabilitation Center. She will represent business, industry, and labor. Virginia G. Young of New Orleans has been reappointed to the Louisiana

## AFCC-LA State Conference to be Held Friday, March 18th in Baton Rouge

The AFCC-LA State Conference will be held Friday, March 18th at the Baton Rouge Embassy Suites. The all-day conference will offer CEUs for Family Court-related issues such as the use (and misuse) of technology and risk management for working with professionals working with DV cases.

Rehabilitation Council. Young is a program coordinator for Exceptional Entrepreneurs of Louisiana. She will represent individuals with physical, cognitive, sensory, and mental disabilities.

The Governor's Justice Reinvestment Implementation Oversight Council studies the state's criminal justice system to recommend strategic changes to improve Louisiana's public safety by reducing the prison population. It offers a report to the Legislature of cost-effective, evidence-based sentencing and corrections reforms that promote offender accountability and protects public safety. Charles G. Hargon of Baton Rouge has been appointed to the Governor's Justice Reinvestment Implementation Oversight Council. Hargon is

a retired chief operating officer for Hibernia National Bank. He will serve at-large.

The Louisiana D.A.R.E. Advisory Board is charged with developing, promoting, monitoring, and evaluating the D.A.R.E. program throughout the state. The board serves as an advisory body to the Louisiana Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Criminal Justice in this respect. Kristy M. Miller of Baton Rouge has been appointed to the Louisiana D.A.R.E. Advisory Board. Miller is the director of drug policy for the Office of Governor John Bel Edwards. She will represent the Governor's Drug Policy Board.

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