

**SPRING EDITION**

# **MPA** **NEWSLETTER**



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Ty Stafford, Ph.D.  
tws37@msstate.edu  
Starkville

**President-Elect:**

Nicholas McAfee, Ph.D.  
nwmcafee@olemiss.edu  
Oxford

**Immediate Past-President  
& Convention Chair:**

Amanda Gugliano, PsyD  
amanda.gugliano@msh.ms.gov  
Whitfield

**Financial Officer:**

Michael Nadorff, Ph.D.  
mnadorff@psychology.msstate.edu  
Starkville

**Communications Officer:**

Hannah Ford, Ph.D.  
hford@umc.edu  
Jackson

**APA Council Representative:**

Cynthia Karlson, Ph.D.  
ckarlson@umc.edu  
Jackson

**Membership Officer:**

Lisa Yazdani, Ph.D.  
lisayazdani@msn.com  
Byram

**Region 1 Representative:**

Sheila Williamson, Ph.D.  
smw0@comcast.net  
Starkville

**Region 2 Representative:**

Liz Woodruff, Ph.D.  
elissa@drelissawoodruff.com  
Ridgeland

**Region 3 Representative:**

Kristy McRaney, Ph.D.  
kristy.mcraney@usm.edu  
Hattiesburg

**Region 4 Representative:**

Jennifer Ladner-Graham, Ph.D.  
jenmladner@gmail.com  
Picayune

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# LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Hello MPA Members,

I am excited and honored to be writing my first letter as your President. As we move even further into 2026, I am excited for what this year holds for the Mississippi Psychological Association. A new year naturally brings a sense of renewal, and I am eager to see MPA continue to lead the way in clinical excellence, education, and advocacy across the state.

I also want to acknowledge the recent and ongoing challenges that have impacted our colleagues and friends in the northern parts of the state who have faced significant hardships due to the recent winter storms. From power outages to office closures, I know that many of you have had to manage personal and professional stress while continuing to provide essential services to your clients and students. If there is anything I or MPA can do to assist the continued recovery, please let me know.



As the year starts we are navigating a field of psychology that is shifting at a rapid pace. The potential for the integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) into our work presents opportunity as well as a complex web of professional and ethical considerations that must be addressed proactively. Furthermore, our advocacy efforts remain more critical than ever as we monitor the evolving landscape of master's level licensure and the ongoing discussions regarding Prescriptive Authority (RxP). These potential changes could represent a significant transformation for psychology in Mississippi, as well as for our professional identity. MPA is committed to being your voice in the state and staying aware of what may be occurring with the issues locally and nationally. I applaud the work of our Legislative Chair and Committee, Federal Advocacy Coordinator, and the team at Ten One Strategies for assisting MPA in staying abreast and proactive about these and other issues.

Related to these issues and in the spirit of continued growth, I am happy to announce that we will be continuing our virtual Summer CEU Series this year. We are creating a range of topics to be announced soon, and I look forward to seeing many of you at these events. We are hoping to collaborate with other organizations as well, so we might maximize the impact of these events.

As I close, I want to issue a challenge to each of you. The strength of our association lies in its members and the diversity of its voices. To ensure our advocacy remains potent and our community remains vibrant, I ask every member reading this to personally reach out to a colleague, a student, or a new psychologist in the state who is not yet a member of MPA. Please take just a moment in the coming weeks to share with someone the value you find in MPA and encourage them to join us.

Thank you all for your work for Mississippi and for the privilege of serving as MPA President. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me if I can be of any assistance.

Sincerely,

Ty Stafford, PhD  
President



# PRACTICE AND SPTA LEADERS CONFERENCE



# REPRESENTING AND ELEVATING MPA AT PSLC WASHINGTON, DC



The Mississippi Psychological Association proudly recognizes Executive Director LaDarion Ammons for his recent presentation at the Practice & Science Leadership Conference (PSLC) in Washington, DC.

PSLC brings together psychological association leaders from across the country to collaborate, share insights, and strengthen the future of the profession. LaDarion's participation and presentation highlighted his commitment to advancing association leadership, fostering innovation, and supporting psychologists through effective organizational strategy. Through his work, LaDarion continues to elevate MPA's presence on a national stage while bringing valuable knowledge and perspective back to benefit our members here in Mississippi. His leadership reflects a strong dedication not only to MPA, but to the broader psychological community.

MPA is honored to have LaDarion representing Mississippi and is grateful for his ongoing commitment to growth, collaboration, and excellence.

## MPA LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE UPDATE

Thank you for participating in the 2026 MPA Capitol Day!

The Mississippi Psychological Association (MPA) Executive Committee commissions the MPA Legislative Committee to represent the organization throughout each Legislative Session, working closely with MPA's lobbyist, Chip Reno, to safeguard the title and practice of psychologists in Mississippi and to advance MPA's legislative priorities.

While the committee actively monitors and responds to developments at the Capitol, members who wish to track legislation themselves can easily do so by following the steps below.

To Review Mississippi Legislation

- Visit the Mississippi Legislature website. [www.legislature.ms.gov/](http://www.legislature.ms.gov/)
- Select the Legislation tab at the top of the page.
- Choose Measure Search if you already know the bill number or select Text Search to search by topic.
- Use the New Text Search and enter relevant keywords (e.g., psychologist, mental health, behavioral health, telehealth).
- Click Search Records to view results.

If you come across legislation that raises concerns or presents opportunities for improvement, please reach out to your regional representatives.

Sincerely,  
Natalie Gaughf, PhD, ABPP  
Legislative Committee Chair

# MPA CAPITOL DAY



# MPA CAPITOL DAY



Congratulations to Chairman Creekmore on receiving MPA's Distinguished Legislative Achievement Award for his continued support of mental health legislation and advocacy to improve access to care across Mississippi.



We also congratulate Dr. Josh Fulwiler on receiving MPA's Distinguished Practitioner Award. We are grateful for your dedication, leadership, and commitment to strengthening mental health care in Mississippi.



## Care that changes lives. A career that matters.

Adams County Correctional Center, Natchez, MS  
Tallahatchie County Correctional Facility, Tutwiler, MS

CoreCivic is dedicated to delivering high-quality support to those in our care. Careers in correctional healthcare offer professionals the chance to grow and find purpose in a uniquely rewarding environment.

 **CoreCivic**

CoreCivic is a Drug-Free Workplace & EOE –  
Veteran/Disability



# APA STATE REPRESENTATIVE

Thank you to the Mississippi Psychological Association for the opportunity to participate in the 2026 American Psychological Association Council of Representatives meeting. The meeting was a time of reaffirmation of psychological principles and research. Below are highlights from the meeting. The full meeting summary, along with links to updated polices, can be found here: [Council meeting summaries](#)

## February 2026 APA Council Meeting Highlights

The American Psychological Association Council of Representatives held a hybrid meeting Feb. 20-21, with in-person council members convening in Washington, D.C. The Council of Representatives is the legislative body of APA and is the ultimate policymaking body for the association.



**2026 Resolution on Antisemitism.** By a vote of 127-37 with five abstentions, Council adopted as policy a 2026 Resolution on Antisemitism. The resolution updates the 2007 APA Resolution on Anti-Semitic and Anti-Jewish Prejudice, strengthening APA's policy framework to reflect developments since 2007.

**Reaffirming APA's Commitment to Human Rights and Free Speech.** Council voted 146-5 (with three abstentions) to adopt a policy reaffirming APA's commitment to human rights and freedom of expression. The resolution condemns bigotry in all its forms and opposes efforts aimed at silencing or punishing non-violent advocacy directed toward safeguarding human life and upholding human dignity and human rights.

**Standards of Accreditation for Programs in Health Service Psychology.** Council voted 156-4 (with two abstentions) to adopt as APA policy the revised Standards of Accreditation for Programs in Health Service Psychology.

**Integrating Psychological Science into Natural Disaster Response.** Based on the findings in an APA presidential task force report, Council adopted (by a vote of 146-1) a policy that calls for a national effort to increase research and partnerships among emergency management agencies, mental health organizations, and community health providers to improve coordination of disaster response efforts.

**Expanding Access to Mental Healthcare in Rural Communities.** By a vote of 166-0, with one abstention, Council approved a policy to acknowledge the unique challenges faced by rural communities and increase support for policies and adequate funding for programs to increase access to mental health care in rural communities.

# APA STATE REPRESENTATIVE

Council, via unanimous consent, adopted an updated **2026 Resolution on Promoting Global Perspectives in U.S. Psychology**. The policy calls on psychologists to examine psychological concepts based on U.S. research that are assumed to be universal; encourage assessment, intervention, and education that respects local communities; and promote international partnerships and initiatives to ensure global knowledge sharing.

**Promoting Comprehensive Sexual Health Education.** Council voted 145-3 (with two abstentions) to update a resolution on sexual health education to promote developmentally appropriate, comprehensive, and inclusive sexual health education. Acknowledging significant

changes in technology and an increased understanding of sexuality and gender diversity, the resolution aims to ensure youth have access to accurate and appropriate sexual health information and to promote inclusion and equity for sexual and gender diverse communities.

Revised Resolution on Palliative Care. Council (via unanimous consent) approved an updated resolution on palliative care and end-of-life issues intended to emphasize the often underutilized but vital role of psychologists in palliative care systems.

Presidential Citations:

- APA President Wendi Williams, PhD, presented a presidential citation to members of the APA Rural Health Caucus, the Committee on Rural Health, the Division 31 Rural Health Section, and all psychologists leading in advocacy for rural communities, for strengthening rural behavioral health systems by addressing the challenges created by workforce shortages, geographic isolation, and limited infrastructure.
- Dr. Williams also presented a presidential citation to members of Division 22 (Rehabilitation Psychology), 25 (Behavior Analysis), and 33 (Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities/Autism Spectrum Disorder), and other psychologists serving patients with autism, their families, and their caregivers. The citation recognizes their profound work to shape our understanding of autism spectrum disorders (ASD) and strengthen the support available to autistic individuals, their families, and their communities.

Policies are in the process of being copy-edited before being posted online in the Council Policy Manual. Links to the policies not yet posted will be added to this summary when available. 8:00 p.m. EST, February 21, 2026

Cindy Karlson, PhD  
APA State Representative



# From Stories to Solutions: A Prevention-Focused Approach to Violence Risk

**Friday – April 17, 2026**

**Noon – 2:00 PM Central**

**Live via Zoom 2 CEs**

This workshop is presented by the Nebraska Psychological Association and a coalition of State, Provincial and Territorial Psychological Associations.



**Melissa Hunter, PhD**



**Sam Hunter, PhD**

High-profile acts of violence are often followed by stories that attempt to explain what happened and why. While these narratives can be compelling, they rarely offer clear guidance for how clinicians, educators, and communities can prevent harm before it occurs. This training builds on existing research and explanatory frameworks to shift the focus from retrospective understanding to forward-looking prevention.



Using a developmental, contextual, and ethically grounded approach, this workshop explores how risk emerges through the interaction of individual vulnerabilities, social environments, and systemic factors. Participants will learn to recognize behavior-based warning signs without relying on stigmatizing assumptions, apply multi-tiered prevention strategies, and navigate the ethical tensions inherent in this work.

## **Learning Objectives**

After attending this presentation, participants will be able to:

1. Explain how descriptive and explanatory models of violent behavior can be extended into practical, prevention-focused approaches for use in clinical, educational, and community settings.
2. Describe how risk for serious harm develops over time through the interaction of individual, social, and environmental factors, rather than being determined by diagnosis, identity, or personality alone.
3. Recognize behavior-based warning signs that may indicate increased vulnerability or need for support, while avoiding assumptions that stigmatize neurodivergent individuals or those with mental health challenges.
4. Apply developmentally informed, tiered prevention strategies (universal, targeted, and intensive) to real-world scenarios involving youth and young adults.
5. Use ethical decision-making principles to balance safety, autonomy, dignity, and inclusion when responding to concerning behaviors or situations.



Dr. Bryant is a licensed New Hampshire and Massachusetts-based clinical and forensic psychologist, with board certification in Forensic Psychology by the American Board of Professional Psychology. She received her B.A. from the University of West Florida, her M.A. and Ph.D. in clinical psychology from Duquesne University, and completed a forensic postdoctoral fellowship at the University of Massachusetts Medical School Law and Psychiatry Program.

Working in both criminal and civil arenas, Dr. Bryant has maintained a private practice in clinical and forensic psychology for nearly two decades and has provided psychological services in a variety of forensic and therapeutic settings.

Dr. Bryant is a Fellow with the American Academy of Forensic Psychology, and formerly served as President and Executive Director of the New Hampshire Psychological Association (NHPA). She also served on the NHPA Ethics Committee for over ten years, received the Margaret M. Riggs Award for Distinguished Contribution to Psychology in the State of New Hampshire, and was awarded the Karl F. Heiser APA Presidential Award for Advocacy. Dr. Bryant brings extensive experience in forensic, clinical, and ethical consultation, academic instruction, and professional presentation to her role on the risk management team.

## Sequence XV: Risky Business: The Ethics and Risk Management of High Risk Circumstances in Clinical Practice

- 6 Ethics Continuing Education Credits
- 15% off your Trust Sponsored Professional Liability Policy premium (*for 2 consecutive years at policy renewal*).

Registration opens at March 19th

Workshop is May 1st via Zoom from 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

### Workshop Description

For over two decades, The Trust has worked to educate and support psychologists in improving their ethics and risk management skills and strategies by providing live workshops, webinars, risk management consultations, and expanding resources. This 15th Workshop in our Sequence series continues to emphasize applied, integrated and strategic methods to help you stay grounded in ethical principles and practices, and to protect you from adverse disciplinary and legal actions.

Psychologists routinely encounter complex, high-stakes situations that require sound clinical judgment, ethical decision-making, and proactive risk management. This advanced workshop provides a deep dive into five of the most legally and ethically challenging areas of practice: compassionate and competent treatment of suicidal patients while balancing clinical and liability concerns, navigating the complexities of duty to protect obligations, working effectively with high-conflict families, managing subpoenas and courtroom testimony, and ensuring a legally and ethically sound termination of treatment. This day-long workshop will provide actionable strategies to mitigate risk, protect clients and practice, and enhance confidence in addressing these critical issues. This seminar is a key training for psychologists seeking to strengthen their ethical competence and safeguard their professional integrity in today's increasingly complex clinical landscape.

[Register Here](#)

\* This course will not fulfill requirements of all jurisdictions. It is important that potential participants review their respective state licensing board requirements prior to registering for this workshop.



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# FEDERAL ADVOCACY COORDINATOR



Greetings all and Happy March from your Federal Advocacy Coordinator. I hope everyone impacted by the earlier storms are getting back to a calmer March. I know how devastating it was in the Oxford area and how the recovery efforts are ongoing.

I wanted to update the membership on the most recent Federal Advocacy happenings, as well as APA's current Grassroots Advocacy focus. For more specifics, you can visit: <https://www.apaservices.org/advocacy/actions/advocacy-priorities>

This past February 18th-20th, I traveled to D.C. and participated in the APA Capitol Hill Visits. I had a lovely meet up with former APA President and Mississippi's own Dr. Jennifer Kelly in the Atlanta airport and was able to discuss more practice issues (FYI she is looking into coming to convention this fall!)

Thursday, during the Capitol Hill Visits, I connected with the office of Senator Roger Wicker (picture with the Senator's Legislative Correspondent, Seth McCaughan and Staff Assistant Garrett Stanford), and offices of Representatives Trent Kelly, Bennie Thompson, Michael Guest, and Mike Ezell. The three main topics of conversation included 1) encouraging congress to fully fund the NIH and NSF to help with programs related to psychological science research, training, and professional development/job creation of psychologists, 2) to use specific language in

appropriations bills related to AI discussions to ensure psychology researchers have a designated seat at the table, and 3) to consider support of the ADAPT act (essentially allowing for reimbursement of predoctoral interns and postdocs to be reimbursed for services through CMS as medical residents can be.

Attached are the factsheets for the funding requests (including request for AI language inclusion) and new bill that we brought to congressional attention.



Being in D.C. always bring the awareness of history, awe of the monuments and emphasis of need for advocacy. I appreciate the opportunity to represent the concerns and needs of Mississippi psychologists to our federally elected officials, and to continue to develop the relationships with other APA advocates representing their states. All offices (even the ones where I was not a constituent to their district) encouraged continued correspondence about issues that are important.

If there are any areas that you are particularly interested in happening at the federal level, please let me know so we can have more discussion and I can relay these concerns/thoughts to the APA Grassroots team. If you have any questions or would like more details about the congressional visits, please don't hesitate to contact me! [djmaack@deltaautumn.com](mailto:djmaack@deltaautumn.com)

# INVEST IN THE NIH AND NSF TO ADVANCE HUMAN-CENTERED AI

- Fund NIH in FY27 at no less than \$51.3 billion
- Fund NSF in FY27 at no less than \$9 billion



## **Appropriation Request**

To maintain American scientific leadership and address the continuing mental health crisis, we urge Congress to provide robust, sustained funding for our nation's premier research agencies:

**National Institutes of Health:** Fund FY27 at no less than **\$51.3 billion**. This level of investment will allow NIH to support researchers across all 50 states, ensuring that behavioral and social science research continues to improve health outcomes and disease prevention.

## **Why Funding NIH Matters:**

- **Impact of NIH Research:** As the largest public funder of biomedical and behavioral research in the world, NIH is the driving force behind decades of advances that improve health, revolutionize science, and serve society more broadly.
- **Essential to Health Outcomes:** Behavioral and social science research is critical to NIH's mission, as individual behaviors are key risk factors for chronic diseases like heart disease, cancer, Alzheimer's disease, and diabetes.
- **Addresses the Mental Health Crisis:** The National Institute of Mental Health, the National Institute of Minority Health and Health Disparities, and the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development are collaborating to end the youth mental health crisis by supporting research to foster the long-term recovery of youth, better target preventive interventions for those most at risk, and improve the treatments delivered to young people in crisis.
- **Supports the U.S. Economy:** Over 80% of NIH investment goes directly to research awards, training, and centers; resulting in investments at more than 2,500 institutions in all 50 states.

**National Science Foundation:** Fund at no less than **\$9 billion**. This funding level is essential to foster a workforce capable of navigating a 21st-century technological landscape.

## **Why Funding NSF Matters:**

- **Foundational Social Science:** NSF is a major source of federal funding for social and behavioral science research at American universities, often funding nearly 25% of all basic research in these institutions.
- **Underpins Economic Growth:** NSF-funded research has earned Nobel Prizes and underpins critical advances in artificial intelligence, national security, and economic prosperity.
- **Nurtures Early Careers:** NSF supports early-career psychological scientists through Graduate Research Fellowships annually, ensuring a pipeline of experts for emerging industries.

## **AI Report Language Request**

APA urges the inclusion of the following report language in the FY 2027 appropriations bills to ensure AI development is grounded in psychological safety and behavioral health.

## **For the National Institutes of Health**

**Research on the Behavioral Health Impacts of AI** —*Suggested Language:* The Committee directs the National Institutes of Health to include the **Office of Behavioral and Social Sciences Research** in ongoing and future artificial intelligence initiatives to ensure the psychological and behavioral impacts of AI are considered. Research should focus on the efficacy of AI-driven mental health tools, the impact of algorithmic decision-making on therapeutic alliances, and the role of AI in addressing or exacerbating health disparities.

# INVEST IN THE NIH AND NSF TO ADVANCE HUMAN-CENTERED AI

## *Behavioral and Social Science Research (BSSR) is Essential to the AI Mission*

As AI becomes a tool for decision-making, BSSR is more valuable than ever in ensuring these technologies are grounded in the reality of human behavior.

### **Why BSSR Leadership is the Key to AI Success...**

- **Scaling Health Interventions:** Many of today's key health issues—including substance use, violence, and trauma—involve deep psychological components. BSSR provides the blueprints for interventions that AI can now scale to population levels, such as AI-powered apps for smoking cessation and physical activity.
- **Mitigating Algorithmic Bias:** Individual and population-level behaviors, studied by psychologists, often represent the "human data" that AI systems use to learn. Without OBSSR-coordinated research to identify and correct bias, AI tools risk reinforcing existing health disparities and misdiagnosing patients.
- **Building Human Trust:** AI systems are only as effective as the trust users place in them. BSSR informs the "psychologically informed" design of AI, helping us understand the cognitive drivers of trust, adherence to medical treatment, and the long-term impacts of human-AI interaction.

## *For the National Science Foundation*

**Psychological Science of Artificial Intelligence** – *Suggested Language* - The Committee directs the National Science Foundation to include the **SBE Directorate** in current and future efforts related to artificial intelligence to ensure funding and coordination of research into the cognitive and social-emotional impacts of AI. Research should aim to develop "psychologically informed" AI systems that prioritize human-centered design, trust, and ethical interaction, ensuring that technological advances do not come at the cost of human social behavior and mental well-being.

## *The NSF Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences (SBE) Directorate: The Architect of Human Centered AI*

Without robust investment in SBE, AI development risks creating powerful technologies that are technically sound but psychologically harmful or socially disruptive.

### **Why SBE Leadership is Vital for AI Innovation:**

- **Designing for Human Cognition:** SBE is essential to AI that is intuitive, explainable, and trustworthy.
- **Managing Workforce Transitions:** SBE research provides the data necessary to navigate the economic shifts and workforce readiness required in an AI-driven economy.
- **Preventing Social Harm:** Investing in SBE-supported AI research prevents the deployment of technologies that are technically sound but psychologically harmful, ensuring that AI enhances rather than replaces human capability.



# CO-SPONSOR THE ACCELERATING THE DEVELOPMENT OF ADVANCED PSYCHOLOGY TRAINEES (ADAPT) ACT [H.R.4484/S.2356]



For more information, contact:  
Kenneth Polishchuk  
kpolishchuk@apa.org

A strong mental and behavioral health workforce is critical to combating the long-term impact of the pandemic and remedying longstanding gaps in care. Unfortunately, multiple barriers exist to growing the doctoral psychology workforce. This includes the rising costs associated with pursuing a doctoral degree, which most students are increasingly financing through loans, and lack of federal support for advanced psychology trainees (doctoral interns and post-doctoral residents).

## **THE NATION'S MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS**

Our nation's mental and behavioral health continues to be in a state of crisis; one quarter of U.S. adults report alarming levels of stress and anxiety.<sup>i</sup> Predictably, psychologists report high demand for treatment for anxiety and depression. Practitioners are seeing increased workloads and longer waitlists, which have contributed to higher levels of burnout within the profession.<sup>ii</sup>

It is estimated that 158 million U.S. residents—nearly half of the population—live in a mental health workforce shortage area.<sup>iii</sup> In fact, nearly every county and district in the country has at least one federally designated Mental Health Professional Shortage Area. These shortages are expected to persist over the next decade, with rural communities facing major challenges in recruiting licensed mental and behavioral health care professionals.<sup>iv, v, vi</sup>

With the rapidly aging U.S. population, investments in Medicare are more essential than ever as the Census Bureau projects greater demands for healthcare, in-home caregiving and assisted living facilities.<sup>vii</sup> In addition, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recently reported the number of suicides deaths in the U.S. reached an all-time high in 2022. The CDC reported a significant increase in suicide among older demographics — for people 65 and older, suicide deaths rose by 8.1 percent, from 9,652 in 2021 to 10,433 in 2022.<sup>viii</sup>

Doctoral-level clinical psychologists play a crucial role in providing behavioral health services to Medicare beneficiaries, as their practices account for more than a third of all psychiatric diagnostic services, roughly 40% of all psychotherapy services, more than 90% of all health and behavior services, and three quarters of all psychological and neuropsychological testing and assessment services.

## **ADVANCED PSYCHOLOGY TRAINEES**

Doctoral degrees in psychology typically require 5-6 years to complete. The doctoral internship and post doctoral residency represent the most advanced stage of training in the psychology training sequence, equivalent to medical residencies and fellowships in the medical training sequence. Each year, approximately 4,000 doctoral students participate in the Association of Psychology Postdoctoral and Internship Centers (APPIC) National Internship Match to complete their doctoral internship, which is required for the awarding of a doctoral degree in psychology. In addition, each year approximately 900 psychologists who have obtained their doctoral degree pursue a post-doctoral residency to complete specialty training or accrue additional hours needed to become fully licensed in their state.

## **BACKGROUND**

Despite the high demand for their services, multiple barriers exist to educating and training psychologists, including the cost of attending graduate school, which most students are increasingly financing by taking on student debt. <sup>ix</sup> Unlike physicians, doctoral-level psychologists are not eligible for Medicare-funded residency programs through Graduate Medical Education (GME). Although clinical

# CO-SPONSOR THE ACCELERATING THE DEVELOPMENT OF ADVANCED PSYCHOLOGY TRAINEES (ADAPT) ACT [H.R.4484/S.2356]

psychology interns typically receive 1,000-2,000 hours of clinical experience prior to beginning their internship, services provided by trainees under the supervision of a licensed psychologist are not reimbursable under Medicare, nor are services provided by psychology residents engaged in post-doctoral degree training.

The lack of support for psychology interns and residents under the nation's single largest health insurance program makes it difficult to support training programs, increase the workforce, and has trickle-down effects throughout the rest of the healthcare landscape. Although these services are not reimbursed in Medicare, the value of services provided by advanced psychology trainees has already been recognized by CMS in Medicaid. With CMS' approval, 30 state Medicaid programs currently provide at least some coverage of services provided by advanced psychology trainees (AL, AK, AR, DE, GA, ID, IN, IA, KY, MA, MI, MN, MO, NE, NH, NV, NM, ND, OH, OK, OR, SC, TX, UT, VT, VA, WA, WV, WI, and WY). In addition, legislation recently passed in Hawaii (HI) authorizes the billing of these services in the future.

## **SOLUTION**

Congress should pass The Accelerating the Development of Advanced Psychology Trainees (ADAPT) Act (H.R.4484/S.2356). This legislation would establish Medicare coverage of behavioral health services provided by advanced psychology trainees by directing CMS to develop a Medicare modifier to allow

psychology trainees to bill for behavioral healthcare provided under the supervision of a licensed psychologist. This modifier would be similar to the GE modifier currently used for billing for services provided by primary care medical residents. For behavioral health services such as psychotherapy, the new GE modifier would allow for supervision of clinical services through one-on-one weekly supervision sessions, with the supervising psychologist being available but not required to be present for the entire time services are delivered.

As there continues to be a nationwide need for a strong behavioral health workforce, establishing billing modifiers for advanced psychology trainee services would increase the current workforce to help meet the nation's growing demand for mental and behavioral health services.

i American Psychological Association. (October 2022). Stress in America: Concerned with the future, beset by inflation. <https://www.apa.org/news/press/releases/stress/2022/concerned-future-inflation>.

ii American Psychological Association (December 2023). Psychologists reaching their limits as patients present with worsening symptoms year after year, 2023 Practitioner Pulse Survey. <https://www.apa.org/pubs/reports/practitioner/2022-covid-psychologist-workload>.

iii KFF. (2024). Mental Health Care Professional Shortage Areas (HPSAs). <https://www.kff.org/other/state-indicator/mental-health-care-health-professional-shortage-areas-hpsas/>

iv U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. Occupational Outlook Handbook, Psychologists. <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/life-physical-and-social-science/psychologists.htm#tab-6>.

v Health Resources and Services Administration. (2023). Behavioral Health Workforce Brief. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. <https://bhw.hrsa.gov/sites/default/files/bureau-health-workforce/Behavioral-Health-Workforce-Brief-2023.pdf>

vi Rural Health Information Hub. (2021). Rural Mental Health. RHIhub. <https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/topics/mental-health-vii>

vii Vespa, Jonathan. (2021). The U.S. Joins Other Countries With Large Aging Populations. United States Census Bureau. Retrieved from: <https://www.census.gov/library/stories/2018/03/graying-america.html>

viii Suicide Data and Statistics (2023, April 6). Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control. Retrieved from: <https://www.cdc.gov/suicide/suicide-data-statistics.html#:~:text=Suicide%20rates%20increased%2037%25%20between,to%20their%20peak%20in%202021>.

ix Doran, J., Kraha, A., Marks, L., Ameen, E. & El-Ghoroury, N. (2016). Graduate Debt in Psychology: A Quantitative Analysis. *Training and Education in Professional Psychology*, 10(1), 3-13.

Note: A special thanks to Alex Gajewski for his assistance in the development of this resource.



**SAVE  
THE DATE**

**77TH ANNUAL CONVENTION  
MISSISSIPPI PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION**

**HANTOM  
OF THE ΨSYSCHE**

**TRAUMA, RESILIENCE, AND THE HIDDEN MIND**

**SEPTEMBER 23-25, 2026**

**IP RESORT IN BILOXI, MISSISSIPPI**