"75 Years of Public Service" The History of Psychologists in Public Service (APA Division 18) 1946-2021

Rodney R. Baker, Ph.D.
Past Division 18 Historian

► Brief Bio of Presenter: The presenter retired as chief of psychology and the director of the mental health service line at the South Texas Veterans Health Care System in San Antonio in 2004. He is a past president of Division 18, a past Division 18 APA Council representative, a 2010 Division 18 Harold M. Hildreth awardee for Distinguished Public Service, a past Division 18 historian, and the 2017 American Psychological Foundation Gold Medal Awardee for Life Achievement in the Practice of Psychology. This history was first presented on August 4, 2021 as an APA Division 18 webinar celebrating the 75th anniversary of Division 18. A recording of the webinar can be obtained from the Division 18 website and a pdf annotated slide handout file for the presentation (Notes Page) can also be obtained at that website.

► Topic introduction comments from presenter: Much of what I am going to talk about in this presentation was first covered in the 50-year history of Division 18 which I published in 1996 and the updated 60-year history of Division18 which I also published that extended that history through 2006. The references to those two publications are on the last slide. Updates to those two documents covering the last 15 years from 2006-2021 were obtained from reviews of division newsletters from 2007 together with topics suggested by Tim Carmody in his historian column in the December 2020 newsletter as he commented on the upcoming 75th anniversary of the division. I also thank Tim for his review of and edit suggestions for this presentation.

► In completing this introduction, I will remind you that "History is all about what happened and what happened is a story." That became a motto of sorts for me as a historian. This presentation will introduce you to some of the stories in the history of Division 18 from 1946-2021.

► I have focused on high points of the 75-year history of Division 18 in this presentation, and I hope to have time for questions at the end of the slide presentation to expand on any topic I discuss. So jot down your questions as you think of them.

Overview of Presentation

- Early Division History: 1946-1966
- Sections Added as the Division Grows and Matures: 1966-1986
- Division Advocacy:1986-96
- Expanding Influence Years (Graduate Students, RxP, Journal): 1996-2006
- The Vision of Public Service Continues: 2006-2021

The above PowerPoint screen identifies the five periods of Division 18 history to be described in this presentation.

Early Division 18 History (1946-1966)

- The formation of divisions in APA in 1946 was one part of a 1945 reorganization plan to resolve a 50-year conflict between academic and applied psychologists.
- A division to represent public service was proposed, initially opposed, but ultimately approved.

►With a major reorganization of APA in 1945 to bring together several psychology organizations, it was also agreed to form divisions to represent different professional interests of members and create a Council of Representatives to govern the organization. APA members were surveyed for their interest in determining which divisions would be formed. Public service was one of 19 charter divisions proposed by members. In final negotiations, however, opposition emerged to a proposed division of psychologists in public service with the argument that it would become the largest and most powerful division in APA because public service settings employed the most psychologists. According to Margaret Ives, the first Division 18 historian, supporters of the division had to pledge that the division would not have a newsletter or a program at the APA annual convention in order to obtain support for being included as one of the original divisions to be established by APA. The Division of Psychologists in Public Service (Division 18) was ultimately approved as one of 19 charter divisions of APA and elected officers to first meet at the 1946 APA annual convention.

►A footnote to that beginning was that the division did start a newsletter in 1949 and began sponsoring some convention symposia shortly thereafter. But it was not until 1970 that APA granted Division 18 convention program hours commensurate with the size of its membership.

Early Division 18 History (continued)

- The initial leadership and member interest in the division in 1946 came from personnel psychologists in government.
- In the 1950s, division leadership moves to clinical psychologists in the VA and NIMH in 1950s. In 1956, Division 18 President Lawrence S. Rogers defines the division's public service mission to mobilize local, state, and national organizations to promote societal goals.
- In 1958, Harold Hildreth became president representing a long public service career with clinical activities ranging from helping to develop police training films to interests in emergency mental health services.

► The first division president, Marion Richardson, had been employed by the U.S. Civil Service Commission before the war and served as chief of personnel research for the Army from 1942 to 1946. The second president of the division, Roger M. Bellows, worked in personnel research for the Adjutant General's Office during the war. The next two presidents, Kenneth Ashcraft and Herbert Conrad, also were individuals with government personnel experience--Ashcraft with the Army and Conrad with the Civil Service Commission.

► In a discussion of the division's history by its officers reported in the minutes of a 1975 Executive Committee Meeting, council representative and former division president Lee Gurel pointed out that the division started more like a union organization, concerned with bread and butter issues like establishing psychology in the Civil Service and noted that early presidential addresses expressed these concerns. The title of Roger Bellows' address in 1949 was "Selling Psychological Services to Administrators."

► In 1954, the passing of leadership of the division to Quinter Holsopple of the then-named Veterans Administration (VA) Central Office in Washington inaugurated a period in which the Division 18 officers shifted from personnel psychology to that of clinical psychology, many coming from the VA or the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH). In a 1956 article in the *American Psychologist,* division president Lawrence Rogers introduced the division's public service mission to mobilize local, state, and national organizations to promote societal goals. He argued that, although it was the responsibility of all psychologists to improve society, it was the special responsibility of those who directly served the public in government agencies.

► 1958, division president Harold Hildreth represented and promoted an even wider range of clinical and research activities. His distinguished career included helping to develop police training films to interests in emergency mental health services.

Early Division 18 History (continued)

- The division's advocacy interests in the mid-1960s focused on Civil Service psychologist employment issues in state and federal government.
- Towards the end of the 1960s, division members also began focusing on psychology licensure issues and accreditation of training programs.
- The division's membership numbers showed steady increases from its beginning to 1966.

► The Civil Service Commission had started looking into new regulations affecting the employment of psychologists in the federal sector, and in the summer of 1966, APA had asked Division 18 for assistance in responding to a request from the Civil Service Commission for help in studying pay comparability of psychologists in Civil Service with other settings. In responding to that request, Division 18 began working with APA on a number of Civil Service employment issues of interest to psychologists.

► But as early as 1946, the VA members of the division had begun focusing on credentialing and promoting its newly established psychology training program. The VA had decided that only doctoral psychologists with some clinical training would be hired to take care of veterans. In order to recruit graduate students for its new training program, the VA asked APA to identify which universities were teaching its students practical clinical skills. The VA also pushed APA to develop a list of universities with a strong clinical and research background to assist in recruiting doctoral psychologists for VA hospitals. The requests eventually led to the development of APA's accreditation program for universities. Toward the end of its first 20 years, the entire division was focusing on other credentialing issues such as accreditation of internship programs and licensure for psychologists.

► In 1948, the division's membership totaled 93. By 1966, membership had grown to 615. In 1966, 42% of the division's members were working in state and local mental health or correctional facilities, 20% in universities and colleges, 19% in the VA, and 19% in other federal agencies. That year, 2.5% of APA's members belonged to Division 18, hardly justifying early concerns that the division would become the largest in APA. In 1966, there were 13 divisions larger than Division 18 and 12 smaller. The division has retained that mid-size division ranking to this day.

Growth and Maturation Years 1966-1986

- Division membership continues to grow, and interest focuses on academic and professional content issues with a broad notion of public interest and well-being.
- The Harold M. Hildreth Award was established in 1966 and was to be and remains the highest award the division can bestow.

► The third and fourth decades of the division's history saw a continued growth in membership. Member interests expanded from the guild issues of the first 20 years to more academic and professional content interests and increased professional concerns with the broad notion of public interest and well-being.

► In its early history, Harold Hildreth had been a long-time friend of Division 18 as division president and APA Council member. Hildreth seemed to be naturally inclined toward public service and spent much of his life devoting himself to the application of psychology to wide areas of endeavor. In addition to describing himself as having special research interests in socially sensitive areas, he was the second person to serve as the chief clinical psychologist in the VA (1948-56), helping to establish psychology as an important clinical service in that agency. He followed that appointment with a distinguished career in the Community Research and Service Branch of the NIMH.

► In an interview with the presenter in 1992, division past president Lee Gurel described Hildreth as an extraordinary leader who made you believe in the importance of psychology and who had a fantastic memory for personal events which endeared him to others. Beyond his personal qualities and interpersonal skills, Gurel suggested that it was Hildreth's role as a visionary which constituted his major contribution to the profession and which set him apart from his contemporaries. It was singularly appropriate that, upon his death in 1965, the division established an award for outstanding public service to the public in his memory. The Harold M. Hildreth Award for Distinguished Public Service was to be and has remained the highest award that the division could bestow.

Growth and Maturation Years-continued

- 1970s usher in formation of sections in the division with a 1974 by-laws change:
  - ►1975 – Criminal Justice Section
  - ►1976 - 1980: Health Research Section
  - ►1977 – Veterans Administration/Veterans Affairs Section
  - ►1981- 2003: Accountability, Program Evaluation, and Information Use Section
  - ►1983 – Police Psychology Section
  - ►1985 – Community and State Hospital Psychologists Section

►In 1974 the division's bylaws were changed to permit the formation of sections in the division, and in 1975 the Criminal Justice Section became the first section to be organized in the division. Carl Clements became its first chair with 72 members enrolled in the fall of 1975.

►The Health Research section was next approved by the division in 1976 with Lee Sechrest elected as the first section chair. Members of the Section voted to dissolve that section in 1980 with many of this Section's members helping to create the new Health Psychology Division of APA.

►The impetus for VA psychologists to join Division 18 and form a section emerged from a 1976 work group of VA chiefs of psychology who identified a need for some organization to express the views and interests of VA psychologists. That work group decided that Division 18 could best serve that need. The Veterans Administration Section was approved in 1977 with Ralph Fingar as its first chair. That year over 300 VA psychologists joined Division 18 with interest in the section, and the section became the largest in the division, a distinction it has continued. In 1989 the section changed its name to the Veterans Affairs Section reflecting that agency's name change and new cabinet level status.

►The Accountability, Program Evaluation, and Information Use Section was formed in 1981 and shortened its name to the Program Evaluation Section in 1984. The section was dissolved in 2003.

►The Police Psychology Section was formed in 1983 with 80 members electing Harvey Goldstein as its the first chair. The section expanded its name to the Police and Public Safety Section in 1988 and grew to be the second largest section in the division.

►The Community and State Hospital Psychologists Section was approved in 1985 with Fred Frese elected its first chair. It also grew rapidly rivaling the Police and Public Safety Section in size.

Division Advocacy Years 1986-96

- The division publishes its first public interest platform in 1990 to promote advocacy in APA Council resolutions both to increase cohesive identity among sections and support public service psychologists and their clients.
- The platform focuses on diversity of underserved public service client populations and their unmet needs.
- Two Division 18 resolutions are approved in Council in 1991—one on shelter for homeless individuals and another addressing the needs of persons with serious/persistent mental illness.

► During the 5th decade of its history, the division published its first public interest platform, partly in response to its struggles in APA with the rapid growth and influence of private practice members and the activity of the newly created APA Practice Directorate. The independent private practice members were involved in important practitioner advocacy and Division 18 members wanted to be involved in and benefit from practitioner advocacy. But private practice members did not consider Division 18 members to be independent practitioners because they were employees in federal, state, and city programs. Even though many division members were licensed practitioners, they were not considered "real" practitioners and had difficulty in getting the private practice community and APA to include practitioner issues of Division 18.

► A second issue facing the division was that the division was losing cohesiveness of identity among its sections. Our communality and reason for existence as a division in APA was that we were serving the public's underserved patient and client populations. We collectively served veterans, those incarcerated in federal and state institutions, those working to support our laws and protect us in police departments, and the seriously mentally ill in local and state community clinics and state hospitals. But we had difficulty relating to our communality. That difficulty probably didn't serve us well in being seen as effective advocates by the private practice community in APA either.

►The strategic plan in fact became a document proposing an advocacy agenda for the unmet needs of our clients and for our profession serving them. The content of the advocacy agenda would be developed by having each section prepare resolutions our Council representative could present to APA Council.

►The sections immediately took to the idea and in 1991 two Division 18 resolutions were passed in Council—one on shelter for homeless individuals and another addressing the needs of persons with serious and persistent mental illness.

Division Advocacy Years-continued

- 1994 – Council approved a Division 18 resolution to fund a task group to make recommendations to APA on practice, research and training issues in treatment of serious mental illness.
- The task force eventually becomes a standing committee of APA

►The 1994 Council approval of funding for the SMI task group was probably the most far-reaching advocacy proposal initiated by Division 18 in those initial advocacy years and got the attention of Council. (You know Council is impressed and serious when it spends money to support a resolution.)

►That funded task group worked hard and continued to impress Council with its efforts and importance, and the task group later became a standing committee of APA.

Division Advocacy Years-continued

- 1995 – Three Division 18 resolutions are submitted: one on recommendations for identification, research, and prevention of domestic abuse; another on prevention of workplace violence; and a third to address the needs of persons with mental disorders in the nation's jails and prisons.

► The decade of Division 18 advocacy did get the attention of APA and Council.

Division Advocacy Years-continued

- 1995 – With APA planning to celebrate the 50th anniversary of divisions in 1996, Division 18 decides to publish its 50-year history as one of the 19 original APA divisions established in 1946. The division also establishes an archive to house the historical documents being collected in writing its history.
- 1996 – The division's history was included as one of nine division histories to be published by APA in the first Volume of the series entitled *Unification Through Division.*

► In 1995, the division decided to write its 50-year history for a planned APA set of books on the 50-year history of divisions to be celebrated by APA in 1996. With that decision, the division's executive committee also believed it was important to establish the division archive to support storage and documentation of its history. Most of division's archive would be a collection of its bylaws changes and newsletters which had several historical accounts of division histories by past presidents and one by its first officially designated historian, Margaret Ives. The division chose to house its records at the Archives of the History of American Psychology (AHAP) at the University of Akron. I became the second division historian at the time and was designated the first Division 18 historian contact for the Archives of the History of American Psychology, now named the Cummings Center for the History of Psychology (CCHP).

► I also authored the division's history which became one of nine divisions to have its history published in 1996 in the first volume of the series entitled *Unification Through Division*.

► It can be noted that Bob Goldberg followed me as division historian and, following Goldberg's untimely death, Timothy Carmody was named the division's fourth historian.

Expanding Influence Years 1996-2006

- 2000 – Division 18 begins its support and leadership for prescription privileges for psychologists (RxP).
- Alliant University is chosen in 2004 to work with Division 18 to train 100 public service psychologists in a program to pursue a Masters Degree in Clinical Psychopharmacology.
- Divisions 18 and 55 create a Federal Prescriptive Authority Task Force in 2006 to promote prescriptive authority for psychologists in federal agencies.

► In the 6th decade of the division's history, the division chose to pursue prescriptive authority for psychologists. It can be noted that several members of the division had begun discussions before 1996 to convince the division to support prescriptive authority for psychologists. But at the annual meeting of the APA in 2000, incoming Division 18 president Randy Taylor presented a white paper at a pre-convention symposium that reported data from a membership survey of interest in continuing education topics with a majority of members indicating interest in training that would lead to prescription privileges. Taylor considered the data an indication that the division was ready to support prescriptive authority and included that initiative during his presidency. Robert Ax, elected division president the following year, continued division support for prescriptive authority.

► In 2004 the division's executive committee developed a plan to partner with an entity that would provide certificate graduate training in clinical psycho-pharmacology. In 2004, Alliant University was chosen to work with Division 18 in training 100 public service psychologists to pursue the Master Degree in Clinical Psychopharmacology. The plan included raising money from grants, members, and other donors to provide the training at no cost to members. The first class began in 2006 as planned and included 15 division members funded by the Division 18/Alliant University grant program.

► In 2006, Divisions 18 and 55 (Advancement of Pharmacotherapy) created a Federal Prescriptive Authority Task Force to promote prescriptive authority for psychologists in federal agencies. The task force was chaired by Robert Ax and began to assemble and provide empirically-based information on the benefits to agencies for this authority. Members of the task force included representatives from the VA and Indian Health Service as well as other APA supporters and set a future goal of constructing a model practitioner position description and model policy for use by federal agencies.

Expanding Influence Years-continued

- 2002 – The Indian Country Section is formed.
- 2003 –A student member is added to the Division 18 Board of Directors with a bylaws change in 2005 giving the student board member a vote on the Board to fully participate in division affairs. Within a decade, a Division 18 Student Section was formed.
- 2004 – Division 18 establishes an APA journal and publishes its first issue of *Psychological Services.*

► In 2002, the Indian Country Section was approved with Jamie Davis Hueston its first chair.

► Beginning in the late 1990s, the division began expanding efforts to attract student members and increased its attention to the value of student members by adding a student to the division's Board of Directors. With a 2005 bylaws change, the student on the Board was given a vote to fully participate in division governance affairs. Within a decade later, the division approved the formation of a Student section.

► Early discussions among division leadership to establish a Division 18 APA journal was first raised in the early 1990s. In 1999, Joel Dvoskin made a division journal a priority in his presidency. It wasn't until 2004, however, that the journal became a reality. The first issue of *Psychological Services* had Sanford Peterson as editor. The following year, Patrick DeLeon was appointed editor and remains editor as of this date. Two issues were planned for 2004 and 2005 with the goal for 2006 and thereafter to be four issues. The journal quickly became an important activity of the division in disseminating information about the research activities of psychologists in public service settings.

Expanding Influence Years-continued

- 2005 – APA Council approved a Division 18 resolution to acknowledge APA's responsibility to inform the public of the unmet needs of deployed active military and their families.

►The prior decade of division advocacy years continued to produce resolutions in the sixth decade. One example was the resolution on unmet needs of deployed military entitled, "Psychological Needs of Our Troops, Veterans, and Their Families."

The Vision of Public Service Continues (2006-2021)

- The first prescription privilege (RxP) class of 2006 graduated from the Division 18/Alliant University grant program in Jan 2009; the last class graduated in December 2012.
- Division 18 voted to end the RxP grant program because of difficulty in raising funds.
- 86 Division 18 members had been certified to enter the program during its existence.

►As we begin our look at the last 15 years of the division's history, we can note that the first 2006 prescription privilege class graduated in January 2009. A second class of 15 graduated in June of 2010, but only five members had been fully funded by the Division 18/Alliant grant program, five more were partially funded, and the remaining five funded their own training.

With difficulty in raising funds from donors and grant money programs, the division voted to end the program. According to Steven Tulkin of Alliant University, the last class to complete the program was in December 2012. Tulkin also notes that 86 Division 18 members had been certified to enter the program.

The Vision of Public Service Continues...

- 2009 – Division 18 approves the formation of the Serious Mental Illness (SMI) / Severe Emotional Disturbance (SED) Section.
- SMI proficiency in Assessment and Treatment was also renewed in 2009 by APA by supporters of the new section.
- 2019 – The section promotes and obtains APA SMI specialty status...and sets a next goal to establish an ABPP SMI specialty.

►With the formation of the SMI/SED Section of the division in 2009, Mary Jansen became its first chair. Those who had been promoting the new section had already spent considerable effort in getting APA to renew its SMI proficiency and the same year the section became approved as the newest section in the division, APA renewed the proficiency status for SMI.

►The section also became active in promoting SMI specialty status in APA, a goal met in 2019. Currently SMI/SED Section has the goal of establishing an ABPP SMI specialty.

The Vision of Public Service Continues...

- Over the last 15 years, Division 18 has shown an increased commitment to the education and continuing education of its members and students. Authorized to accredit CE by APA, the division has expanded and enhanced its CE activity by promoting section and division webinars and podcasts.

► No additional comment for slide.

The Vision of Public Service Continues...

- The Division 18 journal, *Psychological Services,* has distinguished itself in growth and quality—it published its first issue in 2004. In 2005 the journal had nine published articles and 170 pages. In 2019, it had 80 published items, and had almost 700 pages.

More on next slide....

► By the way, the journal royalty income for the division has also been significant. In 2019, the division received a little over $112,000 which was a 115% increase on the prior year which itself was a record royalty payment on the previous year. It is significant that this financial performance occurred in years in which additional pages were added to the journal which normally would have decreased the royalty.

Note: The above statistics were provided the presenter by Steven Smith of APA staff in personal correspondence, March 17, 2021

The Vision of Public Service Continues...

- The Division 18 journal, *Psychological Services,* had the 4th ranked article of the top 10 APA downloaded journal articles in 2020, and
- In May of 2021, the APA Journals Article Spotlight focused on a special online-only issue of *Psychological Services* devoted to public service advocacy from 2020. That issue was the first online-only issue of the journal and a milestone that had been accomplished by only three other APA journals in the past.

►The 4th ranked APA downloaded journal article was an article by Goetter, E. M. et al published in Volume 17, No. 1 entitled "Barriers to Mental Health Treatment Among Individuals With Social Anxiety Disorder and Generalized Anxiety." The study indicated that three in four people who suffer from anxiety do not receive proper care.

►The special online issue was 2020, Vol. 17, No. S1 with thefollowing reference for the introduction to that issue:

Gray, J. S., Kaslow, N. J., & Allbaugh, L. J. (2020). Introduction to the special issue: Advocacy in public service settings. *Psychological Services, 17*(S1), 1-4. http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/ser0000497

The Vision of Public Service Continues...

In 2019, Division 18 produced its 3rd major strategic plan which affirmed the importance and nature of the division's background and vision by noting:

- ►public service psychologists serve underserved and marginalized communities that may not be best served elsewhere, and
- ►the division champions diversity and inclusion by understanding and appreciating differences in thoughts and opinions.

Remaining true to that background and vision insures a great future for Division 18.

Continue to Bibliography slide.

Bibliography

Baker, R. R. (1996). A history of Division 18 (Psychologists in Public Service). In Dewsbury, D. A. (Ed.), *Unification through division, Vol. I* (pp. 137-155). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Baker, R. R. (2013). The history of the Division of Psychologists in Public Service (1946-2006). *Psychological Services*. doi: 10.1037/a0031598

Carmody, T. (2020). Historian column. *Public Service Psychology*, December 2020, Vol 45, No. 2 (retrieved from https://www.apadivisions.org/division-18/publications/newsletters/public-service/2020/12)

Additional information on the history of Division 18 was obtained from back issues of *Public Service Psychology* newsletters from November 2010-December 2020 at https://www.apadivisions.org/division-18/publications/newsletters/public-service/issues. Older newsletter issues and other Division 18 historical material is housed at the Cummings Center for the History of Psychology at the University of Akron.

This slide lists some key references for my presentation. I'll leave the slide up until we start the question and discussion part of the presentation. I'll ask for questions in just a moment.

While waiting for the first question, I will share some information about some membership statistics of the division.

► The Division 18 membership reached its highest number in 1979 with 1,461 members. This membership number was reached during the years that the division was forming sections. There were 37 divisions in APA in 1979 at the time.

► In 2006 when Division 18 was celebrating its 60th anniversary, there were 54 divisions in APA and the division had 1, 290 members.

► In 2021, there remain 54 divisions in APA and Division 18 has 1,021 members.

► Before 1975, Division 18 frequently had two or three seats on the APA Council of Representatives. After 1975, the number of Council seats assigned to each division was determined by an apportionment ballot with each APA member having 10 votes to assign to a division of interest. The 10 votes could also be distributed by members to two or more divisions. It wasn't until 1999 that Division 18 had two Council seats, but the following year, the second seat was lost and not regained until 2003.