

The Colorado Psychologist



Colorado
Psychological
Association



Athena Baca-Chieza, PsyD
President, CPA

June 2019

**Colorado
Psychological
Association**

[http://
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Message from the President

Greetings and Happy Summer!

I cannot believe that I write to you today, with this, my very last TCP Letter, as I wrap up my Presidential Year with CPA. It has been a whirlwind of a year. It feels like it has flown by very quickly, and I am almost overwhelmed as I think back on all that CPA has accomplished, and on the impact this year has had on me professionally and personally. I have learned so much about this association, about how hard the CPA board works behind the scenes to serve our constituents and members to accomplish our goals. I've seen the impact psychologists can have when we pool our passion, energy, and efforts. Relatedly, some of the most meaningful

lessons I've learned, and where it feels I've spent a large part of my time as President of CPA, have occurred in my role at the Colorado State Capitol. I've learned a lot about how the Colorado legislative system works, about how dynamic, vast, and diverse our field is in this state, and the impact we can have as psychologists on the legislative system. I feel very lucky to have served my presidential term during a legislative session that has brought mental health issues to the forefront for Colorado. Although CPA did not run proactive legislation, we did have a very busy year monitoring over 30 bills (here is a [link](#) to our final tracking report) working to amend legislation, weighing in on bills, and actively lobbying against bills when needed. Highlights of

Message from the President – Continued

the year include:

- Mounting an effort to defeat HB 1019, Continuing Competency for Registered Psychotherapists.
- Provided proponents with testimony and lobby support of HB 1039: Identify Documents for Transgender Persons and HB 1129: Prohibit Conversion Therapy.
- Secured amendments on HB 1044: Advance Behavioral Health Orders Treatment and HB 1120: Youth Mental Health Education and Suicide Prevention to move CPA to a neutral position on both proposals.
- Joined a coalition to support HB 1269: Mental Health Parity, SB 010: Professional Behavioral Health Services for Schools, and HB 1244: Expand Peace Office Mental Health Support Program.
- Closely monitored SB 223: Actions Related to Competency to Proceed, for our forensics taskforce.

As you can see by these highlights, CPA was at the state capitol offering expert testimony/support several times this session. CPA voices such as those of Drs. Laura Knudtson, Rick Ginsberg, Julie Jacobs, Sarah Burgamy, and my own. Oftentimes, we were repeat visitors, working hard to advocate for the mental health

rights of Coloradans. I would be remiss if I did not highlight the extraordinary efforts of one particular CPA board member, Dr. Sarah Burgamy, who year after year, has advocated, educated, lobbied, and fought for the rights of Colorado's LGBTQ population. Because of Dr. Burgamy's relentless advocacy at the capitol over the past 5+ years, two landmark bills—HB19-1129: Prohibit Conversion Therapy on a Minor **and** HB19-1039: Identity Documents for Transgender Persons (now known as "Jude's Law")—have passed and been signed into Colorado's state law, protecting the rights of LGBTQ people of all ages. I am incredibly proud to have seen Dr. Burgamy in her element, lending her expertise as a clinical psychologist, demonstrating how psychologists' training, skillsets, expertise, voices, perspectives, and multicultural awareness can offer so much and in so many diverse settings. In essence, we are changing the world for our communities.

Not only was it a busy legislative year, but CPA was also focused on education and expanding our CE offerings. We had record turnout and participation at

CPA Calendar of Events 2019

CPA Board Meetings

3rd Friday of November, January, March, & May
(unless otherwise notified)

12:00 - 3:00 pm

CPA Executive Committee Meetings

3rd Friday of October, December, February, & April
(unless otherwise notified)

1:00 - 3:00 pm

Articles due for The Colorado Psychologist

July 10, 2019

to Brian Beaumund, PsyD at
Brian.Beaumund@gmail.com

Message from the President – Continued

all of our programming events and we feel encouraged to know that by Colorado requiring CE's for licensure, CPA is a helpful resource for CE opportunities. As I enter the final months of my presidency, I'd like to draw your attention to some upcoming educational opportunities:

- June 18, 2019: CPA will be hosting a webinar entitled "Complementary, Alternative, and Integrative Medicine in Developmental Disabilities", from 12:00 pm—1:00 pm, presented by Dr. Robyn Nolan. This webinar is free for CPA members and only \$29 for non-members. 1 CE credit is available!
- July 15, 2019: Risk Management Workshop, Sequence IX: Ethics & Risk Management in Complex Clinical Conundrums, sponsored by The Trust, from 9:00 am—4:30 pm. Six CE credits will be available! Please note that the CPA Annual Meeting and Awards Ceremony is held during the lunch hour of this event. Please join us!

As I've done with every past letter I've written, I want to continue to encourage readers to engage with us. Please consider volunteering or contributing in any way that you can, because whether large or small, every voice/idea/gesture helps us tremendously, especially as our

board's goals to offer more education, conferences, mentorship, and networking become more salient.

Finally, I'd like to end by saying that I have been so humbled by the opportunity that I've had to lead this association over the past year, and it is a responsibility I did not take lightly. Getting to serve in this role, and to be the "face" of CPA was at times intimidating, often challenging, surprisingly fun, and overall, it has been a joy. It will definitely count as one of the great highlights of my career. My deep hope is that in my time as president of CPA, I have been able to impact some element of change, and if nothing else, that by my presence, the community has been made aware that while I was at the helm, their voices and contributions have been welcome and honored. As my high school health teacher used to say at the end of every class, "Go forth and do great things, I'll see you mañana!" It's been a true pleasure serving you.

Warm regards,



Dr. Athena Y. Baca-Chieza

Message From the Editors



Catherine Greisch, PsyD
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Brian Beaumund, PsyD
Submission Coordinator



Brean Roman, PsyD
Content Editor



David Miller
Format Editor

Dear CPA Members,

As we anticipate another beautiful Colorado summer ahead of us, this issue of *The Colorado Psychologist* wraps up the past year of CPA leadership and looks to some of the changes ahead.

Dr. Michael Karson reflects on the fluidity of gender and its performative nature, and graduate student Carly Knauf interviews Denver psychologist and advocate Dr. Apryl Alexander. Dr. Yajaira Johnson-Esparza brings us a detailed update on the January 2019 CPA Board meeting, including some highlighted legislative updates, and Dr. Athena Baca-Chieza presents her final message before wrapping up her year as CPA President.

This edition also includes highlights of news within the CPA community and leadership, CPA organizational updates, and announcements relevant to Colorado psychologists.

The content of *The Colorado Psychologist* reflects the talent of CPA membership and your contributions are crucial to the success of each edition. Please reach out with your

professional news, career highlights, innovative research, clinical advances, legislative and policy updates, or recent awards—anything that lets membership know what is going on within our community! Interested authors should contact Dr. Brian Beaumund at:

brian.beaumund@gmail.com

Thank you to all contributors for your commitment to *TCP*. As always, we appreciate the time and expertise you give to our membership each issue.

Catherine Greisch, PsyD
Lead Editor

Brian Beaumund, PsyD
Submission Coordinator

Brean Roman, PsyD
Content Editor

David Millier
Format Editor

Board of Directors Meeting, January 18, 2019

CEO/Executive Vice President of the APA, Dr. Arthur Evans

- Dr. Evans visited CPA and discussed APA's focus on adapting to the changing environment in psychology and how psychologists can position themselves to adapt to these disruptions. He also discussed the future of psychology in healthcare.
- Dr. Evans summarized the priorities identified in the APA's Strategic Plan.
 - APA must also have a strong voice for rights of psychologists at the national and local levels and it should have an impact on critical social issues (e.g., immigration, gun violence).
 - APA has transformed into a broad-based advocacy organization without the limitations of a charitable non-profit (c6). This new model allows APA to advocate on c6 type issues on all areas of psychology and to have a greater voice on advocacy.
 - APA will increase state grants for state psych associations that can be used toward addressing critical issues.

CPA Day at the Capitol

- American Federation of Suicide Prevention is working with Mental Health Colorado for Day at the Capitol.
- Jeannie Vanderburg will draft a plan for Day at the Capitol.

Legislative Update

- Session started January 4th and over

200 bills have been introduced. Mental health is a major topic.

- Important issues
 - Paid family leave
 - Allowing local governments to set minimum wage
 - Equal pay for equal work
 - Opioid crisis
 - Climate change at the state level
 - Transparency in health care
 - Commitment to K-12 education
- Governor's priorities
 - Free full day funding for kindergarten, though not a mandate on districts. Funding through savings can offset price of kindergarten. There is also revenue coming into the state.
 - Making Healthcare More Affordable through transparency.
 - Medicaid buy-in option.
 - Insurance rates and discrepancy across the state (e.g. rural vs. urban).
 - Drug importation program from Canada.
 - Increase consumption of renewable energy (initiative for CO to be zero-emissions state). Repeal tax credits.
- Bills of interest to CPA
 - House Bill 1019 – Continuing competency requirements for registered psychotherapists.
 - HB 1044 – Advanced BH directives similar to advanced med directives. Technical concerns (e.g., liability) covered.
 - HB 1120 – Decreasing age of consent in CO specifically related to accessing BH services. Currently only applied to social workers (not LC) and registered psychotherapists.

Board of Directors Meeting - Continued

- CPA is collaborating with One Colorado to advocate for ability to change birth certificate.
- Mental health parity and coverage under insurance and Medicaid (working with Mental Health Colorado).

Behavioral Health Caucuses

- Mental Health Colorado invited CPA to participate in a behavioral health caucus and is requesting that CPA contribute funds toward providing a lunch for 15-18 legislators.
 - Motion to approve CPA's participation in behavioral health caucus and contribution of funds toward lunch for legislators passed unanimously.

Ethics Committee Review

- John Holmberg provided background on Ethics Committee: to promote ethical conduct through consultation and education.
- Reported info on use of committee services. Top themes: legal issues, confidentiality, reporting obligations, conduct of other psychologists, dual roles (boundaries)

Credit/debit card policy

- Motion to approve credit/debit card policy passed unanimously.

COPAGS Networking Event

- Alex Littleton provided update on

event. Goal of event is to encourage networking between professionals and students. Depending on the success of this event, additional events will follow.

Vote on Lifetime Membership Application

- Motion to approve Lifetime Membership status for CPA member passed unanimously.

Programming for ECP

- Andrea Liner sent out the first of three emails to the listserv asking members to join ECP committee.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:00 pm (exact time not recorded) with no further business for discussion. The next Board meeting will be held on Friday, March 15, 2019 from 12:00 pm to 3:00 pm.

Submitted by,

Yajaira Johnson-Esparza, PhD
Secretary

What's New at CPA

CPA Quarterly Webinar: Complementary, Alternative, and Integrative Medicine in Developmental Disabilities

CPA will be hosting a webinar titled Complementary, Alternative, and Integrative Medicine in Developmental Disabilities, on June 18 from 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm, presented by Dr. Robyn Nolan. This webinar is free for CPA members and only \$29 for non-members. 1 CE credit is available!

[Register Now!](#)

Course Overview:

One third of adults use health care approaches outside of conventional medicine, with higher rates seen in individuals with chronic illness or developmental disabilities. The goals of this presentation are to familiarize providers with common systems and treatments that their patients may be using or considering and provide a framework for how to evaluate and discuss these options with patients.

Learning Objectives:

1. The participant will understand the concepts of Complementary, Alternative, and Integrative Medicine, and why there is a question about use
2. The participant will evaluate CAM treatments in a systematic manner
3. The participant will be able to discuss the most common CAM treatments

[Click Here To Learn More!](#)

CPA is approved by the American Psychological Association to sponsor continuing education for psychologists. CPA maintains responsibility for this program and its content.

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Save The Date: Risk Management Workshop - July 15, 2019

Join CPA on July 15, 2019 for Sequence IX: Ethics & Risk Management in Complex Clinical Conundrums, sponsored by The Trust, from 9:00 am- 4:30 pm. Six CE credits will be available!

Registration coming soon!

Workshop Description:

For almost 25 years, The Trust has been providing continuing education workshops and individual consultations, with a focus on improving psychologists' risk management skills and strategies. These workshops have evolved from basic concepts and strategies, to a more applied, integrated, and strategic approach to help you protect yourself from adverse disciplinary and legal actions. For this newest workshop, The Trust Risk Management Program reviewed data from over 70,000 consultations provided to date in order to determine which issues and questions are most pressing for today's psychologists. Topics will include boundaries and multiple relationships, challenging terminations, working with children in the midst of family conflict, coping with disciplinary complaints, and psychotherapy patient requests for legally-related documentation. Featured speaker:

Dr. Amanda Zelechoski



Amanda D. Zelechoski is a licensed clinical and forensic psychologist and attorney. Dr. Zelechoski received her Ph.D. from Drexel University, and her J.D. from Villanova University School of Law. She has worked clinically with adults, children, and families in inpatient, outpatient, and forensic settings. She is currently an Associate Professor of Psychology at Valparaiso University.

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What's New at CPA - Continued

Call for Nominations: APA Early Career Psychologist Champion Award

To recognize groups or individuals who champion the interests of early career psychologists.

Description:

The APA Committee on Early Career Psychologists (CECP) invites nominations for its annual Champion Award. This recognition award is presented to individuals or groups that have shown exceptional support to early career members and CECP and are concerned with, knowledgeable about, and familiar with issues related to early career psychologists in the field of psychology. In the past, recipients have demonstrated ongoing support and an overall commitment to advancing the interests of early career psychologists at APA or in related professional societies and associations. A plaque will be presented at the APA Annual Convention during the ECP Social Hour.

Eligibility:

Individuals and groups may self-nominate. Nominators and nominees need not be APA members.

How to Apply:

All nominations must include a brief statement of support for the nominee (250 words max). Optionally, you can strengthen the nomination by including any supporting documentation or weblinks that highlight the individual's or group's focus on the interests of early career psychologists.

Nomination must be received by the end of the day on June 20, 2019. Direct questions and nomination materials to Lucia Gutierrez, PhD, by email at lgutierrez@apa.org.

[Read in browser »](#)

2020 APA Gold Medal Awards for Life Achievement

The American Psychological Foundation (APF) invites nominations for the APF 2020 Gold Medal Award for Life Achievement by a Psychologist in the Public Interest. The award includes a mounted medallion; a waiver of 2020 convention registration fees; round trip airfare; and a travel stipend of \$1,000 to attend the 2020 American Psychological Association (APA) Annual Convention in Washington, DC.

[View Information Here](#)

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Heather Carroll
Heather Kaplinski
Jason Williams
Jonathan Muther
Jody Gottesman
Kay Beaulieu
Monica Foster
Lila Kimel
Molly Brady
Rick Ginsberg
Robyn Hess

Life Contributing Member:

Carol Stafford

Student:

Tess Kilwein

Master's Level Associate:

Clinton Pickett

Early Career Psychologist 0 - 1 Year:

Andrea Alvarado

Early Career Psychologist 2 Years:

Susan Oehler

Early Career Psychologist 3 Years:

Nicole Politis
Kimberly Garrison

Early Career Psychologist 4 Years:

Kate Colon

New Members:

Full:

Jonathan Muther
Kay Beaulieu
Molly Brady
Monica Foster

Early Career Psychologist 0 - 1 Year:

Andrea Alvarado

Early Career Psychologist 4 Years:

Caitlin Walsh

Masters Level Associate:

Clinton Pickett

Everybody Is Gender Fluid

Michael Karson, PhD

If it's true that language governs concepts, then clarifying our language around gender and sex could improve our understanding. *Sex* should refer to whether you are a boy or girl, whether you have an x- and a y-chromosome or two x-chromosomes. *Gender* should refer to whether you act masculine or feminine. It doesn't have to be these particular words of course, but we really need two different words for these two things. There was a time when people confused sex with gender by insisting that there was only one way to be a boy and only one way to be a girl. In those days, it was hard for people to conceive of a feminine man or a masculine woman without disparaging the person. Nowadays, many people confuse sex with gender by assuming that fluidity in gender means fluidity in sex. Ironically, this seems to be based on the same rigid association of masculinity with boys and femininity with girls. In the old days, if a boy played with dolls, some people said he was not a real boy, and if a man cried or said he could not hold more than two drinks, some people said he was not a real man. Nowadays, some people might say that he's not a man (or a boy) at all.

Behaviorally, gender refers to the repertoire of behaviors that were differentially established because of the person's sex. Anything that is punished or rewarded when done by one sex but not by the other is gendered behavior. Cultures and families

differ in what they react to differentially, but every culture and almost every family has some idea of how males should behave that differs in some way from how females should behave. Thus, what is called masculine or feminine is almost entirely arbitrary, but within a culture, it is usually consistent. Even if you think there is a biological basis for what is called masculine or feminine, there will still be some men who are more feminine than some women and some women who are more masculine than some men.

But cultures never stop with biological differences; there are also always behavioral differences in what is considered masculine or feminine (like blue versus pink). In many cultures, boys but not girls are encouraged to settle conflict competitively and are allowed to express overt interest in sex, while girls but not boys are allowed to express tender emotions. These rules are enforced with a form of social punishment called stigma. Since we know that punishment does not change tendencies, only overt expression when punishment is nigh, it is not surprising to find many men having dreams and fantasies of tenderness and submission or to find many women dreaming of sex and competition. No matter how stereotyped a gender performance is, the punished behaviors and the biologically imperative aspects of the self that don't fit the

Everybody Is Gender Fluid - Continued

performance will come out.

It seems pretty obvious that these distinctions also serve a system for dominating women, a key element of which is to highlight their real and invented differences from men. This is especially obvious when femininity resembles childlike behavior (like emotional lability, short stature, and needing protection) and masculinity is linked to adult behavior (like emotion management, tall stature, and protecting others).

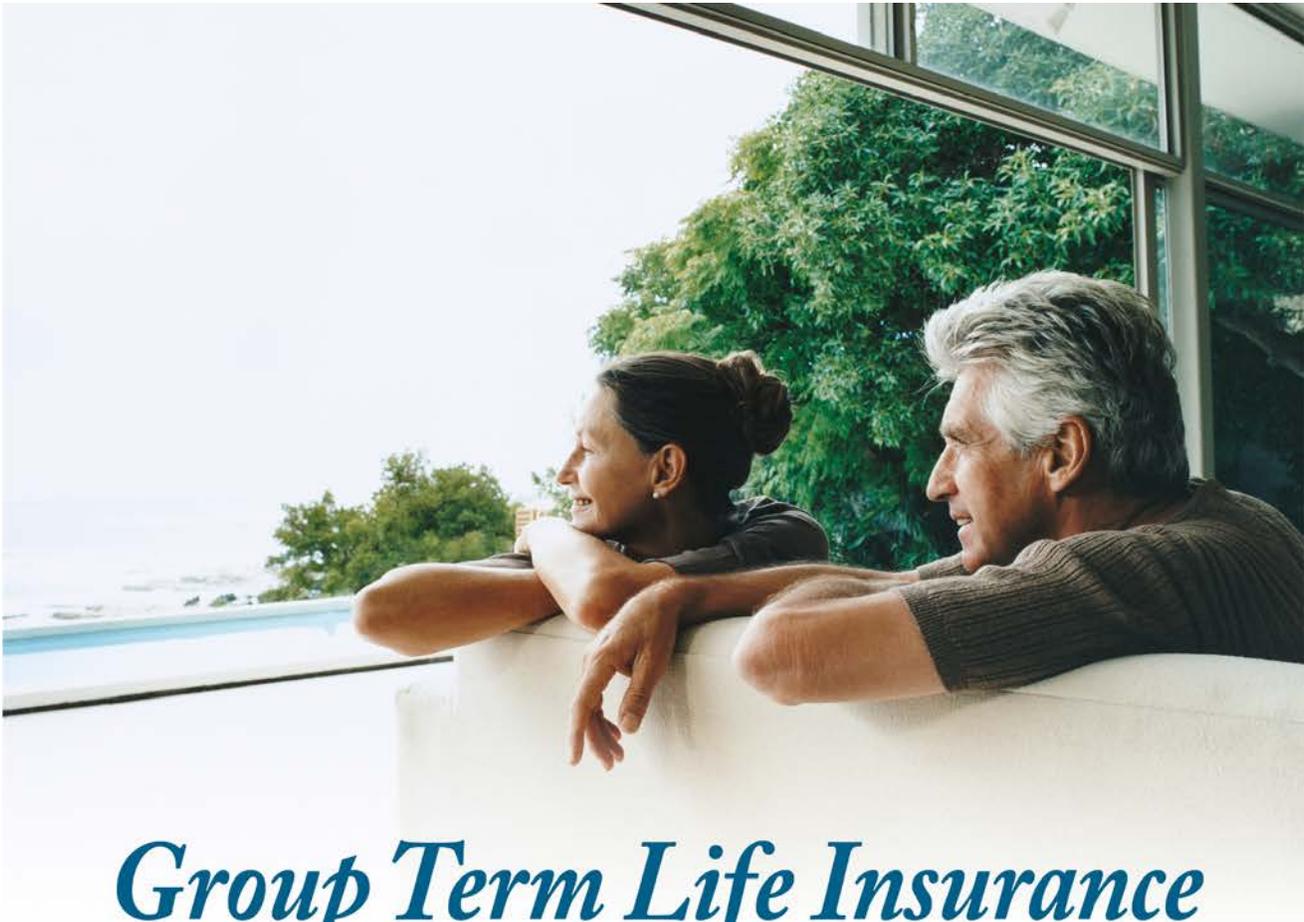
No one is perfectly masculine or feminine—that is, no one tends to do only the things their culture defines as appropriate to their sex with no tendency toward what their culture defines as appropriate to the other sex. Some women may convince themselves and others that they are so nurturing, maternal, and other-oriented as to lack any trace of ego, ambition, or self-expression, and many men may be just as adroit in performing the opposite. But all humans are aggressive, sexual, tender, collaborative animals, and pretending not to be sexual, aggressive, tender, or collaborative can't be pulled off by a human any more than a wolf can pull off the role of a sheep or vice versa. Most of us are performing mainly for others, not for ourselves as well. This majority of gender performers knows that in private, safe from stigma and punishment, the aspects of ourselves not suited to our gender

performance are given freer rein.

There's no harm in pretending you're gender-binary to pull off a cultural performance of masculinity or femininity, as long as you don't forget that you're performing. Therapy can often help a would-be-binary performer recollect and integrate the hidden gender-fluid repertoire.

Michael Karson, PhD, maternally develops and paternally shapes students' behavior at the University of Denver's Graduate School of Professional Psychology. His latest book is What Every Therapist Needs to Know. Dr. Karson can be reached at:

Michael.Karson@du.edu



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² Inflation Safeguard offers additional insurance coverage and the premium will be added to your bill.

Interview with a Psychologist: Apryl Alexander, PsyD

Carly Knauf, MA

The morning before this interview, Dr. Alexander met with legislators at the Capitol to speak with them about the importance of comprehensive school-based sex education, which includes teaching consent and is inclusive of all identities.

Carly: Dr. Alexander, you started the first advocacy course at the Graduate School of Professional Psychology (GSPP) at the University of Denver. Can you tell me more about that?

Dr. Alexander: I started this course because I increasingly became interested in advocacy and activism. However, I didn't have my own training in my graduate school, so I wanted to educate myself and encourage other students to be more involved in public policy and advocacy much earlier in their psychology careers.

Carly: How did you first get involved in advocacy work?

Dr. Alexander: I first got involved after working in a juvenile residential treatment facility and observing all the injustice happening with the adolescents—lifetime registry for juveniles who committed sex offenses, disproportionate minority confinement, and use of solitary confinement. I wanted to find ways to address those problems rather than be a bystander. So when I arrived at DU, I started to actively find ways to be involved in advocacy and policy change using psychology as a tool.

Carly: What are some current issues or laws in Colorado that psychologists and students should be aware of?

Dr. Alexander: Different bills are currently being proposed surrounding suicide prevention. There have been bills introduced in the last several years that have failed, and psychologists can have a voice in really advocating for evidence-based suicide prevention efforts, especially since Colorado has one of the highest rates of suicide for young people and LGBT+ people.

Carly: If people want to learn more about Colorado bills and laws, where is a good place to start?

Dr. Alexander: [Mental Health Colorado's](#) website provides information on all legislation related to mental health each year, and they address which bills they support.

Carly: You wear many hats. You are a Clinical Assistant Professor, Director of Denver FIRST's Outpatient Competency Restoration Program, and Founder & Co-Director of the DU Prison Arts Initiative. What has been most rewarding for you?

Dr. Alexander: Across projects what I enjoy the most is working with students—both DU students and those involved in the DU Prison Arts Initiative. I went to Sterling Correctional Facility to watch one of our theater classes, and it was wonderful seeing the incredible transformational work. Being able to work with a variety of people and promote healthy wellbeing is rewarding.

Carly: Where do you see your career going? What are your next steps?

Dr. Alexander: Since my [TEDx talk](#), people in the community have been wanting to have conversations about psychology and

Interview with a Psychologist - Continued

and integrating psychology into the “real world”—so I hope continue those conversations. I am also working on a book advocating for evidence-based public policy for adolescents who sexually offend. I have been conducting healthy relationship workshops with youth throughout Colorado and I was recently appointed to the Board of Directors of the Colorado Juvenile Defender Center. In sum, I am hoping to find ways to bring psychological science to our communities to help directly benefit people and change policy.

Carly: What advice would you give an early career psychologist?

Dr. Alexander: Use your early career for continued education and training. There are some gaps in our graduate, internship, and postdoc training. Take advantage of opportunities to build leadership skills and skills in advocacy and public policy. APA and other professional organizations have fellowship opportunities, so take advantage of those!

Carly Knauf is a 3rd year PsyD student at the University of Denver. Her clinical interests include family systems, public policy, and advocacy. Contact her at:

Carly.Knauf@du.edu



Dr. Apryl Alexander is a Clinical Assistant Professor in the Graduate School of Professional Psychology at the University of Denver. She is the Director of the Forensic Institute of Research, Service, and Training’s (Denver FIRST) Outpatient Competency Restoration Program. She also serves as the Founder and Co-Director of the DU Prison Arts Initiative, a program that provides therapeutic and creative arts programming to incarcerated men and women in Colorado state prisons. Her research broadly focuses on violence, victimization, and trauma- and culturally-informed practice. Dr. Alexander received the 2017 APA Early Career Achievement Award and the APA Section on Child Maltreatment Early Career Award for Outstanding Contributions to Research.

Colorado Psychological Association

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CPA Mission Statement

The Colorado Psychological Association advances the profession of psychology through advocacy and education for the promotion of psychological health and well-being.

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