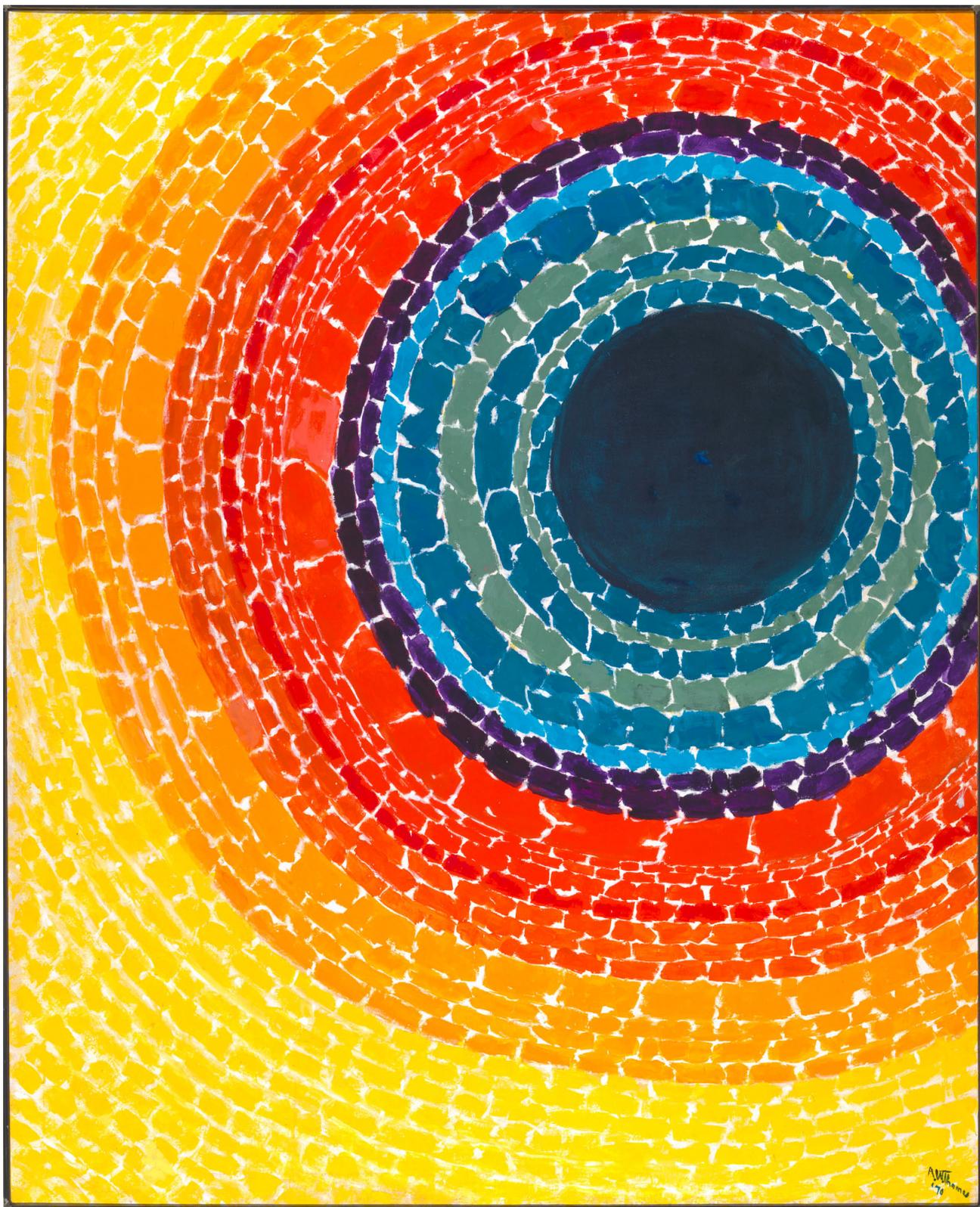


THE FLORIDA SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST

FASP
Florida Association of School Psychologists

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Alma Thomas, *The Eclipse*, 1970, acrylic on canvas, Smithsonian American Art Museum

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On the Cover: In honor of Black History Month and Women's History Month, we celebrate the art of Alma Thomas, a Black female artist who broke color barriers on and off the canvas, yet did not receive national attention until she was 80. (Smithsonian American Art Museum)

A Message from FASP President Angela Mann

Dear FASP Members,

First, thank you all for your continued support and tireless advocacy on behalf of ALL youth and their families across the state of Florida. We know that this work is becoming increasingly more difficult in the current political climate and we are here to provide any support that we can to you.

As I mentioned when I introduced my goals for the year at this year's successful "Social Justice for ALL" annual conference, my goal for this year is to support all of you in continuing to ensure we are creating equitable outcomes for all youth. This work is more important than ever as legislation continues to advance that would create unsafe school climates for youth by denying their identities, the composition of their families, or muting the historical experiences of their ancestors. Schools are also the primary location where students can access mental health, especially youth from low-income and economically marginalized backgrounds. The increasing scrutiny and confusion being created around mental health programming threaten that access.

I know that this tension, coupled with the pandemic, has worn us down. I ask you, as I did when you attended the conference, to revisit the values that drew you to our profession and ask you to renew and recommit to those values every day before you enter your school building or practice. I also ask that you share these values, how critical our work is and how critical it is that our students access our services especially our school-based mental health services, and how critical it is to student mental health that they feel seen with your local leaders — school board members, representatives and senators, parents groups — all the stakeholders who can help us turn this tide.

Please keep an eye out for several professional development opportunities coming in April around disproportionality. We are hoping this supports you with this work. Also, stay tuned for our Facebook Live events where we can dialogue with you more around these issues.

We are here for you and I am always here to lend an ear to hear more about your needs and how FASP can support you.

In solidarity,



Angela Mann, Ph.D., BCBA
FASP President
fasppres@gmail.com

FASP Executive Board

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2022 Diversity Awareness Calendar

Below is a list of the widely recognized awareness months and days for a specific group, culture or cause. These awareness months and days are intended to help raise awareness and understanding for the group, culture or cause, not trivialize them. The second half of the year will be shared in the Summer 2022 edition of the newsletter.

JANUARY

Day	Group, Culture or Cause Recognized
All Month	Poverty in America Awareness Month
1	New Year's Day
1	Global Family Day/World Peace Day
4	World Braille Day
16	World Religion Day
17	Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
23	World Freedom Day
26	International Customs Day
27	International Holocaust Remembrance Day

FEBRUARY

Day	Group, Culture or Cause Recognized
All Month	American History Month Black History Month Canadian History Month Human Relations Month
12	Chinese New Year
14	St. Valentine's Day
15	Nirvana Day
15	Presidents Day
20	World Day of Social Justice

MARCH

Day	Group, Culture or Cause Recognized
All Month	Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month Greek-American Heritage Month Gender Equality Month Irish-American Heritage Month Ethnic Equality Month National Women's History Month National Multiple Sclerosis Education and Awareness Month
1	Mardi Gras
8	Ash Wednesday
8	International Women's Day
8	United Nations Day for Women's Rights and International Peace
11	World Day of Muslim Culture, Peace, Dialogue and Film
14	Pi Day
16	St. Urho day
16-17	Purim
17	St. Patrick's Day
21	International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
21	Naw-Ruz (Baha'i New Year)
25	International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade

APRIL

Day	Group, Culture or Cause Recognized
All Month	Community Service Month Earth Month Autism Awareness Month Arab-American Heritage Month Tartan (Scottish-American) Heritage Month Celebrate Diversity Month
2	World Autism Awareness Day
2	Ramadan Begins
3	Easter
7	International Day of Reflection on the Genocide in Rwanda
15	Passover Starts
20	First Day of Ridvan—Festival of Ridvan
21	Youth Homelessness Matters Day
21	Advisor Appreciation Day
22	National Day of Silence
22	Earth Day
23	Passover Ends
28	The Ninth Day of Ridvan

MAY

Day	Group, Culture or Cause Recognized
All Month	National Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month Haitian Heritage Month Indian Heritage Month Jewish-American Heritage Month Mental Health Month South Asian Heritage Month Personal History Awareness Month Speech and Hearing Awareness Month Older Americans Month
1-2	The Twelfth Day of Ridvan
2	Ramadan Ends
4	Star Wars Day
5	Cinco de Mayo
8-9	Time of Remembrance and Reconciliation for those who Lost their Lives during WWII
21	World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development
22	International Day for Biological Diversity
23	Declaration of the Bab in Shiraz, Shavuot
29	Ascension of Bahau'llah
30	Memorial Day

continued on page 5

2022 Diversity Awareness Calendar (cont.)

JUNE

Day	Group, Culture or Cause Recognized
All Month	National Caribbean American Heritage Month
All Month	AIDS Awareness Month
All Month	LGBT Pride Month
All Month	Black Music Month
8	Race Unity Day
12	Loving Day
19	Juneteenth
21	National Indigenous People's Day
28	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) Pride Day

DIVERSITY TAPESTRY

*"In diversity there is beauty
and there is strength."
~ Maya Angelou*

Special thanks to the FASP Diversity Committee for their extensive contributions to this newsletter!

Freda Reid, Chair
Rodney Godfrey
Faye Henderson
Nikki Hudson
Patrick Hughes
Joan Kappus
Tiombe Kendrick-Dunn
Elvira Medina-Pekofsy
Aline Milfort
James Nguyen
Erin O'Connell
Gisell Rodriguez

Important People in Black History

Marie Van Brittan Brown

Created an early version of the modern home security system. Her system included a motorized camera to record images onto a television monitor, a two way microphone to talk with visitors and a panic button to notify the police. In December 1969, Marie received a patent for her closed circuit television security system.

<https://www.blackpast.org/african-american-history/brown-marie-van-brittan-1922-1999/>

Dr. Gladys West

An American mathematician whose pioneering work in mathematics led to the invention of the Global Positioning System (GPS). In December 2018, Dr. West was inducted into the Air Force Space and Missile Pioneers Hall of Fame.

<https://gcaptain.com/meet-the-navys-gps-pioneer-dr-gladys-west/>

Bass Reeves

It is believed that the real "Lone Ranger" was based on an African American, Bass Reeves. A former slave, Bass escaped to the west during the Civil War. He became a Deputy U.S. Marshal who had a Native American companion. Described as a master of disguise and expert marksman, Reeves allegedly used silver bullets and left a calling card of a silver dollar. He arrested 3,000 outlaws with songs being sung and stories told about his accomplishments. Most of the arrested outlaws were sent to Detroit where the radio show about the Lone Ranger originated

pbs.org/black-culture/explore/10-black-history-little-known-facts

Lonnie G. Johnson

NASA Aerospace Engineer who invented the most famous water gun – the Super Soaker. He also worked on the Galileo Jupiter Probe and Mars Observer Project. Lonnie Johnson holds more than 40 patents.

<https://thinkgrowth.org/14-black-inventors-you-probably-didnt-know-about-3c0702cc63d2>

Mark Dean

Dean was the chief engineer of the 12 person team that designed the IBM Personal Computer. Dean holds three of the nine original patents for the computer.

Bestlifeonline.com/African-american-achievements/

James Weldon Johnson

In November of 1900, Jacksonville, Florida native, James Weldon Johnson wrote the poem "Lift Every Voice and Sing" in honor of Abraham Lincoln's birthday. Set to music by his brother John Rosamond Johnson, the song has become known as the "Black National Anthem."

<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/46549/lift-every-voice-and-sing>

The First Three African American Presidents of the Florida Association of School Psychologists

Denise Dorsey, PsyD, ABSNP, Former FASP Historian

The Florida Association of School Psychologists would like to take a step back in time to celebrate and pay tribute to our first three African American Presidents!

*Mrs. Faye Henderson
32nd President of FASP
1988-1989*

*Ms. Freda Reid
46th President of FASP
2002-2003*

*Dr. Nikki Sutton
60th President of FASP
2016-2017*

These three Past Presidents were courageous in their quests to pursue the top leadership position of the Florida Association of School Psychologists. Not surprisingly, they were each extraordinarily successful in addressing the needs of the specific time period during which they served. Faye, Freda, and Nikki each personified the declaration of Amanda Gorman's poem, which was created for the inauguration of Joe Biden and Kamala Harris.

*When day comes, we step out of
the shade, aflame and unafraid.*

*The new dawn blooms
as we free it.*

*For there is always light,
if only we're brave enough
to see it.*

*If only we're brave enough to be it.
— Amanda Gorman*

To provide a glimpse into some of the factors that influenced the rise of these three astounding leaders, several questions were created for each Past President. They all took the time to reflect and share their personal history as well as their

insight into current issues. The three interviews were conducted in February 2021.

FAYE HENDERSON 32nd President (1988-1989)



Being a trailblazer can be stressful, but you have a history of paving the way for others to follow. You served as the first African American President of FASP. What inspired you to run for President? Can you share what that was like for you? What were some of the other firsts of your professional career?

Faye: Growing up with strong parenting and relentless academic experiences, I have always had a strong curiosity about the elements in life that guide successes and challenges of individuals. I often participated in conversations with my parents that began with curiosity and ended in debates, and sometimes arguments. Even as a teenager in observing my peers, I have always had a strong interest in the dynamics of human behavior, which was one of the topics of discussion along with issues on the state of the country during the '50s and '60s. This strong desire to find answers to questions, especially as they relate to the dynamics of human behavior led me not only to the field of

psychology but also directed my thought process in how to utilize my education and training in this field. As a result of this deep curiosity, the focus was always on seeking answers and guiding others through this journey of finding solutions for challenges. I imagine this curiosity replaced the feelings of stress. It was applied to conversations with colleagues, interactions with schools and my work with students and parents. The challenge was always to ensure the interactions were truly interactive with mutual respect.

Before running for FASP President, I had already served on the Board chairing the committee to finalize the state exam for private licensure, served as NASP state delegate for three years, and served on the FASP Board as the delegate. In addition, along with serving on professional boards and my daily responsibilities as a school psychologist, I worked closely with other psychologists, social workers, teachers, and counselors with efforts to create supportive behavioral and learning environments for students in my assigned schools. I eventually, was awarded Psychologist of the Year by Orange County Public Schools Counseling Department in 1986. At some point, my department supervisor, Dr. Kelland Livesay, asked if I was interested in running for FASP President to place emphasis on the practical, daily aspect of the position. Often times, the position was held by a college professor who had the theoretical background, and of course the time, to serve in the capacity of President. Once again, I felt challenged to answer questions that could lead to the success of others, particularly students. So, I ran for the position. I was able to

connect with the strong desire of colleagues to provide quality and effective services to all students as the population of students throughout the state grew in ethnicities and economic differences in now integrated schools. Often times we found ourselves in positions of addressing desperate needs of teachers and principals to place minority students in “special education” to receive what was viewed as help for their achievement. This solution became “too easy” and too convenient and other solutions were needed. I addressed this in my speech at the FASP state conference and was elected as President-Elect in 1987. Unfortunately, candidates for this position do not give speeches at the state conference anymore as this is the perfect opportunity for candidates to do some soul searching before getting before peers to request their vote for FASP President.

Being the first African American president was demanding because it involved a three-year term — wherein the first year, you were expected to coordinate a state conference. Of course, selecting a team of psychologists who were equally passionate about perfectionism made it somewhat easy, although exhausting. Fortunately, my department supervisor reduced my school assignments to fewer schools. The year of serving the presidency was a continuation of addressing goals of the Board in addition to incorporating my personal goals of expanding the role of school psychologists to serve as change agents, expanding diversity of psychologists and expanding support of students without locking into exceptional education placement. Many concerns emanated about over identification of African American students for exceptional education.

I was the first African American hired as a School Psychologist in Orange County Public School in 1973. However, having completed

my graduate school program thesis on “The Relationship of Environmental Variables to IQ,” I was asked to present my research to the NASP National Conference the Spring of the first year I worked. This was my most daunting experience as I entered into debates and conversation with three college professors who completed their dissertations on biases of IQ tests. One of the professors who was African American claimed a moratorium on all IQ tests for students before a packed audience.

You mentioned that you grew up in the Jim Crow south. How did you navigate through the systemic oppression to become successful and outstanding in your career?

Faye: Racism was prominent throughout the latter '40s, '50s and '60s of my years of growth. What existed for most African American children growing up in this era, particularly in the town of my youth, Sanford, Florida, was very strong support from parents, schools, churches and community as a whole. Students came from homes of little income, one parent, two parents and some of us from homes considered as “middle income.” It did not matter, as everyone was expected to achieve. In addition, you were valued as an integral part of a community and at times spotlighted to perform in plays or other programs, become club presidents, school leaders, participate in spelling bees, participate in competitive music festivals, competitive sports, etc. The black communities thrived within their enclaves in spite of oppressive behaviors from the white community. We were relentlessly taught to stay focused on purpose in life and on goals to achieve. My brother and I heard this message at school, home and in church. It is amazing how powerful these messages are coming from people you respect, love, or admire. It builds much-needed self-esteem and self-worth and

lessens the focus on oppressors. For us, religion also played a critical role in building that emotional strength.

As FASP President, what were some of your proudest moments? What were some of your greatest challenges?

Faye: As FASP President, I totally enjoyed working with colleagues who felt passionate about the field. It was exciting to work at a state level to help influence policies of best practice for schools. My proudest moment is right now as I hear from colleagues about role expansion for school psychologists embraced by OPCS or other districts and I see and hear about definition of evaluations becoming a segment or entity of RTI. I am proud of the increase diversity of psychologists and accompanying services that we addressed through FASP. I am also proud of how the experiences I acquired through the years serving with FASP and NASP contributed to my role as a Director of Exceptional Education and Student Services in OPCS. We were able to create a comprehensive tiered delivery system of services to address emotional and educational needs for all students. During much of my career, I found the greatest challenge during my career was to convince colleagues or school staff that I was not an anomaly. Many of the students in my high school class and throughout my college experiences achieved to great heights. They are all African Americans. I am always questioning how we can change behaviors of stereotyping that exist throughout our country. Otherwise work challenges were always curiosities that led to solutions.

You are unique in many ways, one of which is that there is a special award in your name, the Faye Henderson Exemplary Leadership Award for Minority Students. Can you talk about that award and the impact on minority students?

Faye: When I finally mentally absorbed that FASP actually created an Exemplary Leadership Award in my name for minority students, I felt appreciated and understood. It encompasses my entire existence, and I am awed at how this is recognized by others. My entire adult professional life has been dedicated to working with others in acknowledging their abilities to contribute to the completion of a vision; and in recognizing that these abilities exist throughout ethnicities. Involvement of ethnic groups and other minorities throughout our profession ensures informed, sensitive, and quality services for students.

You are the most recent recipient to join the select few in the History of FASP to receive the Willard Nelson Lifetime Achievement Award. Congratulations again! Please share what that meant to you.

Faye: This question is difficult to answer as I continue to feel humbled by such recognition. The first feeling is "I just do what I do." I know no other way to work at a job other than to find a mission that drives your interest and focus. In addition to this goal, to find others who want to travel the same journey and you work together. In my chosen field of school or educational psychology, I experienced a journey that could last a lifetime. This award reflects that journey.

With regard to social justice, what role can school psychologists play as change agents to make a difference in the lives of others?

Faye: A response to this question can have several layers. First, we all have to come to grips with our own biases and prejudices. We all have them one way or another.

Through the years, I know that school districts have hired consultants for staffs and administrators to address this issue. I have observed visceral resistance to this kind of self-analysis, although just as in counseling training, you are required to obtain counseling for yourself, first. It is a similar concept. To see what is happening with social injustice, it really takes a deep dive into our belief systems that lead to our expectations. We already know that our black and brown mostly male students become caught up in what is viewed as a biased judicial system. In the process of evolving in self-actualization, it is always critical to look objectively at data as to what is really happening overall. Once collected, a plan is developed, and training is essential for the professionals. Parenting sessions continue to be important for children and students. Dialoging with students between critical persons in their lives is very much needed along with support mechanisms. It behooves school psychologists and other student services providers, such as social workers, to become familiar with support and mentoring systems in the communities. Hopefully, FASP will adopt a position paper or statement that will address social injustice, how it negatively impacts the well-being of our society, and how it needs revamping to support the success of all our children and students.

Thank you, Mrs. Faye Henderson, our 32nd FASP President, for your reflections and insight, as well as for your lifetime of leadership, service, and inspiration to our profession.

FREDA REID **46th President (2002-2003)**



Freda, you have an extraordinary history of service on the Executive Board of FASP. When did you first become a School Psychologist? What were some of the positions you held prior to running for President? What gave you the inspiration to run for President? Can you share a little bit about that?

Freda: In 1971, I began working as a School Psychologist in Escambia County. I was the first African American School Psychologist hired in that county. Prior to running for President, I served as a Regional Representative, Diversity Chair, and Professional Development Chair. For several years, I resisted requests to run for president. When I finally did, I lost the election. The following year I was again recruited to run and I won. I had several role models, especially Faye Henderson, who inspired me. I was keenly aware of the lack of diversity on the FASP Board. I felt that the Board needed to increase their awareness of the issues of diverse populations and made this one of my priorities.

Since being the President, you have continued to serve on the Executive Board. What are some of the additional positions you have held?

Freda: Since my term as FASP President ended, I have served as the Ethics and Standards of Practice Committee Chair and, most recently, Diversity Committee Chair.

You have also been an active board member of our FASP charity, Children's Services Fund, Inc. (CSFI). Would you like to share some of the ways that CSFI has helped students and families?

Freda: CSFI holds a very special place in my heart. When I encounter a family in desperate need and CSFI grants my request, the relief on the family's face is so rewarding. CSFI has assisted in paying for the funerals of children; helped families move from their cars into safe housing; assisted a mother in obtaining a lifesaving kidney transplant; purchased tires and gas cards to help parents get to medical appointments and visit their child in the burn unit in Gainesville; and assisted families to recover from devastating home fires. These are just a few of the many emergencies that CSFI has provided assistance to families.

Thanks for sharing that information, Freda. My guess is that not everyone is aware of the phenomenal work of our FASP charity, CSFI. Since 1999, CSFI has given over \$100,000 to families and charitable organizations. (A fundraiser was recently in progress to provide support for children and families by purchasing some very cool face masks.

The publication in the FASP Flash from the Diversity Committee in honor of Black History month was outstanding. As the current Diversity Chair, could you talk about what was involved in that publication?

Freda: The Diversity Committee was awesome in preparing the Black History publication, especially Aline Milfort and Rodney Godfrey. Michelle Roberts Shephard created the artistic design. The Committee had three goals: to highlight Black Americans in school psychology; to provide some little-known facts in black history; and to provide resources to further explore black history.

As FASP President, what were some of your proudest moments? What were some of your greatest challenges?

Freda: One of my greatest concerns as I assumed the duties of FASP President was the lack of timely communication. At the time, the newsletter was published quarterly and social media did not exist. My solution was to develop the FASP FLASH which, 20 years later, continues to be an integral component of FASP communication. The FLASH was designed to fill the communication gap that existed with the quarterly newsletter and to bring to the attention of membership issues requiring immediate attention.

My most memorable challenge during my presidency was the expanding roles of school psychologists. Discussion of expanding roles was beginning to come to the forefront with less emphasis on assessment. There was push back from some members. I remember one school psychologist saying to me, "You are throwing the baby out with the bath water."

You are continuing to exemplify a lifetime of achievement, long after you served as FASP President. Therefore, it comes as no surprise that, in 2015, you became one of the few recipients in the history of FASP to receive the Willard Nelson Lifetime Achievement Award. Congratulations! Please share what being awarded such a great honor meant to you.

Freda: It would be an understatement to say that I was surprised, no, shocked, to be named a recipient of the Willard Nelson Lifetime Achievement Award. I was quite humbled to realize that my colleague held me in such esteem as to honor me with this award. The award is so special, and it is the capstone of my career.

With regard to social justice, what role can school psychologists play as change agents to make a difference in the lives of others?

Freda: As school psychologists, it is our duty to protect ALL children's educational rights and advocate for equal access to opportunities. We must be mindful of the impact of social injustice on student behavior and learning, and how the decisions we make may be influenced by implicit bias. Each of us, as well as others, has implicit biases. We must first recognize their existence and facilitate others in recognizing their implicit biases. School psychologists must be diligent to ensure that implicit biases do not creep into decisions made by school teams.

I vividly recall a situation in which the team was presented with identical assessment profiles of two boys, one white and one black. The white child was staffed into SLD while the black was recommended to be staffed InD. I protested and questioned the reason for the different staffing decisions. With no justifiable explanation, both boys were staffed into the SLD program. This experience left me concerned for children who do not have someone at the table to be their champion. School psychology ethics require that we advocate for the best outcomes for children and not for the benefit of the school, nor the need for bodies in a program or anyone else's desires.

Thank you again, Ms. Freda Reid, our 46th FASP President, for your insight, creativity, and lifetime of compassionate leadership and service for our students, schools, families, and communities.

DR. NIKKI SUTTON
60th President (2016-2017)



You are the youngest member of the select group of African American FASP Presidents, which no doubt will continue to grow. No sooner did you finish your term as FASP President when you were whisked away to a position you could not refuse in Columbus, Georgia. What are some of your current responsibilities as the Program Manager of MTSS Implementation/504 Coordinator for the Muscogee County School District?

Nikki: My primary role entails coordinating, planning, and collaborating with the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) and district and school leaders on the implementation of the MTSS framework. I am working to transform a system of schools into a school system by redesigning school improvement practices through team-based problem-solving and systems-level change. I serve as the liaison between the school district and GaDOE. Additionally, I serve as the district coordinator for the GaDOE Dyslexia Pilot, which involves designing procedures and practices for the screening and identification of characteristics of dyslexia. My secondary role involves overseeing Section 504 regulation within the school district by providing professional development to school contacts, assisting schools with parent grievances or complaints, and ensuring appropriate procedures are in place to meet compliance measures.

What influenced your decision to choose a career as a school psychologist? Who were some of the most instrumental people who shaped your professional career?

Nikki: I was honestly in pursuit of another graduate degree when I finished my Master's in Counseling Psychology. I worked for an agency as a mental health counselor for students in public schools and fell in love with the school setting. It was an educator who told me about school psychology. I did my homework and really loved the idea of a profession that would allow me to address any barriers to student learning as I have a passion for learning. While I can name many people who have shaped my professional career, I believe my biggest influences were God, and my father and mother. They instilled in me the power and the desire to help others break barriers that keep them from their best selves.

You were actively involved in several positions on the FASP Executive Board prior to your presidency. Which additional positions did you hold? What led to your running for FASP President?

Nikki: My previous positions on the FASP Executive Board include Public & Media Relations Chair and Professional Development Chair. My interest in running for FASP President stemmed from my desire to change the landscape of school psychology in the educational setting, across communities and within the field. I wanted increased visibility and value for the profession. Furthermore, I wanted others to know that school psychologists can make significant contributions to the lives of others at the local, state, and federal level. Therefore, I moved forward with a vision and a few ideas for school psychologists to consider when I submitted my name for consideration of the FASP President role.

You are known by many as the Advocacy President. Can you address some of the issues that occurred during your presidency that required advocacy?

Nikki: My passion for advocacy was a hidden gem that was discovered as I learned more about legislative process and bills that either supported or created barriers for promoting students and families. During my presidency, the major issues at the time were the impact of school shootings happening in other parts of the U.S. on students' education and mental wellness, the Pulse Night Club mass shooting, the devastation in the south Florida area caused by Hurricanes Irma and Maria, and a highly controversial and politically-charged 2017 U.S. Presidential election. The violence from mass shooting events and the frequency with which they occurred around that time had taken a toll on both children and adults. The media coverage and obvious decline in mental wellness was proof that FASP needed to address school psychologists, school district leaders, and communities across the state and share a plan as well as resources to support ongoing concerns with safety and the acceptance of differences among people. After the hurricane disaster in the south Florida, the FASP Executive Board agreed to generate a plan to provide money, clothing, non-perishable food items, flashlight, batteries, and a host of other resources to assist the impacted residents in the various areas of Miami, Key West, and Puerto Rico. Lastly, events surrounding the 2016 Presidential election was the beginning of divisiveness, difficulty accepting differences among people, and strong political viewpoints and beliefs that promoted conflict. As the President at that time, I received several personal emails that were politically-charged and with a strong distaste for my role as President of FASP. As a result, the FASP Board followed NASP's

lead with sending message and materials to support diversity and inclusion to FASP members. This event ultimately led to a social justice themed FASP Summer Institute.

What were some of the most important accomplishments during your tenure as FASP President? What were some of your greatest challenges?

Nikki: My greatest accomplishments include having one of the highest attendance number and revenue generated for the FASP Annual Conference, sending frequent FASP Action-Alerts to ask Executive Board members and membership to take action on important legislation impacting children and families, providing resources to victims of tragic events that occurred, working with our lobbyist to have a seat at the legislative table to address mental health with the Committee, and sharing school psychology and mental health resources with superintendents across Florida through a monthly newsletter.

My greatest challenge was navigating a politically-charged climate and the growing changes in attitudes or behavior towards difference in race, religion, gender identification and others. The country was becoming more divided and I increased my consultation with a diverse group of leaders to ensure my messages were very neutral and supportive.

Who are some of the people who have inspired you along the way in your pursuit of excellence?

Nikki: Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Maya Angelou, Angela Bassett, Michelle Obama, and Nikki Giovanni are a few inspirational figures.

With regard to social justice, what role can school psychologists play as change agents to make a difference in the lives of others?

Nikki: As school psychologists, we have an ethical responsibility to engage in social justice to advocate for initiatives that promote equity for students and families and communities we serve. We must release any insecurities with regard to engaging in advocacy and take action on any injustices or inequalities. As a collective effort, every voice and every action taken is another step forward towards positive change.

Is there anything else you would like to add?

Nikki: I am grateful for my experiences in the role of FASP President because it has only fueled my desire to set the bar higher as a leader and continue striving for excellence in my service to others.

Thank you Dr. Nikki Sutton, 60th FASP President, for your years of leadership in FASP and for the remarkable work you continue to do as an advocate and change agent for students, schools, communities, and families.

On a final note, when the three Past Presidents were asked to share a quote from someone who had provided inspiration in their lives and who was an instigator of personal growth, all were in agreement that the quote would be from someone very special to our nation and to our world, the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

May we all receive inspiration from Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., as well as from our first three African American Presidents, who have skillfully provided leadership to the Florida Association of School Psychologists with courage, compassion, and fortitude.

*“Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that.”
— Martin Luther King, Jr.*

Interview with Dr. Deborah Crockett: First African American President of NASP

Aline Milfort, M.S., FASP Diversity Committee

Dr. Deborah Crockett is the first African American president of the National Association of School Psychologists (1997-1998). Dr. Crockett graduated from Spelman College and Georgia State University. She worked for 30 years as a school psychologist in Fayette County Public Schools. Dr. Crockett also worked with a clinical group and in the alternative education setting from 2005 until her retirement in 2011. Dr. Crockett has held various leadership roles at the state (Georgia Association of School Psychologists) and national levels (National Association of School Psychologists). Dr. Crockett established the NASP Minority Scholarship Program and assisted with the initial creation of The Tolerance Project. She has won numerous awards including most recently, the NASP Lifetime Achievement Award.

What inspired you to run for president of NASP?

Dr. Crockett: I was NASP President from 1997-1998, but it is really a three-year term (President-Elect, President, and the Past President). I had a good relationship with school psychologists in Montgomery County located in Maryland and DC, and they came to me and asked would I consider running for president. I did not think I could win. However, I will never forget when I came home and received a call. I cannot remember the exact date, but it was a call on Thursday at 5:30 in the afternoon from the NASP office. The NASP office had been trying to get in touch with me all day. The caller said, Congratulations, you were elected President of NASP." I said, "Are you serious?" My opponent from New York would be calling me to



congratulate me but the NASP office wanted to call before she did. When I checked my voicemail, I had about three calls from her. I was more so inspired by the support of a lot of school psychologists especially by the Black school psychologists. Susan Gorin, NASP Executive Director at the time, was very supportive. It was a wonderful, wonderful experience. During my presidency, Puerto Rico finally became a part of NASP. So, I had a lot of fun. Just getting things up and running.

What would you consider as your greatest professional achievement? And why?

Dr. Crockett: Everyone knows the Minority Scholarship Program and The Tolerance Project were my babies. But if I had to drill down and choose one thing, I would have to say the scholarship program because it was something that could be used for recruitment.

What led you to create the NASP Minority Scholarship Program?

Dr. Crockett: I grew up dirt poor. My parents were wonderful. They had six girls and very little money. So, it was really our responsibility to find a way to go to college and move up the ladder. When I was growing up, we all talked about lifting ourselves up out of poverty. I do not hear those discussions much anymore. I received a scholarship to Spelman College. During my third year at Spelman, my dad was diagnosed with cancer. Since I was the oldest I left school to help the family financially. I promised my father on his death bed that I would finish college because he was so proud that I received a scholarship to Spelman. Eleven years later, I got married and had a child, but I was saving and saving my change. If you save change for a long time, you have more money than you think. I decided to count it one day. My husband came in and I was jumping up and down and I said, "I have enough money to go back to school for at least four quarters." He could not believe it! I was determined because I had promised my father.

In the late '80s/early '90s, I worked with a professor at the University of South Florida in Tampa who was doing research on the number of minorities that were in NASP. The Multicultural Affairs Committee was discussing the need for more Black school psychologists. Children need to see people who look like themselves when they are being asked questions, just to build up trust. I went to my high school and to Spelman trying to find out why minority students were not even considering the field. Well, first they did not know about school

psychology as a profession. Kathy Durbin, NASP President, wanted not just Multicultural Affairs but NASP leadership to get together and develop a program where we would go into the schools and talk to the actual kids about school psychology and who and what we were. Students would ask how much does this cost? The thing is this is a post-baccalaureate degree, so most of these kids were saying even if you go into a college setting, they have student loans and cannot borrow any more money. I knew what a struggle it was for me and so, the light switch went on and I talked to Faye Henderson and Rocky Martinez wondering is there anything we can do to help these students. Faye said, "We talked about starting a scholarship" and "I said where are you in this process. I would be happy to work with you." They had not even started. Somehow, a fire was lit up in me and I said, "This can be done." Then, I started drafting.

I was sitting at a restaurant with Robin Satchell from Maryland, who assisted me as they were doing a scholarship in Maryland. I also spoke with people who were members of the Psychological Corporation and the president of the testing unit from the Psychological Corporation, where they wanted me to share some data. I contacted Mike Curtis and asked if he could send me the data of the number of people who are school psychologists in NASP by age, gender, and any demographics you can give me. At that time, just a little over 1% of school psychologists in NASP were Black/African American, Hispanics were approximately 0.2%, and Indigenous People were not identified at all. I said, "This is a disgrace." Susan Gorin had come on as NASP Executive Director. She worked with special education and we talked and discussed writing a draft. Robin helped. She read it and made changes.

People just started volunteering to help when they heard about it. I was at the delegate assembly with Abby from Utah and we passed out envelopes. We collected almost \$800 that day. Then, Susan said we will count, verify, and seal it. Take it back to D.C. and you take a month to write out the scholarship and the goals. Abby said if you write it, send it to me, I will give you feedback and that is how we got started. Then, what is now called Pearson got involved and they gave money towards the scholarship every year. Then, we reached out to other school psychology associations at the state level including Chicago, Maryland, Georgia, New York, Ohio, and Florida and they gave money. Then, I decided to run for President of NASP and during my presidential year we awarded the first \$5,000 scholarship to Sherrie Proctor and I was over the moon! I was not on the selection committee because I would never have settled for one person. When the selection committee called to tell me that a selection had been made and the young lady was Sherrie Proctor, a graduate of Spelman College, I screamed and said, "I could not believe this that is my undergraduate school." Sherrie came in with her dreads and I said, "Alright, you go girl!" Those were the good old days. My goal was to get it up and running, to get it funded as much as I could, and walk away and then let the scholars take over. This scholarship program is like my child. I remember the first year we got our first Hispanic winner I remember the first year we got an Indigenous winner, and she did her acceptance speech in Navajo language.

Who had the greatest impact on you as a school psychologist?

Dr. Crockett: Jim Ysseldyke. He wrote a book on "Special Education and Identification of Children in Special Education." I was in a

master's program at the time, specifically the second quarter. There was a discussion occurring in my class and I had a lot of questions. So, I called Ysseldyke and had no idea he was the person that he was. He talked to me for over four hours and went through my case with me. It gave me the courage to go back and pick up the discussion in my class. I was able to meet other psychometricians who were professors at the time and very kind to me.

As the first African American NASP President, what advice would you give to a minority early career school psychologist interested in pursuing a leadership role on a local, state or national level?

Dr. Crockett: Decide what you want to do and go and do it. Get involved anywhere you can. Find a niche and get in it and let people know that you are interested. If they are writing papers on different topics, volunteer to help with those. If they are looking for someone to lead in an area that you know about, tell them that you will do it or get a group of people and do it. I believe I started on the Multicultural Affairs Committee at GASP, then I became a region rep, and then I became secretary for the state association. Wherever you think you want to be, go for it. Just start letting people know this specific position is what you want to do.

Any advice for practicing school psychologist and/or graduate students?

Dr. Crockett: You decide what you want to do and based on your specific personality figure out what is the best way to push it through. Look at your organization and based on the interest that you have, determine where you can help.

The Pioneer: Albert Sidney Beckham, The First African American School Psychologist

Rod Godfrey, Psy.S., NCSP



The name Albert Sidney Beckham, Ph.D. should be ingrained in every School Psychologist's "mental rolodex", as he was a pioneer in the field and an innovator. The son of a business owner, Dr. Beckham is the first known African American to hold the title of School Psychologist. As a 15-year-old, Beckham enrolled at Lincoln University in Oxford, Pa., alongside Francis Cecil Sumner, who himself was the first African American to hold a Ph.D. in psychology. After earning his bachelor's degree from Lincoln, one of the Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU), Beckham went on to receive a second bachelor's and a master's degree from Ohio State University. Following his time at Ohio State, Beckham enlisted in the United States Air Force hoping to become a combat pilot. Due to the racism existing in the military, he was not allowed to be a pilot, but instead became a war professor of psychology at Wilberforce University, an HBCU in Ohio. In 1921, after his service was completed, Beckham enrolled at Columbia University in New York, but later transferred to New York University. Beckham became a professor of psychology at Howard University in 1924, and even worked as an editor for a local newspaper, before earning his Ph.D. in educational

psychology from NYU in 1930. Some of Dr. Beckham's notable achievements are as follows:

- Beckham created the lab for Howard University's psychology department; the first of its kind at an HBCU. The lab was used for individual consultations for residents of the Washington, DC area, as well as to conduct research to refute mainstream claims regarding the intellectual inferiority of African American children.
- Beckham worked at the Institute for Juvenile Research, which was devoted to researching and resolving juvenile delinquency.
- Beckham served as a Senior Assistant Research Psychologist for the National Committee for Mental Health. The organization provided delinquent children with psychologists, psychiatrists, and social workers. It was also used to administer tests, provide training for teachers, and evaluate other clinics. This became the model for many services in use today around the country and the world.
- Beckham became the school psychologist at DuSable High School in Chicago and established one of the first public school psychological clinics. DuSable High served primarily African American students. Beckham's clinic aided parents and offered them support in raising adolescents.
- The DuSable clinic created programs that involved local churches, and created a school/church/neighborhood connection that fostered a

strong network in what, at the time, was a large low-income housing development.

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March is Women's History Month

Erin O'Connell, FASP Diversity Committee

March is Women's History Month "commemorating and encouraging the study, observance and celebration of the vital role of women in American history." The Library of Congress website at <https://womenshistorymonth.gov/> provides a wealth of information and resources to appreciate and share. The "For Teachers" section is a must see!

Reflecting on women in the field of school psychology led to the review of two great resources in particular. A 1988 article in *Professional School Psychology* titled, "Grandmothers I wish I knew: Contributions of women to the history of school psychology" by Joseph French helped me to feel a personal connection to the female pioneers in our field. In 1993, the *Journal of School Psychology* published an article titled, "Contributions of women in school psychology: The Thayer report and thereafter" by Rosa Hagin. This article helped me to understand the growth in our field and how women contributed to the advancement. Both articles should be required reading for all school psychologists.

Notable tidbits of information that may peak your interest and encourage you to read the two articles mentioned above include:

- "By 1918, organized psychology (i.e., the American Psychological Association [APA]) had just finished celebrating a quarter century as an organization. During the first 25 years, most members of the APA were men. Although there were some women in the profession, they were spoken of discretely, and they were undoubtedly thought of in stereotypical terms. Women of that day and age

were supposed to attend to domestic activities and to the needs of the young. In my hometown for example, laws at that time referred to "Men, boys and other persons..." almost as if women did not exist at all. Although these conditions existed and made it difficult for women to rise above the stereotypes, the percentage of women in the APA gradually increased and reached 14% by 1918."

- One of the "grandmothers" of school psychology is Helen Thompson Woolley, born in 1874. She worked as an experimental psychologist and was "the first psychologist in the State of Ohio to be employed full-time in a public school system to collect psychological data on public school students" (Veatch, 1978, p. 3). In 1914, Woolley and an associate in the bureau, Charlotte Fischer, were the first to use percentiles in reporting about the cognitive ability of students (Woolley, 1915; Woolley & Fischer, 1914)."
- "In the first half of this century, the schools were one of the few sources of employment for women. Perhaps this is why women, more than men, were the early leaders in the [APA] Division of School Psychology. Of the first five presidents, four were women."
- "The National Education Association's Almanac of Higher Education (Robbins, 1991) shows high proportions of women studying psychology at all levels, with women earning 70% of the bachelor's degrees, 76% of the master's degrees, and 54% of the

doctoral degrees in that field. These gender ratios among currently enrolled students have led to predictions of demographic changes that do not bode well for psychology. Feminization of a field in the past has signaled a loss in prestige and pay. Because of such concerns, an APA committee has been formed to study "the causes and consequences of such changes and what, if anything, needs to be done (Adler, 1991, p. 12). These concerns have special relevance for school psychology because historically a high proportion of women have worked in that field."

- Rosa Hagin describes her job in 1951 as the first school psychologist in a suburban school district with a salary of \$17 per day. "There was no established routine of testing-placement in special education, for these services did not exist. Teachers referred children to the school psychologist, not with the expectation that they would be removed from regular classrooms, but with the need to know more about them so that they could be taught more effectively."

Florida Fun Facts

- According to the Florida Department of Health website, Karen Ann Carroll (SS8) and Dianne Evalyn Cotter (SS9) were the first female Licensed School Psychologists in Florida. Their licenses were originally issued on August 3, 1982. Records indicate there have been a total of 1,562 Licensed School Psychologists in Florida as of the writing of this article.

- Dr. Thelma Voorhis served as a co-president of the Florida Association of School Psychologists (FASP) with Dr. Robert M. Allen in 1957-1958. Both are listed as being the first presidents of FASP. The following year, 1958-1959, Dr. Voorhis alone served as the 2nd President.

Five Women You Should Know About

1. **Gertrude Hildreth** began as a school psychologist in 1921 and authored the first book pertaining to School Psychology titled, "Psychological Services for School Problems," written in 1930.



She was a fellow of the American Psychological Association (APA) and was president of the APA Educational Psychology Division in 1949.

2. **Inez Prosser** was the first Black American woman to receive a Ph.D. in Educational Psychology in 1933. Her dissertation was one of the first investigations into the social domain of school children looking at self-esteem and personality variables of African American students in segregated versus integrated schools. Her life was tragically cut short in 1934 when she was killed in a car accident.



3. **Marigold Linton** became the first American Indian to earn a doctorate in psychology in 1964. In 1974, she co-founded the National Indian Education Association. Dr. Linton's research specialty is long-term memory. She has obtained more than \$13 million in support from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) for programs that enable many American Indians to earn advanced degrees in the sciences.



4. **Martha Bernal** was the first woman of Mexican descent to earn a Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology in the United States. She was a founding member and past president of the National Hispanic Psychological Association. She was recognized for her contributions to the field in 2000 at the Latino Psychology Conference and was awarded the Contributions to Psychology Award.



5. **Melba Vasquez** was the first Latina president of the American Psychological Association in 2011. Dr. Vasquez has served as president of the Texas Psychological Association as well as Division 17 and Division 35 of the APA. She co-founded APA Division 45, the Society for the Psychological Study of Culture, Ethnicity and Race.



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Thelma Grady Voorhis: First Female FASP President

Denise Dorsey, PsyD, Former FASP Historian

Many practicing school psychologists have never heard of Dr. Thelma Grady Voorhis, the first woman elected to serve as President of the Florida Association of School Psychologists. Our founding FASP Historian, John A. Wells, recognized that Dr. Thelma Grady Voorhis was a remarkable woman with an extraordinary history. In the document entitled, *A History of the Florida Association of School Psychologists*, he provided historical information regarding Dr. Voorhis, as well as historical information regarding the FASP organization. In many ways, our first president's story does not read like that of a person born on December 19, 1898, but rather as that of a contemporary.

To begin, Dr. Thelma Grady Voorhis was elected as the first FASP President in May 1957. Her doctoral degree stood out at a time when relatively few women had four-year college degrees. Surprisingly, Dr. Voorhis was not the only one elected President in 1957. She and Dr. Robert M. Allen were each elected as Co-President, a status that has never been replicated in the history of our organization. In 1958, Dr. Voorhis continued in her role of FASP President independently, making her the only FASP President to have served two consecutive terms. Dr. Voorhis will continue to hold that record indefinitely, since the position of FASP President has undergone an evolution into a three-year commitment: President-Elect, President, and Immediate Past President, making it impossible for the same person to serve as President for two consecutive years. (A note worth mentioning is that Joe Jackson is the only other FASP President who has taken on a second term in the office of

presidency; however, his two terms spanned a gap of 29 years, falling at the beginning and at the end of his impressive career. In 1982-1983, Mr. Jackson served as the 26th FASP President and in 2011-2012 as the 55th FASP President.)

The John Wells/FASP Historical Archives reveals that the Florida Association of School Psychologists officially came into being in Miami Beach at the Golden Nugget Hotel. The historic meeting was held immediately prior to the annual meeting of the Florida Psychological Association (FPA), which took place on May 2-4, 1957. Both Dr. Voorhis and Dr. Allen co-chaired the meeting and presented a draft of the new constitution of FASP for review and approval by the 25-30 people in attendance. It appears that early on, the organizations of FPA and FASP were closely aligned and sometimes characterized by the dual membership of some of our school psychologists. For example, while serving as the Co-President of the Florida Association of School Psychologists, Dr. Voorhis also served as the Secretary of the Florida Psychological Association.

Background Information

Thelma Grady was born to John Grady and Hettie Whiting in Deloit, Iowa. For reasons unknown to us, she was not raised by her biological parents. Instead, she grew up with an aunt, who was a teacher.

Thelma's two sisters (Helen Jewel and Ruth Hangardener) were also raised outside their immediate family, either through relative care or adoption. In terms of her career goals, Thelma initially

followed in her aunt's footsteps and entered a teacher's college in Montclair, New Jersey. She graduated with a diploma in elementary education in 1920 from New Jersey State Normal School. In 1922, she was accepted by the Teachers College of Columbia University. After four years, she earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Educational Psychology (1926). She then pursued graduate work at Columbia University, earning her master's degree and then her Ph.D. in 1931.

Although an official resumé for Thelma Grady Voorhis has not been located, the records in the John Wells/FASP Historical Archives shed light on her employment history throughout her lifetime. After graduating from New Jersey State Normal School, she first worked as a substitute teacher, and then as a teacher and administrator in secondary education. During her studies at Columbia University, she worked as an Assistant in Educational Psychology and as a Research Assistant in Educational Psychology. Her final position at Columbia University was that of a Clinical Psychologist in Psychiatric Education (1931-1932).

Meanwhile, in 1929, at the age of 30, Thelma married Edward Ellison Voorhis, a young man from a wealthy family, who was slightly her junior (born 1900). The two of them purchased a home on Staten Island prior to Black Friday and the notorious 1929 stock market crash. Within a few years, the Voorhis family had doubled with the birth of two children, Steven and Jane. Thelma had limited her professional work to psychological consultation services to devote more time to raising her family, but the financial stress precipitated by the

stock market crash necessitated the resumption of her financial contributions.

In 1934, Thelma accepted a part-time position as a teacher trainer at Hunter College in New York, while simultaneously holding a supervisory position through the Works Progress Administration of New York City. Until 1940, she worked tirelessly on the development of materials and techniques to assist in the education of adult speakers of other languages. In 1940, however, her focus changed to that of children and adolescents, with a special focus on those with handicaps. Throughout the rest of her life, she retained her commitment to children, adolescents, and persons with disabilities.

In 1946, Dr. Voorhis accepted a position as a school psychologist in New York City. She was paid \$9.00 per day to administer and interpret intellectual and achievement instruments. She worked with elementary age students through high school students. In addition, she provided consultation services to parents, teachers, and administrators, provided presentations to various organizations, and assisted with the standardization of new materials.

In 1950, Thelma and her husband, Edward, moved with their daughter, Jane, to St. Petersburg, Florida. By that time, their son, Steven was already an adult and had enlisted in the US Navy. Edward accepted a position in a bank and Thelma was hired as a psychologist for the Pinellas County Juvenile Welfare Board. Two years later, in 1952, Dr. Voorhis began working as a school psychologist in Pinellas County. She continued in that position until her retirement in 1964.

Dr. Voorhis died on January 20, 1983, at the age of 84. We remember her and celebrate her not only as a founding member of

the Florida Association of School Psychologists, our First Co-President, and our second President, but also for her many contributions to children, adolescents, and adults throughout her career. Her accomplishments during a time when higher education was the exception rather than the rule for women lend an extra element of genuine admiration and awe to her lifetime of service.

An obituary found in the historical archives, written by Romaine Kosharsky of the St. Petersburg Times, and stamped January 21, 1983, delineates her lifework as well as some of her important associations.

Special Affiliations/Honors

- As a result of her Staten Island work on Women's Rights, in 1938, Dr. Voorhis received an invitation from the President of the 1939 New York World's Fair to be part of the Advisory Committee on Women's Participation.
- By 1939, her stature had risen to such a height that she received an invitation from the mayor of New York City to help him welcome King George VI and Queen Elizabeth on their visit to New York City on June 10, 1939.
- Dr. Voorhis served on the State Board of Education from 1950 to 1962.
- Dr. Voorhis was one of the founders of the Nina Harris School. <https://www.pcsb.org/domain/1952>
- Dr. Voorhis served on the Florida State Board of Examiners of Psychology (1957-1962)
- On March 1, 1958, Dr. Voorhis became the second certified School Psychologist in the State of Florida.
- Dr. Thelma Grady Voorhis was listed in the Who's Who in American Women 1958-1959.

Professional Organizations

- Florida Psychological Organization (FPA)
- Florida Association of School Psychologists (FASP)
- Kappa Delta Pi
- Tampa Bay Psychological Association
- American Psychology

Other Significant Memberships

- Daughters of the American Revolution
- St. Bede's Episcopal Church
- American Red Cross
- Van Voorhees Association

There has been no other president in the John Wells/FASP Historical Archives who has received this level of attention. In fact, Dr. Voorhis is the only FASP President with extensive biographical information reported at the present time. It is a great privilege for the Florida Association of School Psychologists to celebrate our first FASP Co-President and our first female President. The legacy of Dr. Thelma Grady Voorhis is an important part the history of FASP!

April is National Autism Awareness Month

Elvira Medina-Pekofsky , FASP Diversity Committee

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a developmental disability that impacts social, communication, and behavioral development. It prevails throughout the individual's lifespan. The term includes conditions previously known as Autistic Disorder, Pervasive Developmental Disorder not otherwise specified, and Asperger Syndrome. Prevalence data suggest that one in 54 individuals meets criteria for Autism Spectrum Disorder ([CDC](#)). Boys are four times more likely than girls to experience ASD.

This disorder frequently results in self-regulation and communication difficulties that significantly impact social and emotional functioning and require behavioral and social-emotional interventions. Individuals with ASD show a full range of intellectual abilities, from severe delays that require specialized instruction and a high level of support, to above average to gifted cognitive abilities with mild social impairments that can be accommodated within a regular or accelerated program. Recent data suggests that about half of the children identified as experiencing ASD have average to above average intellectual ability ([Autism and Developmental Disabilities Monitoring Network](#)).

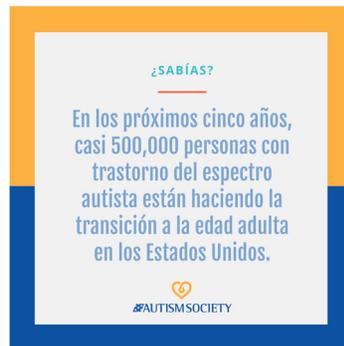
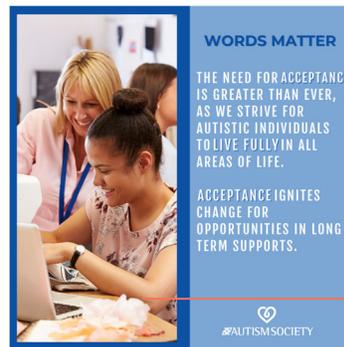
Although children with ASD can be identified by the time they are toddlers, sometimes children are misdiagnosed and miss access to critical early interventions, specialized instruction, and positive supports. Timely interventions and therapies can minimize delays and behavioral difficulties. It is critical that parents monitor development and connect to properly trained evaluators to assess for ASD ([Developmental monitoring and screening](#)).

The first national effort to advocate for individuals affected by autism was introduced by the **Autism Society of America** in the early 1970s. The National Autistic Children's week was introduced in 1972 to promote awareness about the condition. The advocacy effort gradually evolved into a month-long celebration that goes beyond awareness of the disorder to full acceptance of the individuals. The Autism Society focuses on celebrating differences, still offering information about signs and symptoms, yet emphasizing the need to connect with the community to create inclusive experiences for individuals with ASD ([Autism Acceptance Month: Celebrate Differences](#)). Their goal is "fostering acceptance to ignite change through improved support and opportunities in education, employment, accessible housing, affordable health care and comprehensive long-term services and supports."

The #celebratedifferences campaign offers virtual events that promote awareness and inclusion of individuals with ASD ([Facebook Live Webisodes](#)).

[Resources](#) include:

- "What is Autism? Poster
- "What is Autism?" Infographic
- Advocacy Guide (ways to support the campaign, examples of media posts/newsletter, resources
- Social Media graphics – English & Spanish



Autism Speaks promotes the United Nation’s World Autism Awareness Day on April 2nd and continues to celebrate World Autism Month throughout April. ([World Autism Month FAQ](#)). They highlight stories and opportunities that increase the understanding and acceptance of individuals with Autism. Their goal is help individuals with Autism reach their full potential through multiple initiatives:

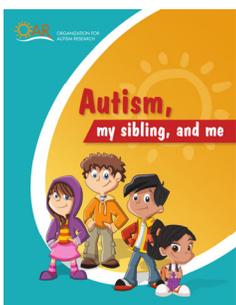
- [#LearnWithKindness](#) – to celebrate and support acceptance, understanding and inclusion with daily acts of kindness in school settings
- [#WorkplaceInclusionNow](#) - to create inclusive workplace environments
- [#LightUpWithKindness](#) – to create connections between kindhearted people through Autism Speaks community activities
- Connect with Kindness – to [highlight the stories of specific individuals](#) and to [connect people with community events](#) where they can connect with each other
- Care with Kindness – offering individuals with ASD and their families with personalized guidance and resources¹³ through the [Autism Care Network](#)

Their interactive [resource guide](#) offers a comprehensive list of resources, by state, life stage, and level of support. It includes resources for advocacy, autism friendly services, employment and post-secondary education, evaluation and diagnosis, health and medical, housing and community living, multi-service providers, recreation & community activities, safety, schools, state services & entitlements, support groups, and treatments & therapies.

The **Organization for Autism Research** celebrates Autism Acceptance during [Autism Awareness Month](#). Their goals are to:

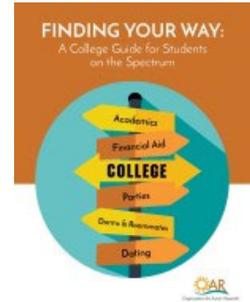
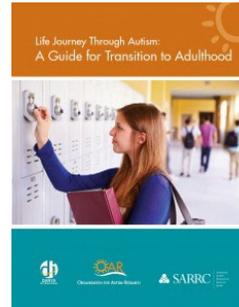
1. Educate youth about peers and siblings with Autism:

- Kit for Kids
- Autism Tuned in
- Young Siblings Guide: Autism, My Sibling, and Me

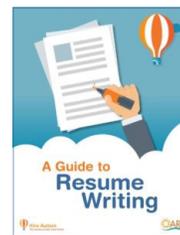


2. Empower the ASD community through informational resources:

- Finding Your Way: A College Guide for Students on the Spectrum
- A Guide to Transition to Adulthood (newly revised)
- A Guide to Safety
- A Guide to Military Families
- Spanish Language Resources



3. Support adults with Autism through their OAR's Hire Autism Initiative



4. Raise funds for Autism research:

- #RUNFORAUTISM
- Active for Autism 5K and Kids Dash
- Autism License Plate



OAR RUN FOR AUTISM WE START AS A GROUP OF PEOPLE. WE FINISH AS A GROUP OF FRIENDS.



May is Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month

James Nguyen and Aline Milfort

#STOPAAPIHATE Together

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4Ps1D-hESes>

History of AAPI Heritage Month

In 1978, Asian/ Pacific Heritage week was established. The first 10 days of May were chosen because of two important milestones, the first arrival of Japanese Immigrants (May 7, 1843) and in recognition of Chinese workers with the completion of the transcontinental railroad (May 10, 1869; Census.gov, 2020). In 1992, Congress expanded the observance to a month-long celebration that is now known as Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month (Census.gov, 2020). Below are various resources available to learn more about the AAPI community:

Impacts on Children and Students

- Parents have expressed fear of taking their children out in public due to rise in hate crimes in the Asian American community (<https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/us/asian-american-parents-say-they-re-afraid-to-take-their-kids-out-in-public/ar-BB1frHUr>)
- Some Asian parents are concerned and worried about elderly parents in cramped, multigenerational households, distrustful of promised safety measures and afraid their children will face racist harassment at school (https://www.washingtonpost.com/education/asian-american-students-home-school-in-person-pandemic/2021/03/02/eb7056bc-7786-11eb-8115-9ad5e9c02117_story.html)

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sf8Ajs-2-Yw>
- Students expressing their own experiences (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VlcF45eUDrc>; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f5ccbJcqlUo&t=1s>)

How to Address Anti-Asian Racism

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l39woiDIZFA>

Why Might Asian Americans Avoid Seeking Help

- Cultural stigma
- Lack of understanding of mental health services
- Conflicting cultural values
- Western vs. Eastern approach
- Collective approach
- Language barriers
- Can cause a lot of misunderstandings
- Lack of awareness of resources available
- Lack of research
- Most research articles include White, Black, Hispanic, and Latinx. Very rarely are Asians included in research
- (<https://www.mhanational.org/issues/asian-americanpacific-islander-communities-and-mental-health#>)

Things You Can Do Now to Support AAPI Individuals

- Routinely ask your AAPI colleagues, students and friends “How are you doing? How is your family doing?”
- Check-in with your AAPI friends and colleagues. Don’t

assume they’re all OK. Even a simple text showing that you care and that you hear us makes all the difference in the world.

- Instead of asking, “Where are you from?” rephrase it to something like, “What is your cultural background?” The Asian community is one of the most heterogeneous minority groups, yet we are grouped into a homogeneous monolith. Don’t assume we’re all the same.
- If you see a hate crime, report it: StopAAPIHate.org. Don’t assume someone else will.
- Support local Asian-own businesses, especially restaurants that have been largely hit by the pandemic.
- Don’t let this movement become just a hashtag. Listen intently, and keep the conversation going. That is the first step in dismantling anti-Asian racism and oppression.
- Be curious about one’s experience and cultural values.
- Be aware of diverse cultural groups (e.g., South Asian, Southeast Asian, Pacific Islanders, etc.).

Sources

PBS Docuseries (History of Asians in America) <https://www.pbs.org/show/asian-americans/>

Asian Pacific American Heritage Month Resource which includes exhibits and collections, audio and video, and more: <https://asianpacificheritage.gov>

Continued on page 24

June is LGBTQ Pride Month: Interviews With School Psychologists

Patrick Hughes and Erin O'Connell

*"If proud Americans can be who they are and boldly stand at the altar with who they love, then surely, surely we can give everyone in this country a fair chance at the great American dream."
—Michelle Obama*

The FASP Diversity Committee interviewed two school psychologists for this article. The two individuals are identified as capital M for male and capital F for female. Neither school psychologist wanted their true identities revealed.

As the FASP Diversity Committee has recognized various minority groups by identifying either pioneers or outstanding persons in the field, why do you think it is different when we are talking about gay school psychologists?

M: It is hard to put into words, I just know differences exist. There may be a couple of reasons. I am towards the end of my career so I may have a different perspective, but I think it is no one's business who a person is with and it shouldn't have any effect on their professional career. Unfortunately, sometimes people associate being gay with being afraid to have them work with little kids, especially males. Personally, I always wanted to fly under the radar. If a parent knew that the chaperone was gay, they might not want their child to go on a school trip (i.e., 5th grade patrol trip to Washington, DC). We don't even know about gay pioneers in the field. They would not have disclosed because they could have been fired. It's better now in the field but still one has to be cautious. There are people who had whole careers and never identified as being gay publicly. There is not a category like Best Gay School Psychologist of the Year.

F: I agree. We have to disclose our status; it's not an obvious thing. There is not a check a box when you're hired asking if you're gay. It does not affect our job at all. It is more of a personal thing. Your sexual orientation is a different category; it does not delineate your job.

Have you experienced any form of discrimination in the workplace or in your personal life for being gay?

M: I read about one Florida city that took a long time to pass a Human Rights Ordinance. It didn't pass the first time it came up with the city council. But, I've never had a negative experience or been discriminated in a workplace for being gay. But, I have had a negative experience as a male school psychologist. One time, I had a father who did not want his young daughter to be in a room alone with me as a male school psychologist.

When I was younger and traveling with my partner, we experienced discrimination at a resort. We could not say we were gay or the resort would not let us in. At that time I had to deny being with my partner when asked. Even now, we don't hold hands in public. It may be different for males than females as far as public display.

F: No, I haven't experienced any personal discrimination. When I graduated in 2004, my mom told me to not tell my employer I was gay because I could get fired. At that time, it was not part of the discrimination policy for employees although it was for students. About 10 years ago, the district added employees to the discrimination policy. Now the

policy is inclusive. Outside of work, I have experienced discrimination for being gay. When together with a partner, people have made snide comments or given us looks. When traveling outside of the U.S., we didn't hold hands in public for fear of discrimination or detention. It has gotten better now.

Are you currently open with your schools and staff, students about your orientation? Why/Why not?

M: This is a tricky question for me. I have never announced it to any school I've been in. They don't ask you. Most of my schools know as far as my living arrangements. But, we have not had an exact discussion about it. Some school staff have assumed that I was married to a "wife" and I've gone with it. I have never disclosed my orientation to a student.

F: In 2004, I was closed-lipped, especially just starting in a new school district. When I began to trust people, I disclosed it to other school psychologists. There were some awkward situations, like colleagues trying to set me up with their sons if I said I was single. It was awkward if I didn't trust that person and didn't feel comfortable disclosing that I was gay. In schools, I have disclosed to individual people. For the most part, people I am not close with are not aware. I work with elementary students so I do not disclose with them or their families. If I was working with high school student, I feel like it would be on a case-by-case basis, especially if that student was also LGBTQ+. I do appreciate the teachers who are out and advocate for themselves and other LGBTQ students. It is very helpful for students to see.

What is your biggest concern and greatest hope regarding LGBTQ issues moving forward?

M: Recently, I feel we have taken a step back with recent transgender legislation in the state of FL. I don't like it when people are split into categories — us vs. them. Politicians and certain groups often catastrophize the issue by generating or creating this firestorm when most of the time it is not that big of a deal. I personally don't know how I feel about it because it has become more of a recent part of the issues for the LGBTQ community. It's funny, we started off with just an L and a G and now it's many more. It is grouping lots of people together. There is a climate of divisiveness from politicians and religious groups. My biggest hope is just to leave people alone and treat each other with respect. Let everyone live their life. Be nice.

F: Moving forward, I would like to see sexual orientation be a non-issue, something parents finding out and reacting negatively. In the future, I hope people become more accepting and respectful of LGBTQ+ persons.

Speaking of gay youth, have you seen any progressive actions by your school system or staff within your schools? What is the climate in regard to gay youth?

M: Our school district came out with a great resource, but strangely did not give it to the school psychologists. A school counselor shared the resource with me. On a positive note, at our high schools all counselors have a rainbow emblem on their door or window to designate they are a safe person to talk to about LGBTQ issues. It is posted throughout the school. Overall, regarding school climate for gay youth, the climate depends on A) where the school is located and B) the teachers and staff.

F: In doing research, I found that Duval County has published a

great resource from the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Department ([Duval County Public Schools LGBTQ+ Support Guide](#)). I first saw it on social media. A school in Duval had a situation last year where a student had emailed a teacher to request to be called by specific pronouns and the teacher refused. The teacher also posted demeaning images and memes on social media. The district did training after this situation but I understand the teacher is still employed by the district. The district also works with the organization JASMYN and offers trainings. Overall, the climate is reported to be getting more progressive, but students allegedly still experience discrimination, unfortunately.

Are you familiar or what is your current practice regarding students who want to be called by their preferred name and pronouns? Have you seen any pushback by school staff?

M: I have worked with a student who did not want to use their “dead name” (the name they used prior to transitioning). We do have a spot now in our district software to put a student's preferred name and pronouns. The issue I have heard from some teachers is that what if next week the student wants to change their name again. I have not had any reports yet where the student wanted to change pronouns again. Our psychoeducational reports are legal documents and we should review the pronoun discussion/suggestions presented by NASP.

One Assistant Principal I worked with refused to use a student's preferred gender pronoun. The student had a proud father who was accepting of his son and had not pushed the issue. At the time, I was not sure what I was supposed to do. I did talk to the AP and told them you cannot do this. The student had a 504 and the counselor brought this issue to my attention. I thought it may

be bullying because it happened several times. I have to admit I was at a loss if I was supposed to report it.

F: Let's give the kids some grace and not make a big deal about it. Just accept it and move on, but it can be hard for “old school” teachers. I accept it for what it is and respect the kid's decision. The more attention you draw to it the more harmful it can be. In our reports, the best case would be that a parent and child agree to use a certain name and pronouns. It would make it easy to write the psychoeducational report. But, it can be harder when a parent is not supportive. In that case, I would state the student's legal name is this and preferred name/ pronouns is this and then use the preferred name and pronouns throughout the rest of the report. Although we now say “preferred pronouns” it will be interesting to see if it changes in the future (i.e. the way sexual preference changed to sexual orientation).

*“Arthur, it doesn't matter whether I approve or disapprove. They are human beings. They exist. It's like asking me if I approve of dwarfs.”
— Maude Findlay, Maude (played by Bea Arthur)*

Tips for School Psychologists

Bathroom — check out your District's policy concerning the use of bathrooms designated either male or female. Some schools have identified a place for transgender kids to go and it has also been incorporated into some 504 plans.

Preferred Names/Pronouns in Report — find out if your district has a policy concerning pronoun use for transgender children. Check to see how detailed this policy is and if there has been some discussion about psychoeducation reports being legal documents and having to use the child's legal name. This is a great discussion for school

psychologists in their respective counties.

Bullying — determine if your district has a policy preventing bullying by other students or school staff. If so, what are the reporting requirements.

*“When we’re free to love
anyone we choose/
When this world’s big enough
for all different views/
When we all can worship from
our own kind of pew/
Then we shall be free.”
—Garth Brooks*

Book Recommendations

Suggested by Reader’s Digest:

- Best for toddlers: *Pride 123* by Michael Joosten
- Best for school-aged kids: *My Rainbow* by DeShanna and Trinity Neal
- Best for tweens and teens: *You Should See Me in a Crown* by Leah Johnson
- Best trans YA romance: *Cemetery Boys* by Aiden Thomas
- Best body-positive YA romance: *I’ll Be The One* by Lyla Lee
- Best coming-of-age trans romance: *Stay Gold* by Tobly McSmith
- Best emotionally-charged fiction novel: *After Elias* by Eddy Boudel Tan
- Best queer femme historical fiction: *Last Night at The Telegraph Club* by Malinda Lo
- Best memoir that doubles as a manifesto: *All Boys Aren’t Blue* by George M. Johnson
- Best queer poetry collection: *Black Girl, Call Home* by Jasmine Mans

Resources

NASP — Gender Inclusive Schools: Policy, Law, and Practice

Education Week — Education news, analysis, and opinion about lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender

or queer students or teachers and their experiences in school

Compass — A Florida non-profit whose mission is to engage, empower and enrich the lives of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) people and those impacted by HIV and AIDS

GLSEN— a non-profit that works to ensure that LGBTQ students are able to learn and grow in a school environment free from bullying and harassment

Florida School Counselor Association – LGTBQ Resource Page

Equality Florida — Safe and Healthy Schools

Genders & Sexualities Alliance Network (GSA) — LGBTQ racial and gender justice organization that empowers and trains queer, trans and allied youth leaders to advocate, organize, and mobilize an intersectional movement for safer schools and healthier communities

University of Central Florida LGTBQ+ Services

PFLAG Orlando — change attitudes and create an environment of understanding so that our LGBTQ+ family members and friends can live in a world that is safe and inclusive

JASMYN — a non-profit that supports and empowers LGBTQ young people by creating safe space, providing health and wholeness services and offering youth development opportunities, while bringing people and resources together to promote equality and human rights

Additional Support

- Jasmyn Gay Youth Information Line
 - * (904) 389-0089
- The Trevor Project Crisis Line
 - * Call 1-866-488-7386
 - * Text ‘START’ to 678-678
 - * Chat thetrevorproject.org/get-help

Celebrating Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month (cont.)

Celebrating Asian Pacific American Heritage Month Resources for Teachers: <https://asianpacificheritage.gov/for-teachers/>

<https://sharemylesson.com/collections/aapi>

<https://www.teachervision.com/holidays/asian-pacific-american-heritage-month>

<https://www.colorincolorado.org/books-authors/literacy-calendar/celebrating-asian-pacific-american-heritage>

<https://www.adl.org/education/resources/tools-and-strategies/asian-american-pacific-islander-aapi-heritage-month>

The Center for East Asian Studies External Resources for Educators: <https://ceas.uchicago.edu/content/external-resources-educators>

Classroom resources for teachers to address AAPI discrimination: <https://www.weareteachers.com/resources-anti-asian-discrimination/>

The Smithsonian Asian Pacific American Center brings history, art and culture to you through innovative museum experiences and digital initiatives: <https://smithsonianapa.org/heritage-irl/>

Children’s Book on Anti-AAPI Racism Resource: <https://issuu.com/joyceylee/docs/yyps2020>

Children’s Books to Celebrate AAPI Culture and Heritage Month: <https://readingpartners.org/blog/13-kids-books-aapi-culture/>

AAPI Resource Library: https://www.aacap.org/AACAP/Families_and_Youth/Resource_Libraries/AAPI_Resources.aspx

FASP Children's Services Fund, Inc. (CSFI) – Our Way of Helping

Recently, the FASP CSFI, our state association's charity arm, provided one of the numerous emergency grants which have been distributed to needy families around the state whose life circumstances threatened to interfere with the education of their child or children. Here is a thank you note from the school psychologist who requested the grant.

"I just wanted to send a huge thank you to CSFI for supporting a mother and son at my school who fled a domestic violence home and arrived at our school while living in their car. The grant from CSFI is providing a safe place for them to sleep so the mom can apply for jobs while she waits for space at a domestic violence shelter to open. The grant has provided mother and son with comfort knowing they have a safe place to sleep, shower, and do laundry and a place for mom to participate in Zoom interviews and intakes. There are no words to thank CSFI enough for providing this family with their most basic needs while they recover from such a traumatic situation. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts."

*Jennifer Valentine, Ed.S., NCSPP
Palm Beach County School District*

FASP's Children's Services Fund, Inc. was founded in 1999 to provide direct and indirect services that promote the educational and psychological well-being of Florida's needy children and families. In order to provide such services, CSFI collects money for grants and various types of goods and services to help meet the needs of the children they serve.

Each year at FASP conferences, CSFI members organize various fundraisers, from which more than 99% of the funds raised go directly to Florida's students and families in need of assistance. There are two types of grants that CSFI

is able to provide. The first is considered an emergency grant to assist when crises in Florida involve needy, school-aged children and their families (e.g., hurricanes, floods, fires, illnesses, deaths, financial crises) and threaten to interfere with the child or children's education. The second type of grant is planned and can be used for a project to benefit needy children academically, socially, or emotionally (e.g., therapy groups, parent trainings, crisis workshops), so long as it is not a service that is the responsibility of the school or another agency. In addition to the money raised by auctions and other fundraisers at the annual FASP Conference and Summer Institute, membership dues and donations at any time during the year are big contributors to funding for these projects as well.

If you would like to learn more about the FASP CSFI and/or to consider joining and contributing, go to http://fasp.org/Liaison_Positions/CSFI.html. We deeply appreciate your support on behalf of the needy children and families of Florida!

Mark Your Calendar

November 9th - 12th,
2022

Calling All School Psychologists!

Are you ready to
spend some well-
deserved quality time
with your colleagues?

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Speaking Up for the Needs and Rights of Students: An Ethical Duty

Christelle Laroche, M.S., and Ralph E. (Gene) Cash, Ph.D., NCSP, ABPP

*"In the end, we will remember
not the words of our enemies,
but the silence of our friends."
— Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.*

We live in a world that is continuously evolving. However, discrimination, disproportionality, inequality, and aggressions (both macro- and micro-) have been and continue to be present concerns. The continuous battle to ensure that this does not compromise student learning and social-emotional development has prompted the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) to clarify several standards in the Principles for Professional Ethics under the section titled, "Principle I.3 Fairness, Equity, and Justice." Moreover, in the introduction to the 2020 ethical standards a requirement has been added for school psychologists to take action to remedy injustice (i.e., "...school psychologists speak up for the needs and rights of students, even when it may be difficult to do so" p. 39, NASP Principles of Professional Ethics, 2020). Under this standard, it is now an ethical duty for a school psychologist to take action on behalf of the needs and rights of all students, discomfort or difficulty notwithstanding.

Taking action can be defined in many ways, depending on the nature of the situation; yet a few key factors pertain across circumstances. These factors can be viewed as proactive strategies for school psychologists. School psychologists must work to form solid relationships with students, faculty members, and administrators to be viewed as effective advocates instead of silent friends. The goal is for school psychologists to be reliable resources for all by advocating for and taking necessary actions. Facilitating a safe environment and climate can also help to reduce injustices found in schools.

School psychologists have always been viewed as problem solvers, but now we are mandated to take action in problem solution. It is our ethical responsibility to take leadership roles in addressing injustices wherever they arise and whenever we become aware of them. Consulting with administrators, faculty, other school personnel, students, families, and communities in which we live and work are vital to our professional roles. As school psychologists, we must be viewed not only as sounding boards, patiently listening to all regardless of their issues, but we must also be determined in responding to violations of the rights of others. School psychologists must educate and empower others.

We can educate by informing and implementing school-wide integration models as well as by teaching students how to advocate for themselves. Effective action can also mean alerting appropriate individuals when injustice or discrimination takes place. As school psychologists, one of our duties is to evaluate and to improve school codes of conduct to ensure that they are not discriminatory and that they are fairly and justly applied. The ultimate goal is to be an advocate who rejects discrimination and injustice and who stands up for those who are powerless and marginalized. As advocates, our ethical standards should be the guiding principles behind our actions. As the courageous dissident Alexander Solzhenitsyn wrote, "Even the most rational approach to ethics is defenseless if there isn't the will to do what is right."

The Willard Nelson Lifetime Achievement Award Recipients

The Willard Nelson Lifetime Achievement Award is the most prestigious award given by the Florida Association of School Psychologists (FASP). It is an honor presented to individuals who have demonstrated a high level of continued leadership and service in the profession of school psychology throughout their lifetime. These inspirational individuals have gone above and beyond expectations during their careers.

This award was established during the 1984-1985 presidential term of Dr. Jim Rockwell in honor of an esteemed colleague, Dr. Willard Nelson, who became its first recipient. Dr. Rockwell remembers that Dr. Nelson was very moved to learn that an award had been established in his name, noting that he was an “absolutely solid person who understood school psychology.” Dr. Rockwell added that Dr. Nelson was an exceptional trainer who developed a formidable training program for school psychologists at FAU.

Dr. Willard Nelson is known historically as an exemplary leader, a founding member of our association, and an outstanding contributor to the profession of school psychology in Florida. He was the 9th President of FASP who served in 1965-1966. Dr. Nelson passed away in 1997. His legacy continues to inspire all of us to strengthen our dedication to FASP’s mission of promoting and advocating for the mental health and educational development of Florida’s children, youth, and families.

Throughout the years since the establishment of the Willard Nelson Lifetime Achievement Award, other leaders have emerged who have made

outstanding contributions to our profession, and exemplified careers of excellence and service. We are proud to present the list of our 21st century Willard Nelson Lifetime Achievement Award Winners.

Willard Nelson Lifetime Achievement Award Winners

- 1985** Dr. Willard Nelson
- 2002** Dr. Ralph Bailey
- 2005** Dr. Thomas Oakland
- 2006** Dr. Gene Cash
- 2007** Dr. Carl Balado
- 2008** Dr. Phil Lazarus
- 2015** Ms. Freda Reid
- 2016** Mr. Bill Donelson
- 2017** Dr. Mary Alice Myers
- 2019** Dr. David Wheeler
- 2020** Mrs. Faye Henderson

In the Fall of 2019 issue of the newsletter, we featured the following Willard Nelson Award Recipients: Dr. Gene Cash (2006), Ms. Freda Reid (2015), Mr. Bill Donelson (2016), and Dr. Mary Alice Myers (2017). Although we would like to be able to feature all our lifetime achievement award recipients, we have been unable to contact Dr. Ralph Bailey (2002) or Dr. Carl Balado (2007). It is our hope that we will be able to feature them in a future newsletter.

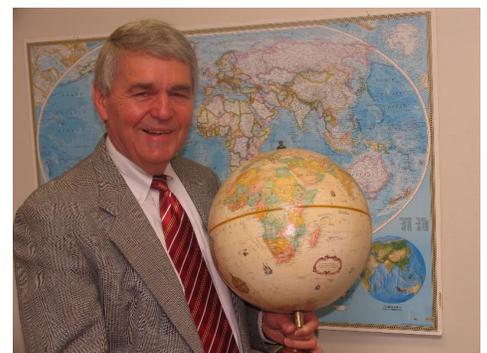
In the current newsletter, we are featuring Dr. Thomas Oakland (2005), who is now deceased, Dr. Phil Lazarus (2008), Dr. David Wheeler (2019), and Mrs. Faye Henderson (2020).

Our featured Willard Nelson Lifetime Achievement Award recipients, apart from Dr. Thomas Oakland, were asked to respond to a few questions regarding their award. We were curious to know what the enormity of receiving

our highest award meant to them. We asked if they could provide a few highlights of their career and leave us with any words of wisdom or suggestions that may be helpful to current practitioners. As you will notice, each of our award winners presents a unique history of serving; however, it is notable that they are generous in their accolades of others who have supported and inspired them along the way. These award winners have continued to provide leadership and support to other school psychologists throughout their careers. We decided not to edit the responses of our award winners in any way to provide an opportunity for our FASP members to hear directly from this group of highly competent and esteemed individuals. We hope you enjoy the walk through FASP history with a glimpse into the lives of some of our most respected and accomplished leaders.

DR. THOMAS OAKLAND

Although Dr. Thomas Oakland is no longer with us, we want to honor his legacy as one of our earliest award recipients. Dr. Oakland was an internationally



recognized leader who was known as one of the Founding Fathers of International School Psychology. He served as a School Psychology professor at the University of

Texas (1967-1994) and the University of Florida (1995-2010), as well as department chair at both universities. Dr. Oakland was a prolific writer who authored and edited numerous books, chapters, articles, and psychological tests. Following his tragic death in 2015, the Florida Association of School Psychologists established the Dr. Thomas Oakland Research Grant in his honor. Although we were not able to interview Dr. Oakland, in 2012, he personally responded to questions regarding his career, international testing, and education and testing: <https://www.tests.com/Thomas-Oakland>. Following his death, the University of Florida published a statement and [profile of Dr. Oakland's life and academic accomplishments](#).

Finally, Dr. Oakland's [obituary](#) provides an insight into a life well-lived that was not only filled with accomplishments, but was overflowing with kindness, dedication, and a concern for children, adolescents, and adults throughout the world.

DR. PHILIP J. LAZARUS

When I was presented with the Willard Nelson Lifetime Achievement Award in 2008 I felt most humbled and honored. A sage Gene Cash once noted, "School psychology is a team specialty." Lifetime achievement is not a sole enterprise. It requires collaboration with colleagues and the support of family and friends. We do not do it alone. We are part of a collective, not just of our generation but of those who preceded us and those who will eventually follow us. As such I would like to express my appreciation to all our FASP Lifetime Achievement Award recipients with whom I have had the privilege of working over the years — Ralph Bailey, Tom Oakland, Gene Cash, Carl Balado, Freda Reid, Bill Donelson, Mary Alice Myers, David Wheeler, and Faye Henderson — as well as all my colleagues and friends within

our Association. The only thing better than receiving a lifetime achievement award would be continuing to be productive in the next lifetime. So, in that regard I am in awe of Dr. David Weschler who continues to produce tests while in the great beyond. But that is another benchmark well beyond my meager capabilities.

In terms of history, I entered the profession of school psychology in 1977 and am now considered the first school psychology graduate from the University of



Florida. Actually, I graduated before UF even had a recognized and accredited program. At that stage in my career, we did not have best practices. At best we had mediocre practices, and we were grateful for that. The Education for All Handicapped Children Act (PI 94-142) had only been passed three years earlier which guaranteed a free appropriate public education to every child with a disability. We now take it for granted that individuals with disabilities are able to receive a free appropriate public education, but that was not the case when I first entered graduate school. This law which has now been amended numerous times is currently called the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act. In many ways, it has been a full opportunity hiring act for school psychologists and enabled us to increase our ranks.

We have come a long way since I graduated, and we now have the NASP Model for Comprehensive and Integrative School Psychology Services, NASP Principles for Professional Ethics, NASP Standards for Graduate Preparation of School Psychologists and NASP Standards for the Credentialing of School Psychologists. In addition, we have a number of new journals in the field and Best Practices in School Psychology is now a four-book series that requires a cart to be carried around. School psychology continues to be recognized by U. S. News and World Report as one of the best professions to enter and our standards have been ramped up exponentially. Therefore, all the graduates we are producing are so much better trained and qualified than I was to do the important work that needs doing.

Upon graduation I worked as a school psychologist in Palm Beach County. The following year I was hired as the Director of the School Psychology Program at Florida International University and was the only faculty member in the College representing our profession. This leadership role was a daunting responsibility — especially without a team of like-minded school psychology colleagues to guide the training of future practitioners. However, I realized I had to work hard to step up my game and do the job.

Two years later, I joined the FASP Executive Board (EB) and during my first board meeting felt a bit intimidated. I was asked to join the EB to serve as the Chair of the Ethics and Standards Committee. At that time, Chapter 490 (The Psychology Licensure Act) had been "sunsetting." This meant that due to the sunset provision in Florida law, there was no longer an act that regulated the practice of psychology. Therefore, anyone could call themselves a psychologist, which had ramifications related to third-party insurance payments for services

rendered. Consequently, we at FASP took this opportunity and decided that the time had come for school psychologists to be license eligible for private practice. We worked with allied mental health professionals to change the law to include school psychologists when a new chapter was developed. We set up the Board of School Psychology Licensure in conjunction with the Florida Department of Professional Regulation. We also developed a subject exam in school psychology and formulated ethical standards related to the private practice of our profession. I was privileged to have served as the Chairperson of the Board and helped to develop our licensure exam and also served as the FASP Committee Chair when we, along with other FASP members, developed private practice standards. Consequently, after a successful internship and two years of supervised practice our graduates are eligible to practice in the private sector as school psychologists at the Specialist level. Florida is one of only a few states with this provision. Further, I was privileged to have served as the Chair of various committees of FASP including Trainers and Supervisors of School Psychologists, Ethics and Standards, Private Practice, as well as the President of our Association. Serving on the FASP Board has given me my most significant opportunity in the profession to learn about and practice leadership. It served as a training ground and springboard for future leadership. Moreover, FASP EB leaders, such as Sarah Valley-Gray (the soul of CSFI), Gene Cash, Tom Oakland, and Kathy Leighton always had my back, and FASP members were my greatest supporters when I ran for and was elected as President of the National Association of School Psychologists.

During my tenure as FASP President from 1997-1998, I was fortunate to have been book-ended by Gene Cash and Bill

Donelson. We accomplished so much during this three-year term which includes President-Elect, President, and Past President. Particular initiatives I am most proud about are these: (a) established Children's Services under the leadership of Maggie Balado as a standing committee and later incorporated FASP Children's Services, Inc. as a stand-alone 501 (3)(c) corporation, (b) brought NASP Executive Leadership to our board meeting to teach us about state and national advocacy, (c) taught the entire Executive Board in conjunction with Patty del Valle and Gene Cash about the 7 Habits of Highly Effective People so that we would have a common way of communicating and acting, (d) brought on the first graduate student, Cheryl Colton-Schenholm, to serve as a Chair of a standing committee, (e) developed with Frank Zenere our first FASP school crisis response team, (f) created the first public policy standing committee of FASP under the leadership of Marty Levine, (g) had an amazing 1997 convention in Daytona Beach due to the leadership of Julian Biller (convention chair) and Mary Alice Myers (local arrangements chair), (h) coordinated the filming of five videos related to educational achievement, youth mental health, emotional intelligence, crisis intervention, and parenting practices that were aired on the educational network for Volusia County Public Schools, (i) provided experts to lead workshops related to child development (e.g., ADHD, homework practices) in Daytona Beach to the public where our convention was being held, (j) ensured that all committees (except for Ethics) had a student member, (k) responded during our convention to a tornado that impacted Volusia County (where Daytona Beach is located) right before our convention began. It destroyed part of a school where all our convention materials were

located. Our materials were undamaged but the room next door to our storage area was demolished (l) had a run on the beach charity event that benefited the Hole in the Wall Gang Camp, (m) had an amazing convention party called, Gypsies, Bikers, and Shrinks. Oh My, and (n) had the great fortune to work with terrific people such as Scott Poland and all members of my NASP National Emergency Assistance Team family (Frank Zenere, Ted Feinberg, Bill Pfohl, Kris Sieckert, Rich Lieberman, Cathy Paine, Cindy Dickinson, Shirley Pitts, and Susan Gorin) to provide both training and crisis response to schools and communities impacted by trauma.

Since I received the FASP Lifetime Achievement Award, I continue to stay grounded and above ground and keep working. As Charles Schultz, aptly opined in his comic strip Peanuts, "When you are over the hill, you just pick up speed." After co-editing Best Practices in School Crisis Prevention and Intervention (with Steve Brock & Shane Jimerson), I recently published Creating Safe and Supportive Schools and Fostering Students' Mental Health (with Michael Sulkowski), and Fostering the Emotional Well-Being of our Youth: A School Based Approach (with Shannon Suldo & Beth Doll). And I am now completing Safe Schools Now! Leadership for Developing Secure, Supported and Emotionally Healthy Students (with Michael Sulkowski).

As a leader, I have learned many lessons. First, leadership involves creating a spirit of belongingness, fostering a sense of purpose, and emphasizing the power of possibilities. Second, never serve because you want to be a leader. Instead, serve to do the job. Third, leadership requires persistent advocacy in service of an important calling. As my friend Rick Lindskog once said, "it is not about you, but it is up to you." That is, it is up to you to take the necessary action, when

you have the skills to solve or mitigate a problem, such as setting up a camp for mentally and physically challenged children (with Diane Wilen) or advocating for continued employment of school psychologists (with Pete Caproni, Joan Kapus, Gene Cash, Gil Lopez, and Kat Norona) or fighting for the rights of an individual child. In so doing, this may require as best stated by John Lewis “getting into good trouble.” And fourth, leadership is about helping to create a shared vision and nurturing others by doing things both big and small. We award big accomplishments, but all contributions are meaningful and important.

Years ago, I established at FIU the Patty del Valle Humanitarian Award in honor of a school psychology faculty member who, sadly, passed away. Every year, our faculty and students award a student who best exemplifies Patty’s decency, empathy, and humanity and provide reasons why the student is deserving. We all have two nomination and the student, with the most nominations, receives the award. This past year one of my nominees was a student who I thought was underappreciated. After the award was presented on Zoom, I sent comments back to all our nominated students with the positive comments said about them. The underappreciated student did not know that I was the one who nominated her and wrote me a note that said, “I read this email and cried. I would like to say thank you for sending this. I work so hard and often feel unseen. I greatly appreciate notes like these, you always make school such a nice place to be. It’s been my safe house, a harbor in the midst of COVID 19, and I greatly appreciate it. Thank you for everything you do for all of us.”

And on that last note, I would like to thank all our 400 plus graduates and current students at FIU who taught me so much and our FASP leaders (past, current and future)

for everything you do for all of us. John Adams once wrote, “If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more, and become more, you are a leader.” So, step up your game. Get involved in our state association. You will get more than you give. And lead in any way you can.

Most importantly, receiving this lifetime achievement award would not have been possible without the support of my loving wife Jane (a former FASP School Psychologist of the Year) who has been my guardian angel.

DR. DAVID WHEELER



I was both humbled and honored to be named recipient of the Willard Nelson Lifetime Achievement Award. This was an unexpected recognition, but I was deeply grateful for the acknowledgement of my contributions to and leadership in school psychology. I believe that each of us desires to “make a difference” in life. Nearing the end of a career, I think it’s natural to ask what – if any – impact and legacy will I leave behind? I will treasure the Willard Nelson Lifetime Achievement Award as an affirmation of my service and a tribute to my legacy.

Similar to previous recipients of the Lifetime Achievement Award, I am indebted to colleagues and the supervisors/mentors who

encouraged, supported and challenged me throughout my career; and, to the support of my best friend and wife, Ana. Among the visionary leaders who mentored and invested in me are: Dr. Alba Ortiz, Director of the Handicapped Minority Research Institute at the University of Texas; Dr. Thomas Oakland, dissertation committee chair at the University of Texas; Dr. Ralph Bailey, Director of Student Services in Pinellas County; and Dr. George Batsche, Director of the Institute for School Reform at the University of South Florida. I owe much of my professional growth to their influence and guidance!

A highlight of my career has been the people whose lives intersected with mine: students, educators, parents, allied professionals, and colleagues and local, state, and national leaders that I have been blessed to work with. I began my career as a bilingual school psychologist in Pinellas and Manatee counties. Accomplishments during those years included: developing bilingual evaluation policies and procedures; developing (with Juan Lopez) an 18-Hour ESOL Component Training for Student Services Personnel; establishing a school psychology internship program; and supervising school psychology interns and school psychologists requiring supervision for licensure.

In 2006, I joined the Student Support Services Project/USF as the state school psychology consultant in the Florida Department of Education. During my tenure as state school psychology consultant, I was involved in revising Florida’s special education rules, policies, and technical assistance to align with the reauthorization of IDEA 2004; implementing response to intervention/multi-tiered system of supports; developing technical assistance and training for Section 504 (e.g., Section 504 Online Introductory Course); serving as the Commissioner of Education designee on

the Suicide Prevention Coordinating Council; developing State Board rules and policies for suicide awareness and prevention (i.e., Youth Suicide Awareness and Training and Suicide Prevention Certified Schools rules); revising the school psychology certification rule; and, implementing statewide school mental health training with the Student Support Services Project after Marjory Stoneman Douglas. Prior to retirement, I had the honor serving on the 2020 NASP Standards Revision, Practice Model Writing Team.

I have been blessed beyond what I deserve and am grateful for the opportunities I've been afforded to "make a difference". As a school psychologist, you have the opportunity to "make a difference" every day. It may impact just one student or one classroom, or it may impact an entire school or district. Take advantage of each and every opportunity no matter how insignificant or small. Carpe diem!

FAYE HENDERSON



Wow! What an honor to be acknowledged by colleagues! The honor is valued because it is so unexpected. My humble appreciation is beyond words. What keeps me emotionally and intellectually balanced in this moment is the thought of inspiring others to commitment and excellence.

I never planned to lead in any mission that I undertook but was always taught by my parents and teachers to always do your best at whatever you undertake. Who would have thought the skinny little girl who outwardly appeared to be "unassuming" growing up in Sanford, Florida, in a home with devoted parents, would receive such recognition as the Willard Nelson Lifetime Achievement Award. I can remember arguing with my mother during my high school years, who wanted me to be a music teacher, that I desired to be a psychologist. She often replied what kind of job will a young black woman find as a psychologist, particularly in the South? My father would reply, there are many people who need psychological help and there will always be a need for someone in this profession. What I heard him say was "just because you do not yet see someone that look like you in my chosen area of interest, does not mean you should doubt yourself in achieving it." That was all I needed to move forward.

Having majored in psychology in undergraduate school, I quickly discovered that job opportunities were very limited with a B.A. degree, although I was able to work as a Social Services Caseworker in Brooklyn, New York. This was an enlightening experience of working with families in poverty, families who were disenfranchised, and families supporting a member with a disability. After a year in this field, I worked two years as a Research Assistant at George Peabody College (presently merged with Vanderbilt University), in the areas of early education, Supervised by Dr. Susan Gray, for underprivileged children (forerunner to the Headstart Program) autism, and language development. I was then fortunate to enter what was known as a consortium clinical psychology graduate degree program at my alma mater, Fisk University, an HBCU small college

in Nashville, TN. This graduate school program was masterful in providing a "rich" and collaborative graduate school experience as they joined forces with Vanderbilt University, George Peabody College and Meharry Medical College for coursework and training in psychoeducational assessment, clinical, and behavioral psychology. It is in the completion of this program that I successfully presented before an academic board my thesis on "The Relationship of Environmental Variables to IQ." Needless to say, the focus of my thesis during the height of the Larry P. v. Riles case in 1971, was reluctantly approved by my co-advisor who was an abnormal psychology professor at Meharry Medical College and did not believe in IQ tests for placing individuals in designated categories. Nevertheless, my thesis was welcomed by my educational psychology advisor who taught theories in psychology at Fisk University. This adviser, Dr. Horton, stated the reality of life is IQ tests will exist for a long time in the school system so let's be practical and at least assess their impact. My journey continued.

Although I tended to lean towards a position in clinical counseling and was offered a position in research at Patrick Air Force Base, I applied for a position of School Psychology with the Orange County Public Schools which, fortunately, was interested in expanding the program with ethnic and gender diversity as well as a defined training program to specifically address the field of service. With the wealth of my previous job experiences and subsequently college and graduate school training and research, in 1973, I was the first African American hired as a school psychologist in Orange County Public Schools. From the onset of being hired by Orange County Public Schools, I felt supported and inspired in a department supervised by Dr. Kelland Livesay. He was actively engaged with FASP and was

committed to a well-trained staff that provided researched best practices in school psychological services. During the Spring after my hiring, I was given the opportunity to present my thesis at the NASP Conference in Atlanta, along with two professors who had conducted extensive doctoral research on IQ testing and another Black professor who specifically stated all IQ testing is biased and declared a moratorium on all IQ testing. Needless to say, at that proclamation, you could hear a "pin drop" in a packed conference room of about 500 school psychologists in attendance. At the beginning of my career, I was fortunate to work with colleagues and schools (after several "roundtable" conferences) who strived to provide support services to students beyond the basic paradigm of testing and placing in special education. I maintained a passion for assessing students in a comprehensive manner that included prevention and intervention services and precluded an exceptional education placement, which often meant students of color were inordinately and disproportionately identified as behaviorally or intellectually disabled.

My passion in finding ways to proactively provide effective strategies to support all students, including students of color, intensified throughout my career. I was able to team up with school counselors, who often made referrals for testing in the early years, to identify effective interventions for education and behavioral support. This team effort was quite successful and led to my receiving a School Psychologist of the Year Award provided by the OCPS Counseling Department in 1986. The rest is history as, while continuing to work as an itinerant school psychologist and later as an administrator with the focus on prevention and intervention services, I subsequently was acknowledged with the following awards: NASP Exemplary Leadership & Services Award as Chair of

Multicultural Affairs Committee, 1989-1999; FASP Outstanding Administrator of the Year as Director of OCPS Exceptional Student Services, 2002; OCPS Outstanding Support in School-Based Mental Health Services, 2005; Award for Commitment and Support of School Psychology Program at University of Central Florida 2005; FASP Outstanding Support of School Psychology in OCPS, 2008; FASP Exemplary Leadership Award for Minority Students, which also led to the FASP Scholarship in my honor. In addition, I also served as the chair of the FASP Board of Examiners that addressed provision of private licensure in the field; NASP State Delegate; the chair of FASP Cultural Diversity Committee; NASP Southeast Regional Director; served on the State Task Force for Gifted Identification, and of course, served as FASP President 1988-1989.

During my 25-year tenure as a school psychologist, my experiences in the leadership positions with FASP, NASP, as Lead Psychologist, only heightened my interests, commitment and passion for a dynamic comprehensive service delivery model for school psychologists. This passion persisted throughout my career as for the 10 years (culminating in 35 years), prior to my retirement; I obtained my Educational Leadership Degree from University of Central Florida and became the Director of Exceptional Student Services in OCPS. As a Director, I was able to increase the hiring of school psychologists and social workers representative of the population of students we served. In addition, I worked with a talented staff of School Psychologists, Social Workers, Behavioral Specialists, Certified Behavioral Analysts, and Response to Intervention (RTI) Educational Specialists who assisted me in developing and implementing a quality comprehensive behavioral and academic service delivery

model for students and schools. To amplify these services, with the support of my Associate Superintendent Supervisor, Dr. Anna Diaz, I was able to create a new position of Licensed Mental Health Counselors for OCPS.

What a journey! It is truly a life's commitment as I continue to collaborate, whenever possible, with the FASP Diversity and Social Justice Committee.

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Tracy Packman Alloway
Strengths to Superpowers: How Harnessing the Abilities of Diverse Learners Helps Them Thrive

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