

# Student Speak

The Official Newsletter of the Ohio Psychological Association of Graduate Students (OPAGS)

February 2009\* Volume 1, Issue 1



## OPAGS

## Hello and Welcome!

To our first readers:

In an effort to better serve and communicate with the psychology graduate students of Ohio, the Ohio Psychological Association of Graduate Students (OPAGS) Executive Committee will publish a newsletter. Our vision is to provide graduate students with regular updates in the areas of advocacy, diversity and other important topics relevant to psychology in both Ohio and the nation. We also aim to provide tips to aid with navigating one's professional development in the field of psychology, as well as keep you informed about any OPAGS and OPA news.

We are excited about this new endeavor and hope that it will be a useful tool for graduate students across the state.

Thank you for taking a moment to read through the first OPAGS newsletter. In this edition, you will find an introduction to our executive committee members and a description of just a few of the services OPAGS provides.

Once again, thanks for reading and enjoy!

Sincerely,  
Susan Wilson, Ohio University  
2008-2009 OPAGS Chair  
sw938306@ohio.edu

*Chair Susan Wilson is a third year clinical psychology student at Ohio University. For more information on the OPAGS Board, including information on joining a committee, visit [www.ohpsych.org](http://www.ohpsych.org) and click on "Students and Careers."*

## Inside this issue

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From the Chair-Elect .....	2
Mentoring .....	2
Diversity Opportunities .....	3
Advocacy .....	3
Connect .....	4
OPAGS History.....	4
Upcoming Events .....	4

## 2008-2009 Executive Committee

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Chair:

[Susan Wilson](#), Ohio University

Chair-Elect:

[Christine Agaibi](#), University of Akron

Past-Chair:

[Jess Grayson](#), Ohio University

Communications and Membership Chair:

[Betsy Seng](#), Ohio University

Advocacy Chair:

[Sarah A. Cain Spannagel](#), Case Western Reserve University

Diversity Chair:

[Prachi Kene](#), University of Toledo

Continuing Education Chair:

[Linda Sirokey-Sabdo](#)

Professional Development Chair:

[Danielle Probst](#), Ohio University

# From The Chair-Elect

OPAGS

The Ohio Psychological Association of Graduate Students (OPAGS) is an organization meant to give a voice and unity to students in psychology across the state of Ohio. As chair-elect, I will serve as treasurer while preparing to assume the role of chair of OPAGS in one year. To that effect, I may attend OPA Board of Directors meetings as well as the Leadership Forum and Legislative Day in Ohio.

In my tenure as chair-elect, I hope to initiate several programs to advocate for students. Some of these programs

could include groups that can assist students in finding healthy ways to manage both their professional and personal lives successfully and efficiently. Another group could support students in transitioning through the stages of their professional careers such as qualifying exams, internship process, dissertation, post-doc and eventual licensure. I look forward to serving you in the next year as chair-elect.

-Christine Agaibi, Chair-Elect  
University of Akron  
cagaibi1@yahoo.com

*"The Ohio Psychological Association of Graduate Students is an organization meant to give voice and unity to students in psychology across the state of Ohio."*

## Find a Mentor Through OPAGS

The OPAGS mentoring program is a unique opportunity offered to graduate students and psychologists within the Ohio Psychological Association. Aiming to assist graduate students as they transition to careers in psychology, the OPAGS mentoring program facilitates mentoring relationships between graduate students and professional psychologists across the state.

Although the nature of the mentoring relationship differs depending on the goals of the student, matches are generally based on shared research and clinical interests. Specifically, mentoring pairs often address issues such as: career development, self-awareness, job satisfaction, research, teaching or networking skills. To apply to this program, visit OPA's Web site [www.ohpsych.org/mentor.aspx](http://www.ohpsych.org/mentor.aspx). Contact Danielle Probst, professional development chair, at [dp304205@ohio.edu](mailto:dp304205@ohio.edu) with any questions or for more information on mentoring.

## Diversity Opportunities Available

The OPAGS Diversity Committee seeks to provide cultural, educational and social opportunities whereby minority and international students will enhance their educational experience. This opportunity allows you to share your culture/country and their impact on you as a student and as a psychologist in training. Toward this goal, the committee has an array of opportunities for getting involved. The committee provides an ideal place to get connected with other minority and international students; develop new perspectives on diversity; learn about diversity issues; and, develop fun, provocative and creative ideas/projects/events that further our understanding of diversity.

-Prachi Kene, Advocacy Committee Chair  
University of Toledo  
[prachikene16781@hotmail.com](mailto:prachikene16781@hotmail.com)

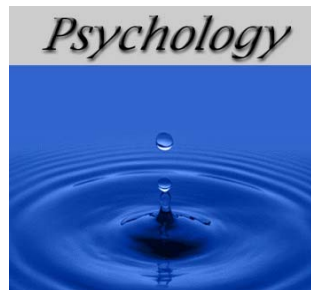
## Connect with OPAGS!

The Communication and Membership Committee is responsible for gathering and disseminating information about events and needs of current psychology graduate students in Ohio.

If you have information you would like other graduate students to know about, or if you would like more information on anything you have heard about in OPAGS or OPA e-mails, don't hesitate to talk to me, and I will point you in the right direction.

I also hope to provide more support and networking opportunities for students over the coming year.

*-Betsy Seng,  
Communications and  
Membership Chair  
Ohio University  
es842306@ohio.edu*



## Advocacy Update

Much legislation is circulating around the Ohio legislature that affects the profession of psychology.

HB503, the Sequence of Training Bill, allows both years of supervised internship experience to be pre-doctoral instead of the current requirement that one year must be post-doctoral. This bill passed the House and Senate and has been signed into law by the governor.

Several other bills are focused on mental health parity in the areas of autism and PTSD, which would prohibit health insurers from excluding coverage for the diagnosis and treatment of these disorders. Additional legislation focuses on use of corporal punishment, cruelty to animals and discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation.

I urge all of you to get involved with these important issues. Please feel free to contact me with any questions. I look forward to advocating with you for our clients and families! For more information on current legislation, visit [www.ohpsych.org](http://www.ohpsych.org) and click on "Psychologists," then "OPA's Advocacy Efforts."

*-Sarah Cain Spannagel, Advocacy Chair  
Case Western Reserve University  
sarah.cain@case.edu*

## Why Join OPAGS?

As you know, there are several ways to be involved in OPA as a graduate student. E-membership is essentially a subscription to the OPA listserv. However, OPA is a thriving support organization for professional psychology in Ohio that is involved in advocacy on both the state and national level and provides community outreach, educational opportunities and professional networking to its members. Full membership grants you to access to the breadth of resources available through OPA, none of which are available to e-members, including:

- Organizational affiliation on CV
- Discounted rates at workshops and convention
- Mentorship program
- Subscription to OPA publications and OPAGS newsletter
- Ability to run for OPAGS or OPA committee offices
- Access to social networking for peer engagement and collaboration
- Access to the OPA Ethics Committee for ethical and legal consultation
- Access to a resource toolkit for starting your own practice

**Visit [www.ohpsych.org/opagsjoin.aspx](http://www.ohpsych.org/opagsjoin.aspx) to join today!**

## History of OPAGS

The OPAGS was originally the vision of Michael Ranney, executive director of the Ohio Psychological Association (OPA). OPAGS remains one of only a handful of graduate student psychological associations in the United States.

In August 2000, the first student summit was held in Columbus, Ohio. At that meeting, Michael Ranney presented and discussed his vision for the development of OPAGS. In September 2001, a draft of the by-laws was considered by a newly elected OPAGS Board, headed by Jackie Scheff of Xavier University.

In July 2002, the first OPAGS Summer Workshop proved a successful beginning to our networking and educational efforts. This event has become an annual one, held each spring.

During the 2002-03 year, OPAGS received national recognition as the Outstanding State Provincial Student Organization during the APA State Leadership Conference in Washington, D.C.

The 2007-08 academic year was marked by the renovation of the OPAGS mentoring program.

## Upcoming Events

April 17, 2009—The Ethics of Multiple Relationships and Boundary Issues with Melba Vasquez, Ph.D.

April 18, 2009—Ethical Considerations in a Multicultural World with Melba Vasquez, Ph.D.

April 25, 2009—OPAGS Spring Workshop

May 5, 2009—OPA Legislative Day, YWCA, Columbus

**Visit the Students and Careers section of [www.ohpsych.org](http://www.ohpsych.org) to stay updated with OPAGS.**