



## “WHAT HAS OPA DONE FOR ME LATELY?”

We sometimes hear skeptical non-members of the Oklahoma Psychological Association ask this question. Our only problem is where to begin!

### **OPA GIVES A VOICE TO OKLAHOMA PSYCHOLOGISTS**

#### **✓ OPA Represents Psychologists Before State Agencies**

For the last several years OPA has represented Oklahoma psychologists on a variety of issues before the Oklahoma Health Care Authority. First there were the OHCA audits. Most recently psychologists have faced new and difficult authorization requirements just to see Medicaid patients. OPA has negotiated this issue with OHCA on several occasions, and this past legislative session OPA took its case to the Oklahoma Legislature. As a result, three separate resolutions were filed to reject OHCA's rules. Ultimately a compromise was agreed upon which resulted in the OHCA data collection form being shortened and simplified appreciably. Those changes are due to go into effect at the end of July, 2011. Additional meetings have been set with OHCA and the Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services on behalf of Oklahoma psychologists. Without OPA, none of this would occur.

*OPA looks out for your interests every day.*

### **OPA PROTECTS YOUR LICENSE**

#### **✓Oklahoma's Sunset Legislation**

Former OK House Speaker Lance Cargill once [11/21/07] wrote in his online newsletter...

“It is my hope that through reorganization of Oklahoma's 515 agencies, boards and commissions we will create a system of government that makes more sense to those who use it and makes better use of the state's \$7 billion budget. Every dollar saved in bureaucratic or administrative expenses is a dollar that can be returned to the taxpayer or redirected to Oklahoma's critical areas, such as education, transportation, health care and public safety.”

Attempts to combine the Oklahoma State Board of Examiners of Psychologists with “similar” regulating boards may be closer at hand than we think!

Every four years, the Oklahoma State Legislature requires the Oklahoma State Board of Examiners of Psychologists to justify its existence and show why it should not be abolished under Oklahoma's Sunset Law. Every legislative session, OPA has representation at the state capitol showing why the psychologist licensing authority should not be subsumed under a “Super Board” and lumped together with licensed professional counselors, licensed marriage and family therapists, licensed behavioral practitioners, and licensed alcohol and drug counselors. Psychologists' licensing authority is under constant scrutiny and OPA makes sure your legislator knows just how important and how efficient the Oklahoma State Board of Examiners of Psychologists is.

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### **OPA PUTS PSYCHOLOGISTS ON STATE BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS**

#### **✓OPA's Continued Efforts Have Resulted in Giving Psychology an Active Role in State Governance**

Oklahoma enacted a law lobbied heavily by OPA that provides psychology a statutory position on the State Board of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services. Currently, OPA's representative on the OK State Board of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services is OPA past-president and RXP Chair, Dr. Larry McCauley.

OPA also lobbied heavily for legislation that was passed allowing a psychologist to be Commissioner of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services. Prior to that legislation, only psychiatrists were eligible to hold the position. That change in our law resulted in an Oklahoma psychologist being hired as Commissioner of Mental Health & Substance Abuse Services!

For many years, only a physician could serve as the Commissioner of the Oklahoma Health Department. Until recently, a psychologist directing this large, multi-disciplinary agency was inconceivable to most. Today psychologist Dr. Terry Cline heads up this agency demonstrating again the effectiveness of OPA's efforts to promote and preserve the profession.

Psychologists are now regularly appointed to Oklahoma Boards and Commissions thanks to the political presence and influence of your professional association: the Oklahoma Psychological Association.

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## **OPA MAINTAINS A PRESENCE AT THE STATE CAPITOL**

### **✓OPA is Nationally Unique in its Psychologist of the Day Program**

Oklahoma has the only Psychologist of the Day program in the United States. Each week during the regular legislative session, a psychologist is introduced on the floor of both the Oklahoma State House of Representatives and Oklahoma State Senate. The psychologist spends the day at the capitol meeting informally with his/her state representatives, state elected officials, and other legislative advocates with similar legislative agendas. You are invited to become an OPA Psychologist of the Day. Just let us know you are interested, and we'll mentor you through the process.

### **✓OPA Provides Expertise to State Government**

The Oklahoma Psychological Association is often invited by legislative leaders and other state officials to provide expertise in certain professional areas by offering counsel, advice, direction, and testimony in forming public policy and developing legislation.

### **✓OPA Annually Recognizes Its Outstanding Legislative Supporters**

Each year, at its annual convention, the Oklahoma Psychological Association recognizes the accomplishments and assistance received from its friends in the legislature and/or state government with its Legislator of the Year award. Visitors to the state capitol offices of these officials see these awards posted prominently on the leader's office wall and are reminded of Oklahoma Psychology's influence at the Capitol.

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## **OPA MAINTAINS A POLITICAL PRESENCE IN WASHINGTON D.C.**

### **✓OPA Annually Meets with Our Members of Congress in Washington, D.C.**

Annually, a delegation from OPA travels to Washington, D.C. to meet with Oklahoma's Congressional Delegation and advocate on behalf of psychology as well as the mentally ill in Oklahoma. This has been an annual tradition for over twenty years. Some of the results of the annual advocacy meetings include:

- Inclusion of psychologists as recognized Medicaid and Medicare providers –and therefore eligible for reimbursement;
- Roll-back of cuts in Medicaid and Medicare reimbursement rates for psychologists;
- Invitations to OPA to provide expert testimony in Congressional Field Hearings on mental health parity legislation pending before both the US House and US Senate;
- Sponsorship by members of the Oklahoma Congressional Delegation of multiple key bills that were pro-psychology and pro-mental health; and
- Establishment of a working relationship with our Members of Congress that allows OPA

access to a Member on a personal basis whenever consultation and advice is needed or requested.

### ✓OPA Maintains Working Relationships with Oklahomans in Federal Leadership Positions

Former Oklahoma Psychological Association member and current Commissioner of the Oklahoma Health Department, Dr. Terry Cline was appointed by President George W. Bush as Administrator of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration in the United States Department of Health and Human Services. Dr. Cline reported to Health and Human Services Secretary Michael O. Leavitt and lead the \$3.3 billion agency responsible for improving the accountability, capacity and effectiveness of the nation's substance abuse prevention, addictions treatment, and mental health service delivery systems. Dr. Cline was first introduced to the OPA delegation in one of its trips to Washington where Dr. Cline served as a Health Care Policy Fellow at the Federal Center for Mental Health Services in the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration in Washington D.C. Who knew what great things were to come for Dr. Cline and psychology in Oklahoma-and the nation?

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### OPA MEETS REGULARLY WITH STATE AND NATIONAL LEADERS

#### ✓Lunch With the Leaders

Monthly, the Oklahoma Psychological Association President, President-Elect, Executive Director, Director of Professional Affairs, and invited members meet for lunch with Oklahomans in federal and state government leadership positions. Leaders who have met with OPA representatives over lunch include:

- Oklahoma Dept. of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services Commissioner Terri White;
- Former Speaker of the Oklahoma House of Representatives Lance Cargill;
- Oklahoma Health Care Authority CEO Mike Fogarty;
- Oklahoma Department of Corrections Director Justin Jones;
- Oklahoma Department of Human Services Director Howard Hendricks; and
- Member of United States Congress John Sullivan

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### OPA KEEPS OKLAHOMA PSYCHOLOGISTS ON THE CUTTING EDGE OF PROFESSIONAL AND ETHICAL ISSUES

#### ✓Professional Meetings and Continuing Education Opportunities

The Oklahoma Psychological Association holds its annual convention in the fall of each year and brings in speakers of national and international standing who are on the cutting edge of psychology research and practice. Sufficient continuing education credits are usually available at the convention to help meet the annual CE requirements for licensed practitioners. And the opportunity to meet, greet and network with fellow and future psychologists is always welcome!

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### OPA PROVIDES NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES FOR MEMBERS

#### ✓OPA Members Talk Among Themselves Through Online Communications and Active Networking at OPA Sponsored Meetings and Convention

Want to meet colleagues who have the same interests with varied areas of expertise? OPA sponsors a free Listserv for its members that allows you to post on-line questions and responses. Need a referral in North Dakota for one of your patients? Post your need on the OPA Listserv. Need to know where to find a continuing education seminar in a specialty area? Post your need on the OPA Listserv. Want to form a peer supervision group in your community? Post your need on the OPA Listserv. Want to receive a

“heads up” on OHCA auditors coming your direction? Check the OPA Listserv. You get the point...and yes, *OPA looks out for your interests every day.*

## OPA COMMUNICATES 24/7 ON THE INTERNET WITH ITS MEMBERS AND WITH THE WORLD

✓OPA Maintains a Referral Network In our Central Office of OPA Members to Respond to Online Requests for Local Psychologists

✓OPA Maintains a Worldwide Presence on the Internet

You can find it at [www.okpsych.org](http://www.okpsych.org), OPA’s official website. And, the world can find you at [www.okpsych.org](http://www.okpsych.org). OPA maintains a worldwide presence on the World Wide Web via the internet thanks to technology and some very dedicated OPA members.

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✓OPA is Working on New Guidelines and a New Structure for an Improved Colleague Assistance Program.

✓OPA Provides Complimentary or Reduced Fee Legal Counsel to Members.

✓OPA’s Scientific and Professional Ethics Education Committee [SPEEC] regularly presents ethics and risk management seminars. Participants receive reduced rates on professional liability insurance policies.

✓OPA Recognizes Its Members Who Make Significant Contribution to the Profession

✓OPA Recognizes Young Professional Psychologists Who Make Significant Contributions to the Profession

✓OPA Members Mentor Young Professional Psychologists New to Oklahoma Psychology

The Oklahoma Psychological Association works hard every day to make sure that you and your profession are recognized for the strengths and abilities you have to offer at the neighborhood, community, county, state, national, and international levels.

OPA works hard for you but OPA is you. It doesn’t have life, passion, or meaning without your input. OPA needs you as a member. OPA needs voluntary leadership and the input of new ideas and goals for its survival. You are the key.

## JOIN OPA TODAY!