



# Nebraska Psychiatric Society

Winter 2022

Mission: Nebraska Psychiatric Society exists to advance the profession of psychiatry, serve the needs of our members and provide support for psychiatric services across Nebraska.

Vision: To become a trusted voice and resource for psychiatric services in Nebraska.

## A Message from the President:

Greetings fellow NPS members!

As winter descends upon the Great Plains, I offer my warmest regards and brightest hopes for your 2022.

Our NPS membership numbers have remained steady over the past year. We are excited to see more psychiatrists either staying in the state after residency or coming back to practice after spending time away. That said, rural and frontier areas of Nebraska continue to struggle to attract psychiatrists. We also want to acknowledge the passing of several NPS members this year--sadness in saying goodbye, but also celebration of the memory of their service and camaraderie.

Our main NPS activity continues to be advocating our positions on legislation and policies at the state level. We took pro and con stances on multiple bills during the long session and were there to testify whenever possible. Our efforts to oppose the psychologist prescribing bill were successful in keeping it in committee--of course, we can count on this legislation to be introduced every year. The American Psychological Association has an entire division devoted to psychologists practicing medicine (<https://www.apadivisions.org/division-55>), and they view this as an essential mission of their survival as a specialty. As long as the proposed bill places patients at risk, we will oppose it.

We applied for and were fortunate to be awarded a grant from the APA to



Martin Wetzel, M.D.

fund a professional lobbyist to help with our campaigns. This year the grant came with a twist--our chapter was asked to put in \$1000 toward the amount (see accompanying article). We are asking for your contributions to not only meet but exceed this amount, as we do need these resources to fund our work with the legislature.

Please consider giving a contribution, perhaps in honor of a past teacher, peer or special person who helped you in your professional journey.

Finally, I want to thank the members of the Executive Committee for a great year, Carol and her team at MOMS for keeping us on track, and you, our members, for continuing to support our mission. Wishing you all the best for the holidays and 2022.

SAVE THE DATE  
NPS MEMBERSHIP MEETING  
MARCH 1st  
Details to Come



### The Nebraska Psychiatry Newsletter

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Authors' opinions do not necessarily reflect the official opinion of the Nebraska Psychiatric Society.

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## Welcome to Our New NPS Members!

**Bryan Beals**

*Lauren Edwards (welcome back!)*

**Sara Zachmann**

**Andrew Smith**

**Taliat Fawole**

**Nicole Bergeron**

Thank you for joining us in our dedication to the education and scientific values of psychiatry in Nebraska!

NPS submitted a Committee on Advocacy & Litigation Funding (CALF) grant application to the APA, focused on advancing collaborative care and promoting psychiatric leadership throughout any Nebraska behavioral health initiatives that might receive American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding. Our request was funded, with the stipulation that NPS would have to contribute a portion of the \$20,000 we requested. This CALF grant will enable NPS to continue to retain Korby Gilbertson, JD as our lobbyist throughout 2022. We anticipate any future CALF grant awards will require cost-sharing by NPS.

The Nebraska Unicameral reconvened September 13-30 to address redistricting prompted by the 2020 U.S. Census numbers, which affected the U.S. House of Representatives Legislative Districts, the Nebraska Legislative Districts, the Nebraska Board of Education, the Nebraska Public Service Commission, the Nebraska Supreme Court, and the University of Nebraska Board of Regents. After several proposals from the Redistricting Committee, the Legislature and Governor approved new boundaries based on a consensus majority. District 38 of the Nebraska Legislature moved from the Gothenburg area to Sarpy County; there was no change in the number of 49 legislative districts, although many districts now include new geography to maintain a relatively uniform population in each district. Senator John Stinner, who has introduced psychologist prescribing bills in 2020 and again in 2021, proposed Legislative Resolution 143 (to examine the mental and behavioral health needs of Nebraskans, assess the shortages of providers, and determine what is needed to ensure an adequate behavioral health service delivery system) was heard before Health and Human Services (HHS) on September 15. A number of professionals were invited by Sen. Stinner to participate in a task force that

held several meetings in the summer prior to the hearing; psychiatrists involved in this work were Marley Doyle, MD, of UNMC and BHECN; Shannon Kinnan, MD of Creighton and One World; and me, and these meetings were coordinated by Korby Gilbertson. Psychologist prescribing was not mentioned by any testifier at the hearing, but important issues raised included the maldistribution of regional crisis services, the value of school-based clinics, the need for additional acute psychiatric beds, financial support for psychologist doctoral internships, designing regional services across the state with communities' needs and resources in mind, the stiff competition for behavioral health staff members at the Bachelor and Masters level which has resulted in non-profits being priced out of the market, workforce trends and distribution across the state, and targeting rural, Panhandle and frontier areas for additional services. As is typical of interim hearings, there was no comment by the HHS Committee. We anticipate Senator Stinner will introduce a legislative bill in January focused on these issues, and it is encouraging that our NPS lobbyist is involved in drafting an appropriate bill.

On October 5 the Appropriations Committee, chaired by Senator Stinner, began hearings focused on how to spend the federal emergency American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) dollars which will be distributed to Nebraska. More than 50 testifiers offered various proposals. Dexter Schrodt, JD from the Nebraska Medical Association spoke about ways to retain and recruit workforce by creating scholarships, expanding the Rural Loan Forgiveness Program, developing marketing campaigns to help expand diversity among healthcare workers, establishing incentive payments, developing housing for health care staff who are training in rural areas, creating financial incentives to train health care translators, and expanding the workforce data collection system currently in place for nurses to



**Beth Ann Brooks, M.D.**

all health care professions. There were many proposals put forth, but the need to build upon and improve access to mental health care was emphasized in several testimonies.

On October 6, Appropriations heard an interim study concerning workforce challenges, particularly in nursing. A behavioral health testifier emphasized the need for provider rate increases to meet salary challenges which have been exacerbated by the ongoing pandemic.

Nebraska Medicaid will be procuring new contracts for its capitated managed care program, Heritage Health, in 2022. Medicaid's tentative schedule for procuring these contracts is as follows: April 2022 Nebraska will release its request for proposals, and in July the 2023 contracts will be awarded.

There will be hard work ahead in the Legislature when the fast-paced "short session" convenes on January 5 for its usual introduction and hearings of bills; familiar high-profile issues related to Nebraska's tax system, funding for K-12 education, and prison overcrowding will be some of the subjects debated in the Unicameral. And the ARPA fund allocations will require careful deliberation because the Governor's plans for spending those funds may not match those of the many stakeholders who testified at the October 5 Appropriations hearings. Feel free to contact me if you have questions about specific legislative issues, and remember that the best way to advocate for our patients and the psychiatric profession is to maintain contact with your individual senators.

Respectfully submitted,  
Beth Ann Brooks, M.D., M.S.A.

## 2021 Fall APA Assembly Meeting Update

Hello NPS members,

Greetings from your friendly neighborhood APA Assembly Representative. I hope you all enjoyed Thanksgiving, got some quality time with those important to you, remembered those you've lost, and created new memories to cherish for years to come. Christmas is right around the corner so time to start filling your Amazon carts!

The APA Assembly met virtually from November 6-7, and as your Area 4 APA Assembly Representative, one of my responsibilities is to provide you with a report of this meeting. Topics of particular interest this year included action items related to diversity & equity, legalization of illicit substance possession and use, and maintenance of certification (MOC).

The Assembly voted to approve the following actions:

- Revised Position Statement: Location of Civil Commitment Hearings
- Revised Position Statement: Sexual Harassment
- Retirement of the Position Statement: Patient Access to Electronic Mental Health Records
- Proposed Position Statement: Transitions from Hospital- Based Care to the Community for Substance Use Disorders
- Proposed Position Statement: Police Interactions with Children and Adolescents in Mental Health Crisis
- Revised Position Statement: Position Statement on Off- Label Treatments
- Revised Position Statement: College and University Mental Health
- Proposed Position Statement: Position Statement on Immigration, Children, Adolescents, and their Families
- Proposed Position Statement: Mental Health Impact of Public Health Emergencies on Young People
- Proposed Position Statement: Racism and Racial Discrimination in the Psychiatric Workplace

- Revised Position Statement: Psychiatric Services in Adult Correctional Facilities
- Proposed Position Statement: Moral Injury Among Healthcare Workers During a Public Health Crisis
- Revised Position Statement: Core Principles for Alternative Payment Models for Behavioral Health
- Proposed Position Statement: Medical Supervision of Psychiatry Residents and Fellows
- Revised Position Statement: Telemedicine in Psychiatry
- Retention of the Position Statement: Any Willing Physician
- Revised Position Statement: Trial Sentencing of Juveniles in the Criminal Justice System
- Proposed Position Statement: Civil Commitment of Minors
- Accept the report of the Nominating Committee.

The slate of candidates for the Spring 2022 Assembly election is as follows:

- Speaker-Elect: Vasilis K. Pozios, MD, Area 4. Recorder: Kenneth Ashley, MD, Area 2 Steven Starks, MD, Area 5
- Deletion of Suicidal Behavior Disorder from Section 3 of the DSM
  - Action paper 12.A, which asks that the Council on Health Care Systems and Financing develop a position statement regarding the interface between psychiatry reviewers and treating clinicians
  - Action paper 12.B, which asks that American Psychiatric Association's Council on Advocacy and Government Relations (CAGR) in consultation with APA's Legal Department create an advocacy toolkit which provides resources to District Branches as well as to individual psychiatrists to advocate for a change in professional board licensing applications as well as hospital and organizational credentialing applications in order to destigmatize mental health and enhance help seeking by physicians. The APA



**Steve Salzbrenner, MD**

will refine web site search criteria to link to all toolkits.

- Action paper 12.D, which asks:
  1. That the APA use its existing lobbying resources to advocate for the passage of H.R. 1722, H.R. 3434, or other similar legislation that addresses Medicaid funding disparities.
  2. That the APA include this issue in its advocacy update newsletter and facilitate the process for its members to reach out to their representatives in support of H.R. 1722 and H.R. 3434 through their online tool.
  3. That the APA Media/Public Relations department bring light to this important issue by issuing an article on its APA Headlines Updates and in a large circulation publication like the Psychiatric News.
  4. That the appropriate APA designated party (like the APA Department of Government Relations staff) meet with relevant members of Congress to advocate for H.R. 1722, H.R. 3434 and similar legislative solutions to be sponsored, co-sponsored and/or raised in committee, such as U.S. Representative Anna G. Eshoo, Chairwoman of the Council on Energy and Commerce- Health Subcommittee.
- Action paper 12.E, which asks that the Council on Addiction Psychiatry review the available evidence and develop a position statement by the fall 2023 Assembly meeting regarding:
  1. Decriminalizing personal use and possession of illicit substances; and
  2. Federal drug policy reform in alignment with evidence-based solutions

*Continued on page 4.*

## 2021 Fall APA Assembly Meeting Update Cont.

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- Action paper 12.H, which asks that APA advocate for imgs and support the development of a formal mentorship/sponsorship program to help foster professional growth and guide early to mid-career IMG Psychiatrists to opportunities in the APA and its district branches.
- Action paper 12.I, which asks:
  1. That APA advocate on the behalf of its ABPN diplomates that any psychiatrist employed by a health care organization which is accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting organization will be in compliance with PIP, given that QI is already being assessed by accrediting organizations.
  2. That adequate self-assessment credit be gained from participating in the article-based Part III component of MOC to satisfy all self-assessment requirements for MOC.
  3. That the number of articles required of psychiatrists with multiple psychiatric board certifications be reduced in order to equal no more than is required for board certification in general psychiatry.
- Action paper 12.J, which asks that:
  1. The APA educates its membership, the public and, specifically its leadership, on race-based tokenism and its antidotes using formats such as the APA Learning Center, internal communications, and other communication forums such as the Focus Journal.
  2. The APA create a publicly available, structured, transparent and accountability focused plan for addressing how race-based tokenism acts as a barrier to its efforts to address its structural racism and how it impacts the mental health of its members and ultimately psychiatric patients informed by the expertise of an Assembly consultant who can directly address the manifestations in policies, practices, and norms of the APA Assembly.
  3. The APA consultant work directly with the Assembly MUR Group and collaboratively adopt an open-door policy allowing for frequent, psychologically safe, and confidential interactions with interested stakeholders who have observed, experienced and/or been harmed by race-based tokenism within the APA.
  4. The APA publishes an annual report, in collaboration with DDHE, on its efforts to mitigate the presence and consequences of race-based tokenism at all levels of the organization, including within APA staff hiring and supervision.
- Action paper 12.K, which asks that:
  1. The APA Assembly recommends the BOT EC includes the MUR Trustee.
  2. In support of transparency and accountability, that the APA Assembly be informed of the rationale for the BOT voting down the structural racism task force recommendation to include the MUR Trustee.
- To approve action paper 12.M, which asks that:
  1. The APA Assembly acknowledge to its members the presence of white dominant culture by ensuring that it is addressed in current efforts to eliminate structural racism.
  2. That the APA Assembly educate its members and leadership on manifestations of cultural racism and its functioning.
  3. That this educational effort be supported by APA resources including but not limited to appropriate consultants.
- Action paper 12.N, which asks that:
  1. To ensure transparency and accountability and improve the active informed participation of APA members, APA administration will:
    - a) Inform membership of action papers and position statements under consideration before each Assembly meeting.
    - b) Inform membership of the meetings of Reference Committees so that APA members may provide real time input on action items under consideration.
  - c) Inform membership of the status of each action item considered at each Assembly meeting.
  2. As stated in the Procedural Code of the Assembly, Assembly Reps are responsible for being the point of contact for their respective constituents.
- Action paper 12.O, which asks:
  1. That the APA shall develop a comprehensive plan for the reduction of the carbon footprint of its Annual Meeting, which will include the formulation of a work group to explore the use of strategic conference placement to minimize travel, integration of virtual with in-person meeting components, and payment of carbon offsets for carbon dioxide produced by travel and holding the meeting. This work group will conclude within one year to release its recommendations to the APA for action.
  2. That in order to fulfill our ethical mandate as physicians, the APA shall set a target goal of 50% reduction in the carbon footprint of the meeting by 2030, which is consistent with the recommendations of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and the national mandate of the US federal governmental (12, 13). Complete carbon neutrality may also be achievable within this timeframe.

Your grateful representative,

Steve Salzbrenner, MD  
Area 4 Assembly Representative

## Please Welcome Our Class of 2025 Psychiatry Residents

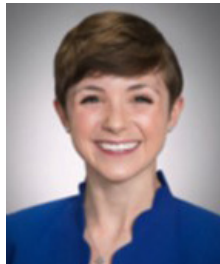
### Creighton University Psychiatry:



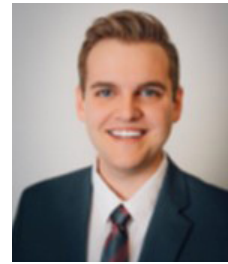
Kellen Andersen, MD



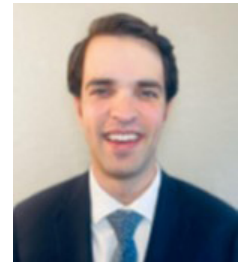
Coralie Eilers, MD



Haley Schuster, MD



Kyle Sramek, MD

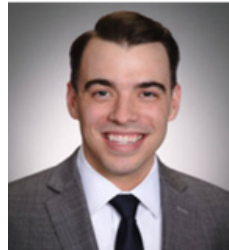


David Wilton, MD

### From University of Nebraska Medical Center Psychiatry:



Thomas Bainter, MD



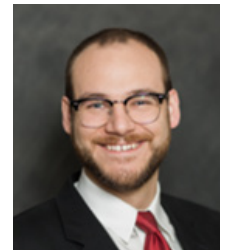
Logan Ford, MD



Bryndis Grissom, DO



Tianqui(Nina) Luo, DO



Maxwell Lydiatt, MD

## NPS Executive Board Member Dr. Alëna Balasanova Presented Award

Congratulations to our own Dr. Alëna Balasanova for being named the Nebraska Medical Association's 2021 Young Physician of the Year!

This award recognizes Dr Balasanova for consistently achieving high standards in the practice of medicine and being looked upon as a role model by peers. Award criteria include being a credible role model, both professionally and personally, to the community, other health professionals, residents, and medical

students; exceeding expectations of our profession; making a significant difference in the lives of a patient, staff member or colleague; contributing substantially to their community through community service or support; providing high-level leadership; and fostering the spread of medical knowledge.

Dr. Balasanova is a medical staff psychiatrist at Nebraska Medicine and also holds several academic appointments which include: Director of Addiction

Psychiatry Education, Graduate Faculty, Assistant Professor for the Department of Psychiatry, Assistant Clinical Professor for the Department of Psychiatry, Assistant Professor of Physician Assistant Studies.



## Your Contribution Means Everything

*As Dr. Wetzel mentioned in his letter, we need your help! Our goal is \$1000 to put towards a lobbyist acting on our behalf to support and promote the interests and values of Nebraska psychiatrists regarding Nebraska legislative efforts, including against the now-yearly proposed bill to give psychologists prescribing privileges. Also, any donation will enter the donor's name in a drawing for a prize at our upcoming winter meeting! Note that because these funds are for political lobbying purposes, they are not tax deductible.*

## Two Ways to Donate:

1. **Mail donation to:**  
NPS, 7906 Davenport St, Omaha, NE 68114
2. **Venmo** @Nebraskapsych, or use the QR code:



venmo