



**SPRING  
2010**

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

**The moving parts**

*BY ROBERT ODELL*

**T**wo years ago, during the board retreat, I set out some goals that I hoped we could achieve. And I am happy to say that most of them seem to have been achieved, or are well on their way.

An organization of any kind might report similar results over a two-plus year period. Such is the nature of all human collaborative activity, including one that is run by clinical social workers volunteering their time, working from home or clinical office.

In this time, many members have worked extraordinarily hard to not only run programs, but also try to improve the way we handle and pass down information and structure volunteer assignments. It's been in the service of making all the "moving parts" ultimately easier to run—and thus more accessible for any member who wishes to have a good professional experience working within a professional association.

We built on the preexisting agenda of developing membership diversity, revising our bylaws to include mandates toward that goal, adding a mission statement, and revising our key objectives. A related goal—and a perennial one—has

been to increase membership. The Society has heretofore avoided, or been unable to afford, a true membership marketing campaign. A feasible plan for how we evolve from a King County/Western Washington to a truly state-wide membership has been broadly developed. Generally, this means a difficult task of bringing our programs to a point where we can "export" them to other communities with volunteer clinical social workers.

**Many members  
have worked  
extraordinarily  
hard.**

I am also happy to report that, despite the economic tsunami that hit this country and the world, we have recovered much of our invested reserves. We are also poised this year to actually add to our financial reserves.

Succession to leadership is also very important. Cyclically, even healthy organizations can have trouble finding new leaders. This was true in December 2007, when I agreed to stand for election. Today, WSSCSW has a wealth of members ready to lead this organization. A competitive ballot for board president next year would be a good thing, with different visions from the future candidates who are seeking votes.

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# WSSCSW

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The Washington State Society for Clinical Social Work was established in 1973 and incorporated in 1988 as a 501(c)(6) to promote and advance specialization of clinical practice within the social work profession. It is an organization of clinical social workers practicing in a variety of settings including mental health clinics, family service agencies, hospitals and medical clinics, and private practice in the state of Washington. Its members span the professional life cycle from students and new professionals to mid-range, seasoned, and retired clinicians.

WSSCSW offers its members continuing educational opportunities, legislative advocacy including lobbying, network and professional growth opportunities and special programs for new professionals.

WSSCSW is a nonprofit tax-exempt professional organization with a board of directors composed of officers elected by the membership and chairpersons of the various committees. It is affiliated with the Clinical Social Work Association, which represents clinical social workers on the national level and actively works with them to represent local as well as national concerns.

## NEWSLETTER

# Welcome, Krista and Rachel!

BY MARY ASHWORTH

It is with tremendous enthusiasm that I am introducing the new co-editors of the Society's newsletter. I hope you will all welcome Krista Murtfeldt and Rachel Kirby to the position. After an evening of lively discussion with a number of us meeting to discuss the future of communications within the Society, Krista and Rachel offered their services as co-editors of our newsletter. The first ever communications happy hour took place at the home of Marianne Pettersen in February where we explored many possible ways of communicating with our membership and generated some new and exciting ideas for our newsletter. Krista and Rachel asked important questions, shared their ideas, and by the end of the evening had decided they would combine their energies and talents to tackle this project. I am sure in the coming months you will be hearing more about some of the ideas this group and these two women in particular began to consider.

In their professional lives Krista and Rachel both have an interest in working with children and parents and both are in private practice. Krista attended Washington University's School of Social Work in St. Louis, Missouri. In addition to her newly launched private practice in north Seattle, she has worked at University of Washington Medical Center as a perinatal social worker since 2001. Rachel is a graduate of the University of Washington's School of Social Work program here in Seattle and has been navigating both parenting and social work practice since 2002.

As the outgoing editor, I am very pleased with their eagerness to become involved in the Society in this meaningful way and know that with their attention to detail, their enthusiasm and creative bent, the newsletter is in terrific hands. I look forward to gobbling up the fruits of their labor. Congratulations and many thanks to Krista and Rachel! ♦

**WSSCSW newsletter** is mailed quarterly to members of WSSCSW. Deadline for the next newsletter is **August 15, 2010**.

Classified ads are \$10 for 25 words, \$20 for 50 words, etc. Articles and ads should be emailed to Rachel Kirby at **rachel.kirby.msw@gmail.com**.

Newsletter design: Dennis Martin Design, 206-363-4500.

Articles expressing the personal views of members on issues affecting the social work profession are welcome and will be published at the discretion of the editors and WSSCSW board. Articles reflect the views of authors and Society endorsement is not intended.

## PRESIDENT'S LETTER

continued from front page

As of July 1, Carolyn Sharp is our new board president. I can't imagine a more qualified individual in terms of personality, experience, and vision. In this last letter, I'd like to give everyone a brief picture—with a dash of history—of the organization and the board she will lead. I'll start with some of our newest board members, to make a particular point.

With this newsletter, we have new editorial leadership. Our new co-editors are Krista Murtfeldt and Rachel Kirby. Rachel and Krista began in March to replace Mary Ashworth, our prior editor, who put out this publication with great dedication for five years. We purposely sought co-editors, to share the responsibilities and make the commitments easier to sustain.

I would like to talk about the other current board members (in alphabetic order.) They deserve recognition for their hard work and constant attention. Everyone is creating and managing significant change!

Bruce Gimplin is our newest member, coming in as chair of the Ethics Committee. This committee has been completely redesigned to fit WSSCSW members' everyday needs. Bruce has been known to members as our email group moderator. His ability to respond to members, handling many questions, makes him a good choice for ethics. Please welcome him, and take a look at the committee's new web page!

Our legislative chair, Laura Groshong, is all about change, every year. In Olympia (with Lonnie Johns-Brown, our superb lobbyist)

and Seattle, she operates in a very dynamic environment that requires many contacts and great diplomacy. Laura's established reputation in our community is 100 percent earned every day, with enthusiasm, wisdom and humor.

Shauna Hill joined our board and executive committee as secretary nine months ago. In addition to keeping our CE certification business humming, she is the first to volunteer for other activities, such as hosting events or joining a workshop faculty. Thank you, Shauna, for your energy, smarts, and collaboration on everything!

The financial health we have now began with the collaboration between our past treasurer (Carolyn Sharp) and our current one, Jennifer Loewen. Jennifer has understood from the beginning the shift WSSCSW has made financially. It means asking good questions and understanding all of our programs. Sure enough, we have gained strength each year. Jennifer supports and leads in every area of WSSCSW activity.

Marianne Pettersen has continued to advise and support this board in exemplary past president tradition. Her commitment to clinical social work and WSSCSW is legendary.

Theresa Rogers created change exactly where we needed it—taking membership online, making it easier, more accessible, and ready to support growth. The change will free her up to do what's most enjoyable and important—to welcome new and returning members.

Lyla Ross became a parent late last year. Not much change, right? The New Professionals Committee

is changing its name to better fit the new law reorganizing counselors. Lyla and her committee welcome those joining our profession with care (mentorship, supervision, low-cost psychotherapy) and feeding (the annual dinner.)

Last spring, Sara Slater took over the Professional Development Committee. Sara gave us a year of tremendous activity and success. She gave enormously of her time and energy, and also facilitated collaborative effort. Along the way, everyone enjoyed working with her. Thank you, Sara, for your remarkable commitment to WSSCSW.

We practice in an environment with the more readily identifiable professions of psychology, marriage and family therapy, and mental health counseling. These are colleagues who have made a commitment to clinical social work a part of their professional identity. We all must work to differentiate and stand up for ourselves within the social work profession and the allied clinical mental health professions.

So, please welcome Carolyn Sharp and this board of directors. And my thanks to so many members who have helped and offered kind words of encouragement for what we are trying to do. I look forward to our annual meeting and volunteer appreciation on June 24. I hope as many members as possible can be there to celebrate our success. ♦

## Extraordinary growth

BY CAROLYN SHARP

It is an honor to get to sit down and write my first newsletter article to you as your newly elected president. It is also more than a little daunting! But before sharing my initial thoughts, let me say a few things about our soon-to-be new past president.

In the two years that Rob Odell has been president of the WSSCSW, there has been extraordinary growth, which he has overseen, facilitated, guided, spearheaded, and sometimes arm wrestled. Some of the highlights:

- Extended membership into South King County and Tacoma.
- A diversity initiative, including our first completed diversity survey and amendment to the bylaws.
- A now complete transition to electronic database (thank you, Theresa and Kate!), which allows us to access our own data, streamlining our processes and eliminating much of the human error which has been so frustrating.
- A newly developed Ethics Committee (which until a month ago Rob was also leading!) which is expanding our communication and conversation about the ethical dilemmas which we all get into.
- An enhanced relationship with our professional allies at WSPA, WAMFT, WAMCA, and the other

acronyms that make us sound like spies rather than mental health professionals.

- Incredible advocacy by Rob and Laura Groshong, insuring reasonable transition for our clients served currently by Uniform Medical Plan (soon to be Regence), and a powerful dialogue begun with the state Insurance Commission, protecting the needs of our consumers.
- Incredible legislative accomplishments, including new certified counselor legislation, mental health parity, protection to social services in extremely difficult budget times, and so many other things too numerous to mention (thank you, Laura and Lonnie!).
- Powerful programming through our Professional Development Committee (thank you, Sara!).

So, these are a few of the highlights, although this is far from an exhaustive list! Much less sexy, although equally important, are the organizational systems that Rob has put into place to “professionalize” our organization. While, at the outside, these changes may have felt to some a bit antithetical to our social work “culture,” as our membership has grown beyond 200, these systems have been and are critical and revolutionary to our long-term survival. The behind the scenes things that have happened to make sure we are able to make the above list possible should not be understated.

I am sure many of you do not realize that at one point, Rob was simultaneously the president, the chair of the Professional Development Committee, and developing the Ethics Committee and the Diversity Initiative, all while operating a full-time private practice, maintaining a new marriage, raising a child, and recovering from some significant medical situations within his family!

So, okay, can we take a minute and pause at these accomplishments? Thank you, Rob. You may never fully realize how extraordinary your work has been.

So, I have some rather large shoes to fill. Let me say, off the bat, that I will not be chairing any committees in addition to holding the president's office. Many things, I am, but superheroic, I am not. I am going to gratefully take the newly organized professional organization, let the committees that Rob has so carefully nurtured to health, and focus on something a little different. So here goes:

As we have grown both in number and breadth of practicing clinical social workers, we have developed an unsurpassed richness of expertise and experience. We see this frequently on our incredible listserv: the referrals and resources offered are incredible. However, in my time in the organization and on the board, I have met only a small sampling of these members. I have served with the same 15 or 20 folks who regularly volunteer, and many

## New professionals get new title for programming within the Society

BY LYLA ROSS

of the same folks attend the clinical evening meetings. This has been an incredible experience for me, as I have developed a vital network of colleagues through this group and increased my referral sources both for myself and others. I have also developed incredible friendships in this, which has been the greatest benefit!

However, I want to meet more of you! Now that we have a successful and strong system to maintain our day-to-day workings, I want to focus on creating more opportunities for our membership to get to know the organization and the people within. I am going to be planning multiple informal get-togethers for both brainstorming for new ideas from folks that may not have previously added to the voice of the programming, and for people to develop new contacts and consultation opportunities. Look for these on the listserv, and please do not hesitate to contact me with your ideas.

These are my initial thoughts. As I move officially into my new role, I will have more to share and more thoughts to add, as well as much more work to do. I am very excited about the opportunities to get to know all of you better and to help us work together to build on the incredible work of the irreplaceable Rob Odell.

Please join me in thanking him at our annual party, and please come say hi! ♦

As the Society finds itself in the midst of some big changes—rolling out the new website, moving towards a more “green” way of disseminating and keeping information, allowing members to manage their bios on their own, etc.,—so too, is the new professionals program!

This year was a big legislative year for those social workers who have recently graduated, as the title changed for pre-licensure candidates from “registered counselors” to either “licensed social work associate—dependent clinical” or “licensed social work associate—advanced.” With this change, it seemed only appropriate to reconsider the title of our program, which specifically supports MSW graduates within the first five years after graduation. Through thought and discussion amongst the board, it was decided that our program will now be called the Associates Program. This seemed to better reflect the group make-up as well as utilize the new title adopted by Washington State for those who are working toward licensure.

With the new program title will also come more chances for our associate members (formerly new professionals) to meet each other in person, network, share ideas, get educated about legislative changes, support each other, and *have fun!* Be on the lookout for invitations to be less formal and more social. We will contact you by email and/or the message board.

There will also be an opportunity for associate members to join with our approved supervisors to learn more about the specific changes in our licensure laws. In the coming year, Laura Groshong (legislative chair) and the Associates Program committee members will collaborate to find at least one opportunity to provide ongoing education about the new licensure laws and how they will affect pre-licensure candidates and their supervisors.

Please do feel free to contact Lyla Ross or Diane Gris -Crismani if you have any ideas or suggestions that you think might be helpful for the associates program activities or services. ♦

# kudos

Krista Murtfeldt and Rachel Kirby write: A special thanks to Mary Ashworth for her years of dedication as the WSSCSW newsletter editor. Thank you for your guidance through our transition as co-editors. You leave hard shoes to fill!

## Going paperless and digital!

BY THERESA ROGERS

I recently came across a statement in the *New York Times* (May 7, 2010) that read: “The digital age may claim another victim.” The reference was to the residential White Pages printed and distributed every year in Manhattan by Verizon. Because only one of every nine households uses the hard-copy listing, the service is no longer practical. Most people go online to gather information. By ending the automatic distribution of phone books, Verizon estimates that it will save nearly 5,000 tons of paper.

I would like to officially welcome the digital age to the Washington State Society for Clinical Social Work! Because of the dedicated efforts of our beloved webmaster, Kate Witt, we have successfully transported all of our member data to a new database that now allows all members to download their own paper directory or simply go online to gather the information you need. Our Society’s carbon footprint has



been reduced, trees have been saved, and a significant financial savings has occurred, allowing our Society to protect and nurture our financial foundation. This summer, rather than receiving a paper renewal form in the mail, you will receive an email notice and the option to renew your membership online—no paper required! At any moment in time you can go online to correct or update your membership listing—without having to wait until the renewal drive to update your information via a paper form. I believe that this arrangement will ultimately be much more satisfying for members, as it puts each individual in a place of personal responsibility for managing your own directory data. Once your data is in place, there is nothing more you need do to have it managed, other than to pay your yearly membership fee. If you do not pay your membership fee, your data is removed from the website and your list serve connection is discontinued as well.

One very exciting change as a result of this new database, is that purchasing an “enhanced listing” allows you to place a photo on your WSSCSW website listing and a link to your website if you have one. Future expanded services are currently being developed as well.

I know as a clinician how I am often in a position to help my patients make sense of an ever-changing world—one in which technology often serves to both improve and depersonalize our

experiences in the world. Because the world of technology changes rapidly, making sense of its impact on the individual, let alone our society, is daunting. I understand that as WSSCSW makes this healthy developmental shift from a paper to digital experience, some Society members may feel disoriented or even disappointed or angry about the changes that have occurred. In this case, there is no substitute for the time-honored experience of a personal relationship with a real person—me! Your WSSCSW Membership Committee chair is personally available to you by calling me at 206-548-1223 or emailing me at [theresamarietogers@comcast.net](mailto:theresamarietogers@comcast.net) if you should have any concerns or questions about the direction our Society is moving in response to the digital age. I have been personally motivated to try my best to understand and get on board with advancements in technology because of the fact that I have young children at home. I would not be able to help them with their homework or even communicate with them (texting, Skype ...) if I didn’t agree to meet them in their world. In addition, I have watched their world be transformed by the transition from paper to digital. While it was perhaps exciting in the past to see your name in print when the directory came, saving trees, I believe, is more a testament to your immortality than your name on paper could ever be. ♦



## An exciting year ...

BY JENNIFER LOEWEN

It's hard to believe that a year has passed since I was elected to the position of treasurer. I must admit, coming into the post following Carolyn Sharp's leadership was an intimidating prospect. But, I'm pleased to say that WSSCSW is looking at making a profit during the 2009/2010 fiscal year (whew!).

### Income

To date, our total income for the year is \$55,771.20. As has been the pattern in previous years, the majority of our income came from membership dues, 44%. Conferences brought in 36% of our income this year. The remainder of our budget came from lobbying contributions (7%), CEUs (3%), website listings (2%), and miscellaneous income (less than 1%). Unfortunately, short courses have not generated any income for us this year.

We used a portion of our surplus last year (\$3,000) to put into cash reserves for this year. Because of our nonprofit status, we must reset our budget to \$0.00 at the beginning of the fiscal year (July 1). This \$3,000 can be carried over as cash reserves, and we can use it to pay employees and bills until we begin generating income with our membership drive.

### Expenses

To date, our expenses total \$30,696.44. Our largest expense this year was the legislative committee at 30%. The legislative budget pays for the time and operating expenses of our lobbyists, Lonnie Johns-Brown

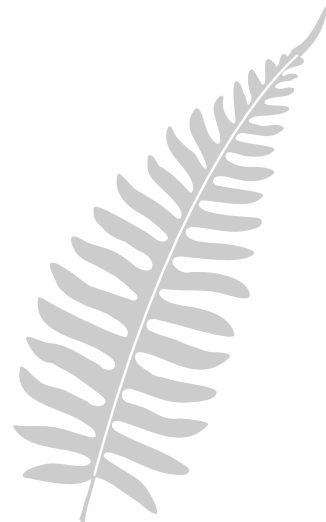
and Laura Groshong, as well as for contributions made to support our legislative agenda. A close second was communications, accounting for 29% of the budget. This expense category pays for the salaries of our administrative assistant, Aimee Roos, and our webmaster, Kate Witt, as well as publication of our newsletter. The professional development committee, paying for programming expenses, comprised 24% of the budget this year. The executive budget accounted for 11% of the budget. Executive expenses include general operating costs, the end of the year party, and volunteer recognition. The New Professionals Committee (now referred to as the Associates Program to reflect the change in licensing categories at the state level) accounted for 5% of this year's budget.

The shift to an online database for managing membership data and switching to paperless membership renewal and conference registration is nearly complete. Over the course of the year, we have paid Kate Witt, our webmaster, to transition our information and set up this system. Much of this is a one-time expense, which should result in savings for the organization in the future because we were paying our administrative assistant a high rate to manually organize this information.

Although we have not yet closed the books on this fiscal year, I predict the organization will make a healthy profit this year. While our income for this fiscal year is similar to last, our expenses were down significantly. These numbers are

not final, however, and we will still have expenses associated with our annual party in June, as well as an upcoming conference at the end of May for those transitioning into the new certified counselor category. This is the second conference we have offered for registered counselors this year, and due to demand for this training, professional development is considering another, which would likely further our profit margin for the year.

It has been an exciting year to be on the board, especially with the switch to an online database. In line with these changes, I have also updated our accounting system so we now have the capability to do online banking—making my job much easier! Thank you so much for the opportunity to serve as your treasurer! ♦



## The year in professional development

BY SARA SLATER

**W**ith the hope of summer in the air, it feels a tad odd to be writing an end-of-year article. But such is the way of all things fiscal. And so I'd like to take a moment to shout out the hard work of our fabulous professional development team, a delightful blend of folks who brought both the wisdom and perspective of longtime membership, and the enthusiasm and energy of more recent additions to our organization.

Huge thanks to Bill Etnyre, John Powers, Cristina Mullen, Bill Cooper, Diane Broderick, Richard Sirota, Robin Adler, and Bruce Gimplin. Planning for a year of professional development happens in the spring/summer, and the collaboration of both older and newer members of WSSCSW brought to our attention to the complex role of professional development in providing both continuing education, as well as opportunities for socializing and networking, something which becomes increasingly more difficult as our organization grows. Overwhelmingly at the top of the list of what folks value most about their membership is "the listserv," and then "professional development," and when given a chance to meet, often at a professional development event, I constantly hear (or say) "I see your name on the listserv all the time—how nice to finally meet

you." So recalling how professional development used to play an essential role in bringing people together in years past, notably the brown bag get-togethers at the Golden Coin, and figuring out how to enhance the social role of the Professional Development Committee are an ongoing part of the conversation. More on that in a moment.

An outcome of that initial planning last summer was the idea of exploring a single theme through a variety of theoretical and experiential perspectives. This year's series of clinical evening meetings focused on the subject of trauma and brought us such diverse topics as "Working with PTSD: Mindfulness-Based Treatment and Research" with Christina Mullen, Maureen Sawyer, and David Kearney; "Traumatic Loss: The Clinician's Own Experience" with Donna James, Bev Osband, and Carolyn Sharp; "Trauma in the Body: Right Brain and the Autonomic Nervous System—the Somatic Unconscious" with Sal Ziz, Myrna Dunlop, and Peter Moore; and "Trauma of Sudden or Violent Loss" with Ted Rynearson, MD. Our final meeting, "The Trauma of Racism" with Marian Harris, has been postponed to fall; date to be announced.

On the conference front, highlighting this year was our first collaborative conference with NASW and the NW Alliance for Psychoanalytic Study, which brought us Glen O. Gabbard, MD, speaking on "The Impossible Patient," to a completely full house. Many thanks here to

both John and Rob for the many months of effort required to pull this together, and to Richard, Diane, and Bill for their cheerful, efficient, onsite support.

Our second major conference, "Building Blocks: What Certified Counselors Need to Know," represents a huge opportunity for the WSSCSW to take an important leadership role in supporting folks through the legislative transition by providing the mandatory training, which brings the counseling profession to a new level of excellence. Many thanks to Dana Blue, Laura Groshong, Caron Harrang, and Maxine Nelson for stepping up to the challenge. This dynamic team gave WSSCSW a template for training that allows us to offer repeat trainings (necessary, given the size of applicant pool); our first, in January, was completely sold out. We will present the second "Building Blocks" on May 24, again to a sold-out crowd, and are thrilled to have Carolyn Sharp and Shauna Hill, together with Laura Groshong, bringing their own experience and energy to this important curriculum.

Execution of all this enthusiastic planning happens throughout the year, and so I am immensely grateful for everyone's stamina and commitment. I also wish to add my deep appreciation for the ongoing support of Rob Odell, who stepped in last year as interim chair and helped to bring a new level of organization and technological wizardry to our team. (Thank you, Rob, for your ever-



## It's all about relationships

BY RACHEL KIRBY

patient replies to my endless and slightly panicky emails!)

In the interest of planning for *next* year, we hosted a professional development happy hour in the late spring, which resulted in some excellent ideas for addressing the complex need for both educational and social opportunities, increasing involvement, and getting over that divide between old and new members (it's not easy to be a new member—think high school!). Among the exciting ideas: workshops on the business of practice; a professional development resource fair (kind of a livelist serv!); a monthly clinical book club; creation of a consult group list (who's meeting where, and discussing what); and a CEM series on ethics. It was wonderful to share some face time, to brainstorm, and to have the participation of members both old and new. If we are to keep the Professional Development Committee dynamic and our membership vital, we need *you!* Now's an ideal time to get involved, and participation, like NPR fund drives, can be at your level of ability, in terms of time and interest. I would be more than delighted to talk with you. Please contact me at 206-579-1729, or [saraslaterlicsw@gmail.com](mailto:saraslaterlicsw@gmail.com). Now's the time! ♦

**A**s a fairly new member of this Society, and the new co-editor of the newsletter, I have been curious about the people who are behind so many of the policy changes in our profession.

One such person who captured my interest is Laura Groshong, our Society's lobbyist for statewide issues pertaining to the social work profession. Laura is also the director of government relations for the national organization Clinical Social Work Association.

I met Laura for lunch, naively thinking I was going to walk away with a concise summary of the policy issues she had been grappling with throughout this past legislative session. Instead I got to know a little bit about Laura and her journey, and she learned about me.

I quickly realized that the thoughtful, personable way in which she engaged with me was how she connects with everyone, including legislators. "It's all about relationships," Laura told me. "As a lobbyist I try to get people with common interests to come together." Laura tells me that her social work training was helpful in giving her the ability to bring people together. She attended the University of Chicago's School of Social Work, which she stated was very clinically oriented, but also had a strong emphasis on advocacy. "I just didn't get around to doing it for twenty years," Laura confides, "I didn't always do all of this crazy legislative stuff. I still think of myself as a clinician." Laura maintains a private practice in addition to her legislative work.

Through our discussion, I came to understand how much Laura's clinical experience influences her work on policy. "I know what it is to be a clinician and what might be a problem for us."

When I broached the subject of national health care reform, Laura told me that it had been pretty overwhelming. "From December to March I spent two hours per day reading emails regarding health care reform." Laura remarked that this major legislation could not have happened without the Internet. She laughs as she remembers that ten years ago the primary means of communicating within this Society was using a phone tree.

Laura states that overall she feels pleased with the piece of legislation that was passed. "It's not the end. All legislation is incremental."

As for a summary of this monumental work, Laura reminded me that there are at least 300–400 parts to this legislation. I smiled to myself. I realized I would be leaving this interview with a new mentor to turn to, but I would not have a concise article on health care reform. That's okay. As a wise colleague once told me, "It's all about relationships." ♦

*Note: Our state lobbyist is also a national lobbyist. Laura Groshong reminds us all to become members of the national organization, the Clinical Social Work Association. In the CSWA summer newsletter is a complete review of health care reform. Go to [www.clinicalsocialwork-association.org/newsletters](http://www.clinicalsocialwork-association.org/newsletters) and click on "access—summer 2010."*

## Introducing the Ethics Committee

BY BRUCE GIMPLIN

I am excited and flattered to be able to assume the position of chair of the Ethics Committee and I look forward to working with our committee, the WSSCSW Board of Directors, and all of our members. As you may already know, the Ethics Committee is a benefit of membership and offers professional, advisory support for clinicians to discuss and hopefully clarify difficult clinical issues that may arise in our practice settings. The committee members bring many years of deep and varied clinical experience and include Audrey Shiffman, David Parnes, Eddie Edmondson, Roberta Myers, and Tanya Ranchigoda.

In the near future, members will be able to access an “ethics” page on the Society’s website. This page will include information on how to contact our committee, links to codes of ethics and other websites, and clinical issues. We also will include an article in each newsletter that will discuss a general ethics issue that is relevant to clinical social work.

Please feel free to contact me—or any of our committee members—if you have a clinical issue or want to pass along an article, website, or a suggestion regarding ethics. I can be reached at [bgimplin@msn.com](mailto:bgimplin@msn.com) or by phone at 206-919-9070. ♦

## 2010 policy updates

BY LAURA GROSHONG

The 2010 legislative session ended April 13, a month later than scheduled. The serious budget crisis this year took up most of the time and energy of the legislature. Lonnie Johns-Brown and I were able to keep the Advisory Committee from being eliminated, protect a sudden threat to mental health parity, and protect most of the GA-U, some of the basic health plan, adult day treatment, and other social service programs. The issue of whether associates in master’s mental health can engage in private practice is still being reviewed by the Joint Associate Review Committee (JARC); whatever action occurs will not take place until at least 2013.

In addition, Rob Odell, Lonnie Johns-Brown, and I, along with other mental health groups, worked with Regence on their implementation of mental health parity, and with the Health Care Authority on changes to the Uniform Medical Plan (UMP).

### Successes

*SHB 1162 (children’s social and emotional learning).* This bill, sponsored by Rep. Mary Lou Dickerson would have created a public/private funding source for K-12 education in teaching emotional self-awareness and management of emotions. The bill passed the House and went to the Rules Committee of the Senate where it stalled. The Society will continue to support Rep. Dickerson’s efforts to create this excellent program.

*Advisory board maintained.* Once again, the governor proposed doing away with 140 boards, commis-

sions, and committees, including the Licensed Mental Health Advisory Committee. Once again, Lonnie Johns-Brown and I were able to prevent this elimination of our committee. Hopefully the governor understands that we pay for DOH staff time with our fees and elimination of the committee would not be a cost savings.

*SHB 2875 (health savings accounts).* This bill had a “poison pill” amendment, which would have circumvented our mental health parity law, due to be fully implemented on July 1, 2010, by allowing out-of-state insurers to sell health plans that did not have to comply with our mental health parity laws. This bill was prevented from leaving the Rules Committee and died there.

### Work to do

*HB 3006 (associates scope of practice).* This bill would have corrected the rule created by Department of Health which allows associates (LSWAICs), to work in private practice with supervision, not the language of the RCW, which requires associates to work as an employee until they have full licensure as an LICSW. We worked with NASW toward this goal but were stymied by the opposition of WMHCA and WAMFT to having this standard for associates. The issue will be taken up by JARC, which resolves conflicts between laws and rules during interim. ♦

# Mental Health Political Action Committee

BY LAURA GROSHONG

**H**ave you been wondering how to pass legislation that supports better access to ethical mental health treatment?

Do you want to elect legislative candidates who support:

- Privacy of mental health records.
- Respect for quality mental health treatment.
- Empowering clinicians and consumers to be heard.

MH-PAC is a political action committee affiliated with Washington State Coalition of Mental Health Professionals and Consumers.

Eight mental health groups in Washington have decided to achieve the above goals by forming a political action committee, MH-PAC, which has made contributions to

the campaigns of candidates who demonstrate a willingness to support ethical mental health treatment for the past 10 years, endorsing over 150 candidates for state office, and distributing over \$30,000. MH-PAC's rate of successful endorsements overall is 93 percent! Political action committees are the most effective way to make our voices heard – by electing candidates who support access to ethical mental health treatment.

The Washington State Society for Clinical Social Work has wonderful representation on the MH-PAC board, with Laura Groshong, coordinator; Barbara Sardarov, treasurer; and members Samantha Ching and Theresa Rogers. Please support their hard work by doing your part and making a donation to this superb organization.

You will also be joining our colleagues in the Center for Object Relations, Child Therapy Association, Northwest Alliance for Psychoanalytic Study, Seattle Psychoanalytic Society and Institute, Washington State Coalition of Mental Health Professionals and Consumers, and Washington Mental Health Counselors Association with your donation.

Our MH-PAC goal for the 2010 election cycle is \$8,000. Please contribute to support our ability to influence legislative mental health policy!

**Yes!** I want our legislature to support access to quality mental health treatment!

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Leg. dist (state) \_\_\_\_\_ (fed.) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Amount:  \$100  \$50  \$25  Other \_\_\_\_\_  I want to be on the MH-PAC board.

Please send your contribution to:

MH-PAC, Barbara Sardarov, MH-PAC Treasurer, 15 S Grady Way, Suite 250D, Renton, WA 98057.

Thanks for your support!



**Washington State Society for Clinical Social Work**

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