



PRESS RELEASE
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Mental Health Matters! School Psychologists Honored at NYASP Annual Awards Ceremony

NEW YORK - The New York Association of School Psychologists (NYASP) recognized School Psychologists and School Psychology Graduate Students at their virtual awards ceremony on November 4, 2021. The 2021 awards ceremony capped off the first day of the NYASP 2021 Annual Conference, which occurred November 4th through the 6th. The NYASP Awards Committee Co-Chairs, Dr. Jeanne Gold and Dr. Arielle Sikora, coordinated a virtual “red carpet” style event to honor all award winners.

Lawrence I. Scott, Jr., M.S./A.C. was honored as the ***Frank Plumeau School Psychologist of the Year***. Mr. Scott is a School Psychologist and Alternatives to Suspension Specialist in the Kenmore-Tonawanda School District. Mr. Scott has worked as a School Psychologist for 19 years and was appointed to his specialist position in 2018. After being trained in restorative practices by Dr. Robert Spicer, Mr. Scott found great value and healing in exchanging stories with others. As an Alternatives to Suspension Specialist, Mr. Scott’s focus is on restorative practices and systemic repercussions of suspensions. His program, which consists of conflict coaching, mediation, restorative conferencing, restitution and community service, and behavioral consultation, has led to a reduction of suspensions in both the middle and high schools. Mr. Scott also serves as a Member-at-Large on the Board of Education for Buffalo Public Schools, where he is a strong advocate for restorative practices. In his remarks at the awards ceremony, Mr. Scott highlighted the impact of restorative practices on his life by noting, “Not only has this work produced systemic and individual change around me, I can confidently say that I am living the work that I believe in and which transcends across multiple roles and circumstances.”

Mark D. Terjesen, Ph.D. was honored with the ***Gil Trachtman Leadership in School Psychology Award***. The Gil Trachtman Leadership in School Psychology Award recognizes individuals who have made significant contributions to the field of school psychology through teaching, research, and/or supervision. Dr. Terjesen has been a faculty member in the Department of Psychology at St. John’s University for over 20 years. He served two terms as the School Psychology Program Director, where he oversaw the School Psychology masters and doctoral programs. While training countless practitioners in the field, Dr. Terjesen oversees graduate students in the St. John’s Center for Psychological Services, has supervised more than 97 dissertation projects, and remains current with research to ensure his students undergo the highest quality training. Dr. Terjesen prioritizes facilitating opportunities for his students to build on their strengths and interests. In his remarks, Dr. Terjesen reflected on how his initial interactions with Gil Trachtman shaped his philosophy as a leader, “That’s the kind of person I want to be, to be able to make connections for my students to other opportunities professionally... This is why I do what I do... the opportunity to learn from our students and the opportunity to see them grow.” In addition to being a trainer, Dr. Terjesen has taken on multiple leadership roles in several professional organizations, has his own private practice, has authored and served as an editor for multiple books, and sits on review committees for scholarly journals. His remarkable and extensive contributions to the field of school psychology are evidenced by the enthusiasm and professionalism exhibited by his current and former students.

The **Legislative Award** was presented to **Senator Samra G. Brouk**. Senator Brouk is the Chair of the Senate Mental Health Committee and works diligently to address mental health issues across the state. Senator Brouk is currently sponsoring S4347A, which provides for licensure of school psychologists and establishes a pilot program of multi-tiered system of support to address the social and emotional needs of students. In her remarks, Senator Brouk highlighted the impact of school psychologists' work, "...If we aren't taking care of the trauma and addressing the trauma that our young people have experienced over the past year and a half, not just through COVID, but so many other things that have happened on a national scale, all of it will be for naught because they (children) have to be ready to learn. They have to be in a place where they feel safe and secure and supported and so much of the work of school psychologists is just that."

Stacy Johnson, M.S./C.A.S. was the recipient of the **Friend of Children Award**, which honors individuals who are dedicated to enhancing the lives of children. In addition to her regular duties as a Bilingual School Psychologist in Buffalo Public Schools, Ms. Johnson provides support to school psychologists in the Dominican Republic. Through a partnership with Emmanuel House in the Dominican Republic, Ms. Johnson has made several trips to the island to conduct trainings and provide resources related to Positive Behavioral Intervention Supports (PBIS).

The **Presidential Service Award** was presented to NYASP members who have demonstrated great commitment to planning the annual conference and to those who have gone above and beyond to support children and families. NYASP President, Beth Rizzi, presented the following individuals with this award: **Flora Covey, M.S./C.A.G.S., Allison Keller, Ed.S., NCSP, Moira Mascelli, M.S./A.C./NCSP, and Gary Schaffer, M.S./C.A.S.**

The following individuals received the **Chapter School Psychologist of the Year Award** which recognizes excellence in the provision of school psychological services at the local level: **Cindy Hoff, M.A./C.A.S.** (Chapter B: Clinton, Essex, & Franklin County), **Lawrence L. Scott, Jr., M.S./A.C.** (Chapter C: Erie, Genesee, Niagara, Orleans & Wyoming County), **Chad Swanson, Psy.D., NCSP** (Chapter F: Fulton, Hamilton, Herkimer, Montgomery, Saratoga, Warren, & Washington County), **Tiffany Folmer Lawrence, M.S./A.C.** (Chapter H: Chemung, Livingston, Schuylar, & Yates County), and **Danielle Rannazzisi, Psy.D.** (Chapter O: Nassau County).

The **Ted Bernstein Award** was presented to outstanding students in each of the School Psychology training programs in New York: **Valdis Rice** (SUNY at Albany), **Nicole Price** (Adelphi University), **Marissa Ramirez** (Alfred University), **Amanda Nierva** (Brooklyn College of CUNY), **Abbey McClellmont** (SUNY at Buffalo), **Yanette Rosario** (Columbia University), **Anya Morales** (Fordham University), **Michal Ambalu** (Hofstra University), **Anthony Coppola** (Iona College), **Marisa Rosario** (Long Island University), **Jamilet Saleh** (LIU Hudson at Westchester), **Mariangely Hernandez** (Marist College), **Nicole Broomfield** (Mercy College), **Christopher Manfre** (Niagara University), **Nicole Wilson** (SUNY at Oswego), **Randi Leigh Polizzotto** (Pace University), **Quinn Cooley** (SUNY at Plattsburgh), **Zalmon Katanov** (Queens College of CUNY), **Rachel Wendt** (Roberts Wesleyan College), **Emily Joslyn** (Rochester Institute of Technology), **Jane Wong** (St. John's University), **Emily Cary** (Syracuse University), **Kaitlin Meier** (College of Saint Rose), **Rachit Bhatt** (Yeshiva University).