



AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

Candidate Statements for Division 54 - Society of Pediatric Psychology

Please note that the submission of candidate statement was voluntary so it is possible not every candidate listed on the ballot will have a statement.

Candidate: Lori Crosby, PsyD

Office: President-Elect

Candidate Statement: I am deeply honored by the nomination for President Elect of the Society for Pediatric Psychology, my professional home for 25 years. Our membership is extraordinary with expertise spanning theory, practice, research, and advocacy. My service to SPP began as an abstract reviewer, grew to the Diversity Committee and engagement in multiple SIGS (Diversity, AYA, Adherence and Self-Management, Hem/Onc/BMT), and serving on the editorial board for CPPP. I received the SPP Award for Distinguished Contributions to Diversity and have provided keynote addresses elevating patient, family, and community voices in pediatric psychology. My service to SPP recently expanded to provide support to the Board in developing strategies to infuse diversity and inclusion into all SPP activities. My institutional leadership roles at Cincinnati Children's Hospital as Director of the CCTST Community Engagement Core, Co-Director of INNOVATIONS in Community Research, and Co-Director of Faculty Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Strategy, have provided me with insights about the valuable ways psychologists can contribute to improving health systems. With that in mind, I believe in our collective ability to continue to advance: 1) Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility, 2) Spaces that promote trainee and psychologist well-being, 3) International collaborations across the Global North and South, and 4) Translation of our innovative work into policy, so that we can achieve our mission of optimal "health and psychological well-being for ALL children, youth and families." As such, I would be humbled to build upon our accomplishments and pursue these advancements as your President Elect.

Candidate: Chrissy Salley, PhD

Office: President-Elect

Candidate Statement: I am pleased to have the opportunity to run for President Elect for SPP, my professional home for nearly 20 years. I am currently Director of Clinician Engagement and Outreach at with the Courageous Parents Network and I have been honored to serve in different capacities within SPP - I am currently Co-Chair of the Caregiver Wellbeing SIG and member of the Communications Committee. These are exciting times in our field. Scientific advancements and innovations in technology are changing the landscape of pediatric healthcare. Institutions are mobilizing to address health inequities and biases and elevating the voices of those with lived experiences. Advocacy for the health of children and families is ever growing. Pediatric psychologists

are leading and centered in it all. At the same time, our members, their passions and their skills are more diverse than ever, resulting in what, I believe, is the most robust and strongest membership SPP has seen. To that end, I aim to contribute to SPP through the role of President by collaborating with not only our Board, but our members, who, collectively carry a wealth of insight and expertise that can both foster growth and health for SPP as an organization and support us in executing our mission. My hope for SPP is that it is “the go to” place for all pediatric psychologists, which means ensuring that we tend to the unique and evolving needs in our members’ diverse careers and goals. Importantly, as our membership grows, I aspire to maintain a sense of community, warmth, friendship, and collegiality that this organization is known for and has provided for me.

Candidate: Dawn Dore-Stites, PhD

Office: Member-at-Large – Student/Trainee Development

Candidate Statement: Serving trainees in Pediatric Psychology has been a focal area of my career for several years. I relish opportunities to look at the entire spectrum of education: from incorporating an individualized plan for a specific learner through how policies impact training quality. I am committed to broadening this spectrum to include contributions at a wider level in the Society of Pediatric Psychology. Currently, I am a Clinical Associate Professor at the University of Michigan in the Department of Pediatrics. Within this role, I serve as director of the Pediatric Psychology fellowship and oversee the overall training program as Director of Education. Interest in expanding understanding of training issues beyond the individual division led to appointment as chair for the Graduate Psychology Education Committee--an initiative at the medical school level bringing together psychology fellowship programs across multiple departments within the institution. These roles have provided me with rich experiences collaborating with trainees at all levels—from practicum students through fellows—and has led to initiatives to address trainee wellness, increase collaboration with other training directors and more systematically address policy issues related to training. My goals for this position include: 1. Increasing collaboration between training sites; 2. Disseminating ideas and possible best practices in areas of emerging need including integration of trainee wellness and preparing trainees to be change leaders in medical institutions; and 3. Contribute to the evolution of training programs in Pediatric Psychology as a whole.

Candidate: Nicole Fleisher, PhD

Office: Member-at-Large - Student/Trainee Development

Candidate Statement: The future of pediatric psychology is in our trainees. However, in my time as Training director at my institution, my involvement in SPP through the communications committee and serving on the board of the Arab American Middle Eastern and North African Psychological association, I have heard many stories of the hardships of graduate school from trainees. Some of these hardships are expected. Hiccups in research projects, difficult case studies during practicum. Yet, many stories I have heard involve hardships related to finances, accessibility to programs and institutions, and even experience of discrimination and microaggressions from peers and

faculty within their institutions. As Trainee Member at Large, I plan to work closely with the Student Advisory Board to uplift the voices of students within SPP. In my previous work with student leaders at SPP, I have found that they have plenty of wonderful ideas and initiatives that help them to advocate for themselves and their peers. My role as MAL is not to interject, but instead to refine and elevate these initiatives. Additionally, I hope to further the contributions that SPP has developed to increase access to resources and opportunities for students such as the Student and Trainee Research Grant, the SPPAC student poster awards, and the APA scholar award. The trainees make up a large part of the behind-the-scenes efforts at SPP, and as a liaison between the board and students, I hope to ensure they are fairly represented in SPP efforts, budget considerations, and representation.

Candidate: Jeanette Iskander, PhD

Office: Member-at-Large - Student/Trainee Development

Candidate Statement: It is an honor to be nominated for the Member-At-Large position for Student/Trainee Development. Training and mentorship are an aspect of my career that I am extremely passionate about. I am currently working to build an internship program at my institution and have served as a supervisor for externs and fellows. I am also the chair of a newly created peer mentorship program for our medical staff within my institution. As a previous Student Representative within SPP, I worked closely with the MAL for Student/Trainee Development in order to identify ways to maximize trainee involvement and benefits from SPP. I have also been so impressed by the way the Student Advisory Board has transformed over the past several years! I am excited about the prospect of serving as their advisor and continuing to identify and amplify ways to support student/trainee development for all trainees so that our future pediatric psychologists feel prepared to enter the workforce and choose to continue calling SPP their professional home. We already have many incredible opportunities available for trainees within our society, yet there are still gaps that can be addressed. For example, there are likely aspects of our careers that graduate school did not prepare us for. I would love to be able to identify these topics and provide resources to our trainees from all backgrounds so they feel empowered to start their careers. Thank you sincerely for your consideration. I look forward to having the opportunity to serve SPP in this role.

Candidate: Sanita Ley, PhD

Office: Member-at-Large - Student/Trainee Development

Candidate Statement: I am grateful to be considered to serve as Member at Large for Student and Trainee Development. I have been fortunate to benefit from the investment of both formal and informal mentorship throughout my doctoral and post-doctoral training, which has been formative in my development as a psychologist. As the training director of Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center's internship program and as a supervisor for both our internship and post-doctoral programs, I am able to pay it forward by developing and implementing high quality training within my institution. I value working collaboratively with our applicants/trainees to ensure that we are meeting their needs, and I would continue utilizing this approach as a faculty advisor to the Student Advisory Board. I would be honored to oversee the awarding of SPP

student/trainee awards and grants. Ensuring equitable support amongst trainees is vital to their success at each phase of their training. My knowledge base as a training director and supervisor ensures that I would be uniquely positioned to support trainees in all phases of their training. Specifically, it would be beneficial to add resources to support trainees as they transition through phases of training through resource links on SPP's website as well as through webinars tailored to common concerns (e.g., building CVs, preparing for interviews). As investment in training is one of my core professional values, it would be an honor to be able to extend the scope of my involvement in trainee development within the Society of Pediatric Psychology.

Candidate: Kelly O'Neil Rodriguez, PhD

Office: Member-at-Large - Student/Trainee Development

Candidate Statement: Thank you for considering my candidacy for Member at Large (MAL) for Student/Trainee Development. I am deeply committed to advancing SPP's goals of diverse and inclusive membership and quality education and career development opportunities. I am prepared to serve effectively in this role given my experience in service and leadership within pediatric psychology training, throughout which I have prioritized amplifying student/trainee voices. If elected, I will continue to listen to and advocate for the initiatives and needs of students/trainees including those who have been under-represented and under-resourced in our organization and field. SPP has been my professional home since my internship year. In my role as a pediatric GI psychologist at CHOP I am most passionate about teaching and mentoring psychology externs, interns, and fellows. I previously served as the MAL-Education for the Pediatric Gastroenterology SIG. In that position I collaborated with the Student Representative on initiatives addressing needs identified by student/trainees in our SIG, including peer support meetings and an updated training site directory. As the Track Advisor for Pediatric Psychology and member of the Internship Leadership Team within the Psychology Internship Program at CHOP I advocate for trainee-identified needs, spearheading specific efforts related to intern compensation and professional development support. As MAL for Student/Trainee Development within SPP, I would similarly partner with the Student Advisory Board to support trainee-led initiatives and advocate for trainee-identified needs. I hope to have this exciting opportunity to welcome, recognize, and advocate for the diverse and impressive student/trainee community within SPP.

Candidate: Elizabeth Pulgaron, PhD

Office: Member-at-Large - Student/Trainee Development

Candidate Statement: Dr. Pulgaron is an Associate Professor of Clinical Pediatrics at the University of Miami's Miller School of Medicine. She graduated from Drexel University and completed her internship at Nemours Children's Health. At the Mailman Center, she has supervised fellows, interns, and practicum students' clinical cases and research projects. She mentors students across disciplines including psychology, public health, and pediatric medical residents. She has spent a significant amount of her professional career working in the community. Dr. Pulgaron is the Director of Psychosocial Services for the School Health Initiative (SHI). SHI provides primary care and psychosocial interventions

free of charge to approximately 12,000 students in 9 schools located in high need and low resource communities in Miami. Additionally, she established the Student Champion program under SHI, aiming to empower, educate, and encourage high school youth to pursue careers in the healthcare field. I am excited to be running for the SPP Member at Large for Training position. My journey in SPP started as a graduate student. During that time, I served on the Student Advisory Board and participated in the mentorship program. I was also the 2016 APA Program Chair and the Diversity SIG Co-Chair. SPP has grown exponentially, not only in numbers but in the diversity of its offerings and investment in the future of the field. I am excited for this opportunity to serve the Division, especially with a focus on the next generation of pediatric psychologists. It would be a privilege to serve in this position if elected.

Candidate: Kira Branch, PsyD

Office: Member-at-Large - Diversity

Candidate Statement: I am honored to be nominated for SPP Member-at-Large for Diversity. When I joined SPP over 10 years ago as a Black trainee, I remember feeling a sense of not belonging. Today, I am a proud member of SPP, not only because it promotes exemplary work in the field of pediatric psychology, but because of SPP's dedication to social justice initiatives, diversifying the pipeline into pediatric psychology, and providing culturally humble care to all children and families. Yet, there is still more work to be done and a continued call to action for all of us. Throughout my career, I have shown my commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and social justice efforts. I am the founder and clinical director of a school-based antiracism program and a member of the SPP Diversity SIG, the Delaware Psychological Association Diversity Committee, and Diversity subcommittee of the Division of Behavioral Health at Nemours Children's Health- DE. As a training director at Nemours, I am dedicated to decolonizing psychology training and have advocated for systemic change to support a more inclusive environment for trainees/psychologists who hold marginalized identities. I am incredibly humbled to have received the SPP Award for Distinguished Contributions to Diversity in Pediatric Psychology in 2023. If elected, I will amplify the voices of underrepresented psychologists/trainees, advocate for continued social justice initiatives and programming, and work with other SPP board members to decolonize pediatric psychology clinical practice, training, education, and research. Thank you for your consideration and support!

Candidate: Naadira Upshaw, PsyD, ABPP

Office: Member-at-Large - Diversity

Candidate Statement: The Society of Pediatric Psychology (SPP) has made significant palpable shifts as it relates to justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion over the past few years. I have been grateful to play a small role in this movement within the context of chairing SPPAC, and would love the opportunity to continue driving the momentum within our division to make it one that feels more inclusive and where we are forging ahead as leaders in health equity and justice. For far too long many have felt that SPP may not be their professional home for a variety of reasons, and I believe that the shifts we have made together have moved the needle for many, but work remains. My

priorities in this role would be to continue advocating for the continuance of grant funding for anti-racist and anti-oppressive work, collaborating with SPP affinity groups to understand their needs as professionals navigating spaces and systems that are oppressive, continuing the outreach to students and learners who are members of historically marginalized groups to facilitate connections to mentorship and support, and aiding and encouraging continued learning opportunities for all SPP members who are on lifelong culturally humble journeys of education and growth to be supportive colleagues, providers, supervisors, teachers, and members of the society.

Candidate: Elizabeth Getzoff, PhD

Office: Division Representative to APA Council

Candidate Statement: Elizabeth “Eli” Getzoff Testa is a Senior Psychologist and Coordinator for the Behavioral Pain Program at Mt Washington Pediatric Hospital (MWPH) in the Division of Psychology and Neuropsychology at MWPH. She served as the Coordinator of Psychology Services and Research for The Center of Pediatric Weight Management and Healthy Living for 14 years before moving into working with youth experiencing pain, functional neurological symptom disorders, and providing gender affirming care. In addition to seeing children and families at MWPH, she also has a private practice where she integrates clinical and advocacy endeavors. Eli Candidate Statement: I am deeply appreciative for the nomination to serve as Division 54 Council Representative. With nearly two decades of membership in SPP, my involvement has been rich with leadership and membership of various committees, SIGs, and affinity groups. My commitment to SPP's mission is unwavering, and if chosen, I will bring this same dedication to my service. Beyond my clinical duties and SPP engagements, I am actively engaged in advocacy across local, state, and national levels. My efforts are aimed at advancing legislation that enhances the mental and physical health of youth. Should I be elected, I pledge to collaborate to further SPP's mission within APA and beyond. My passion for pediatric psychology will be evident as I advocate for the health and wellbeing of children, adolescents, and families. I am committed to amplifying the voices of those historically marginalized within SPP and APA, while also advocating for a more diverse workforce to better serve our communities.

Candidate: Nicole Kahhan, PhD

Office: Division Representative to APA Council

Candidate Statement: It would be my honor to represent, and advocate for, children, adolescents and their families as a Division 54 Representative to the APA Council. As a Division 54 Representative, my goal would be to drive action and initiatives in line with our mission, emphasizing the health and wellbeing of youth with chronic and acute medical needs. My experience as a pediatric psychologist at Nemours Children’s Health, where I hold joint appointments in the Division of Psychology & Neuropsychology, the Center for Healthcare & Delivery Science, and the Division of Patient Experience, as well as my role as an associate editor for Clinical Practice in Pediatric Psychology will allow me to connect the voice of the child and family, research, and clinical best practice to APA policy. Outside of my professional role, I am active in community spaces that emphasize youth leadership development; LGBTQIA+ visibility, conversation, and

education; and environmental stewardship. I believe it is imperative in my professional and personal life that my actions are grounded in an understanding of intersectionality and anti-racism. Building on these values I will ensure that, along with research and best practice, the lived experience of the families we serve is at the forefront of initiatives and policy supported by Division 54 on the APA Council.