



## **The Federation of Behavioral, Psychological, & Cognitive Sciences Executive Director's Annual Report 2002**

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This has been a year of excitement, many changes, and an overall re-energizing of the Federation. In addition to sponsoring a sizable amount of programs (see complete list at end), we also explored new programming ideas and new methods of funding. A high priority was to engage society board members in our work and be responsive to their needs; this was critical in assessing and understanding their concerns.

Without the help of the Executive Committee, and especially the Officers of the Federation (President Stephen W. Porges, Vice President Howard Egeth, and Secretary/Treasurer Francine Butler), this year would not have been nearly as successful. Their dedication goes far beyond normal expectations. The staff in the Washington office was supported by their deeds, not just words, and we are very grateful for their guidance and help. We would be remiss in not acknowledging Ms. Sheri Lynne Hoffman, Federation Senior Accountant, who tirelessly and creatively supported our work this year. The combined efforts of these people helped to guide and direct us through transitions and changes.

***Increasing efficiency and professionalism*** The beginning of this new Executive Director's term was spent overseeing many details, for example: revamping the web site (The new site includes information not only on our own events, but also on topical information of interest to members such as an extensive selection of IRB-related material and links); reworking the logo and making new stationery and the like; getting new office space (we obtained space on the 6<sup>th</sup> floor); and hiring certain staff (most importantly, Dr. Jill Egeth as Public Policy Analyst, and a variety of temps and interns as projects required). Another needed but difficult task was negotiating with societies to have dues arrive on time so that we could properly plan activities for the upcoming year. From that effort, it appears now that most, if not all, societies will pay their dues in January of the year assessed.

***Building relationships with our society boards and members*** In the beginning, most of the contact was with Treasurers of our various societies but as time went on, this expanded greatly – not just to other board members but also to society members. An email newsletter was quickly developed and sent virtually every week to all board members. Currently, not only do quite a number of members subscribe to the newsletter, but also some Divisions of APA send it out as their means of keeping members up on the Washington scene. (In fact, this newsletter has wider circulation than originally anticipated or planned.) A Federation Experts List was developed and now is under constant revision enabling us to present names to various offices seeking to organize a new committee, task force, fill rotator jobs, and the like. These opportunities arise in such governmental agencies as Health and Human Services (which incorporates the National Institutes of Health for example) as well as the Office of Science and Technology Policy (an office under the White House that focuses on advising the President on these topics), and in various non-profit organizations in Washington as well. For the Federation to succeed in its mission, it will take the dedication of many behavioral scientists to get the message across in Washington and we can facilitate much of that.

***Making connections with the information and power sources in DC*** "Making the rounds" around town became crucial to understanding the issues facing the behavioral sciences while also networking for a variety of causes. We regularly attend meetings where critical information is relayed regarding congressional or other governmental initiatives (e.g. Office of Homeland Security) that might affect us, the latest changes or improvements at the National Institutes of Health, the National Science Foundation, Department of Education and the like. Advocacy of the behavioral sciences is done in a variety of ways in Washington and sometimes simply making an appearance makes a difference (as in the case of

certain science meetings normally spotlighting only the life/physical sciences), sometimes writing a position paper raises an awareness that is needed, and sometimes asking a good question at a meeting can have an impact. Learning the subtleties of how it all works is a continuing process.

**Funding Sources** We were awarded a \$20,000 grant from the Foundation for Child Development to conduct four congressional briefings. We have completed two thus far and will finish the series next year. We completed the requirements of a grant obtained by the previous Federation Executive Director on technology and education from the Office of Naval Research for \$14,000. We also concluded a series of briefings on autism that was funded by the National Alliance for Autism Research and the Nancy Lurie Marks Family Foundation (the total of which was \$10,000).

Additionally, we have begun a sponsorship program and have received funds from groups like the Decade of Behavior and the American Sociological Association for assisting us on certain events. Importantly, the Association for Behavior Analysis has committed funding to do a combination science briefing/FORM in early spring with their input on topic and individuals to invite to speak at these events. Another society has indicated some interest in doing same and we hope to see other societies become interested in this opportunity. While our goal is to be general enough to assist all society goals, this is a golden opportunity for a society to highlight its special work with the Federation Washington office as planners and organizers of those events for them. Currently we have submitted a grant to the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and will be applying for others in the coming year.

**Lobbying and programming initiatives** Our main focus is promoting the importance of the behavioral, psychological and cognitive sciences in Washington, DC and we achieve this in many ways. We actively participate with other lobbying groups such as the Friends of the National Institute for Child Health and Human Development (FNICHD), Consortium of Social Science Associations (COSSA), and Council on National Science Funding (CNSF). We are part of National Institutes of Health Office of Behavioral and Social Science Research Coordinating Committee (OBSSRCC) and regularly attend advisory council meetings of several institutes such as the National Institute of Mental Health, National Institute of Drug Abuse, and the National Institute of Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism.

Phone calling, letter writing, visiting congressional staff and relevant decision makers, and other advocacy activities are key foci of our work. This year we became involved in such diverse areas as animal research restrictions (Helms' Amendment to the Farm Bill), possible human research restrictions vis a vis proposed IRB legislation (the Degette bill in the House of Representatives and Kennedy bill in the Senate), educational issues particularly surrounding funding of the Office of Education Reform and Improvement (OERI), the dissolution of the National Human Protections Advisory Committee (NHRPAC), and funding for the behavioral sciences at NIH and NSF. We track legislation that affects us and act in timely and meaningful ways (including asking members to also write to their congressional representatives), and we plan programming to be helpful to congressional staff on mutually-beneficial legislation (for example, in response to Congressman Holt's attempt to re-start the now-defunct Office of Technology Assessment we are organizing a briefing for Spring 2003).

We also participate in activities that highlight the work of behavioral researchers, e.g. (1) an all-day event at the FBI academy engaging a discussion between agents in the field (and higher ups) with researchers who conduct relevant research (such as how to detect lying), also (2) an all-day event at the NSF having active researchers discuss concerns with NSF's funding of animal research, particularly in the area of basic learning and neuroscience.

The Federation is recognized for holding science and public policy seminars (briefings) on Capitol Hill for congressional staff and FORM (Forum on Research Management) for academics and agency officials to interact. An interesting "problem" emerged as we worked with the FORM committee this year – we generated ideas for forums that were not solely on the topic of research management. Tentatively we are calling the new idea "Topical Forum" and, for example, for the spring of 2003 we have planned one on Medical Decision Making, where we discuss what is needed to take basic cognitive research and apply it to a real-world problem.

Another programming idea arose from a board meeting at the Association for Behavior Analysis at which interest was expressed in having board members and possibly some students come to Washington to learn about psychology and public policy. We have begun to design what that programming might look like and will have ABA be our first test case once it's formed. Having more people involved in the

advocacy of the behavioral sciences is important to strengthen our mission and we expect this idea to expand further.

*Following is the complete list of science briefings and FORMS: Federation Programming (November 2001- November 2002)*

### **Science Briefings**

1. *A series of Science and Public Policy seminars on autism, featuring Drs. Morton Gernsbacher, Geraldine Dawson, Edward Cook, and Margaret Bauman.* These events were co-sponsored by the National Alliance for Autism Research and the Nancy Lurie Marks Family Foundation. Four separate talks were held on Capitol Hill and served to educate members of Congress and their staff about autism and the policy implications of some of the latest research. This series concluded in June of 2002.
2. *“Children and Welfare Reform: The Role of Marriage in Childhood Outcomes” on the impact of welfare reauthorization on childhood development was held on June 12, 2002.* This briefing, held on Capitol Hill, was co-sponsored by the Foundation for Child Development, and was organized in response to pending legislation dedicating funds towards the promotion of marriage among welfare recipients. Our panel of speakers included Jeanne Brooks-Gunn, Brian Wilcox, Andrew Cherlin, and Melvin Wilson. Our focus was to present Congress with behavioral science data so that they could be better informed about a policy decision.
3. *“Technology and Education: Where Has it Been and Where is it Going?” describing the current state and the potential future of technology and education, with an emphasis on the need for research funds was held on June 14, 2002.* The briefing panel included Kenneth Koedinger, Daniel Anderson, Eva Baker, John Dexter Fletcher, and Margaret Honey.
4. *“A Critical Analysis of Head Start” was held on September 13<sup>th</sup>.* This briefing was funded by the Foundation for Childhood Development and was the second in a series of four programs. Our speakers were W. Steven Barnett and Nicolas Zill who considered Head Start’s effectiveness via data they had collected or obtained. This was a very large event with over 70 in attendance and a rousing discussion at the end.
5. *“Behavior and Health: New Research, New Hope” was held on September 25, 2002 in collaboration with The American Psychological Association, The American Psychological Society, and the Decade of Behavior.* This briefing highlighted the research of several key institutes: NIDA, NIMH, and NCI and included presentations by some key researchers in those fields: Terrance Albrecht, Timothy Baker, and James Gold.

### **Forum on Research Management (FORM) meetings (proceedings are on website)**

*(all FORMs were moderated by Federation Vice President Howard Egeth)*

1. *“The role of behavioral science research in the post-September 11 world” was held on November 29, 2001.* This meeting helped to foster communication between and disseminate information to researchers and federal agency officials (e.g., National Institutes of Health, National Science Foundation, Office of Naval Research). Panelists were Dan King, Lynda King, Russell Jones, Robert Croyle, and Gerald Krueger.
2. *“Institutional review boards and the review process for proposed research on human subject” was held on April 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>.* Attendees included officials from various governmental agencies such as the National Institutes of Health, the National Science Foundation and the Office of Naval Research, academic scholars from various universities, and representatives of Federation societies. Recent concerns regarding IRBs and human subjects were addressed and proposals to ameliorate the current conditions were brought forth. Speakers included: Bobbie Spellman, Ginny de Wolf, Dan Ilgen, Merry Bullock, Phil Rubin, and Felice Levine.

3. *“Technology and education: where has it been and where is it going?”* was held on June 13<sup>th</sup>. Our panel of speakers included Kenneth Koedinger, Daniel Anderson, Eva Baker, John Dexter Fletcher, and Margaret Honey. This event was co-sponsored by the Office of Naval Research and served as a forum for discussing the future of research on computers, software, media, and education.
4. *“Improving the Relationship Between the Behavioral Sciences and the Media”* will be held on Friday, November 15 from 10:00-4:00 on Capitol Hill. *This meeting will serve as a forum in which behavioral science researchers, media representatives, and congressional press offices can interact, discuss the current state of their relationship, and learn more about what kind of help each group could use from the other in order for scientific information to be frequently and accurately represented in the media. Speakers are:* Phil Zimbardo, PhD, President, American Psychological Association. Rhea Farberman, Director, APA Public and Member Communications, Mary Hanson of the NSF Office of Legislative and Public Affairs, Michael Purdy, Senior Media Representative, Johns Hopkins University, Elizabeth Ruksznis, Assistant Science Producer, Dateline, NBC, Peggy Girshman, Science Editor, National Public Radio, Sally Squires, Science Writer, Washington Post, and Ira Allen, Vice-President of Public Affairs, Center for the Advancement of Health.

#### PLANNED BRIEFINGS FOR 2003 THUS FAR.....

1. *A briefing on the reinstatement of the Office of Technology Assessment will be held in Spring.* OTA was a group of physical and behavioral scientists who served as advisors on scientific issues to members of Congress. This office was dissolved a decade ago and may be re-instituted via Congressman Rush Holt’s legislation. In collaboration with Rush Holt’s office, we are gathering a panel of former OTA staff to discuss the need for a stronger and more effective OTA.
2. *A briefing featuring Federation President Stephen W. Porges will be held in the Spring.* This talk will review some recent advances in autism research, specifically, the polyvagal approach developed by Dr. Porges. Special invitations will be sent to the Coalition for the Advancement of Autism Research, a Congressional caucus, and other national autism organizations.
3. *A late spring/early summer briefing on Literacy in Reading,* co-sponsored by the Foundation for Child Development is tentatively scheduled for March. This is the third in a series of four FCD-sponsored events.
4. *A fall briefing on High-Quality Educational Programming,* co-sponsored by the Foundation for Child Development is tentatively scheduled. This is the fourth in a series of four FCD-sponsored events.

#### PLANNED FORM MEETINGS FOR 2003 THUS FAR....

1. *Topical Forum on “Applying Research Findings in Decision Making To Real World Health Problems”* (This event is co-sponsored by the National Cancer Institute of the National Institutes of Health). The FORM committee and NCI helped develop this working document:

*“A person at risk for or diagnosed with a complex disease such as cancer is faced with many choices regarding prevention, early detection and treatment strategies. This decision making process potentially involves a host of cognitive and affective processes involving both the patient and health care provider.*

*Psychology as a research discipline can offer some uniquely important data to inform this decision making process. Data already gathered by psychologists and cognitive scientists on topics such as judgment and decision-making, and personality variables or psychological states such as optimism may be invaluable to patients as well*

*as health care providers. This Topical Forum will highlight the multi-faceted aspects of this type of decision-making and bring basic psychological research into contact with individual choice on a very important matter.*

*This forum will be a new type of event for the Federation to host in some ways but it is very much in keeping with our objectives to “communicate and educate.” We are presenting here a “real world problem” and bringing basic science to bear on the issue. It is a unique opportunity to also have representatives from the National Institutes as well as from other leading governmental and non-governmental agencies interested in science and health that may attend to become better acquainted with what basic research in psychology can offer.”*

We are currently relying on SJDM and some other societies for suggested speakers and have the FORM committee involved as well.”

*2. Beginning stages of discussing a FORM on “classified” versus “non-classified” research and how that might be best developed/evaluated. Given that the National Academies is working on this issue, and that the Bush Administration is interested in finding relevant definitions, we are considering a FORM with relevant people on the panel to discuss this with local behavioral scientists.*

*3. Beginning stages of discussing a possible “Topical Forum” on Careers in Psychology and behavioral sciences that are not academic: for the new PhD and the middle-level academic who seeks change. We have been mulling this one over in various forms for some time now and have found growing interest in this topic.*

*Special note: Without the efforts, dedication, and enthusiasm of Dr. Jill Egeth, our Public Policy Analyst, the amount and quality of work this office would not have been nearly as impressive. It is the Federation’s greatest fortune to have her working with us, as a true team player, in Washington. We hope that she will continue working so creatively and effectively for us for a long time to come.*