



The California Psychology Internship Council

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Introduction

In 1991, critical training and service needs in the San Francisco Bay Area inspired the visionary and pragmatic development of the California Psychology Internship Council (CAPIC)ⁱ. Now incorporated as a public non-profit, 501(c)(3) charitable and educational organization, CAPIC has become a statewide membership organization for doctoral programs and mental health agencies that support organized training for psychologists. CAPIC's original mission that continues today is to promote excellence in professional psychology training and mental health services. This article provides a brief history of CAPIC as an innovative response to the training and service challenges throughout Californiaⁱⁱ.

Background

In the early 1960s, psychology educators were challenged by

California's critical need for clinicians to serve a growing and increasingly diverse population. Established university doctoral programs offered limited openings and failed to graduate a sufficient number of psychologists to meet these public service needs; furthermore, graduating clinicians was not their main objective. Professional psychology doctoral programs were developed to address the complementary practice orientation that was missing from the profession (Peterson, 1997).

At the leading edge of the professional school movement, the California School of Professional Psychology (CSPP) and The Wright Institute were founded in the late 1960s with a commitment to meeting community needs. Expanding the scope of professional psychology, participants at the 1973 Vail Conference endorsed clinical training programs designed to educate for service delivery, broaden training to underserved populations in nontraditional settings, offer multiple levels of training, provide adequate role models by hiring faculty actively engaged in practice, respond to changing demographics by recruiting and admitting minority students and women and removing obstacles to graduation (Korman, 1974).

The increasing number of professional psychology students in California created a greater demand for training internships and fellowships. However, by the early 1990s, traditional psychology was failing to keep up with training needs as described by Kenkel, Swope, Brandt and Rodolfa (1991):

"Between 1980 and 1990, 11 new [American Psychological Association-accredited doctoral] programs were accredited in the state California now has 1,600 students enrolled in APA-accredited doctoral programs...during the same 10-year period, 16 new California internship sites, offering 42 slots or positions, have been accredited by APA...for a total of 191 slots."

Pursuing training opportunities out of state was not a viable option for many students. The many mid-life students who attended professional schools were not prepared to leave their local community for internship training. Most of the students were rooted in their community



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married, or single parents. Among others, Kenkel et al. (1991) encouraged development of practical local options to promote parity with other areas of the country and to increase access to training for psychology students for whom relocating would be a hardship.

The historically progressive Bay Area was an optimal environment for developing alternative training programs and, by 1991, professional psychology doctoral and mental health programs had collaborated there to form a network of high quality professional psychology training programs. Many of these programs were in nonprofit community mental health clinics providing critical services to diverse and traditionally underserved populations. Most programs did not consider accreditation or APPIC membership necessary or feasible, but placements were highly sought after by local students.

Individually, doctoral programs allocated resources to evaluate the appropriateness of available settings and programs to train their students. While this process encouraged collaboration with agencies, it also produced redundant efforts and failed to deliver common quality assurance guidelines and application/selection policies. The process of matching students with training sites was often chaotic and unfair.

CAPIC

In an effort to combine resources and bring order to the local training community, Drs. Alan Swope and Gilbert Newman assembled training directors from Bay Area doctoral programsⁱⁱⁱ and agencies and founded CAPIC.

CAPIC was established to develop and implement guidelines to improve the internship application/selection process. Swope and Newman created a constituency and initiated dialogues between doctoral programs and agencies and formed comprehensive agreements about monitoring training, quality assurance, and supervision standards.

Working at a grassroots level, CAPIC's initial directive was to persuade the training community to adhere to CAPIC policies and procedures which were based on revisions of APPIC internship criteria which emphasized innovation, multicultural diversity, and the half-time internship-training model. The Uniform Notification Day was first implemented during the spring 1992 application/selection process.

A visionary Executive Director, Dr. Newman implemented CAPIC's wide array of services and benefits including directories and electronic databases that centralized internship information, an internship clearinghouse, site visits, standardized forms, annual internship information fairs, a newsletter, a statement of intern rights and responsibilities, and the first California postdoctoral directory — an essential resource for psychology graduates.

CAPIC began with a membership of five doctoral programs and approximately 75 Bay Area internship-training sites. Today, CAPIC is an association of 18 doctoral programs and approximately 140 sites which represent diverse settings, treatment modalities and services provided to many different clinical and ethnic/cultural populations throughout California. CAPIC conservatively estimates that, in any given training year, approximately 161,775 direct serv-

ice hours are provided by CAPIC interns at training sites. The membership formed a powerful collective voice on behalf of many stakeholders — educators, clinical supervisors, students, and consumers. They invited the Board of Psychology and the California Psychological Association to the training community forum and provided an opportunity to ask important questions at the center of the profession.

CAPIC formed a steering committee facilitating input to the Board of Psychology on how regulations impact intern training and, thus, Californians in general. In 2001, the Board of Psychology recognized CAPIC in revised regulations for supervised professional experience and, in response, CAPIC expanded to include doctoral programs and internships beyond the Bay Area. As a statewide agency, CAPIC now represents a large constituency of psychologists invested in promoting public support for training and service in psychology.

CAPIC is uniquely positioned to support innovative programs, events, and forums. In 1993, CAPIC collaborated with OMI Community Mental Health Center in San Francisco to build a training program providing cost-effective, high-quality assessment services for mental health clients while coordinating this valuable training experience with classroom training from graduate school faculty. In 1999 and 2000, Dr. Newman organized two large public rallies in San Francisco and Washington, D.C., to focus attention on the thousands of service hours provided by psychology graduate students. In 2005, Dr. Luli Emmons organized the first national conference on the half-time internship, *The Half-Time Internship: Coming Into the Mainstream*, in Berkeley, California (CAPIC, 2005).

Conclusion and Future of CAPIC

CAPIC aspires to lead the statewide centralization of training programs that prepare psychologists to meet the needs of contemporary society. To this end, CAPIC is well positioned to build on its achievements through the following activities:

Collaboration with APPIC to ensure a cohesive array of local and national training opportunities;

Development of practica and postdoctoral guidelines for California training programs;

Continued promulgation of the half-time internship model; and

Fundraising for continuing development of internships and service-centered initiatives.

Innovation is built on vision. CAPIC continues to represent and serve a thriving network of community agencies and doctoral programs committed to the vision that we can "all work together to meet the most urgent needs that the people of our land are facing today" (Peterson, 1997, p. 190).

i Initially called The San Francisco Bay Area Internship Coordinating Council

ii I would like to thank Drs. Katherine Czesak, Michael Donner, Zonya Johnson, Lenny Levis, Gilbert Newman, Ann Rawley, Emil Rodolfa and Alan Swope for their contributions to this article.

iii CAPIC's founding doctoral programs were: California Institute of Integral Studies, The California School of Professional Psychology (San Francisco Campus), Pacific Graduate School of Psychology, The Professional School of Psychology and The Wright Institute.

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