

8	20/20: A Vision for the Future of Counseling initiative gaining focus
10	Don't let the name fool you: The choking 'game' can be deadly
14	Five strategies counselors can use to advocate for the profession
18	Can Christian counselors help those with different religious views?
31	ACA divisions and branches share news of recent happenings
32	Relive the experience: Pictorial coverage of the ACA Convention
36	ACA National Award winners honored for impact on profession
38	Winning teams announced in student ethics case study contest
43	Counselors can partner with parents to keep the focus on family
48	Counseling leader and advocate Jack Cloud passes unexpectedly



10



48

5	From the President
6	Executive Director's Message
12	Student Focus
16	Finding Your Way
20	Resource Reviews
23	Washington Update
30	Your Counseling Career
39	ACA Journal Spotlight
41	Private Practice in Counseling
45	Behind the Book
49	Dignity, Development & Diversity
52	Classifieds

Counseling Today

AN AMERICAN COUNSELING ASSOCIATION PUBLICATION

www.counseling.org

Licensure bills gain traction in California and Nevada

BY SCOTT BARSTOW

Legislation is pending to establish counselor licensure in the last two states yet to recognize the profession. In both California and Nevada, committed legislators and hard work by counselors have given the licensure bills a fighting chance of being enacted by the end of the year.

Earlier in this year's session of the California Legislature, state Assembly member Charles Calderon introduced AB 1486, an updated version of the counselor licensure legislation that

was considered in the state in 2006. On April 17, the Assembly Business and Professions Committee unanimously approved the bill by a vote of 10-0. Counselors, including American Counseling Association President-Elect Brian Canfield, were prepared to testify in favor of the bill, but the California Coalition for Counselor Licensure (CCCL) had already done such a good job of educating legislators about the important reasons to establish licensure — including consumer protection and increasing access to mental health care — that the

committee approved the measure without testimony.

CCCL, which is composed of 10 statewide counseling associations, is promoting the bill. The coalition (www.caccl.org) has worked hard with legislators and other interested parties during the past year to remove roadblocks to enactment of a licensure bill. As a result of CCCL's efforts, a subcommittee of the California Board of Behavioral Sciences (BBS) recently voted to endorse the legislation. CCCL hopes this is

Continued on page 46



Bound with pink ribbons

Using group therapy to help women with breast cancer

BY ANGELA KENNEDY

She is taught early on to search for something that she doesn't want to find: an uninvit-

ed guest lurking within. From the point when she finds a lump, her fear is real and sometimes immobilizing. When

breast cancer is diagnosed, it's as if her body — her womanhood — has turned against her.

According to the American Cancer Society, this year alone approximately 178,480 women in the United States will discover that they have invasive breast cancer. Currently, more than 2 million women living in the United States have been treated for breast cancer, and one in eight women is at risk of getting the cancer.

University of North Carolina doctoral student Amy Bigbee never planned on working with

breast cancer patients, but by chance, her internship brought her to the pastoral care program at the Moses Cone Regional Cancer Center in Greensboro. The encounters she had while working there altered the course of her life. At the American Counseling Association Convention in Detroit in March, she shared her experiences and suggestions in the session "Pink Ribbons: How to Use Group Therapy in Working With Women Who Have Breast Cancer."

"I was moved every time I

went to the group," Bigbee says. "My life was changed because of those women. They faced death, and I learned to live. Personally, I learned what's important in my life. Professionally, it was hard. The emotional drain ... counseling any group is emotionally hard, but working with people who are facing death can be really heavy. Having to process that can be hard, but at the same time, it's the most rewarding, to work with people who so courageously face death."

Continued on page 26

PERIODICALS MAIL-NEWSPAPER HANDLING



20/20 initiative gaining focus

Delegates discussing seven major areas likely to determine the future direction of the counseling profession

BY JONATHAN ROLLINS

A coordinated and consolidated effort to proactively put the counseling profession on more solid ground in the future has moved steadily forward in the last year. Delegates representing 29 different counseling associations and entities met yet again at the most recent American Counseling Association Convention in Detroit to discuss the progress being made on the initiative, known as 20/20: A Vision for the Future of Counseling.

Since getting the process started by holding counseling summits in 2006 at the American Association of State Counseling Boards Annual Conference and the ACA Convention, the delegates have chosen seven areas they believe need to be actively addressed to ensure the future health of the profession. Those areas are:

- Strengthening identity
- Presenting ourselves as one profession
- Improving public perception/recognition and advocating for professional issues

- Creating licensing portability
- Expanding and promoting the research base of professional counseling
- Focusing on students and prospective students
- Promoting client welfare and advocacy

In the past year, the delegates split into work groups and fashioned reports that recommended how to address each of the focus areas. First drafts of the reports were presented at the AASCB Annual Conference in Sarasota, Fla., in January; second drafts were discussed by the delegates at the ACA Convention in Detroit. In addition, an Education Session was held in Detroit so the 20/20 Oversight Committee could begin to better inform counseling professionals of the initiative.

While general feedback was solicited during the Education Session, the committee doesn't want to present anything "official" to the public for comment until delegates have reached a 90 percent consensus on each concept, said ACA Chief Professional Officer David Kaplan. When the delegates develop an initial draft of a consensus doc-

ument, the public will be given ample opportunity to provide feedback, he added.

While there was some hope the delegates would begin to reach consensus on concepts in Detroit, there is no set timetable for development of the consensus document. "This is a major initiative in the counseling profession," Kaplan said. "This is an open process that involves all the major players in counseling. It's not about glossing over specialties, regions and grassroots. Sensitivity is being paid to that. Doing this right is more important than arbitrary deadlines."

At the same time, everyone involved with the 20/20 Vision effort agrees that the clock is ticking. If the counseling profession cannot come to grips with its core identity, then it risks becoming irrelevant. The ongoing struggle is how best to present counseling as a single, unified profession with many specialties.

"What we're trying to do is unify the profession and have some core thread," said AASCB Past President Charlie Gagnon at the Education Session on the 20/20 initiative in Detroit. "We don't want to take away from the individuals in the field but instead give them a core identity with their specialty. ... One of the issues we're struggling with is defining what a counselor is."

Sam Gladding, a past president of ACA who is serving as the facilitator for the 20/20 process, voiced similar senti-

ments about identifying a core for the counseling profession. "If we don't take steps to define that, we're not going to be very functional in the future, and we're not going to have a very good public perception," he said. "We need to define ourselves rather than having other groups define us. If we can agree what our identity is, it will also help us with our identity in the public eye."

Another option, Kaplan pointed out, is to determine that each counseling specialty — mental health, school, career, rehabilitation and so on — actually constitutes its own unique profession. One of the main problems with that approach, he said, is that, acting alone, the counseling groups lose their power to influence legislation. "We want to unify our profession and present ourselves as a coherent group to outside groups," Kaplan emphasized. "Otherwise, legislators ask, 'Why don't you have one group with one voice? Come back when you have your act together.'"

Finding that one voice has proved to be a difficult task for the counseling profession. As Gladding told the delegates convened in Detroit, "We have been stuck for years as a profession at 'storming' in the group process."

The current process doesn't promise smooth sailing either, but those involved in the 20/20 initiative appear committed for

Continued on page 30



The career marketing toolkit

Many counseling professionals bristle at the term “self-promotion,” but it’s a crucial element for career success. Let’s examine some of the tools that counselors can utilize in marketing their services.

Curriculum vitae (a.k.a. “C.V.” or “Vitae”): This is a detailed accounting of one’s professional life, including courses, workshops, presentations, published works, employment, licensure, certification, community service, professional manuscripts, honors and awards, etc. This document is most commonly used when applying for positions in educational or research institutions, grant opportunities or awards related to academic or research entities. In cases in which the included information is voluminous, the C.V. is often accompanied by an executive summary (see below).

Résumé: A résumé often shares many of the same elements and uses as a C.V., but the most effective résumés are best developed as brief documents that address experiences and accomplishments closely aligned with a specific position. Individuals with broad experi-

ences may have several versions of their résumé, each targeting a different aspect (and application) of their background.

Executive summary: Up to (but not exceeding) a page in length, the executive summary should serve as a scannable synopsis of those professional experiences most closely aligned with the activity for which the document is being prepared. When accompanying a C.V., the executive summary takes on many properties of a résumé, highlighting accomplishments and targeting specific activities related to the submission. In a résumé, the executive summary serves as an overview of the remainder of the document and, when well-devised, encourages the reader to seek additional information.

Bio: Similar to the executive summary in its brevity, but meant to be read, not scanned. It addresses a need for information about your background without boring the reader with the minutiae of your career path. Include basic biographical information (name, educational background, etc.), scope of practice, career highlights

and contact information. This is the document that humanizes you, so you may want to include some information about family, hobbies or community activities. In these days of identity theft and other crimes, be careful when sharing personal information. (If you need an example of how a bio should read, pick up almost any published book with scholarly or self-help overtones and examine the “About the Author” entry.)

You should update your C.V., résumé, executive summary and bio on a regular basis (at least once a year, but more effectively, once a quarter) so they are readily available when opportunity knocks.

Any of these documents would appropriately be accompanied by a ...

Cover letter: As its name suggests, this is the letter that covers your résumé or C.V. The most effective cover letters are brief and specifically prepared for the opportunity. They should accomplish three things: present concise reasoning as to why you are a strong candidate for the position or award; share enough of your background to

create interest and encourage the reader to look at your résumé; and provide an opportunity for follow-up regarding your candidacy. This is not the place for a lengthy “Philosophy of Counseling” statement (best handled as a separate document presented as an appendix to your C.V. or résumé.) If your cover letter exceeds three to four paragraphs or one type-written page, it’s time to edit.

A few other recommendations for your career marketing arsenal:

Press releases: Present a free seminar in conjunction with a community organization and promote it through the local news media. In addition to newspaper and television entities, don’t forget school newsletters, library information boards, grocery store community boards and church bulletins. Name recognition is the goal here.

Websites: In the Age of the Internet, a website legitimizes your business. Internet presence is rapidly becoming a necessity, especially for those in private practice. Make certain your website contains appropriate buzz words that

will be captured by search engines.

Business cards: In your word-of-mouth marketing plan, there is no easier leave-behind than a business card. Besides supplying contact information, the flip side of the card can be used to list services provided to clients.

Brochures: Think of a brochure as a business card on steroids with a bio attached. These can be instrumental marketing tools for practices that actively seek referrals through auxiliary entities: Provide a bundle to your contact and let them share the information.

In the business of counseling, all practitioners must engage in marketing their services on some level, either in seeking to join an institution, agency or practice, or in seeking private clients. How many of these tools are you using to promote your career? ■

Amy Reece Connelly is the manager of ACA Career Services. E-mail questions to her at acacareers@counseling.org. Telephone consultation is available to ACA members by appointment.

20/20

Continued from page 8

the long haul and to share an understanding of its importance. “We realize this isn’t going to be an easy process. We have 50 years of difficulty to overcome,” said 20/20 delegate J. Barry Mascari, president of AASCB and an assistant professor in the Kean University Counselor Education Department. “But despite a difficult task ahead, this initiative by our profession has gone farther than any effort to attempt this before now. While it may take longer than we would hope, I was pleased that delegates wanted the process to continue, recognizing that, while we may be currently talking about aspirations, we need to envision a

different future. That future can only come through continued effort and dialogue as we move into heretofore uncharted waters. It is a pretty exciting process.”

License portability

The 20/20 initiative actually began as an outgrowth of AASCB’s license portability effort. After reviewing the multiple variations in state licensing titles and requirements, AASCB asked ACA to partner in an effort to standardize counselor licensure in the United States. AASCB said the lack of common standards not only hindered the goal of license portability, but was also fragmenting the profession.

As the presidential teams of the two associations met at the ACA Convention in Atlanta in 2005, the conversation began to encompass other key issues affecting the counseling profession. “Eventually we said, ‘Why don’t we go beyond that (license portability)? How can we position the profession of counseling proactively?’” Kaplan recalled. Those questions eventually seeded the 20/20 initiative.

Not coincidentally, license portability is one of the major focus areas of the 20/20 initiative. At the same time, AASCB continues to advance its portability plan and has established the National Credentials Reg-

istry. As described on the AASCB website (www.aascb.org), the National Credentials Registry is “a perpetual holding site for documents related to licensing and portability.”

Jan McMillan, a former AASCB president, is chairing the registry. Her committee has been visiting states to help them modify their regulations to accept license portability.

“Currently, there are 22 states in various stages of portability initiatives, with a few having completed their processes,” Mascari said. “It is a massive undertaking and challenging to get 48 states, (Washington) D.C. and Puerto Rico to move to portability

when the nationwide standards have such wide variation.”

Mascari urged licensed professional counselors and other ACA members to contact their state counseling boards to obtain more information about where they stand in the process and to encourage them to either begin or continue working toward license portability. ■

Jonathan Rollins is the editor-in-chief of *Counseling Today*. Contact him at jrollins@counseling.org.

Letters to the editor: ct@counseling.org