

Kirk Schneider, Ph.D.

1. The mission of AP-LS/Division 41 is to “enhance well-being, justice, and human rights through the science and practice of psychology in legal contexts.” In what ways, if any, do your plans for your presidency intersect with this mission?

My plans for president-elect directly support enhancement of well-being (equitable quality psychotherapy and consultation services), justice (equitable, quality psychosocial services, particularly in underserved communities, a federal office of psychological advisors) and human rights (respect for the value of dialogue and the availability of longer-term, emotionally restorative relationships among people of diverging backgrounds across divergent settings). Please see my platform summary below for an elaboration:

To cut to the chase, social crises are exploding today and we need to mobilize our discipline for action. I propose that we develop a National Corps of Psychologists to facilitate “emotionally restorative relationships” throughout our country. These are relationships that help people to feel seen and heard and that get at the roots of their problems. Specifically, I call for this Corps to provide highly structured, healing dialogues to address the alarming cultural and political divides in our country. I also call for the Corps to provide equitable access to longer term, emotionally restorative psychotherapy. This framework moreover would be integrative, comprising, as appropriate, medical, cognitive-behavioral, psychodynamic and existential dimensions of practice. The Corps would also foster a wide range of services to enhance individual and public well-being. For example, it could expand the availability of first responders to aid police dealing with mental health emergencies; provide consulting services to organizations in impoverished communities, and bolster the time and quality of psychological services in schools, hospitals, prisons, governmental and diplomatic settings--wherever such services are in greatest need today.

To fund this National Corps of Psychologists I would use the platform of APA president to call on the support of government, private industry and others who care about the state of our profession and world. Such funding in turn would generate the pilot studies, grants and other forms of support that would help to discern the viability and long-term sustainability of given Corps services. The superb resources of our research as well as applied and practice communities will be very much needed in this timely, broad-based effort.

Finally, to see my related proposals--such as a summit of APA Division leaders and a federal office of psychological advisors--visit [here](#).

2. Vastly disproportionate numbers of those in the criminal legal system have substance use and mental health issues, and minoritized identities. How do you think APA should address those needs within forensic settings generally?

As a part of my platform summary you can see that I mention the need for pilot programs that offer affordable, longer term, and quality relationships for people across diverse settings, including those in prison. I believe that the press for such programs under a National Corps of Psychologists would help rally members of our profession who practice in the criminal justice system to notably improve the psychological resources within that system.

Kirk Schneider, Ph.D.

3. APA has recently recommitted itself to giving psychology away through its amicus brief program. How might you help nurture this recommitment and what issues before the courts do you believe APA should consider addressing? Apart from submitting amici briefs to appellate courts, what would you like to see APA undertake to foster the adoption of practices in the legal system which benefit from psychological science?

My platform is all about "giving away" psychological skills and resources to communities all over the country, but in particular those that are underserved and marginalized. I believe psychology is as critical as ever to the humanization of our legal system and beyond that to the governance of the country. And that is why I propose a federal office of psychological advisors to augment APA's current advocacy efforts and provide information, support, and practical recommendations to our U.S. president, the congress, the diplomatic corps, and the public.