

AHEC West

PSYCHOLOGY AND PROFESSIONAL COUNSELING CAUCUS MINUTES

Special Meeting - June 29, 2017

Allegany College of Maryland, CE Room #18 – Cumberland, Maryland

CALL TO ORDER: Anne Sheetz called the meeting to order at 12:00 pm and welcomed everyone. The following individuals were present:

Michael Motter
Misti Slaughter
Christa Snyder

Anne Sheetz
Judyth Altemus
Cindy Herzog

Richard Kerns
Paul McCusker
Jack Zealand

Reading of the minutes and approval was deferred to next regularly scheduled meeting on August 28, 2017.

SPECIAL MEETING REPORT

Future of Psychology and Professional Counseling Caucus

Anne Sheetz opened the special meeting by noting the presentation by AHEC West Executive Director Susan Stewart at the May 22, 2017 meeting, at which time Susan reviewed grant-related mandates forcing AHEC West to end its support for health professions caucuses, including the Psychology and Professional Counseling Caucus. Anne noted that the group had two main issues to decide: “Where do we go from here?” and “What to do with the money?” – mainly the \$802 in the caucus treasury.

In answer to Anne’s question, “Do we want to continue?” the group unanimously affirmed that the caucus should continue. At the question of what to name the group it was decided to drop AHEC West and be named “Psychology and Professional Counseling Caucus of Western Maryland.”

It was decided that the Caucus would hold its next meeting as usual in the CE Building at ACM, with Christa Snyder of ACM saying the group is free to meet there as often as it likes. However, Anne indicated that Jeff O’Neal of the Western Maryland Health System has encouraged the Caucus to meet at WMHS, in part to possibly attract psychologists and professional counselors who work at the hospital.

The Caucus members next addressed the issue of the Caucus treasury, which after the meal provided at the special meeting, totals \$738. Following discussion the group decided to donate \$500 to longtime former Caucus member Jason Edwards, who is suffering from ALS. Jack termed the donation “money well spent.” Another \$100 will be donated to AHEC West in appreciation for its service over the years. The remaining \$138 will be used for lunch at the August 28, 2017 meeting, with excess funds to be directed to AHEC West. The account must be closed by August 31, 2017.

The group considered spending some of the funds to cover fall conference fees for events

slated through ACM, but some members indicated that they do not incur such expenses, and that it would not be fair to Caucus members who were not present to cover fees for those who were in attendance. Also, it was decided not to use the funds for Caucus library materials, with the group agreeing that such materials are infrequently used and that members can pool their resources for future such purchases deemed appropriate by the Caucus.

A few issues remained unresolved and slated for additional discussion at the August 28, 2017 meeting, including election of officers, with the secretary's position deemed critical for recording meeting minutes and addressing other administrative matters. However, the group agreed that such responsibilities cannot accrue to just one member and that the duties need to be shared.

Judyth noted that a less formal group will require less administrative work: "Keeping it simple makes things more do-able," she said.

The Caucus asked Richard to have Jackie Booth at AHEC *West* detail her Caucus-related duties to help determine which activities need to be sustained and which might be able to be discarded.

Also to be determined is whether the Caucus will maintain a treasury, and thus whether a treasurer's position will be required. The group felt that dues for the Caucus are not necessary.

Another issue to be discussed August 28, 2017 is the frequency of meetings. Paul suggested meetings every other month may be preferable to the current quarterly meetings.

Looking to the group's future direction, Anne then asked the Caucus members to discuss the purpose of the Caucus. Members noted that the Caucus serves in part as a point of contact for the psychology/professional counseling profession, as well as a clearinghouse for ideas and initiatives. Furthermore, the Caucus aids in development of CEUs, and in the presentation and sharing of case studies. Misti noted that she was drawn to the Caucus for its advocacy role and ability to collectively address legislative matters related to the field.

On the question of whether the Caucus can serve an outreach role, promoting the profession to young people, Judyth said such a role may be secondary, at least until the Caucus fully charts its path forward.

Anne closed the discussion by encouraging Caucus members to think about what structure the group should assume as it evolves without AHEC *West* support.

No other reports or matters were discussed. Paul agreed to hold his case study until the meeting after the August 28, 2017 meeting, which the members expect will be taken up by further discussion about the future of the Caucus.

Anne adjourned the meeting at 12:55 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by Richard Kerns