

The APA Division 41 - American Psychology and the Law Society (AP-LS)
Practice Committee Announces an Award to Recognize Outstanding Practitioner
Mentoring for the Elimination of Racial, Ethnic and Cultural (REC)
Disparities in the Field of Psychology and the Law

REC disparities in the criminal justice system (CJS) necessitate that practicing psychologists working in the field of psychology and the law use their knowledge and experience to combat them. Practitioners are in a unique position to offer education, assessment, intervention and advocacy on issues of REC disparities, racism, and discrimination in the field of psychology and the law. However, a limited body of research, lack of practice guidelines on REC integration in forensic practice, and low representation of Black, Indigenous, People Of Color (BIPOC) professionals, limit such efforts. Mentorship of emerging practitioners in psychology and the law on such issues can bridge the gap of knowledge, application, and BIPOC representation in the field.

The AP-LS Practice Committee wants to recognize the substantive contributions of practitioner mentors who educate and support emerging clinicians in psychology and the law with a lens toward the elimination of REC disparities and social justice. For these purposes, we use Goldstein's (2007) definition of the practice of psychology and the law: "The application of psychological research, theory, practice, and traditional and specialized methodology (e.g. interviewing, psychological testing, forensic assessment, and forensically relevant instruments) to provide information relevant to a legal question."

The award for Outstanding Practitioner Mentoring to Eliminate Racial, Ethnic and Cultural (REC) Disparities in the Field of Psychology and the Law, will be conferred on a yearly basis. The Recipient will receive a \$500.00 cash award, a plaque to be presented at the annual AP-LS conference, and will be featured in an AP-LS newsletter article, written by the practice committee, highlighting the recipient's achievements and recommendations to other practitioners. Highlighting the recipient's mentorship practices and experiences can serve as a model for other professionals in the field of psychology and the law.

Eligibility: The award will recognize a practitioner mentor of any career stage who has excelled in their focus to educate, advocate and eliminate REC disparities in the field of psychology and the law. To be eligible for the award, individuals must have a doctoral degree (Ph.D., Psy.D., Ed.D.), self-identify as a predominantly practicing forensic psychologist (about 75% of their work) and have a track record of excellence conducting mentorship of emerging forensic practitioners. Namely, the mentorship of graduate students, postdoctoral trainees, or early career professionals preparing for a career in direct service provision.

The mentorship can be formal (e.g. an assigned clinical supervisor or mentor in a training program or place of work). It can also be so-called "informal mentorship" where the mentor has dedicated their personal time to assist and support emerging clinicians outside formal institutional affiliations (e.g. an African American forensic psychologist who regularly mentors other BIPOC early career psychologists in their area). Excellence in mentorship can take many shapes and forms. A common thread would be mentoring emerging clinicians, regardless of race or ethnicity, on using their specialized skills and knowledge as forensic psychologists to reduce REC disparities. The practitioner's mentorship has had a significant impact in the system in which they operate (e.g. supporting increased training opportunities on BIPOC issues, helping increase BIPOC representation in the field of psychology and the law, supporting antiracist professional identities for emerging forensic psychologists).

Application Process: The nomination package should be converted into a PDF file and emailed directly to the chair of the award committee. Self-nominations are encouraged; the candidate does not have to be an AP-LS member. The nomination package must be not more than 25 total pages and should include the following:

- a. Nominee's statement (1-2 pages) describing how the nominated psychologist meets the criteria for the award, their focus and approach to mentoring and how it centers BIPOC issues, for example their support of BIPOC trainees/staff under their supervision, and/or work with non-BIPOC trainees/staff on issues relevant to BIPOC populations in Psychology and the Law. It should also include their goals and accomplishments associated with the field of Psychology and the Law.
- b. A curriculum vitae.
- c. A letter of support from a mentee (e.g. former or current) focusing on the impact the individual had in their professional development and understanding of BIPOC issues in FMH.

Nomination packages are due January 15th and should be emailed to the chair of the award subcommittee at award.practice.apls@gmail.com.

References

Goldstein, A.M. (2007). Forensic psychology: Toward a standard of care. In Goldstein, A.M. (Ed.), *Forensic Psychology: Emerging Topics and Expanding Roles* (3-41). John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Higgins, M.C. & Kram, K.E. (2001). Reconceptualizing mentoring at work: A developmental network perspective. *Academy of Management Review*, 26 (2), 264-288.

Jones, H. A., Perrin, P. B., Heller, M. B., Hailu, S., & Barnett, C. (2018). Black psychology graduate students' lives matter: Using informal mentoring to create an inclusive climate amidst national race-related events. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, 49(1), 75–82.
<https://doi.org/10.1037/pro0000169>

Kovera, M. B. (2019). Racial disparities in the criminal justice system: Prevalence, causes, and a search for solutions. *Journal of Social Issues*, 75(4), 1139-1164.

Thrower, S. J., Helms, J. E., & Manosalvas, K. (2020). Exploring the role of context on racially responsive supervision: The racial identity social interaction model. *Training and Education in Professional Psychology*, 14(2), 116–125. <https://doi.org/10.1037/tep0000271>