



NEWSLETTER

Spring 2008 Issue

In official relations with the American Public Health Association

Continuing Work of the LGBT Caucus

By Richard Trevino, MPH - Caucus Chair

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The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Caucus (LGBTTC) board members have been hard at work since the last American Public Health Association (APHA) meeting. We have reviewed abstracts for the APHA meeting, been asked to speak at the Spirit of 1848's 160 year anniversary celebration which will take place during APHA's Annual Meeting this October in San Diego, added to our website (<http://www-personal.umich.edu/~brsinco/aphalgbt/>), prepared the newsletter, and worked on the budget.

Keeping gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender issues an important part of APHA continues to be an important goal. We still have far to go. Recent articles in the American Journal of Public Health have focused on LGBT issues such as suicide in adolescents/young adults, physical health complaints, name based reporting of HIV, and smoking/its relationship to adolescent same sex and both sex relations.

Please see *LGBT Caucus* on page 5

Let's Make Sure Our Voice is Heard on Election Day- The LGBT Caucus

The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Caucus (LGBTTC) is a forum for public health workers interested in gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender issues. The LGBT Caucus has been in official relations with the American Public Health Association (APHA) since 1975. Since that time, the LGBT Caucus has provided a forum that supports the educational interchange among other lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender public health members. We also encourage interchange between others who are not LGBT but are interested in our issues. The caucus has been very important in giving opportunities for public health practitioners to learn about relevant LGBT health issues and to ensure that these issues continue to be addressed in all dimensions of health. The Caucus is also committed to combating discriminatory practices in health organizations and systems.



Winner of the 2007 Walter J. Lear, MD, Outstanding Student Award

By Paul Gilbert, ScM - Program Chair Elect

Annesa Flentje Santa, M.A., was awarded the Walter J. Lear Outstanding Student Research Award at the Caucus's annual dinner on November 6, 2007, for her presentation "Reflections on Policy and Practices: LGBT Veterans' Experiences While in the Military." In her presentation, Annesa analyzed mental health outcomes and health services utilization by LGBT veterans before and after implementation of the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy. (See abstract on page 3)



Award winner Annesa Flentje Santa, M.A., and Program Chair, Seth Welles, ScD PhD at the 2007 Annual Caucus Dinner.

Annesa said, "it was a fantastic surprise. It was my first year at APHA and I was excited to be there, but also pretty unfamiliar with the organization and the Caucus." A fourth year doctoral student in clinical psychology

at the University of Montana, Annesa said her advisor prompted her to submit this abstract because her work tends to show a public health influence. Annesa said she was glad she attended APHA and was impressed by the multi-disciplinary aspect of much of the work presented at the meeting.

Among the highlights of the meeting, Annesa was able to talk in person with many people whose work she has been reading. "As a student in a sea of researchers, it's sometimes hard to feel encouraged. I really feel encouraged by this award. It was great to meet everyone. The Caucus members were a really nice group to talk to at a huge conference."

Annesa has been interested in substance abuse issues for some time and had the good fortune to have access to a large data set that included items about mental health functioning of LGBT veterans, from which she prepared her presentation.

The Caucus established the Walter J. Lear Outstanding Student Research Award to recognize exceptional work by students on LGBT-related issues. The award consists of a stipend and free caucus membership. All students who submit an abstract to the Caucus for consideration for the annual meeting are eligible for this award.

Following the meeting, Annesa said her top priority is to complete her dissertation, "Experiences of Ex-Ex-Gay Individuals: Is There a Relationship Between Sexual Reorientation Therapy and Psychological Functioning?" Ultimately, she hopes to pursue an academic career where she can combine research on substance abuse in LGBT populations with her clinical skills. We wish her much success and are confident that she'll have more interesting results to present in the future.

Walter J. Lear Outstanding Student Research Award Winning Abstract: Reflections on policy and practices: LGBT veterans' experiences while in the military

*Annese Flentje Santa, MA, Tracy L. Simpson, PhD, Kimberly F. Balsam, PhD,
and Bryan N. Cochran, PhD.*

LGBT veterans comprise a significant proportion of our military forces, yet "don't ask, don't tell" policies make this group a silent component of our veteran communities. Veterans' research does not query about sexual orientation or gender identity; therefore very little is known about LGBT veterans. This study queried LGBT veterans via an online survey, gathering information regarding their experiences while serving in the military and following discharge. The survey was completed by 445 participants (27.2% female, 64.7% male, 8.1% transgender or other). Overall, participants endorsed having been investigated regarding their sexual orientation (36.2%, n = 161), isolated from their unit due to sexual orientation (14.8%, n = 66) with 2.0% experiencing incarceration, and forced to do a psychiatric evaluation due to sexual orientation (11.7%, n = 52). When analyses on these same variables were conducted comparing participants who left the military prior to (n = 245) and after (n = 177) the implementation of "don't ask, don't tell," few differences emerged. Sixteen percent of the respondents (n = 71) said that they were forced to leave the military due to their sexual orientation, and these respondents were more likely to avoid using Veterans Administration services due to their perception of how they would be treated ($X^2 = 14.9, p < .001$). Additional analyses will be presented regarding the experiences of LGBT veterans while in the military and following discharge. This study has implications for both the "don't ask, don't tell" policy and for health care workers aiding LGBT veterans.

Faculty Positions Available



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In addition, Lambda Legal has published a new safety scale (page 4) in terms of respect for same-sex couples' relationships. The safety scale is a quick assessment of all US states and is only one example of the challenges that continue to face the LGBT Community.

We are in the midst of an election year. The issues we face as gay, lesbian, transgender and bisexual individuals are paramount. Communities are considering same sex marriage and same sex health and death benefits. Even in my home state of Massachusetts where the state provides marriage equality, issues around Medicaid benefits, adding gender identity/expression to existing non-discrimination laws and restoring funding for youth programs such as Safe Schools and suicide prevention still need to be addressed. We must continue to make our presence known.

LGBT Caucus Budget as of March 3, 2008

By John Grima, MHSA -Treasurer

<u>Revenue</u>	<u>2007 Conference</u>	<u>Comment</u>
Membership	\$3,420.00	includes 34 2-year memberships
Donations	\$760.00	includes \$70 donation for dinners to support students
Dinner	\$1,320.00	1 dinner remains unpaid
Student Award	\$115.00	donations to Lear Award account
Other	\$1,000.00	National Coalition for LGBT Health-Monday reception
total revenue	\$6,615.00	
<u>Expenses</u>		
Booth & Conference+Banner	\$220.00	
2008 Booth Pre-Pay	\$220.00	2008 Booth Expense
Caucus/Booth Supplies	\$386.43	booth furniture
Newsletter - print	\$0.00	gratis
Conference Calls -Exec. Cmte	\$0.00	gratis
Dinner	\$1,440.00	3 dinners gratis + 1 remains unpaid
Social - conference center	\$2,281.20	includes food/bartender/taxes
Student Award	\$500.00	
Student Plaque	\$149.80	
Returned Check & Fee	\$0.00	
Other	\$497.00	domain reg/dinner mtg expense/gift/cab
total expense	\$5,694.43	
Beginning Balance December 9, 2006		Ending Balance March 3, 2008
\$4,124.05		\$5,044.62
Remaining in Student Fund	(\$265.00)	<i>amount included in ending balance</i>



Recent Articles in the *American Journal of Public Health*

The following are a few articles focusing on LGBT issues that have been published on line in the *American Journal of Public Health*, www.ajph.org, since November 2007:

May 2008

The Young Men's Survey Phase II: Hepatitis B Immunization and Infection Among Young Men Who Have Sex With Men

Cindy M. Weinbaum, MD, MPH, Rob Lyerla, PhD, Duncan A. MacKellar, MA, MPH, Linda A. Valleroy, PhD, Gina M. Secura, PhD, MPH, Stephanie K. Behel, MPH, Trista Bingham, MPH, MS, David D. Celentano, ScD, Beryl A. Koblin, PhD, Marlene LaLota, MPH, Douglas A. Shehan, Hanne Thiede, DVM, MPH, Lucia V. Torian, PhD for the Young Men's Survey Study Group

Objectives. We measured the prevalence of hepatitis B virus (HBV) immunization and HBV infection among men aged 23 to 29 years who have sex with men.

Methods. We analyzed data from 2834 men who have sex with men in 6 US metropolitan areas. Participants were interviewed and tested for serologic markers of immunization and HBV infection in 1998 through 2000.

Results. Immunization prevalence was 17.2%; coverage was 21.0% among participants with private physicians or health maintenance organizations and 12.6% among those with no source of health care. Overall, 20.6% had markers of HBV infection, ranging from 13.7% among the youngest to 31.0% among the oldest participants. Among those susceptible to HBV, 93.5% had regular sources of health care, had been tested for HIV, or had been treated for a sexually transmitted disease.

Conclusions. Although many young men who have sex with men have access to health care, most are not immunized against HBV. To reduce morbidity from HBV in this population, providers of health care, including sexually transmitted disease and HIV prevention services, should provide vaccinations or referrals for vaccination.

April 2008

"Rice Is Essential but Tiresome; You Should Get Some Noodles": *Doi Moi* and the Political Economy of Men's Extramarital Sexual Relations and Marital HIV Risk in Hanoi, Vietnam

Harriet M. Phinney, PhD, MPH

Research from around the world has suggested that married women's greatest risk for contracting HIV is from having sexual intercourse with their husbands. On the basis of 6 months of ethnographic research in Hanoi, Vietnam, I argue that the contemporary nature of the HIV epidemic in Hanoi is shaped by 3 interrelated policies implemented in 1986 as part of the government's new economic policy, *Doi Moi* (Renovation). Together, these policies structure men's opportunities for extramarital sexual relations and encourage wives to acquiesce to their husbands' sexual infidelity, putting both at risk of HIV. I propose 4 structural intervention strategies that address the policies that contribute to men's opportunities for extramarital liaisons and to marital HIV risk.

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November 2007

Sexual Orientation and Risk Factors for Suicidal Ideation and Suicide Attempts Among Adolescents and Young Adults

Vincent M.B. Silenzio, MD, MPH, Juan B. Pena, PhD, Paul R. Duberstein, PhD, Julie Cerel, PhD and Kerry L. Knox, PhD

Same-gender sexual orientation has been repeatedly shown to exert an independent influence on suicidal ideation and suicide attempts, suggesting that risk factors and markers may differ in relative importance between lesbian, gay, and bisexual individuals and others. Analyses of recent data from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health revealed that lesbian, gay, and bisexual respondents reported higher rates of suicidal ideation and suicide attempts than did heterosexual respondents and that drug use and depression were associated with adverse outcomes among heterosexual respondents but not among lesbian, gay, and bisexual respondents.

Physical Health Complaints Among Lesbians, Gay Men, and Bisexual and Homosexually Experienced Heterosexual Individuals: Results From the California Quality of Life Survey

Susan D. Cochran, PhD, MS and Vickie M. Mays, PhD, MSPH

Objectives. We examined evidence that minority sexual orientation is associated with more-frequent reports of physical health complaints. We also investigated the possible role of HIV infection among gay men and higher rates of psychological distress among lesbians, gay men, and bisexually and homosexually experienced heterosexual individuals in generating these health disparities.

Methods. We used data from the California Quality of Life Survey (N=2272 adults) to examine associations between sexual orientation and self-reports about physical health status, common health conditions, disabilities, and psychological distress. =

Results. Prevalent HIV infection was reported by nearly 18% of gay, bisexual, and homosexually experienced heterosexual men. Gay men and bisexual and homosexually experienced heterosexual individuals had higher levels of psychological distress compared with exclusively heterosexual individuals. Self-reported physical health status varied by gender and by sexual orientation.

Conclusions. Lesbians and bisexual and homosexually experienced heterosexual women reported a greater variety of health conditions and limitations compared with exclusively heterosexual women; however, these differences mostly disappeared when distress levels were taken into account. Among men, differences in health complaints appeared to reflect the ongoing burden of HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases in the gay male community.

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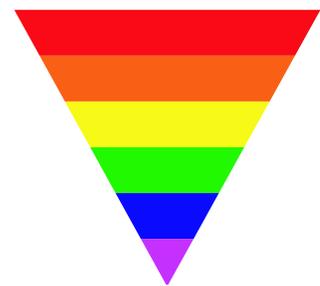
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