

Appropriations Alert: Graduate Psychology Education Program (GPE) Receives Full Funding In Extremely Difficult Budget Climate, Campus Suicide Prevention Funding Maintained

Congress finalized action on the FY'12 appropriations by rolling together all remaining spending bills into a larger "megabus" vehicle. The U.S. House of Representatives passed H.R. 2055, the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2012 on December 16th and the U.S. Senate passed the legislation the following day. Overall, federal spending in the "megabus" legislation came in at \$915 billion. Within this package, there are a number of programs of great importance to psychology.

Graduate Psychology Education Program

We are delighted to announce that this appropriations bill included level funding of nearly \$3 million for the Graduate Psychology Education Program (GPE). In an extremely difficult budget climate, the inclusion of this vital program represents an extraordinary feat for the psychology community. The overall budget for Health and Human Resources (HHS) was cut by nearly \$700 million from fiscal year 2011. Moreover, the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), which administers the GPE grant program, received a \$41 million reduction in funding. For context, funding for other HRSA programs under the Interdisciplinary Community Linkages (ICL) category were cut by over \$7 million. These include cuts to Area Health Education Centers, Allied Health and Other Disciplines (which no longer includes GPE) as well as Geriatric Programs. Overall, Nursing Programs were cut by \$10 million and Health Professions suffered a cut of \$28.9 million.

This great success for the Graduate Psychology Education Program (GPE) is due in large part to the psychologists and psychology students who made a record-breaking 358 hill visits on behalf of GPE this year. It is the efforts of our psychologist-advocates that make this tremendous victory possible.

Suicide Prevention on College Campuses

Congress affirmed the importance of addressing mental and

behavioral health on college campuses by providing level funding for a small but important program that supports the prevention work of college counseling centers. The Campus Suicide Prevention program, authorized by the Garrett Lee Smith Memorial Act, and administered by SAMHSA received \$4.975 million. In addition, for the second year, the program will receive another \$10 million from the Prevention and Public Health Fund, thanks to the leadership of Senator Jack Reed (D-RI) who fought for those additional funds. The Suicide Prevention Resource Center received \$4.957 million. Finally, the Youth Suicide Prevention Program for States and Tribes received \$29.74 million.

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