

METRO The Metropolitan New York Association for Applied Psychology: 76 Years and Still Going Strong!

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The **Metropolitan New York Association for Applied Psychology (METRO)** was founded in 1939 as a not-for-profit professional association, and it is the oldest and largest local professional association of applied psychologists in the U.S. METRO takes pride in serving as a role model for other applied psychology organizations now operating in various locations across the U.S. As the immediate past president (first author Terri Shapiro), I'm proud to report that METRO is still going strong after 76 years, with 230 dues paying members, 99 of them student members (reduced membership rate), with an additional 1,845 nonmembers on our web-based mailing list receiving regular communications. This year's METRO Board includes **Wendy Becker**, President, **Katherine Bittner**, Vice President, Rania Vasilatos, Treasurer, and **Anthony Boyce**, Secretary. METRO's mission is:

- To promote and maintain high standards among professionals in the applied psychology field.
- To help the advancement of applied psychology as a science and profession.
- To further educate our members, colleagues in adjacent disciplines, and the public at large.

METRO was highlighted previously in *TIP* in January 2003, with a spotlight article by **Brian Ruggeberg** and **Janis Ward**. As in the past, being located in the NYC area is METRO's biggest advantage, with a high concentration of applied psychologists and organizations, and numerous universities located in the tristate area. METRO currently has fewer than the 400 members reported in 2003, but many of the 230 current members are highly active and regularly attend meetings. The meeting schedule is still linked to the academic calendar, with monthly meetings held between September and June. Attendance at these meeting, where noted speakers are invited to present on current topics of interest (expenses paid by METRO), ranges from about 50 to 100 attendees, although in the past few years, there have been several room-busting meetings topping the 120 mark. Nonmembers also attend meetings fairly regularly (for a small fee). Faculty at local universities, from Connecticut to Long Island, have also brought their (relatively small) classes to meetings that are relevant to class topics. Meetings begin with networking, wine, and food (definitely an incentive!), followed by the speaker presentation (no more than 1 hour), and finally a Q&A. Meetings usually end around 7:45pm.

Board members do a 4-year “tour of duty,” cycling through the roles of secretary, treasurer, vice president, and president; it is a significant commitment to the organization. METRO also relies on a cadre of volunteers: a webmaster, sponsorship director, career day chair and committee, and a team of food gurus. Without these volunteers, as discussed in 2003, METRO would not be able to offer a full range of services and activities during the year. Next, we would like to highlight some of the unique ways that METRO works during the year to support its mission and meet the needs of the membership and the I-O community at large.

Career Day

METRO has developed a very popular program that explores major career options available to any I-O and related professionals, students, and those looking to make career transitions. METRO has been offering a career day every March for many years, where academics and practitioners discuss their own career paths and the knowledge, skills, abilities, and characteristics that employers are seeking and how they go about identifying suitable candidates. In addition, they discuss the latest trends in the job market and the ins and outs of the job search from recent job seekers.

The Career Day program usually consists of three panel discussions with audience participation. Usually, there is an internal career panel, external or consulting career panel, and a recruiter panel. Occasionally, the panels have been organized around I- versus O-related careers. Each panel comprises four to six professionals with a mix of early career

and senior panelists. Being located in NYC, METRO is able to recruit panelists to volunteer from a wide variety of industries: public and private, large and small, as well as academic institutions. A small sample of these include Ernst and Young, Citibank, JetBlue, Deutsche Bank, AON Hewitt, PepsiCo, YSC, Google, Aeropostale, Amex, Columbia University, Hofstra University, iCoach, and many others. Common issues addressed are:

- Close-up explanation of the differences between the internal and external consultant/employee role
- Shifts in perspective needed to make given the current work environment
- Technical and nontechnical resources available for help in the job search
- Providing added value or distinguishing myself from everyone else
- Perspectives on how careers progress
- What to include in a resumé
- Current trends in the job markets
- Internships: Are they out there, are they worth it, and how do I get one?

METRO’s Career Day Committee, with input from the board, recruits the panelists and sets the agenda for the meeting, which is advertised via email blasts to the METRO database, as well as through faculty at NYC area universities. METRO provides the meeting space, a continental breakfast, and plenty of coffee! To cover the costs, all attendees (even METRO members) pay a fee for the event, which starts around 9am and ends around 2pm. In the last several years, attendance at Career Day has averaged around 80 attendees, with 12–15 panelists. It is consistently one of the most successful and well-liked programs of the year.

SIOP Conference Scholarships for Students

METRO has a significant number of student members, and supporting those student members is a high priority. About 3 years ago, they began offering support for student members presenting at SIOP. The first 2 years, a \$1,500 and a \$2,000 award were given out to one student each year, respectively. Students submit their names and SIOP presentation title via email and the board randomly selects a name from a hat at the METRO meeting prior to the conference. In the most recent year, the board chose to support 4 students rather than just one, with awards of \$500 each.

In addition, prior to SIOP the board compiles a list of METRO members presenting at SIOP, and the date/time of their presentations, and distributes it through email to the full mailing list and posts it on the website. The aim is to encourage attendance at METRO members' presentations and facilitate networking and socializing opportunities for the membership.

METRO-Hogan-Right Management Collaboration

This February METRO, in collaboration with Hogan Assessment Systems and Right Management, is offering its third annual METRO-Hogan-Right Management Hogan Assessment Certification Workshop. People who complete the workshop are certified to use and interpret the Hogan Personality Inventory, Hogan Development Survey, and the Motives, Values, Preferences Inventory. The opportunity to attend this workshop at a discounted price has been overwhelm-

ingly popular. Right Management provides office space, METRO provides catering (breakfast and lunch for participants for 2 days), and of course Hogan Assessment Systems provides the workshop leaders and materials. This workshop is limited to METRO members and Right Management employees; space is limited so registration is on a first come, first serve basis, and caps out at about 32 participants.

In addition to these activities, the METRO president often communicates to members, as well as the entire mailing list, via a president's blog or email blast. The METRO webmaster maintains the METRO meeting calendar, meeting details, speaker bios, and job opportunity announcements on the webpage (www.metroappspsych.com). The satisfaction of members is paramount, and there is a free exchange of ideas between the board and the membership.

Although METRO is the probably the largest local I-O group in the county, it is not at all a "stuffy" organization; the activity during the networking time preceding speaker presentations each month is more akin to a giant family reunion, loud and happy and enthusiastic (the wine helps, I'm sure). Indeed, members indicate that the opportunity to see colleagues and friends at meetings is just as important as the speaker presentations. Finally, METRO is always looking for innovative ways to meet its core mission, and the opportunity to support and collaborate with other local I-O groups is welcome!

If you have questions about this article or about METRO, contact Terri Shapiro (terri.shapiro@hofstra.edu).