

Officers:

President

Melanie Hetzel-Riggin
mdh33@psu.edu

President-Elect

position open

Past-President

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Secretary

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Treasurer

Erica Edwards
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Liaison to PPA

position open

Newsletter Editor

Victoria Kazmerski
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Our Webpage:

<http://northwesternppa.com>

Get involved with NWPPA

Volunteers are always welcome. Consider helping to organize an event, serving on the Executive Board, updating the website, or helping with the newsletter. We welcome all.

Contact Melanie Hetzel Riggin or any of the other executive board members.

President's Message

Welcome, members and friends of the Northwestern Pennsylvania Psychological Association (NWPPA), to an exciting new year! We are thrilled to introduce our new officers who are eager to lead us into a year filled with growth, collaboration, and renewed energy. As we embark on this journey together, we invite each of you to play an active role in rebuilding and revitalizing our organization. Your expertise and input are invaluable, and we encourage you to help us shape the future of NWPPA by suggesting dynamic speakers, proposing new initiatives, and sharing ideas that will advance the practice of psychology in our region. This is a time for us to come together as a community, supporting one another professionally while also ensuring that we continue to serve the mental health needs of Northwestern Pennsylvania with the highest level of care. Together, we can foster a vibrant, engaged association that nurtures the growth of psychology and enriches the lives of both practitioners and the communities we serve. Let's make this a year of innovation and renewal!

We are excited to invite you to our upcoming fall meeting, where we will kick off the academic year with an engaging speaker and important planning for the months ahead. This meeting will provide a great opportunity to connect with fellow members, share ideas, and help shape the direction of our association for the rest of the year. Our featured speaker will discuss the growing use of therapy dogs in psychological practice, exploring how these animals can be integrated into therapeutic settings to support mental health treatment. Whether you're curious about incorporating animal-assisted therapy into your own work or simply want to learn more about this innovative practice, this presentation will offer valuable insights.

The field of psychology has faced several important areas of concern that have shaped both research and practice. One focus has been the growing recognition of mental health disparities, with particular attention to underserved populations and the need for more culturally competent care. Additionally, the rise in discussions surrounding trauma-informed care has highlighted the necessity for psychologists to approach treatment with greater sensitivity to systemic and personal trauma. Another significant issue is the impact of climate

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President's newsletter continued

change on mental health, with increasing research into eco-anxiety and its psychological toll. Moreover, technology's rapid advancement—particularly artificial intelligence and its integration into mental health treatment—is reshaping how psychologists approach therapy and research, bringing both opportunities and ethical challenges. These issues underscore the importance of staying informed and adaptive in our practice to meet the evolving needs of society. We look forward to your presence and participation as we lay the groundwork for a successful year of learning, growth, and collaboration.

Melanie D. Hetzel-Riggin, Ph.D.
President, NWPPA

Announcement

NWPPA has undergone recent developments that we are excited to share with all our members. There have been changes to the Executive Board, as well as some new openings that members can run for.

NWPPA has updated its website and social media presence and is looking to expand and meet the needs of psychologists and mental health practitioners, trainers and college/graduate school students and interns in our region. We are happy to announce that the website, as well as an Instagram and Facebook profile, are updated and ready to be seen! Please visit and follow these sites and consider joining us if you are not already a member. Participate by attending our events, suggesting activities, and assuming a leadership position in the organization. Here are links to the sites:

- **Website:** <https://northwesternppa.com/>

We will post our events and other information you don't want to miss! We encourage everyone to follow these sites to stay updated and to share the social media sites and the website with friends or colleagues. We hope that our updated website and new social media sites will encourage participation and sharing of information and events to benefit our community!

We are always welcoming new members, and sharing these sites is an opportunity to connect our organization with them. A copy of the application form is at the end of this newsletter. Or you can download the application from our website : [Membership – NWPPA \(northwesternppa.com\)](https://northwesternppa.com/)

The 2025 renewals will be available and sent by email to current members in November.

Please share this newsletter with those who are interested!



FALL MEETING AND SPEAKER: OCTOBER 14, 2024, 5:30-8:30 pm

Where: Penn State Erie, The Behrend College, Susan Hirt Hagen CORE Conference Room

Located in the Federal House, 5343 Station Road, Erie PA

NWPPA invites you to participate in our revised fall meeting and speaker. This tradition is based on the core value of providing relevant, high-quality training on high interest issues in psychology. This year NWPPA is pleased to begin the evening with an hour-long fall meeting with light hors d'oeuvres. Topics will include planning for the spring academic panel and revealing the new website and social media presence. We will then follow with our invited speaker:

Workshop: 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. – *The Healing Power of the Unique Human-Animal Bond*

Presented by Kelly Philson, Development Director, Therapy Dogs United

This presentation will review the science of the human-animal bond refers to the deep connection between people and animals, characterized by mutual trust, companionship, and emotional support. This bond has been recognized for centuries, but the modern use of therapy dogs in healthcare and psychology gained prominence only recently. These specially trained animals are now widely used by psychologists to help individuals cope with stress, anxiety, trauma, and depression. Therapy dogs provide comfort and emotional support, making them valuable companions in therapeutic settings such as hospitals, schools, and mental health clinics. Their presence can ease communication, reduce anxiety, and enhance the overall well-being of patients. This presentation will inform attendees about the requirements to become a therapy dog, applications and uses of therapy dogs, and research supporting the use of therapy dogs.

To register for this free event, please use the Eventbrite link here:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/nwppa-fall-meeting-and-speaker-tickets-1034246638537?aff=oddtcreator>

You can also email NWPPA at nwpapsychologicalassoc@gmail.com

We are excited to see you there!

Additional October Trainings:

Recovery is Community NWPVA Virtual Trainings:

<https://www.recoveryiscommunity.org/meetings-and-events/training-sessions>

Differential Diagnosis of ADHD

October 4, 2024, 12pm-1pm

Dr. Lisa May, Ph.D., LPC

Strategies for Addressing Co-Occurring Disorders

October 10, 2024, 12pm-1pm

Dr. Amy Gallaher-Miles, DO and Dr. Lisa May, Ph.D., LPC.

Trauma Informed Care in Substance Use Disorder Services

October 18, 2024, 12pm-1pm

Dr. Mandy Fauble, Ph.D., LCSW

Compassion Fatigue: The Cost of Caring for Medical Professionals

October 23, 2024, 12pm-1pm

Dr. Rachel Drosdick-Sigafoos, Ph.D.

Evaluation and Diagnosis of ADHD

October 25, 2024, 8am-9am

Dr. Lisa May, Ph.D., LPC

Trauma Responsive Practices in Policing: Protecting People and Communities

October 30, 2024, 12pm-1pm

Dennis Marsili, MA.

About NWPPA

Northwestern Pennsylvania Psychological Association (NWPPA) is a regional affiliate of the Pennsylvania Psychological Association (PPA). We encourage all mental health workers and graduate students in psychology in the NW PA region to consider joining NWPPA to enjoy benefits and opportunities to:

- Network/connect with others in our area who share similar professional interests
- Earn continuing education credits
- Assume a leadership position in NWPPA
- Receive communications about events and relevant issues *and* showcase professional accomplishments in our communications/on our social media sites

NWPPA's Purpose is to:

- Enhance and advance relationships among professional psychologists in Northwestern Pennsylvania
- Further the application of psychology as a field of scientific inquiry and professional practice.
- Promote quality psychological services for the betterment of human welfare through the maintenance of the ethical standards of the American Psychological Association and the Pennsylvania Psychological Association.

NORTHWESTERN PENNSYLVANIA PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

2024 NEW MEMBER APPLICATION (Current Members receive a dues statement in November)

Professional ____ Student ____

DIRECTORY INFORMATION

NOTE: Please print clearly and as you would like information to appear in the directory.

Name _____ Degree _____

Licenses/Certifications _____

Area(s) of Specialization _____

Organization _____

Mailing Address _____

Phone (office) _____ (home) _____

EMAIL _____ FAX _____

Correspondence including newsletters will be sent via email.

Please **circle** whether you agree to having your information published.

- I do / do not agree to have the above information included in the membership directory
- I do / do not agree to have the above information included on the NWPPA website

(home phone #s will not be used on the website).

Directory information may be used for referrals or for mailings regarding professional opportunities.

PLEASE MAIL THE COMPLETED APPLICATION WITH PAYMENT TO:

**NWPPA
c/o Michael Bucell
12607 Forrest Drive
Edinboro, PA 16412**

DUES OPTIONS

- ____ \$55.00 PROFESSIONAL TWO YEAR MEMBERSHIP (Jan. 2025 – Dec. 2026)
____ \$30.00 Professional One Year Membership (Jan. 2025- Dec. 2025)
____ \$10.00 Student (Jan. – Dec. 2025)

* Note: any new or past-due memberships received in October 2024 will be effective immediately through Dec. 2025

Checks should be made out to NWPPA. _____ Dues Amount

Additional Gift Contribution _____ Contribution

\$ _____ **TOTAL Enclosed**