ACA SURPASSES MEMBERSHIP GOAL!

ACA also surpassed its membership goal of 52,500 members in fiscal year 2013 by 839 members, ending fiscal year 2013 with 53,339 members. The membership goal for fiscal year 2014 is 57,500. Driven by an ever-expanding list of membership benefits, membership has grown to 54,495—a five percent increase since December 1, 2012. The expansion of existing programs and services has also helped to spur growth to a level not seen since 2003.

We also expanded our exclusive Members-Only Discount Program in 2013 by offering huge member savings on liability and auto insurance, prescription, lab and imaging services, as well as discounts from industry leaders in hotel, travel, office supplies, and much more. Click here to view your full list of exclusive member benefits.

In support of Membership Relations, ACA Member Information Specialists answered more than 23,000 telephone calls and processed over 21,600 new and renewal applications. While providing fast, friendly, and reliable service to members is its core purpose, the team also engaged non-members by providing information about membership, assisting with conference and webinar registrations, and facilitating the ordering process for publications and other products.

GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS TEAM FOCUSES ON LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

In 2013 ACA made significant progress on two important legislative priorities to the counseling profession: Medicare recognition of Licensed Professional Counselors and full integration into the Department of Veterans Affairs.

In December, for the first time since 2009, we saw a bill introduced in the House of Representatives that would expand Medicare coverage for counseling services. Representative Chris Gibson (NY-19) introduced H.R. 3662, the “Mental Health Access Improvement Act of 2013,” a companion piece of legislation to S. 562, which would finally rectify the omission of LPCs from Medicare Part B. ACA is in full support of this bi-partisan legislation and looks forward to working with Rep. Gibson and Sen. Wyden to get these bills passed in the new year.

ACA also worked with Senator Jon Tester to introduce important legislation that would expand career opportunities for Licensed Professional Counselors seeking employment in the Department of Veterans Affairs. S. 1155, the Rural Veterans Mental Health Improvement Act, mandates that the VA fully integrate counselors into its trainee program so that counselors can receive a financial stipend when they are enrolled in the trainee program. Psychologists, psychiatrists, and social workers all receive stipends as part of this program, but counselors are currently left out.

This is a training program that is also a well-proven pathway to a career within the VA. The VA itself has testified that over 65 percent of the psychologists employed by the VA today came through this program.

S. 1155 was incorporated into S. 1581, which was sent to the full Senate for consideration in mid-November. ACA will be working with the Senator to see that this bill is passed and receives support in the House as well. Click here to learn more about ACA Government Affairs.
2013 ILT PARTICIPANTS MAKE A DIFFERENCE

The fifth ACA Institute for Leadership Training brought over 100 current and emerging leaders from ACA Branches, Divisions, and Regions to Alexandria, VA in late July for seminars on advocacy strategies, issues facing the counseling profession, and effective leadership. Participants traveled to Capitol Hill to discuss the following topics with members of congress: funding for the Elementary and Secondary School Counseling Program and federal support for school counseling services; Medicare coverage of services provided by licensed professional counselors; and recognition and hiring of licensed professional counselors within the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

In addition to ACA’s regular “Day on the Hill” activities, ACA launched its first ever, photo message campaign to Congress. ACA members from across the country emailed photos of themselves with a message to Congress. These messages asked Congress to support ESSCP funding, increased employment of LPCs in the VA, as well as other statements. They were incorporated into handouts, which were delivered to Congressional offices by ILT participants. Thanks to all who participated in this campaign! ACA was able to double the number of counseling professionals that connected with their Members of Congress during the ILT!

Watch the 2013 ILT video, and a video montage of images from the photo message campaign.

ASSISTING THOSE AFFECTED BY TERRORISM AND NATURAL DISASTER

Within three hours of the terrorist attack at the Boston marathon, ACA sent an e-mail to members in the Boston area providing ACA-ARC developed sheltering-in-place guidelines to assist with the mandated community lock-down.

ACA also contacted members in the West, Texas area and provided trauma resources for counselors, clients, adults, and children after the massive explosion, injuries, and loss of life that occurred at the site of the former West Chemical and Fertilizer Co.

Members in the Newtown, CT area were offered assistance and provided trauma resources after the tragic shootings at Sandy Hooks Elementary School. We worked with the Connecticut Counseling Association to generate a list of volunteer counselors who could provide trauma-related counseling and to promote a CCA fund for those in need of trauma-related counseling who could not afford services.

MEDIA COVERAGE PROMOTES THE PROFESSION, INCREASES AWARENESS

In 2013, ACA worked hard to build important relationships with key media, including the Washington Post, USA Today, and Time Magazine. ACA Leadership, including Dr. Cirecie West Olatunji, President, participated in nearly 20 interviews on behalf of members. From a U.S. News & World Report article highlighting the important role of professional school counselors to a Huffington Post byline article discussing cyberbullying, ACA now has a regular presence in the news and is an active contributor to a growing national dialogue on mental health and mental health services. We look forward to continuing this important initiative in 2014.

Review coverage below:

- 09.16.13 - U.S. News & World Report: Student Support Act
- 10.07.13 - RT-TV: Joblessness and Depression
- 10.18.13 - The Huffington Post: Byline on Cyberbullying
- 10.18.13 - Washington Business Journal: Executive Profile
- 11.03.13 - WERS-FM: Cyberbullying
- 11.12.13 - CBS-WUSA-9: Affordable Care Act & Mental Health
- 11.20.13 - FOX-WTTG-5: Creigh Deeds & Mental Health Access
- 12.01.13 - School Nutrition Magazine: Recovering from the Unthinkable
- 12.02.13 - eSchool News: Technology & Counseling Children

THE ASSOCIATION FINISHES STRONG IN FY2013

ACA ended FY2013 with a profit of more than $800,000, which is up $200,000 from FY2012 profit. Membership revenues are by far the largest contributor, posting an increase of more than $422,000 over the prior year.

Other significant financial milestones for ACA during the fiscal year that ended June 30, 2013 included:

- Webinars brought in $117,000 more revenue than last year.
- Affinity programs posted increases of more than $35,000 largely due to the HPSO professional liability program.
The first full year under the Wiley journal program saw significant financial gains for both ACA and for the division journals, which ACA publishes. The association is stable, with more than $9 million in cash and investments. This is $1 million higher than the prior fiscal year.

**2013 Conference & Expo INSPIRED STRONG SENSE OF COMMUNITY**

Nearly 3,500 counseling professionals attended the ACA 2013 Conference & Expo in Cincinnati and approximately 85 percent of participants rated the event as excellent! Ashley Judd received a standing ovation for an extremely powerful presentation about her personal journey to recovery and stunned the crowds when she stayed to pose for photos with each person in line. Other highlights included:

- The ACA Client-Focused Research Series—sessions covered the therapeutic relationship, postpartum depression, and so much more. Each received an overwhelming response.
- The Counseling in Action Demonstration Series—counselors went wild for titles such as *Promoting Growth within a Group: Performing in the Here and Now* and *Counseling Returning Veterans with PTSD*.
- The Graduate Students and New Professionals Only Series—speakers such as Gerald Corey, Sam Gladding, and Don Locke were very well received.
- ACA’s Got Talent—The audience was blown away with singing, dancing, poetry, comedy, and more during our first talent show. See a photo montage [here](#).
- A record-breaking number of student volunteers—approximately 146 students participated in the Graduate Student Volunteer Program.
- We hope to see everyone in Hawaii this March! Everything you need to know about the 2014 Conference can be found [here](#).

**Another Successful Year for the ACA Publications Program**


**ACA Journals Reaching A New Global Audience**

In the second year of our publishing partnership with Wiley-Blackwell, the *Journal of Counseling & Development* and the nine division journals we publish now reach a greatly expanded worldwide audience through the Wiley Online Library, which is accessed by 12 million unique visitors each year. *JCD* is now available in 1,800 institutions worldwide via the Wiley-Blackwell license, and in 212 institutions in the developing world via philanthropic initiatives.

**Practice Briefs Expand in 2013**

After one year of implementation, the ACA Center for Counseling Practice, Policy, and Research Practice has posted 27 Practice Briefs (PBs) on the [Center’s website](#). (Practice Briefs are only available to ACA members.) Topics covered to date include:

- Adult Child Sexual Abuse Survivors
- Animal Assisted Therapy
- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD): Treating Adults
- Career Indecision
- Childhood Sexual Abuse
- Chronic Pain Counseling
- Clinical Depression
- Complex Trauma and Associated Diagnoses
- Conduct Disorder
- Death and Dying Issues
- Divorce and Children
- Generalized Anxiety Disorder
- Grief/Loss
- Integrating Religion and Spirituality into Counseling
- Intimate Partner Violence – Treating Battering Perpetrators
- Intimate Partner Violence – Treating Child Witnesses

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SCHOLARS-IN-RESIDENCE (SIR) PROGRAM OFF TO A PROMISING START

The ACA Center for Counseling Practice, Policy, and Research initiated the Scholars-in-Residence program in 2013. This unique program will provide selected ACA members with valuable experience in supporting federal, state, and community-based programs, work-force policies, and best practices in various counseling settings. During this inaugural year, the SIR program received 314 applications from practitioners and graduate students. Two positions will be filled in January 2014, with each SIR serving for one calendar year.

HPSO CLAIMS STUDY IN PROGRESS

ACA’s liability insurance carrier, HPSO, is conducting a study of factors that lead to malpractice lawsuits against counselors. The results will provide ACA members useful information in avoiding costly malpractice lawsuits. The final HPSO document is expected to be released for distribution by the end of December 2013. A formal presentation will be made at the ACA 2014 Conference & Expo in Honolulu, HI this March.

ACA LIBRARY LAUNCHES INTERVENTION AND ACTIVITIES CLEARINGHOUSE

ACA and the Association for Creativity in Counseling (ACC) introduced a new member resource in 2013: the ACA-ACC Creative Interventions and Activities Clearinghouse. This database, located here, is designed to showcase innovative activities and interventions developed for counselors by counselors. It also serves as an idea and information exchange focused on creative and relational interventions for counselors working with diverse populations. The Clearinghouse can help practitioners in five basic practice settings:

- Mental Health Agency/Private Practice Counseling
- Rehabilitation Counseling
- School Counseling
- College Counseling
- Counselor Education and Supervision

2014 LICENSURE REQUIREMENTS BOOK FINALIZED

The next edition of the Licensure Requirements for Professional Counselors was revised and completed for publication and release in January 2014. This edition features expanded sections on distance counseling/supervision as well as updated information regarding educational, experiential, and testing requirements for licensure in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. A new “What’s New for 2014” section will address changing requirements in the areas of citizenship/residency, continuing education, and criminal background checks. Updated information regarding emerging credential titles and reciprocity/portability mandates is included as well.

COUNSELING TODAY INTRODUCES POWERFUL NEW FEATURES

In January 2013, Counseling Today rolled out its first major design overhaul since converting to a magazine format in July 2008. That redesign was a major part of the reason why Counseling Today received an APEX award in the category of most improved magazines and journals in 2013. The magazine also won an APEX award in the writing series category for a two-part series on bullying published in the February and March issues. CT also introduced three new columns in 2013:

- Pages of Influence, in which well-known members of the counseling community share the books that have shaped them personally, professionally and philosophically
- Technology Tutor, which covers the different ways that technology is affecting counseling practice
- Deconstructing the DSM-5, which details changes to the recent revision of the diagnostic manual and examines the implications for counselors

To ensure that it keeps pace with the needs and interests of counselors, Counseling Today also established a reader’s panel composed of seven ACA members in February. The
Panelists critique each issue of the magazine and provide input on topics to cover and new ideas to implement.

But the magazine wasn’t the only area to evolve in 2013. Its companion website, CT Online, was busy posting a variety of original content not available elsewhere. Among the new features last year were “Behind the Book” interviews with authors of recently published ACA books and rotating poll questions that invited counselors to weigh in on a variety of topics. CT Online also earned its first APEX award last year in the category of best WordPress sites.

With the three awards it received in 2013, Counseling Today has earned a total of 31 awards recognizing exceptional writing, design and website content since 2005.

**ETHICS DEPARTMENT SERVES THOUSANDS**

The Ethics Department received and responded to more than 6,000 ethics inquiries via phone and email in 2013.

Areas of particular interest to members included duty to warn requirements, confidentiality restrictions, custodial concerns, and considerations when working with minors.

**ACA EXPANDS RISK MANAGEMENT SERVICES**

ACA expanded its risk management service in 2013. Members confronted with a risk management situation may now speak directly with a risk management expert regarding subpoenas/court orders, disclosing client information, and navigating complex professional situations. Email ethics@counseling.org or call 800-347-6637 ext. 314 for more information.

**COUNSELOR SALARY COMPENSATION SURVEY RESULTS COMING SOON**

ACA conducted its first Counselor Salary Compensation Survey this past fall. The data is currently being analyzed and the results will be published and available (as a document) in 2014. This effort aims to provide valuable information about the compensation and benefits packages typically granted to counselors around the country. The study will contain information on how compensation is affected by geography; specialty; education and credentials; and experience level. We intend to answer the following questions and more:

- How much do counselors make in different parts of the nation?
- How does licensure affect compensation?
- What kinds of benefits do counselors receive?
- What work setting is the best for a new counselor just entering the profession?

**WEBSITES PROVIDE THOUGHTFUL GUIDANCE FOR TIMELY ISSUES**

ACA webinars were very well received in 2013. We generated more than $247,000 in webinar revenue and broke attendance records with more than 1,000 registrants for our DSM-5 series. Other webinars averaged between 300 and 500 participants; more than 2500 members attended the following webinars throughout the year:

- Confronting the Darkness; Non-Suicidal Self-Injury, Suicide Assessment, and Counselor Self-Care After Client Suicide
- DSM-5 Specifics, Drilling Down With the New Diagnostic Tools
- DSM-5: Navigating the New Terrain
- Adult ADHD: Help Your Clients to Thrive: if they have ADHD (or think they might)
- The Secrets to Surviving Infidelity
- Depression: New and Emerging Treatment Strategies

**PODCASTS GAIN POPULARITY EACH YEAR**

ACA produced eight new podcasts this calendar year, covering topics including Disability Awareness, Behavior Code in Schools, DSM-5 and CPT codes, Reality Therapy, and Child Sexual Abuse Survivors. The two DSM-5 focused podcasts were produced before distribution of the DSM-5 publication as part of ACA’s overall effort to educate members on important changes and provide answers and guidance for common questions and concerns. Members can download and listen to ACA podcasts free of charge (obtaining a CE requires payment) here.

**ACA BLOGS SHARE IMPORTANT PERSPECTIVES IN 2013**

ACA currently has 35 active bloggers on MyCounseling.Org. Topics represented in 2013 include: Adult Development & Aging; Assessment, Career & Employment Counseling; Children & Adolescents; Counselor Education & Supervision; Creativity, Ethics & Legal Issues; LGBTQ Issues; Marriage, Couples, & Family; Military, Multiculturalism & Diversity; Social Justice; Offenders; Private Practice Management; Professional Issues; Rehabilitation & Disability; School Counseling; Spirituality and Religious Values; Substance Abuse & Addictions; Trauma and Disaster; and Wellness. Approximately 450 blogs were posted in FY 13.
CAREER RESOURCES ON THE RISE

The Fierce List of counseling jobs consists of more than 120 positions (updated monthly) throughout the four ACA regions: Southern, North Atlantic, Midwest, and Western Region. The following categories were represented in 2013: College Counseling; Government; Counselor Educator; Rehabilitation/Vocational; School Counseling; Offender/Correctional; Substance Abuse/Addictions; Couples/Marriage/Family; Career/Employment; and Spiritual/Religious Counseling. The ACA Career Center page received 36,146 views in 2013 and our job listings received a total of 124,381 views.

COUNSELING.ORG THRIVES IN 2013

Support. Guidance. Illumination. These words represent the core of the new counseling.org. After months of thoughtful input and feedback, we proudly present this reflection of your ACA. Welcome.

On March 1, 2013, ACA re-launched counseling.org with the above message. The result of nearly two years of planning, the new site provides a pleasant viewing experience independent of device. Along with the design improvements, counseling.org boasts a powerful search engine, and a system that allows a greater number of staff to update content more quickly. These efforts have been recognized with a Hermes Gold Award, a MarCom Gold Award, and an APEX Award of Excellence.

Additionally, 2013 saw the launch of “ACA Connect,” an online community for ACA members. With over 5,000 members having visited the site, this knowledge-sharing community is growing every day. A sampling of popular discussions include topics as varied as:

- Addictions and family
- Billing
- Discussing my physical disability with clients
- Mandate to take the NCMHCE

One client, more than one therapist- is this allowed?

Aside from ACA Open Forum (the all-inclusive member only community), the most active community has been the 2014 ACA Annual Conference & Exposition Community. Visit counseling.org and start connecting today.

ACA PARTICIPATES IN NATIONAL DIALOGUE ON MENTAL HEALTH

On October 12, 2013 ACA participated in a town hall event hosted by Creating Community Solutions and DC Mayor Vincent Gray. The event was part of the National Dialogue on Mental Health, which was launched as part of the President’s plan to protect our children and our communities by reducing gun violence. More than 400 people convened at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center in Washington DC, with participants ranging from middle school students and consumers to mental health professionals, associations, and facilities. Presenters included Mayor Gray; Steven Brigham, President of American Speaks; Dr. Joseph Wright from the Washington DC Children’s Medical Center; Councilwoman Yvette Alexander, Chair of the Washington DC committee on Health; Stephen Baron from the Washington DC Department of Behavioral Health; and Dr. Dr. Paramjit Joshi from the George Washington University School of Medicine. ACA’s input focused on the need for early assessment in schools through the funding of school counselors and the need to fund professional counselors in mental health settings to address the chronic under treatment of those with mental health issues.

20/20 DELEGATES ACHIEVE CONSENSUS ON LICENSURE TITLE AND SCOPE OF PRACTICE

The delegates to 20/20: A Vision for the Future of Counseling completed work on their final initiative, the Building Blocks to Portability Project, by reaching consensus on a licensure title and scope of practice. Delegates proposed that Licensed Professional Counselor be the licensure title supported by the profession of counseling. They also proposed a scope of practice for licensing boards that focuses on individual, group, couples, and family counseling; mental health wellness; development across the lifespan; crisis intervention; the diagnosis and treatment of mental disorders; consultation and program evaluation; supervision; and the ability to practice independently. The proposed title and scope of practice now go to the 31 participating organizations for endorsement. For more information and updates, click here.

ACA PROMOTES SAFE AND SUPPORTIVE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENTS

In late 2013, ACA partnered with the American Psychological Association (APA) to implement the Safe and Supportive Schools Project (SSSP). Funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), SSSP promotes the establishment of safe and supportive school environments for all students and staff as an approach for preventing HIV and other sexually transmitted infections for adolescents. Selected ACA school counselors are reviewing resources and providing implementation guidance for interventions that school counselors, school nurses, school psychologists, and school social workers can use in their school districts.
ACA Provides Input into The Occupational Outlook Handbook

ACA worked with the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics to update the Occupational Outlook Handbook for the 2014 edition. ACA reviewed the descriptions of all counseling specialties and provided current information, terminology, and responsibilities.

ACA Examines Guidelines for Video-Based Mental Health Services

ACA provided the American Telemedicine Association (ATA) with feedback on the development of ATA Practice Guidelines for Video-Based Online Mental Health Services. ACA suggested that a number of imperatives be removed in order to reduce liability exposure for counselors.

2014 Conference: Highest # of Program Submissions in 5 Years

ACA received a very healthy 1,354 program submissions for the 2014 Conference & Expo in Hawaii (March 27–30, Pre-conference Learning Institutes: March 6–27). This is the highest number of submissions in the past five years and bodes well for an excellent conference this spring!

Counseling Corner Represents Profession Nationwide

During the past year, ACA re-instated a popular public outreach program called the “Counseling Corner.” This program provides weekly columns to newspapers across the country. The columns offer practical advice related to counseling issues: child rearing, parent-teen communications, career planning, recognizing depression, and more. The columns are now carried by almost 80 publications in 33 states and two Canadian provinces. Through these publications ACA is reaching more than two million readers each week and helping them better understand the many ways in which professional counselors can assist people from all walks of life. The columns are also available online here.

Social Media Presence Triples in 2013

ACA’s presence on and use of social media expanded throughout 2013 and the number of followers continues to grow. As of mid December, we have more than 12,000 followers on Facebook, almost 10,000 followers on Twitter, and almost 20,000 on LinkedIn. ACA also has a YouTube channel and the popular blog, MyCounseling.Org.

2013 Learning Resources & Opportunities at a Glance

Online CE courses added ........................................45
Online CE courses purchased ................................2,667
Free “CE of the month” sessions taken ..........39,817
Pre-conference Learning Institutes, education sessions, and poster sessions at the 2013 conference .......................................................... 524
Personalized ethics consults ..................................6,276
Personalized professional standards consults .... 1,382
Referrals for personalized risk management consults (a service afforded only by ACA)....... 293
Personalized career consults (conference and headquarters).......................... 358
Webinars offered ........................................22 one-hour webinars
Webinar registrants .............................................2,707
Personalized library consults ................................255
Views of ACA-ACES Syllabus Clearinghouse ........................................13,917
Views of VISTAS .............................................34,515
Number of blog posts ........................................349
Total number of blog views ..............................81,960
Jobs posted ......................................................1,313
Views of Career Center page .......................206,571
Practice Briefs.....................................................27
Scholars-in-Residence Applications Received (First Round Competition) ...............314
THANKS FOR A GREAT YEAR!

ACA would like to thank all of its members for another successful year. Together, we made major accomplishments in 2013, from important legislative progress and increased awareness of the counseling profession through national media coverage… to exciting new member benefits, resources, and education opportunities. ACA looks forward to serving you in 2014. Great things are to come.

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