



“You don’t have to be great to get started, but you have to get started to be great.”

- Les Brown

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It’s clear that as a profession, and association, we need to do a better job developing future leaders. Recently, I heard that if you want to start a revolution, you need to begin with the students...and Early Career Psychologists (ECPs). Nowhere is this more true than in the field of psychology. Over the course of the last several years, there’s been an increased focus on adequately addressing the needs of ECPs. Rightfully so, we have realized that if we don’t do a better job meeting the needs of our students and ECPs, we’ll eventually lose momentum and fall short as a profession. Like all things in psychology, CPA needs to be proactive in this area.

A good leader doesn’t create more followers, but more notably, creates more leaders. As I reflect upon my journey from student to ECP in the CPA, it’s clear that it has been filled with meaningful experiences that have resonated with my core values. At this past month’s APA State Leadership Conference, I attended one of the Plenary Sessions presented by Jeff De Cagna. De Cagna described what he calls an “*architecture of participation*” as an association’s ability to think creatively when developing opportunities for volunteers and leaders. In essence, De Cagna describes the importance of acknowledging that people want an opportunity to design their own pathways for meaningful participation and contributions to the association’s on-going activities. In my perspective, many ECP’s fall into this category.

It’s important to understand that ECPs professional journey may look different than the professional journey of our more seasoned colleagues. As a result of these potential differences, we need to think about how we can create meaningful opportunities where ECPs can create their own architectural plan of participation, rather than only look for people to fill in already existing positions and vacancies. De Cagna stated that many associations have a hard time shifting to a mindset that reflects this particular value. Rather, many associations would assume continuing down the same path with honoring “tradition,” doing more of the same while only shifting and reflexively responding in times of need. It is critical that CPA honor our past, while simultaneously embracing our future.

I am pleased about this particular issue of the CP and the work that the CPA is doing toward this end. As noted in this issue, our newly formed Early Career Psychologist Committee is well represented and doing excellent work on behalf of the association and state. While we have begun this process, we still have much work to do. Our future depends on our ability to create meaningful spaces for ECPs to further develop their own unique pathways and leadership skills in the association. As an association we have realized that in order to be great, we need to get started. We’ve done so, and we’ll continue down this path for our continued success.



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