



Networking Meals

The networking meals have two purposes: one, to increase the sense of community among psychologists and trainees by providing an informal setting to network and make connections and, two, to share information and discuss ideas with fellow psychologists who share like interests. Each meal has a specific focus, as described below.

No prior knowledge or skills are required – just an innate curiosity and a desire to get to know one another better. Please be sure to take this opportunity to get to know your fellow VA psychologists!

Day 1 – Thursday, May 18, 2017

General Breakfast Area

Where: Navarro Ballroom

Topic: Open for everyone

Welcome Breakfast: Introduction to the Conference

Hosts: Dr. Ron Girona, Dr. Monica Roy, and Dr. Manuel Garcia

Where: Zapata

Goals of the breakfast

- The Welcome Breakfast is open to any conference attendee; however, we specifically hope to reach out to trainees and first-time attendees who may want some more information about the conference.

Specific objectives

- Introduce different aspects of the conference (e.g., how to choose breakouts, networking lunches).
- Share a brief history of the conference and the sponsoring organizations.
- Discuss strategies for networking effectively.

General Lunch Area**Where: Navarro Ballroom****Topic: Open for everyone**

Networking Lunch: Meet the AVAPL and Division 18 Officers**Hosts: Dr. Ron Gironda, Dr. Tom Kirchberg, Dr. Mary Beth Shea, Dr. John McQuaid, Dr. Sam Wan, Dr. Shirley Glynn, and Dr. Monica Roy****Where: Navarro Ballroom**

Goals for the conversation

- This gathering invites attendees interested in learning more about AVAPL and Division 18 and what each organization can offer their members.

Questions for attendees

- What have you gained from being a member of one or both of these organizations?
 - What initiatives would you like to see each organization pursue in the coming year?
 - What leadership opportunities would be of interest to you?
-

Networking Lunch: Women in Leadership SIG**Hosts: Dr. Antonette Zeiss, Dr. Nicole Shiber, Dr. Lisa Kearney, and Dr. Cheryl Lowman****Where: Olivares**

Goals for the conversation

- Discuss formation of the new Women in Leadership SIG in AVAPL.
- Discuss ongoing challenges to women regarding reaching leadership roles in VA and other professional settings, performing effectively in them, balancing multiple roles, etc.
- Brainstorm how the SIG can provide support and resources to women regarding leadership and to male colleagues who support women in leadership.

Questions for attendees

- Do you know about the new SIG and have you joined the email group?
- What challenges have you faced when pursuing or performing in a leadership position? What assisted you in overcoming these challenges?
- How can the SIG support you in handling these challenges? Think freely – we hope to generate a breadth of ideas.

Networking Lunch: Advocacy**Hosts: Dr. Heather Kelly, Dr. Kathy McNamara, and Dr. Jay Cohen****Where: Zapata**

Goals for the conversation

- A discussion of how and when VA psychologists can be involved in advocacy given the restrictions in place for federal employees.
- Exploring the kinds of issues VA psychologists are most interested in advocating about and with whom.

Questions for attendees

- Do you have any experience advocating for your clinical work and/or your research at the hospital/local/state/federal level?
 - What are your concerns about participating in advocacy?
 - If there are clinical and/or research issues that are so important to you that you stay up at night worrying about them, what can you imagine doing about them?
-

Networking Lunch: Diversity/Psychologists of Color**Hosts: Dr. Gayle Iwamasa and Dr. Christopher Watson****Where: Villa**

Goals for the conversation

- Introduce members of the newly formed Psychologists of Color Special Interest Group (SIG).
- Gain a greater understanding of the issues faced by psychologists of color, particularly related to hiring and promotion.
- Discuss the purpose, mission, and goals of the SIG for the upcoming year
- Identify ways in which the SIG can help inform the larger AVAPL membership.

Questions for attendees

- What obstacles or sources of support have you encountered in the workplace and/or when pursuing a leadership position?
- What do you think other psychologists need to understand about the experience of psychologists of color and how might this information be disseminated?
- What are your ideas for initiatives that the Psychologists of Color SIG should or could pursue?

Day 2 – Friday, May 19, 2017**General Breakfast Area****Where: Navarro Ballroom****Topic: Open for everyone**

Job Exploration Breakfast: Overview of Upcoming VA Job Opportunities**Host: Dr. George Shorter****Where: Zapata**

Goals of the breakfast

- The Job Exploration Breakfast is open to any conference attendee; however, we specifically hope to connect those seeking employment with those who have current or future open psychologist positions.

Specific objectives

- Connect psychology chiefs with job-seeking psychologists/trainees.
 - Discuss strategies for successfully obtaining VA employment.
 - Provide information about job opportunities at different VA facilities.
-

General Lunch Area**Where: Navarro Ballroom****Topic: Open**

Networking Lunch: Building Morale**Hosts: Dr. Steven Lovett, Dr. Lisa Kearney, and Dr. George Shorter****Where: Navarro**

Goals of the conversation

- Explore organizational, interpersonal, and work-related issues that impact morale and discuss ways to restore hope.

Questions for attendees

- How have the changes in the VA and the practice of mental health in the past 2+ years impacted morale at your facility?
- What other obstacles have you faced that have led to job dissatisfaction and burnout?
- What strategies have you and your colleagues employed or hope to employ to improve morale and restore hope?

Networking Lunch: Early Career Psychologists
Hosts: Dr. Theresa Schmitz and Dr. Josh Rinker
Where: Olivares

Goals of the conversation

- The ECP Networking Lunch invites VA psychologists in the first ten years of their career (or in their first years with the VA) to engage in networking and conversations on specific steps to advocate for their career trajectory of choice.
- Discussion will be open to all with varied career interests. Please consider your local time challenges, administrative needs, personal career interests, and needed trainings, assignments, and other opportunities.

Questions for attendees

- Please consider a project or role you would like to pursue at your facility or within VA. What steps have you already taken in pursuit of this goal? What other obstacles have you faced that have led to job dissatisfaction and burnout?
 - What is the role of mentorship in charting a career in a new direction; what have you tried and was it successful? Why or why not?
 - What barriers do you perceive related to getting yourself or others involved with AVAPL or Division 18? What opportunities would you like to know more about within VA, AVAPL, or Division 18?
-

Networking Lunch: Mid-Career Psychologists
Hosts: Dr. Jay Cohen and Dr. Laura Phillips
Where: Zapata

Goals for the conversation

- Discuss information gathered during last year's Mid-Career Psychologists lunch and identify issues specific to mid-career psychologists.
- Discuss obstacles to promotion and the recent revisions in the Psychology Qualification Standards.
- Solicit participants' ideas about how AVAPL and Division 18 can better serve mid-career psychologists.

Questions for attendees

- What challenges do mid-career psychologists face within the organization and related to professional growth?
- In what way has involvement in professional organizations like AVAPL or Division 18 helped you at this point in your career? In what other ways can these organizations support you?
- What are some of the goals that you have developed for your career, and what has been most helpful to you in reaching some of these goals?

Networking Lunch: Psychology Training**Hosts: Stacy Pommer, Dr. Stacey Pollack, Dr. Ken Jones, and Dr. Bernadette Pasquale****Where: Villa**

Goals for the conversation

- This gathering will invite open discussion of topics relevant to psychology trainees, supervisors, training directors and others who have interest in training.

Questions for attendees

- Accreditation: What challenges are sites facing in the accreditation/reaccreditation process and transition to the new Standards of Accreditation (SoA)?
- Accreditation fee payment: Discussion of national Blanket Purchase Agreement with APA and site visitor travel
- Recruitment: What challenges are sites facing and any examples of best practices for recruitment?