

Member at Large Statement
Julie A. Garcia

It is with great enthusiasm that I write about the unique qualities I would bring to the SPSP board as your Member at Large for Outreach and Advocacy. My commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion has led me to seek out opportunities for outreach and advocacy in my research, teaching, and service, and have prepared me to serve in this role. Within SPSP, I have served on the Nominations Committee and the Diversity and Climate Committee (DCC). Most notably, I co-led a diversity and climate survey of our membership and co-wrote the corresponding [report](#), for which I received the Service to SPSP Award. With these data in hand, the DCC advocated for, and implemented, tangible changes for our most underserved members, including increasing funding for graduate student diversity awards and developing an underrepresented undergraduate student mentoring event. In my role as Interim Associate Vice President of Diversity and Inclusion at Cal Poly, I translated psychological research to inform equitable policies across campus, including marketing, admissions, student affairs, and academic divisions. At a national level, I consult and give talks on the application of social psychological research to real-world problems, including diversity, equity, and inclusion best practices. I have also provided consulting services and given talks to increase inclusive practices in university teaching and health fields.

My research and teaching focus on questions pertaining to belonging, intergroup relations, social identity, and social justice. These topics also inform my leadership approach. Whether I am in front of a classroom of undergraduates, or giving talks to higher education leaders or practitioners, I always wonder, whose voices are we hearing as we inform, lead, and practice? Who is given a “seat at the table”? Who is being asked to contribute? What are we missing when the content we teach, the people we ask to lead, or the ways we practice do not reflect the diversity of the human experience?

As the SPSP Member at Large for Outreach and Advocacy, I would advocate for new and creative ways to engage the public to increase utilization of social psychological research, such as growing our social media presence and diversifying dissemination strategies. For example, I would examine the diversity of the contributors to our [“Character & Context”](#) blog posts to see if there are opportunities to ensure we are inviting members from teaching-focused institutions and industry to contribute, as well as examining other aspects of diversity such as first-generation status, gender identity, race and ethnicity, and sexual orientation. I would also work towards providing resources to our members to help provide them with the tools to best disseminate their findings to practitioners, government leaders, and a general audience by facilitating workshops and talks at our annual conference.

As social and personality psychologists, we have so much to offer the public. Our SPSP members collect data and have developed theories to address some of our most challenging social problems, including addressing equity gaps in higher education, examining mental and physical health disparities, exploring ways to improve intergroup

relationships, uncovering reasons for sexual and physical violence, and understanding causes of political division. Many of our members are already engaged in outreach and advocacy efforts, but more is needed. We do our field a disservice if we do not continue to explore new avenues to expand our reach beyond our academic institutions. As your Member at Large for Outreach and Advocacy, I would eagerly take on this challenge of helping to facilitate SPSP's core goal of using our work and theory to benefit society.