

## **CONRAE LUCAS-ADKINS** **State Delegate Candidate: West Virginia**

### *Statement 2*

**NASP Leaders have adopted five strategic goals that guide the association's work. In your state, what are some gains being made in school psychology practice related to these goals, and what are some pressing challenges?**

First, I want to applaud our state association's efforts over the past 3 years in addressing the NASP strategic goals through advocacy, professional development opportunities, and collaboration with our state department of education and other groups of school mental health providers. Our state's strategic plan is closely aligned with NASP's key initiatives, and our members are committed to following the NASP Practice Model, as evidenced by the work that is done in our local schools on a daily basis. The school psychologists in our state are amazing implementers of "best practices" across all NASP domains, and many of them do so without recognition or accolades; their hearts are just genuinely focused on strengthening supports for youth and families. If elected to a second term as WV Delegate, I will seek out recognition opportunities for our practitioners and also connect them with others across the nation that have similar interests and are doing similar work. Furthermore, as a delegate, I will maintain my role as a liaison between NASP and the state association, bringing back discussions and ideas from other state and NASP leaders regarding advancement of the strategic goals. I want our practitioners to feel connected with a community of school psychologists and to know there are others who have faced similar professional challenges and have overcome them successfully.

WV has made notable gains in addressing the shortages of school psychologists, promoting school psychologists as behavioral/mental health providers, advancing social justice, and implementing the NASP Practice Model. Our state association maintains a strong relationship with the state's only school psychology graduate training program; members provide mentorship to graduate students and offer volunteer opportunities for students within the association. The training program actively seeks input from the association when developing assessments of candidate performance and dispositions and when enhancing the content of the courses within the program. The association has helped promote the training program's efforts to reach potential candidates who are further from the main campus and/or limited in their ability to come to campus regularly for classes. This partnership has helped to increase numbers of school psychologists who want to remain in WV. WVSPA's conferences consistently offer workshops connected with the strategic goals, and this upcoming spring conference will be completely devoted to social justice. Advocacy efforts led by our GPR and other association members have led to increased recognition of school psychologists as mental health providers and the expansion of this service delivery by school psychologists. A new position was recently created at our state department of education for a coordinator of school psychological services; this is evidence of our association's advocacy and commitment to full implementation of the NASP Practice Model.

Although significant gains have been made, our state's challenges include: broadening the role of school psychologist, meeting the NASP recommended school psychologist to student ratio, and aligning our state's

credentialing language with that of the NASP standards. Yet, given the health of our association and the determination of our members, I anticipate continual movement forward.