The NASP Leadership Assembly has adopted three 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?

The NASP Strategic Plan adopted in 2022 serves to guide our association’s work. During my first term as Delegate and to advance our goals, I have promoted the NASP Model for Comprehensive and Integrated School Psychological Services (Practice Model) by providing professional development and consultation to raise awareness, bolster skillset, and facilitate growth. I presented at undergraduate institutions to address workforce shortages and have worked with state leaders in developing avenues to increase recruitment, retention, and satisfaction in professional roles. I also have increased support for graduate students of minoritized backgrounds by serving as mentor and providing professional development. To address NASP’s third strategic goal, we have worked as advocates for socially just practices through professional development, leadership development, and by increasing engagement of members and leaders, especially those from minoritized backgrounds. I lead the largest group of school psychology practitioners, students, faculty, and supervisors from Florida and other states in meetings and activities to identify and interrupt inequities in educational settings for multilingual students. Our work is not done, but Florida is making steps in the right direction.

Promoting safe and healthy school climates is a FASP priority. The LGBTQ+ population is being targeted in Florida, putting children and youth in danger. We are ethically obligated to ensure that all students have an equal opportunity for the development and expression of their personal identity. We have been strong advocates and have partnered with organizations to provide guidance on laws which are in conflict with our professional ethics. We have provided professional development and access to resources to equip school psychologists to work with vulnerable populations. I organized an LGBTQ Town Hall with fierce student and community leaders to highlight student experiences and to promote safe, accepting, and respectful school climates, free from harassment and discrimination. For all our work, we have consulted with expert NASP leaders and obtained resources to improve our advocacy.

To promote fair and equitable schools, we must continue to advocate for the reduction of ineffective disciplinary practices such as corporal punishment and the increase of school-wide strategies and Positive Behavior Supports. We must continue promoting school psychologists as mental health professionals to increase student access to mental and behavioral health, reduce suicide rates, and decrease racism and other discriminatory practices. We also must continue promoting policies and legislation that affirm the right to services for all students, including the LGBTQ+ population and other marginalized groups.

As an immigrant from Peru, my experience as an English learner in elementary school inspired me to become a school psychologist passionate about social justice. I deeply understand the needs of our profession and will continue to be an effective liaison between NASP and all school psychologists in Florida by providing timely
resources and by facilitating advocacy for our profession. My vision is to have all Florida school psychologists working together to advance the profession and build a better future for the students and families we serve. I hope to count on your vote!