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?

In Nevada, our state association, the Nevada Association of School Psychologists (NVASP), has been at the forefront of championing our field and advocating for our students by aligning with NASP's three strategic goals. As a longtime active member of NVASP, including participation as a Board member for the past three years, I have been able to observe and actively engage in the promotion of the NASP Practice Model, addressing workforce shortages, and the progression of social justice initiatives. While we have made many gains, numerous challenges lie ahead.

As school psychologists, we are often typecast solely as evaluators and gatekeepers for special education services. In response, NVASP has played a pivotal role in transforming these perceptions at both local and state levels through its active promotion of the NASP Practice Model. NVASP has not only shared valuable information but also offered staunch support for legislation that differentiates the unique role of school psychologists from other educators. Moreover, we have advocated for the widespread integration of the NASP Practice Model in the assessment and licensure processes of school psychologists within our state. In tandem with our legislative efforts, NVASP has been instrumental in facilitating professional development opportunities. Collaborations with other state organizations and providers, both direct and indirect, ensure that school psychologists in Nevada have access to the training and resources needed to effectively implement this model. However, our most significant obstacle in adopting the NASP Practice Model remains the persistent workforce shortages.

In response to workforce shortages, NVASP maintains a close partnership with the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV), the sole school psychology program in the state. This collaboration includes professors and students on our board, fostering open communication and raising awareness about the state's training programs. Furthermore, a second graduate-level school psychology program at Nevada State University is set to launch next fall, aiming to address workforce shortages by establishing a pipeline starting from high school. NVASP actively advocates for increased educational funding and equitable pay for school psychologists at the legislative level. We are committed to ongoing collaboration with UNLV and the forthcoming program at NSU to recruit and train a diverse pool of school psychologists, including those from minority backgrounds. Our advocacy efforts, at both state and local levels, are geared towards ensuring equitable compensation for our current practitioners, ultimately reducing shortages and enhancing working conditions, which will enable the broader implementation of the NASP Practice Model within school and community settings.

Finally, concerning social justice, NVASP has taken a firm stance against retention policies that could disproportionately affect minority and English Language Learner students. Both NVASP and some of our largest school districts offer professional development opportunities, with NVASP actively endorsing participation in the
LGBTQIA+ Pride Festival. While progress has been made in this and the other two areas, as your state delegate, I pledge my continual commitment to further elevate these realms.