



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
School Psychologists

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Pamela Agan-Smith Receives NASP 2015 School Psychologist of the Year Award

Bethesda, MD—The National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) has named Pamela Agan-Smith, PsyD, as 2015 School Psychologist of the Year. NASP established the award in 1990 to recognize individual school psychologists who have demonstrated exemplary dedication and effectiveness in improving the well-being of children, families, and schools, and in advancing the profession of school psychology.

Dr. Agan-Smith has been a school psychologist in the Greenville Central School District (GCSD) located in Greenville just south of Albany, NY for 31 years. She earned her Associate of Science degree at Corning Community College, her Bachelor of Science in Psychology at Binghamton University and her Master of Science and Doctor of Psychology degrees at the University at Albany. When she began practicing at GCSD, Dr. Agan-Smith was the district's only school psychologist. She became a fervent advocate for students with disabilities, and within her first 3 years helped develop three new special education programs.

As a leader and innovator, Dr. Agan-Smith has decisively and positively impacted the health, well-being, and academic achievement of her students. According to NASP President Stephen E. Brock, Dr. Agan-Smith "exemplifies services in the areas of systems change, prevention and intervention, more effective instruction, and improving the mental health of students." Her colleagues in GCSD describe her as passionate in her work, with a constant warmth and sense of humor. They appreciate her down-to-earth, solution-focused perspective, noting that "she thinks like a scientist but always works from her heart."

Dr. Agan-Smith has implemented several innovative programs with regard to both learning and instruction and students' mental health. For example, in response to an increase in evaluation referrals for reading disabilities, she led teachers and administrators to begin a new early literacy intervention program and to shift to more balanced reading instruction. She organized summer inservice sessions for

teachers and was involved in all aspects of the programs' scheduling, implementation, and evaluation. Her efforts resulted in better instruction for all students and a decrease in both reading failure and referrals for disability evaluation.

With regard to mental health, the former director of the children's unit in the county mental health agency once said of Dr. Agan-Smith, "It was well known in our agency that the Greenville school system had the most competent mental health and counseling services in the county, and Pam was the driving force behind this success." Dr. Agan-Smith has developed and led parent support groups, preteen Girls and Boys Clubs, an after-school Al-A-Teen program, peer-mediation, and suicide prevention programs, and she annually presents to students on stress management and relaxation techniques. In addition, she organized and developed procedures for responding to mental health crises and GCSD's first district-wide crisis plan.

Dr. Agan-Smith also continues to mentor school psychology interns and early career professionals through her work at GCSD and by presenting at local colleges and universities. She has been an active leader in the New York Association of School Psychologists (NYASP), serving as a Chapter Representative and NYASP representative on the NY State Education Department RTI Advisory Group. She also served on the committees for three regional NYASP conferences.

A faculty member at a local university states that Dr. Agan-Smith's "love for the work, her optimism about the future, and her commitment to evidence-based practice make her an excellent model for what a school psychologist should be." NASP congratulates Dr. Agan-Smith on this well-deserved award and on being one of the individuals who exemplifies the essence of helping all children and youth thrive in school, at home, and throughout life.

NASP represents 25,000 school psychologists throughout the United States and abroad. NASP empowers school psychologists by advancing effective practices to improve students' learning, behavior, and mental health. Further information about school psychology, NASP, and our School Psychologist of the Year is available at www.nasponline.org.

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