**The Small Grants - Promoting Partnerships Committee is pleased to announce the 2015 Award Winners:**

Mara Bentley (Los Angeles Trade Technical College), Sky Chafin (Grossmont College), Jerry Rudmann (Irvine Valley College), & Amira Wegenek (Saddleback College)

Southern California Teaching of Psychology Conference

The Los Angeles Community College District is the largest community college district in the United States and is one of the largest in the world. The LACCD consists of nine colleges and covers an area of more than 882 square miles. Our nine colleges offer educational opportunities to students in 40 cities and communities. A primary objective of this conference will be to address student success along multiple dimensions, including non-cognitive factors that influence student success and maximizing the usefulness of student learning outcome assessment. Conference programming will include a distinguished keynote speaker on research-based strategies for enhancing the academic success of today’s high school and college students, followed by a variety of panel presentations on meaningful assessment of student learning, engaging students in psychological research and service learning, retention strategies, and fostering professional competence and career readiness in students of psychology. Moreover the conference will provide opportunities for teachers to both network and exchange effective teaching strategies.

Paige Fisher (Seton Hall University), Janine Buckner (Seton Hall University), & Crystal Izquierdo (Seton Hall University)

Engaging Creative Thinkers: Collaborative Partnerships among High School and University Psychology Courses

This project focuses on incorporating critical thinking skills into high school and college psychology courses and developing partnerships amongst the participating faculty. Through multiple sessions during a one-day workshop, participants will discuss infusing critical thinking into the classroom, improving teaching and enhancing student engagement. Topics addressed in workshop sessions will include: a general discussion of pedagogy and methodological practices, critical thinking and the scientific method, increasing information literacy, evaluating students’ written work to enhance critical thinking, and utilizing technology to increase critical thinking. We also aim to stimulate an interactive, collegial network amongst participants for gaining additional resources, feedback, and support. The efficacy and generalizability of this workshop will be assessed at three different time points for comparison (Pre conference, several weeks before the event and at Post-Conference, two months later). Our hope is to find changes in awareness, activity, and confidence in instructors’ incorporation of critical-thinking into their coursework and curricula. This project is the preliminary step in the development of an ongoing collaboration between faculty from area high schools and colleges, with later components to include high school and college students as participants.

Rose Danek (Columbus State University) & Jennifer Daniels (Lyon College)

Collaborative Virtual Student Research Conference

The purpose of this project is to create a Virtual Research Conference to pilot test between two schools, with the ultimate goal being a virtual conference that is low- or no-cost to attend where students from many different institutions can present work. Using webcams and specialized software, students across our two institutions will collaborate to evaluate each other’s work at key points in the research process: topic choices, research design, and write-up and presentation. This procedure will allow students to get feedback from a source other than their classmates, as well as practice in justifying the procedural and statistical choices they make. Ultimately, we will hold a virtual conference in which students will give live research poster and paper presentations. Assessment rubrics will be used to evaluate the quality of the papers and talks created for the class. Rubrics will also be used to assess the quality of the feedback given to the student being assessed, and the application of the feedback to the final product. Finally, we will collect indirect assessments of students’ self-reported anxiety levels, students’ feelings about the project, and perceived quality of the peer-review process.

Amy Fineburg (Alabaster City Schools)

Steering Committee Meeting for a National Conference on High School Education in Psychology

This project will bring together 10 psychologists and high school teachers to plan an international summit on high school psychology. The steering committee meeting, which will take place in June of 2015, will identify a place to hold the summit, criteria for selecting participants, and topics for discussion during the summit. The summit, to be held in June or July of 2016, will provide a framework for addressing curricular, instructional, and administrative issues particular to high school psychology. The resulting framework will give policymakers, teachers, and administrators guidance for developing, offering, and teaching high school psychology.