

## News From the SIOPI United Nations Team

### SIOPI Representatives to the United Nations:

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**Alexander Gloss, *North Carolina State University***

The SIOPI UN Team continues its efforts to bring work-, worker-, and employment-related theory, research, and practice to help advance the goals of the United Nations and increase I-O psychologists' potential for global impact. We remain dedicated to involving as many SIOPI members as possible in these initiatives and will continue to look for opportunities such as the United Nations Agency Project described below. In addition to that project, please note that SIOPI members can participate in this year's Psychology Day at the UN, which is focused on sustainable development and cochaired by Lori Foster Thompson. This event is described below along with information about registration.

Our team members are also involved in other activities that connect the work of the United Nations with the field of I-O psychology. Examples of these efforts include work with the Istanbul International Center for the Private Sector in Development, the Psychology Coalition

at the United Nations, and the Global Compact, all described below. For ongoing updates and opportunities, please visit our SIOPI United Nations Team group page on my.SIOPI.

#### **United Nations Agency Project**

One aspect of the SIOPI UN team's mission is to form partnerships with various UN agencies to identify potential projects for SIOPI members aimed at applying I-O knowledge to help UN agencies accomplish their strategic goals. We formalized our first project last November and issued a call for expressions of interest for work on a talent management initiative being pursued by a major UN agency. Our vision was that teams of SIOPI members with the requisite expertise (including academics and practitioners, as well as students) would be formed to "bid" on the project. Response has been very good, as two project teams have been invited to meet

with the agency and submit a full proposal. We are currently in conversations with other UN agencies to identify similar projects. Please be on the lookout for future calls.

### **Psychology Day at the United Nations**

A full house is expected for this year's Psychology Day at the United Nations, which Lori Foster Thompson is cochairing. The event will take place at the UN in New York City on April 24, 2014. Space is limited, registration is required, and all SIOP members are invited to attend. The speakers will address psychology's contributions to the three pillars of sustainable development: social, environmental, and economic. Many SIOP members will recognize these pillars as they map onto "triple bottom line" commonly attended to by organizations interested in corporate social responsibility: people, planet, and profit.

Psychology Day's 2014 theme around sustainable development was chosen because of its relevance to some of the biggest issues being tackled at the UN today. As the Millennium Development Goals near their 2015 expiration date, the world's post-2015 development agenda is being discussed and defined. Although the details continue to be worked out, it is clear that a *human-centered* approach focusing on the three pillars of sustainable development is the way forward. Placing people at the heart of development re-

quires a profound understanding of human behavior, judgment, decision making, work, social, and mental processes. Psychology provides the evidence base for this understanding.

For up-to-date information regarding registration for Psychology Day, please visit <http://unpsychologyday.org>. The program is reaching finalization, with an exciting line up of speakers scheduled, including experts spanning various sub-disciplines and regions of the world. Maya Shankar from the White House will provide a behavioral economics perspective on the topic, as will Elke Weber, a psychologist from Columbia University. Saths Cooper will come from South Africa to share his perspective. H. E. Ambassador Carlos Enrique García González, Permanent Representative of El Salvador to the United Nations, has promised to make an appearance, as has John Lawrence, a psychologist working in the national human resource development sphere, who has a long history with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

### **Istanbul International Center for the Private Sector in Development**

Speaking of the UNDP, a team consisting of Alex Gloss, **Stuart Carr**, Dharm Prakash Sharma Bhawuk, and Lori Foster Thompson has been hard at work on a contribution to a foundational report being developed by the UNDP's Istanbul

International Center for the Private Sector in Development. The report as a whole considers barriers to and opportunities for poverty reduction from the perspective of various psychology subdisciplines. Alex, Stu, “Bhawuk,” and Lori’s contribution focuses on how research and theory from I-O psychology can facilitate this understanding. Various topics are covered, including the relevance of work analysis to socio-economic development as well as corporate social responsibility/engagement.

### **Psychology Coalition at the United Nations (PCUN)**

SIOPI UN representatives are members of the PCUN (Psychology Coalition at the UN), a recently formed group of psychology associations working together on UN efforts. PCUN meets monthly at the UN and is focused on gaining greater recognition for the value of psychological sciences for issues addressed by the UN.

Opportunities to participate at the UN include attending commission presentations and submitting written and oral statements to UN areas. Some UN areas of particular interest to SIOPI representatives include social development, status of women, sustainable development,

population and development, international labor organization, and associated agencies like UNICEF. Many of these UN areas provide opportunities to submit written and oral statements on topics of strategic importance. Recent statements submitted by SIOPI UN representatives, in conjunction with other PCUN members, included I-O research on gender stereotypes, workplace discrimination, and the use of assessments and training as evidence-based solutions to these issues.

### **UN Global Compact**

The UN team continues to partner with the UN Global Compact in identifying ways in which SIOPI can promote the Global Compact principles surrounding human rights, labor, environmental sustainability, and anticorruption in organizations. If your employer is not currently a Global Compact participant, our team would be happy to meet with you to assist in this process. We are also pursuing ways in which graduate programs in I-O psychology can become official Global Compact participants, as well as incorporate the Global Compact 10 Principles into their curricula. We will continue to update you on these efforts.

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