



Fall Newsletter

Ohio Board of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology

Board Members:

Chairperson:

Valenta Ward-Gravely, Au.D.

Vice-Chairperson:

Helene Levenfus, Au.D.

Loretta T. Embry, M.A., SLP

J. Paul Good, Public Member

Jane M. Kukula, Au.D.

Patricia L. Leppla, M.A., SLP

Malcolm J. Porter, Public Member

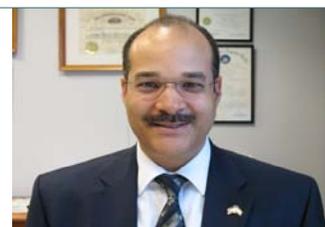
Patricia M. Zurlinden, M.A., CCC-SLP

SLP

Message from the Board Chairperson, Dr. Valenta Ward-Gravely Introducing the Ohio Board of Speech-Language Pathology & Audiology's Executive Director

It was with great honor that I accepted the position of Chair of the Ohio Board of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology (OBSLPA) in December 2008. Many exciting and challenging events have occurred since that time; most notable being the selection of a permanent Executive Director. In March, after an extensive search, the OBSLPA announced the hiring of Executive Director, Gregg B. Thornton. The Executive Director search committee vetted over 150 applications. Following several rounds of interviews, the search process culminated in February with in-person

interviews of three highly qualified candidates.



Meet Gregg B. Thornton, Esq.

Mr. Thornton is originally from Cleveland, Ohio. He graduated with honors from Howard University in Washington, D.C., with a B.A. degree in political science. He received his Juris-doctorate degree from Case Western Reserve University School of Law. Mr. Thornton began his

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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Reminder: Board meetings are open to the public.
- Public comment is welcome at all Board meetings.
- Please visit our website at www.slpaud.ohio.gov for the latest updates and information.

Message from the Executive Director

It is hard to believe that six months has already gone by since my appointment as the Executive Director on March 2, 2009. I have spent that time working diligently to fully acclimate myself into this position. In order to ensure a smooth transition, I wanted to meet with the various stakeholders as soon as possible. I was introduced at the annual conferences

sponsored by the Ohio Academy of Audiology and the Ohio Speech-Language-Hearing Association in early spring. I also attended the Legislative Breakfast sponsored by the Government Affairs Coalition (GAC) in March. I have attended several meetings with the GAC's lobbyist, Kelly O'Reilly on several issues and met with Dr. Erin Miller, GAC's president to

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Introducing the Ohio Board of Speech-Language Pathology & Audiology's Executive Director (continued from page 1)

legal career with the Ohio Attorney General's Office. As an Assistant Attorney General, Mr. Thornton served in the Health and Human Services Section and Civil Rights Section. He represented numerous health regulatory boards which operate under Chapter 47 of the Ohio Revised Code, similar to the OBSLPA. He also advised state investigators on the preparation of cases. In 1994, Mr. Thornton accepted a position with the Ohio Inspector General's Office as a Deputy Inspector General. In 2001, he was awarded the designation of Certified Inspector General after completing a program of study with the Association of Inspectors General – Inspector Generals Institute. During Mr. Thornton's fourteen years with this office, he investigated wrongful acts or omissions committed by state officials or state employees involved in the management and operation of state agencies within the executive branch of state government and made recommendations to improve internal operations and prevent wrongdoing from recurring. He served on two state and federal Task Force investigations and assumed various responsibilities as the Senior Deputy Inspector General and Assistant Legal Counsel during his tenure with the office.

With over twenty years of experience in state and local government, Mr. Thornton brings a wealth of knowledge in the areas of administrative law, investigations, and best practices for preventing waste, fraud, and abuse in the public sector. He served on a non-partisan board in the city of Gahanna, where he resides with his wife of

twenty years, Lydia-Margaret and daughter, Lydia-Ashleigh. He is also a two-term past president of the Ohio Investigators Association.

As the new Executive Director of the OBSLPA, Mr. Thornton has been tasked with moving the board forward by implementing best practices for the operations of the office. Additionally, Mr. Thornton will be working to continue good working relationships with various stakeholders. To that end the OBSLPA looks forward to broadening its accessibility to its licensees in the speech-language pathology and audiology professions and networking with the stakeholders in a collaborative manner.

"OBSLPA is delighted to welcome Gregg as our Executive Director," said Dr. Valenta Ward-Gravelly, Board Chairperson. "His extensive background in state government combined with his legal experience in administrative law will be invaluable as we license more practitioners and continue to address various challenges facing our profession, including shortages in all work settings."

"This is an extraordinary opportunity to utilize my experience in state government and legal background to move the Board forward with integrity and in a positive manner."

**Gregg B. Thornton
Executive Director**

"The process was exciting because we were presented with many qualified candidates and were able to choose from the best of the best," said Dr. Helene Levenfus, OBSLPA Vice Chairperson.

Ohio Board of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology

The mission of the Ohio Board of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology is to protect the health and promote the welfare of the citizens of Ohio by licensing and regulating the practice of speech-language pathology and audiology pursuant to Chapter 4753 of the Ohio Revised Code and Ohio Administrative Code.

Message from the Executive Director (Continued from page 1)

discuss important issues related to the professions. I met with the executive and legislative councils for the Ohio Speech-Language-Hearing Association (OSLHA), as well as the leadership for the Ohio Council of Speech and Hearing Administrators (OCSHA). In October, I will be giving a presentation at the Ohio School Speech-Language Pathologists Educational Audiologists Coalition (OSSPEAC) fall conference, along with Mrs. Loretta Embry, a Speech-Language Pathology Board member and meeting with OSSPEAC's executive council. I have met with several of the university stakeholders, including the University of Cincinnati, University of Akron, and Cleveland State University. I have also given presentations to graduate students at Ohio University and The Ohio State University, and the University of Cincinnati. I have seen the professions in various work settings, including hospital settings; and in Speech and Hearing Centers in Delaware and Cleveland. During the next several months, I will be visiting other work settings and universities. I have met with former board members, including past Chairpersons, to ensure continuity. All of these contacts have provided me with invaluable information and a unique perspective to facilitate my transition.

These past six months have been very busy in the office as well. During the spring and summer, we receive our heaviest volume of licensure applications

from individuals who are completing their graduate level programs. Since May 1, 2009, we have licensed well over 300 applicants. This is good news for the profession since there is a critical shortage of speech-language pathologists and audiologists within all work settings. The Board is cognizant of this issue and as a result, one of the things I will be doing during the next renewal cycle in 2010 is enhancing our licensure database to track the number of licensees by county and work settings. This type of information will allow the Board to more accurately identify which parts of the state are most impacted by shortages and in which work settings. This information will then be shared with the various stakeholders so that we can address this issue in a more collaborative manner.

The Board has taken great strides since my appointment and will continue to move forward in a positive direction. Despite statewide budget cuts, the Board remains committed to ensuring that we maintain the highest level of performance in order to protect the safety and welfare of the public who receive speech-language pathology and audiology services.

The purpose of this newsletter is to keep you informed about issues related to licensure. We will post a newsletter to our website and send a copy to our licensees and stakeholders via e-mail on a quarterly basis. If you have suggestions for the newsletter, please let us know.

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OBSLPA FALL CALENDAR



October 1

October 8

October 15

October 16

October 27



November 2

November 9

November 16

November 24



December 1

December 7

December 8

December 15

December 28



January 4

January 2010

Application Review and Approval

Documents Received Deadline for Next Review

Application Review and Approval

Board Meeting

Documents Received Deadline for Next Review

Application Review and Approval

Documents Received Deadline for Next Review

Application Review and Approval

Documents Received Deadline for Next Review

Application Review and Approval

Board Meeting

Documents Received Deadline for Next Review

Application Review and Approval

Documents Received Deadline for Next Review

Application Review and Approval

Winter Quarterly Newsletter

Please visit the Board’s website at www.slpud.ohio.gov for the specific time and location of the board meetings. In addition, you may also download the board’s agenda and meeting minutes.



Ask the Executive Director:

Regular Feature

Frequently asked questions and answers will appear in each quarterly newsletter.



How often do you review licensure applications?

Licensure applications are reviewed for approval by the Executive Director on the first and fifteenth of each month. If the first and fifteenth fall on a weekend or holiday, then the review occurs on the next business day. Only complete applications shall be presented to the Board for approval. A complete application shall include

all information requested on the form, the licensure fee, and all materials required for verification that the applicant meets all licensure requirements. The Board may refuse to review any application that is not complete seven calendar days before the first and fifteenth of each month.