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# Counseling Today

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## Coming into focus

20/20 counseling summit committees work to define, advance profession

BY ANGELA KENNEDY

The dictionary defines identity as the distinguishing character or personality of an individual or group — in other words, who we are. Members of the “20/20: Vision for the Future of Counseling” project are taking that a step further and also defining who counselors *want* to be as a group.

Continuing their work from counseling summits held earlier this year at the American Counseling Association Convention in Montréal and the American Association of State Counseling Boards Annual Conference in Phoenix, delegates have split into seven committees that are

focusing on the most prominent issues facing the counseling profession:

- Strengthening identity
- Presenting counselors (no matter their specialty) as one profession
- Improving public perception/recognition and advocating for professional issues
- Creating licensure portability
- Expanding and promoting the research base of professional counseling
- Focusing on students and prospective students
- Promoting client welfare and advocacy

The project, a collaborative effort initiated by ACA and

AASCB, includes counselors from all ACA divisions and regions, as well as the National Board for Certified Counselors, the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs, the Council on Rehabilitation Education and Chi Sigma Iota. Twenty-eight counseling organizations have united for the first time not only to define what a counselor is, but also to plan, prepare and delineate what the profession could or should look like in the year 2020. The project's aim is to create a unified professional identity to assist in the implementation of the AASCB porta-

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## Use of SAT lands Maine in hot water

Maine school counselors find little satisfaction in saying ‘We told you so’ to state Department of Education

BY ANGELA KENNEDY

Last March, *Counseling Today* reported that Maine Commis-

sioner of Education Susan Gendron was planning to replace the state’s junior year educational assessment test with the SAT, a

move that the Maine Counseling Association (MeCA) tried prudently, but fruitlessly, to block. Since that time, the state of Maine has received notification that it is in “nonapproved” status with No Child Left Behind requirements because the SAT isn’t a sufficient testing tool. Additionally, and some are questioning whether it is mere coincidence, certain school counselors in Maine have been denied a significant salary increase for next year.

In a letter to Gendron, the U.S. Department of Education

said in part: “... the Department laid out new approval categories in a letter to the Chief State School Officers on April 24, 2006. These categories better reflect where States collectively are in the process of meeting the statutory standards and assessment requirements and where each State individually stands. Based on these new categories, the current status of the Maine standards and assessment system is Non-Approved. This indicates that Maine’s standards and assessment system administered in the 2005–06 school year

has several fundamental components that are missing or that do not meet the statutory and regulatory requirements and that the evidence provided indicates that the State will not be able to administer a fully approved assessment in the 2006–07 school year.”

The letter further informed Gendron that because Maine failed to meet NCLB requirements for the 2005–06 school year and will not be able to come into compliance during

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### PERIODICALS MAIL-NEWSPAPER HANDLING

# First quarter ACA fiscal report

BY THELMA T. DALEY

In an effort to keep the American Counseling Association membership fully informed and simultaneously comply with Governing Council policy, quarterly fiscal reports are issued in *Counseling Today*. This quarterly report (summarizing July 1-Sept. 30) represents the first report for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2007.

The balance sheet presented with this report is intended to reflect ACA's financial position at a given point in time. This balance sheet gives a picture of the association's financial position as of Sept. 30. As of Sept. 30, ACA owned \$7,174,836 in assets. Of these assets, \$5,983,302 was in cash and investments.

On Sept. 30, the association's liabilities included vendor fees of approximately \$455,487, staff salaries and benefits of \$414,685 and fees collected on behalf of related organizations of \$39,148. Member benefits to be fulfilled total \$3,416,304 and appear as a liability because ACA receives membership revenues annually while providing member benefits monthly.

As this balance sheet indicates, ACA's net worth on Sept. 30 was \$2,819,212. This indicates that the association remains financially healthy. However,

efforts must continue to be made to ensure the association's long-term stability.

As of Sept. 30, the association reported \$249,833 in excess expenses over revenues. ACA's revenues are more than \$160,000 higher than those reported last year. Expenses incurred through the first quarter of this fiscal year are approximately \$1,700 lower than those of last year. The ACA Financial Affairs Committee will continue to monitor ACA's revenues and expenditures on a monthly basis. ACA intends to continue developing more programs as it realizes greater success in its legislative activities and will continue to provide established programs and benefits to its members.

The ACA Financial Affairs Committee, in collaboration with the administrative staff and the Governing Council, convenes monthly to evaluate the financial position of the association and to recommend pertinent action. Quarterly reports are provided to the membership via *Counseling Today*. If you have questions about this report or need clarification, please contact ACA Treasurer Thelma T. Daley by telephone at 410.542.0176 or via e-mail at [ttd\\_1@msn.com](mailto:ttd_1@msn.com). ■

Thelma T. Daley is serving as  
ACA treasurer for Fiscal Year 2007.

## AMERICAN COUNSELING ASSOCIATION

### BALANCE SHEET

SEPTEMBER 30, 2006

#### ASSETS

Cash & Cash Equivalents	\$5,983,302
Accounts Receivable (net of allowance for doubtful accounts of \$39,125)	449,444
Prepaid Expenses	81,026
Deposits	15,398
Inventory	262,487
Fixed Assets (Net of Accum. Depr.)	383,178

**Total Assets** **\$7,174,836**

#### LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCE

LIABILITIES:	
Due to related organizations	39,148
Accounts Payable	455,487
Accrued Salaries, Annual Leave & Payroll Taxes	414,685
Deferred Revenues	3,416,304

**Total Liabilities** **4,355,624**

FUND BALANCES:	
Unrestricted Fund Balances	(93,094)
Designated Fund Balances	3,162,139
Prior Period Adjustment	0
Retained Earnings	(249,833)

**Total Fund Balance (Deficit)** **2,819,212**

**Total Liabilities & Fund Balance (Deficit)** **\$ 7,174,836**

## 20/20

Continued from page 1

bility plan and to eliminate the wide variation of state licensing standards.

Chairing the committee examining the issue of presenting counselors as one profession is NBCC President Thomas W. Clawson. "This topic is one that I have pondered for years," he says. "It is close to the heart of what the NBCC Board discusses so often. Being able to start a dialogue that includes ideas for real change and real possibilities of unity within the profession, while respecting the differing needs of 28 different counseling organizations, is energizing."

So far, the committees have submitted first draft bullet points to the project's Oversight Committee, which is composed of ACA President Marie Wakefield, AASCB President Barry Mascari, ACA Immediate Past President Patricia Arredondo, AASCB Immediate Past President Charles Gagnon, ACA Past President Sam Gladding, AASCB Past President Jim Wilson and ACA Chief Professional Officer David Kaplan (serving as the administrative coordinator).

Beginning in December, all seven workgroup drafts will be sent to the 28 delegates for comments and feedback. Soon, the counseling community at large will be able to provide suggestions via postings on the ACA website and notices sent through *Counseling Today*, the

AASCB newsletter, listservs and other venues. The comment period for both delegates and the counseling community as a whole will last through the middle of February 2007.

As part of the feedback process, the 20/20 Oversight Committee will conduct a town hall meeting in January 2007 at the AASCB Annual Conference in Sarasota, Fla. All 20/20 delegates attending the AASCB conference are encouraged to come to the town hall meeting. Both the internal (delegate) and external (public) comments will be provided to all 20/20 delegates at the beginning of March 2007 for review. Additionally, all delegates will meet at the 2007 ACA Convention in Detroit to review the initial drafts and feedback and to provide direction for the subsequent draft. A final draft will be written over the summer of 2007 and presented to the delegates for ratification. The 28 delegates will also present portions of the final draft to their respective organizations for ratification.

"We are excited about the outcomes that will be generated by the committees and the feedback that we will receive at the AASCB and ACA conventions," Gladding says.

In addition to serving on the Oversight Committee, Mascari is chairing the Counselor Licensing Portability Commit-

tee. "This is really an easy topic for statements of principle," he says. "I think there is relative consensus on the major points concerning portability, and much of that is contingent on what happens with the rest of the profession. The portability issue is intertwined with other issues, including the CACREP revisions, counselor identity, supervision standards and individual states' different ways of doing things. Depending on when a state adopted their legislation, reflecting the fact that we are relatively new in the licensing game, regulations look very different. The biggest single roadblock to portability is the wide variation in standards. What are really being reflected in licensure are the areas of weakness in our profession. Many statutes allow the language 'and related professions' as part of the counselor licensing, which opens the doors to graduates from psychology degree programs to be licensed professional counselors. This brings people with weak or nonexistent counselor identity into the counselor licensing world."

Mascari adds that the Counselor Licensing Portability Committee is one piece of the larger puzzle that must address education and training and, ultimately, counselor professional identity. "The work of 20/20 is the fulfillment of a dream of mine ever since my dissertation

where I found identity unraveling and the lack of common standards threatening the future health of the counseling profession," he says. "My dream was to have a summit where all groups from the profession would come together and resolve some of these long-standing issues. Interestingly enough, in reading old AASCB minutes, I found that there was a call for a summit around 1986 to address training and certification standards, (but) it never happened."

"When legislators look at the diversity of training standards and the counselor professional groups claiming to be separate and distinct professions based on work settings, I would say we have some work to do," Mascari continued. "Sam Gladding said it best to me. He said his goal was, in 2020, when on an airplane and someone asked a social worker what that was, that person would reply, 'You know, it's like a counselor.'"

*Counseling Today* will continue to provide updates on the progress of "20/20: A Vision for the Future of Counseling." ■

Angela Kennedy is a senior writer at *Counseling Today*. Contact her at [akennedy@counseling.org](mailto:akennedy@counseling.org).

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