
Eric U. Russ, Ph.D.

Brief Bio:

Dr. Russ earned his PhD in clinical psychology from Emory University, completed internship at the San Francisco VA and fellowship in trauma psychology at Rush University Medical Center in Chicago. He moved back to his hometown of Louisville in 2012. Dr. Russ is currently the Behavioral Health Operations Manager for Passport Health Plan and Assistant Clinical Professor at the University of Louisville in the Department of Psychiatry. Dr. Russ' primary clinical expertise is in treating trauma and personality disorders. He currently serves as President-Elect on the board of directors of the Kentucky Psychological Association. For APA, Dr. Russ serves as the SPTA representative on the Committee for Early Career Psychologists and is a member of the Committee of State Leaders.

As a Board Member, what do you find the most rewarding - or what are you most hoping to accomplish?:

There are three goals I think are particularly important for the KPA Board to attend to. Communication about the value of psychology. I firmly believe that psychologists can make valuable, empirically-grounded contributions to public discourse about a wide range of topics. We have an incredible wealth of knowledge across psychologists working in private practice, industry, hospitals and clinics, and universities. Our work on developing a process for taking a stand is a major step forward and I look forward to using this process to increase the visibility of psychology and psychologists in the public sphere. Psychology works, psychotherapy works and we need to get the message out. Diversity: We need to ensure that our membership reflects and promotes diversity in our field. We must value diversity across personal identities, professional settings, and geography. Increasing outreach to psychologists with diverse identities early in their careers is critical to long term engagement and leadership. Advocacy: Policy decisions strongly affect the practice of psychology, and for us to have a voice in policy we need effective advocacy. I have been impressed at the commitment and thoughtfulness of KPA in developing an effective long-term advocacy strategy. In a political environment where healthcare is constant topic of discussion, we must continue to emphasize that mental health is health and psychologists are a critical part of the future of healthcare.

Why did you decide to become involved as a leader within KPA?:

I have been a member of KPA since moving back to Kentucky in 2012, and I feel lucky to have found KPA as a place to learn and grow as a psychologist. KPA has a very strong leadership team that works hard is welcoming of a variety of perspectives. I am grateful to be part of this group of leaders!

How did you end up in psychology?:

I had no intention of going to graduate school in psychology until my last semester of college. That semester I took two classes, one on personality theories and the other on the psychology of ending, with professors that made me excited about the possibility of being a psychologist. One of those professors was kind enough to help me get a job as an RA in personality disorders lab following graduation. I eventually started as a graduate student in that same lab!