

## SIG Members In Touch Spirituality and Health Newsletter

*The whole is greater than the sum of its parts*

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### **SIG Chair**

**Amy Wachholtz**

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Greetings to the Spirituality & Health SIG! As we approach the close of summer we once again find ourselves in SBM abstract submission season. We have had a number of exciting changes in the SIG over the past few years. At the 2013 conference, we thanked Crystal Park, PhD for her work on behalf of the SIG as she “retired” from SIG co-chair and moved to Past-Chair. We also welcomed John Salsman, PhD to the position of SIG Chair-elect and who will be SIG Co-Chair starting at the 2014 conference. I would

also like to give a hearty welcome to Andrea Clements, PhD who is taking over as our Newsletter Editor for the Spirituality and Health SIG. My ongoing and deepest thanks to everyone who helps make this SIG possible year after year.

To update everyone on the SIG activities, we have worked diligently with the SBM conference team over the past two years. As a result, we have had great success for Spirituality and Health representation at SBM. We notably increased our Spirituality and Health abstract submission rates for the 2013 conference. At the 2013 conference we saw more Spirituality & Health research at SBM, more oral presentations, and better timing for those presentations. We are relying on you to help us keep that momentum going! Please submit Spirituality & Health abstracts for papers, symposium, posters, and panels. Use the list serve to connect with others who are working in your area to put together symposium or panels. Let’s make this the best year yet for Spirituality and Health at SBM! Happy SBM Abstract Submission Season!

Amy Wachholtz, PhD  
Spirituality and Health SIG Chair



**Congratulations to Kevin Masters  
(University of Colorado, Denver) on his  
election as President of APA Division 38!**

## Greetings from Our Chair-Elect

**John Salsman**

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Hello everyone,

Amy asked me to write a few words to say hello and share goals for my term. I am excited and honored by this opportunity to serve our SIG and am looking forward to the challenge of strengthening our group in new ways. I know many of you but for those that do not know me, I am a licensed clinical health psychologist and a Research Assistant Professor in the Department of Medical Social Sciences at Northwestern University's Feinberg School of Medicine. I received my doctorate in clinical psychology from the University of Kentucky and completed a pre-doctoral internship in medical/health psychology at the Memphis Veterans Affairs Medical Center. Following internship, I moved to Chicago and completed a two-year, combined clinical and research post-doctoral fellowship in psychosocial oncology at Evanston Northwestern Healthcare.

My research program investigates psychosocial adaptation to the cancer experience across the continuum of care. By using a wellness model of health, I explore constructs that are often linked to resilience and enhanced quality of life among cancer patients and survivors (e.g., optimism, subjective well-being, meaning and spirituality, posttraumatic growth). I have been funded as a Principal Investigator by an American Cancer Society-Institutional Research Grant (ACS -IRG 93-037-18), an American Cancer Society-Illinois Division Grant (PSB-08-15), and a National Cancer Institute career development award (5K07CA158008). These projects focus respectively on fertility preservation decision-making among newly diagnosed young adults with cancer, health behaviors and psychological adaptation among young adult cancer survivors during re-entry, and leveraging the measurement science of the NIH PROMIS for optimal assessment of positive health processes and outcomes throughout the cancer care continuum.

I consider SBM my "can't miss" conference and have been attending and presenting at it for over ten years. I routinely leave the conference feeling physically exhausted but mentally energized –a mark of a great conference in my opinion! As far as the goals I have for our SIG, first and foremost, I believe we can benefit from increased within group connections. Too often, we operate in "silos" when we could develop synergistic collaborations with other researchers and clinicians in our group. I would like to see us foster greater networking and build collaborations among members with shared research interests. Similarly, I would like to see us strengthen existing connections and foster new ones with other SIGs to enhance the visibility and impact of the work being done by our Spirituality and Health SIG members. I believe this approach would parallel the current interest in Translational Research and "Team Science" initiatives that use multidisciplinary research teams to foster greater innovation. Those are a couple of my goals for the next several months but I want to know your interests as well. Over the next several months, I hope to reach out to individual members to engage others in strengthening our SIG, but feel free to e-mail ([j-salsman@northwestern.edu](mailto:j-salsman@northwestern.edu)) or call (312-503-3470) if you have some ideas on how we can grow our SIG and build on the dynamic work of our members. "The whole is greater than the sum of its parts."

Best wishes,

John M. Salsman, PhD

## **Farewell from Past SIG Chair**

**Crystal Park**

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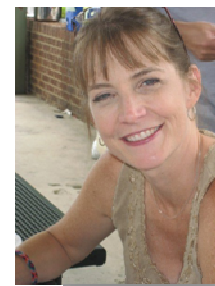
I feel honored and privileged to have served as chair of SBM's Spirituality and Health SIG and am grateful to the SIG members for your support. I very much enjoyed working with the outgoing (Kevin Masters) and incoming (Amy Wachholtz) chairs to keep the SIG thriving and to create opportunities for our members: we developed a pre-conference workshop on funding for spirituality and CIM research on health, advocated for more spirituality and health programming on the SBM conference program, developed an award for a senior investigator, and planned activities for the SBM conference. Through this involvement, I have come to appreciate even more how fortunate we are to have a SIG with so many members who are active in the field and well-known for their work. This involvement and esteem is particularly important for our SIG, because even though many links between spirituality and health are well-documented, and we continue to produce more rigorous and nuanced research, the science involved in studying spirituality and health still receives heightened scrutiny from many corners (including federal funding agencies). I think our field will continue to counter these biases by conducting top-notch research that links the work we do with areas of primary concern to other SIGs, such as those focusing on cancer, obesity, heart disease, diabetes, and health behaviors. Thus, I encourage all of our SIG members to be active in our SIG and other SIGs, to ensure that our work is visible in every area of behavioral medicine and increasingly comes to be regarded as mainstream.

Crystal Park  
Past SIG Chair

## **Editor's Notes**

**Andi Clements**

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I am honored and excited to be the new newsletter editor for the Spirituality and Health SIG. I have found my home at SBM and hope to help foster collaborative relationships among researchers who share interests in studying the interplay among spirituality, religiosity, and health. One of the first items of business after welcoming our new leaders and thanking our veteran leaders is to make our presence known to the general membership of SBM. We can do that by presenting our research at the annual meeting. For this reason I am encouraging everyone to submit symposia, presentations, and posters for the 35<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting in Philadelphia, April 23-26, 2014. The theme is "Behavior Matters: The Impact and Reach of Behavioral Medicine." What a wonderful theme to allow us to showcase research in an area that may be seen by some researchers as "a reach."

In 2013 the acceptance rate for Spirituality-related abstracts increased over previous years. Let's maintain this momentum. Please submit your research and remember to indicate that it falls in the area of spirituality and health. It is especially helpful to submit symposia. In essence symposia submissions have two chances for acceptance as they are reviewed as symposia first, and if not accepted as complete symposia, the paper abstracts are reviewed as separate submissions.

Once the program is complete for the Annual Meeting, we will send out a newsletter identifying all of the symposia, presentations, and posters related to Spirituality and Health. I hope we have a full newsletter! That is up to all of you!

## **Abstract Submission for the 35th Annual Meeting & Scientific Sessions of the Society of Behavioral Medicine**

<http://www.sbm.org/meetings/2014/call-for-abstracts>

### **Abstract Submission**

**Opens:**

Thursday, June 20, 2013

**Closes:**

Thursday, September 12, 2013

### **Rapid Communication Poster Submission**

**Opens:**

Thursday, November 14, 2013

**Closes:**

Tuesday, January 7, 2014

### **Calendar of Events**

**April 23-26, 2014**

35th Annual Meeting & Scientific Sessions of the Society of Behavioral Medicine, Philadelphia, PA

**May 22-24, 2014**

4th European Conference on Religion, Spirituality and Health, Malta

### **Newsletter Deadlines**

Please send me news, events, issues, research and practice insights to share, information on resources, or anything else that you would like to be included in the spring newsletter by January 31, 2014. You can e-mail me <mailto:bab12@psu.edu> at [clements@etsu.edu](mailto:clements@etsu.edu). Abstracts are always welcome, as are commentaries, or questions to pose to members. What are you doing? What would you like help with? Write to me with suggestions and comments too. This is the members' newsletter, so I would love to have your input. If I receive enough input soon, we will have a winter newsletter as well.