



Elections are near

“Leadership is the capacity to translate vision into reality.”
– Warren Bennis

The leaders elected at the 2014 Annual Meeting for the Board of Directors and the Nominating Committee will contribute to ASWB’s future governance initiatives and leadership development. They will be stepping into their roles as the organization begins to consider some of the most challenging issues for the social work profession: mobility, e-practice, and continuing competence.

Delegates attending the annual meeting will be asked to vote for the following: president-elect; secretary; director at large, professional member; and director at large, member board staff on the Board of Directors and two seats on the Nominating Committee. A short biography of each candidate on the election slate is provided below. The full profile is available [online](#).

Board of Directors

President-elect

M. Jenise Comer (MO)



M. Jenise Comer of Missouri received her MSW from the University of Kansas and was grandfathered as an LCSW in 1989. She is a professor of social work at the University of Central Missouri and has served as the director of the

social work program there for five years. Comer has been active with ASWB since 2002. She served on and chaired the Nominating Committee and the Bylaws and Resolutions Committee. She was appointed to serve a one-year term on the Board of Directors in 2007, and in 2009 and 2014 she served as a member of the Program and Education Committee. She now serves as Board liaison to the Regulation and Standards Committee and the International Technology Task Force. Comer was first appointed to the Missouri State Committee for Social Workers in 2000. For several years, she served as either the secretary or chair of the board. She will continue to serve until replaced.

Robert Payne (ID)



Robert Payne of Idaho has a BA in social work from Boise State University and a master’s in social work from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Payne, an LCSW, has been a social worker for more than 28 years and has worked in a variety of settings. He has served as adjunct faculty at The College of Idaho, Boise State University, and Linfield College-Astoria, Oregon. He also has belonged to numerous volunteer

boards, often serving as chair, in his current community as well as in the other communities where he has resided. Payne currently has a private practice in Hailey, Idaho. His involvement with ASWB began at a New Board Member Training session in 2000. Since then he has attended 14 ASWB meetings and also attends the Administrators Forum meetings. He was appointed to fill an unexpired term on the Idaho Board of Social Work Examiners in 2000 and continues to serve.

Secretary

Maureen Egan (RI)



Maureen Egan of Rhode Island received a BSW degree from Providence College and her MSW from Rhode Island College. Egan, an LICSW, currently

works as a medical social worker. She retired from the Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth, and Families in 2009 after 29 years. As a volunteer, she has worked with the Girl Scouts of Rhode Island, the South Kingstown Affordable Housing Commission, and the Washington County Coalition for Children. Egan was appointed to the Rhode Island Board of Social Work Examiners in 1996 and her term expired earlier this year. During her tenure, she was an active participant with the board and with ASWB, often attending ASWB's education meetings at her own expense. Her involvement with ASWB includes serving on the Approved Continuing Education (ACE) Committee, the Bylaws and Resolutions Committee, and the Program and Education Committee.

Melinda Pilkinton (MS)



Melinda Pilkinton of Mississippi has a BA in social work from Mississippi State University, an MSW from the University of Southern Mississippi,

and a Ph.D. in social work from Jackson State University. She is currently licensed as an LCSW in Mississippi (since 1987). She has taught at Mississippi State University for 15 years, where she is a tenured faculty member and director of the social work program. Earlier this year, Pilkinton retired after 20 years from a small clinical practice at an outpatient behavioral health facility where she provided therapeutic social work services and clinical supervision for one MSW. She served two, 4-year terms on the Mississippi Board of Examiners for Social Workers and Marriage and Family Therapists. Her second term ended in July. She attended New Board Member Training about a year after she was appointed to her first term on the board. Other involvement with ASWB includes working on the 2008-2009 Practice Analysis Task Force and serving on the Regulation and Standards Committee. She was elected to the Nominating Committee in 2010.

*Director at Large,
Professional Member*

John McBride (LA)



As the incumbent director at large, professional member, John McBride of Louisiana is program director of the VA Home

Based Primary Care Program at the VA Medical Center, where he has worked since 1991. Previously, McBride was the administrator of the VA Community Residential Care program there for 15 years. In addition, he has provided consulting work for families wishing to adopt. He has an MSW from Our Lady of the Lake University, received his LCSW in 1995, and is certified as a Board Approved Clinical Supervisor. He has taught undergraduate-level social work at Louisiana College. McBride was appointed to the Louisiana Board of Social Work Examiners in 2008 to fill an unexpired position and reappointed in 2010, serving until May 2014. During his second and third years on the board, he was chair. Involvement with ASWB includes serving on the Bylaws and Resolutions Committee, the Finance Committee, and the Approved Continuing Education (ACE) Committee.

Steven W. Pharris (TN)



Steven W. Pharris of Tennessee, LCSW, is the senior social worker and contracting officer representative with the Department

of Veterans Affairs, focusing on hospice care and long-term care, and establishing contracts with health care providers. His professional practice includes both rural and urban communities in the areas of child protection, public health, jails/prisons, chronic homelessness, HIV/AIDS, and mental health. As an adjunct professor, he has developed courses in mental health practice and social work and law. He has a BSW from Middle Tennessee

State, an MSW from Spalding University, and a J.D. from the Nashville School of Law. Pharris served on the Tennessee Board of Social Work Licensure from 2008 to 2014 and was a delegate to ASWB's annual meetings. He attended a New Board Member Training session in 2009 and has served on the Regulation and Standards (RAS) Committee since 2011. He is the current RAS Committee chair. Pharris also serves on ASWB's International Technology Task Force.

*Director at Large,
Member Board Staff*

John Mayr (BC)



John Mayr of British Columbia is currently the administrator for the BC College of Social Work. He has been an administrator/regulator for the last 18 years, for three different professions. He has an MBA, an advanced certificate in health systems leadership, and a master's degree in law. Mayr is a member of the education committee of the British Columbia Council of Administrative Tribunals (BCCAT), a not-for-profit organization dedicated to advancing the knowledge and skill of frontline decision makers in administrative tribunals. He also is the vice president of the Canadian Council of Social Work Regulators (CCSWR). Involvement with ASWB includes co-hosting New Board Member Training, co-presenting on professional regulation and competency-based testing at the Canadian Association of Social Work Educators conference, presenting the BCCSW's public

awareness campaign to the Administrators Forum, Spring 2014, and planning for the implementation of the licensure examination in British Columbia.

Richard Silver (QC)



As the incumbent director at large, member board staff, Richard Silver of Québec is legal counsel to the Ordre des travailleurs sociaux et des thérapeutes conjugaux et familiaux du Québec, where he has been on staff since 2001. He has a BSW from McGill University and a master's degree in law from the Université de Sherbrooke. He was a founding board member of the Canadian Council of Social Work Regulators (CCSWR). In addition to serving on the ASWB Board, Silver is volunteer coordinator of New Board Member Training and Board liaison to the Bylaws and Resolutions Committee. He was on the development committee planning ASWB's first Administrators Workshop, held in September, and was one of the trainers. Other involvement with ASWB includes: Nominating Committee chair (2009), Passing Score Study (2010), and Strategic Planning sessions (2010, 2013). He has presented at the Spring Education Meeting and at the Federation of Associations of Regulatory Boards (FARB) on professional regulation.

Nominating Committee

(Two people will need to be selected among the four candidates for two-year seats on the Nominating Committee.)

Leisa Askew (AL)



Leisa Askew of Alabama has served as aging resource specialist and Alabama Cares coordinator for Lee Russell Council of Governments Area

Agency on Aging for 14 years. Previous experience includes social service director for a three-level step-down aging facility in Auburn, AL. Askew has a BA in social work from Auburn University with a double minor in sociology and psychology. She recently completed her term on the Alabama State Board of Social Work Examiners (2008-2014), where she attended bimonthly board meetings as well as disciplinary hearings, public hearings, and legislative meetings. Other service includes: Alabama Gerontology Society Executive Board (2007-2013), Lee County Junior League Executive Board (2005-2009), Lee County Ombudsman Advisory Committee (2001- present), Alabama Association of Regional Councils, and South Eastern Association of Area Agencies on Aging. She has been involved with ASWB during her term on the Alabama board, attending all but three of the spring and fall ASWB yearly meetings.

Sandra Barlow (FL)



Sandra Barlow of Florida currently works in independent practice with children,

adolescents, and families, and she contracts with Early Head Start and Head Start programs as a mental health consultant. Barlow has an MSW with a clinical focus toward working with children and families and a Ph.D. in family relations from Florida State University and has completed advanced postgraduate study with the FSU-LSU Harris Institute for Infant Mental Health. She is credentialed as a Registered Play Therapist-Supervisor and a Florida-approved supervisor for clinical social workers, marriage and family therapists, and mental health counselors. She was appointed to the Florida Board of Clinical Social Work, Marriage and Family Therapy and Mental Health Counseling in 2010 and currently serves as chair. Involvement with ASWB began at a New Board Member Training session in 2010. She has attended ASWB's Spring Education and Annual Meetings since 2010 and was a member of the Program and Education Committee for two years.

Spencer Blalock (MS)



Spencer Blalock of Mississippi currently works in mental health in direct practice and administration. He has worked previously in

adolescent/adult acute, residential, and community mental health; crisis services; child/adult welfare; hospice; home health; youth court; and long-term care. He has a BSW and an MSW and is pursuing a doctorate in health administration. Blalock, an LCSW, is also a Certified Mental Health Therapist, board-certified Diplomate of clinical social work, and a board-

approved clinical supervisor. He was recently appointed as chair of the Caregivers Task Force by the governor. Appointed to the Mississippi Board of Examiners for Social Workers and Marriage and Family Therapists in January 2011, he serves on the Social Work Discipline Specific Committee and the Legislative Committee and chairs the Continuing Education Committee. Involvement with ASWB includes attending New Board Member Training, the Spring Education Meeting and the 2013 Delegate Assembly. He also is a member of the Regulation and Standards (RAS) Committee.

Barb Whitenect (NB)



Barb Whitenect of New Brunswick has worked for the provincial government of New Brunswick since 1992. Her

current position is executive director of corporate services dealing with the Department of Public Safety. Previously, she served as the provincial executive director of addiction and mental health services for the Department of Health. Whitenect has a BSW from St. Thomas University, Fredericton, and an MSW from Carleton University, Ottawa. She has been a registered social worker since 1992. Whitenect has been very active with the New Brunswick Association of Social Workers (NBASW), sitting on the board as a board member, vice president, and president. She has also been actively involved with the Canadian Association of Social Workers (CASW) and the Canadian Council of Social Worker Regulators (CCSWR). Involvement with ASWB includes attendance

at New Board Member Training in 2008 and participation in ASWB meetings since her presidency of the NBASW in 2010-11.