



Leadership Report to 2015 Delegate Assembly



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ASWB Chief Executive Officer

Thank you, Dorinda, and Good Morning, Everyone!

It is great to see all of you this morning—I hope you had a good time last night. It’s hard not to be happy with such great weather... unless of course you live in the other “sunshine state” on the west coast—California! “Welcome Back” to our colleagues from the west coast—Kim Madsen [executive officer of the California Board of Behavioral Sciences], we look forward to being in beautiful San Diego next year.

I think it is very fitting that we are having our 2015 Annual Meeting of the Delegate Assembly in beautiful Fort Lauderdale, especially during speed boat time, because “Full Speed Ahead” accurately describes this year of accomplishments and results for ASWB, our organization. I have chosen “Full Speed Ahead” as the theme for 2015 and I am pleased to share my Leadership Report to kick off this historic meeting.

But first, I want to share a story with you. Last Friday, I had the honor of attending NASW’s 60th anniversary and was invited to serve on the panel celebrating the 55th Anniversary of the Code of Ethics. Other panelists included Allan Barsky from Florida Atlantic

University, JoAnn Regan from CSWE, and, of course, Rick Reamer from Rhode Island College and our favorite “ethics guru.”

You may recognize the names of two of these social workers because they served on the ASWB International Technology Task Force that published the Model Regulatory Standards for Technology and Social Work Practice earlier this year—one of our great 2015 accomplishments...and now all three of these colleagues are collaborating with ASWB, NASW, and CSWE in writing practice standards for technology and social work practice. The panel was asked to discuss the evolution of the Code of Ethics, and my part was to focus on the code’s impact on regulation. We had a lively discussion, and afterward I was able to chat with various NASW colleagues from my past.

As I was proudly talking about all of the regulatory innovations that ASWB was currently leading, one colleague asked me how many staff are employed at ASWB. When I told her 42, she was amazed and wondered how we were able to get all of this important work done. This gave me the opportunity to explain what I believe is the very creative and unique business and leadership model that we have developed at ASWB.

This business and leadership model depends on three interrelated groups of professionals driven by the mission of our organization. Each working group is critical to our success, and all are integrated around the operating principles of mission, engagement, respect, results, and celebration. The leadership staff, Board of Directors, and all of our volunteers are ASWB's most valuable resources.

The first group is our excellent **ASWB staff**—please stand and be recognized—you have done an incredible job of working interdepartmentally this year... and traveling the globe! Thanks to each of you...and to your families for supporting you and the organization.

The second group is our dedicated and knowledgeable **Board of Directors** whom you have just met...each of whom has embraced their governance responsibilities to guide the association in a mutually respectful partnership with staff. It has been my privilege to learn, stretch, and grow with you this past year.

And the third group is **all of our members, but especially those who have served in a volunteer capacity for ASWB this year**. I am so grateful, because I know that most of you are already volunteering your precious time by serving on your jurisdictional board or college, so we truly thank you for digging deep and finding the time to say "Yes" to ASWB's further requests for your time and expertise.

This has been the most active volunteer year in memory—we can all be heartened by the significant work of the various committees and

task forces—you will be hearing of their work over the next two days. You are all exceptional leadership resources for ASWB and we are stronger because of you. And I thank you!

2015: The year in review

Today, we are celebrating our successful 2015 results, recognizing the best practices and processes we have utilized to get us to where we are today: a solid, sustainable association that can and will achieve social work practice mobility in our Lifetime!

We put mobility in the Strategic Plan in 2013, set the stage for more consistency across jurisdictions in 2014, and in 2015 we bumped this major effort up to the association's strategic priority. This will require planning, "agility," cooperation, and TRUST among our members, ASWB, and our many stakeholders; but I truly believe we are positioned to be successful.

After three years as your CEO, I believe the following three observations are accurate:

- ✓ ASWB is acknowledged as a respected leader in both the social work profession and the field of professional regulation. We have improved our organizational leadership structure and increased our governance knowledge and capacity so that we are more sophisticated and effective in our organizational outreach and influence. We have the depth and confidence to be the leaders that we are.
- ✓ The social work profession is coming to terms with being a regulated profession, embracing it, normalizing it, and recognizing the importance

of regulation to solidifying its future in the health care, social services, and social policy arenas. ASWB has extended the definition of the social work regulatory community to include regulators, educators, students, practitioners, and employers—and these stakeholders are joining together in new and creative ways. We have made good progress, but there is still more work to be done here.

- ✓ And finally, social work regulation, with public protection as its core mission, is consistent with the core values of the social work profession, particularly the values of service, competence, and social justice. The clients whom social workers serve deserve services provided by safe, ethical, and competent practitioners; if practitioners fall below standards and do harm, their clients have recourse for relief under the law. This is the social justice value of regulation. Regulation takes the Code of Ethics and turns a professional behavioral obligation into a legal duty. That is the power of regulation: Public Protection. We're all in this together, so Full Speed Ahead!

I want to start my review our results for 2015 by highlighting accomplishments from each department.

First, the Examination Services Department. New York and Massachusetts are eliminating exemptions, especially for government agencies and private nonprofits; Pennsylvania is adding the BSW category of licensure. Other changes: Medicaid and Medicare reimbursements; acceptance of

regulation as good for the social worker, public, and profession.

It's Back! The Practice Analysis is a big undertaking and a major commitment every five to seven years to keep the content of our exams current, relevant, and accurate reflections of current practice. Dwight Hymans and Lavina Harless will discuss this tomorrow.

Internally, there was a reorganization of staff and functions within the department. It is ASWB's largest department and it needed a different "path to leadership." Dwight and I worked closely with Exam Services Director Pat Olinger to establish appropriate supervisory levels and divide responsibilities according to talents and needed functions. An accountability training with this team was conducted by our new training senior manager, Jan Fitts, and the training will be rolled out to rest of staff in this final quarter of 2015.

Next, the Communications and Marketing Department. MarCom underwent a staffing transition as two members left earlier this year. Director Jayne Wood and Bobbie Hartman regrouped and now are joined by Kim Phillips, digital content coordinator. You can see the visible results of their collaborative work in the Members website redesign, which Bobbie shared at the Administrators Forum and Board Member Exchange meetings yesterday; our beautiful 2014 Annual Report; the distinctive logo branding for this annual business meeting (turning the ASWB logo design into working gears); and the incredible Mobility Report from the Spring Education Meeting. Our social media presence continues to grow, so please join us on Facebook and Twitter.

Highlights from the Member Services Department are in three areas of service to you, our members:

1) There was a reorganization of the Approved Continuing Education (ACE) program & New Jersey course approval into a Continuing Competency program. Continuing competency is emerging as THE regulatory issue; it is bigger than CE only, and professions are grappling with how to measure it. Our ACE program is exemplary and will continue under Lisa Casler's direction with support from Donna Edwards. Lisa Casler is ASWB's newest MSW hire—bringing us to six MSW subject matter experts on staff. Her charge is to work with Member Services Director Jennifer Henkel to chart a course for Continuing Competency for social work regulation. Stay tuned.

2) Contract Services has outgrown the building it moved into two years ago, for goodness' sakes! Dave Ryczko and his team moved into rented space—affectionately named the MSW building—for Member Services West. They handle application processing, the Social Work Registry, and CE audits.

3) There is a new look for Meetings and New Board Member Trainings. It is strategic in getting more work done collectively, with increased engagement of membership, and a fiscally smart approach that offers multiple meetings simultaneously, and we now have the capacity to staff them. Essentially we have added a full day of pre-meeting meetings to facilitate committee work and a higher level of collaboration among membership with the Administrators Forum and the Board Member Exchange. You asked for more

training and networking, and these are your opportunities.

Our newest department is Education and Training Services, also known as "ET." Senior Manager Jan Fitts and Jennifer Ward are forging a great team to serve regulatory training needs of three constituencies: educators and students; our members; and our staff.

In Operations, Director Christine Breeden celebrated 25 years this year! That is staying power. ASWB Treasurer Carole Bryant will give a detailed report on ASWB's finances tomorrow.

2016: Full Speed Ahead! What is our focus?

A new headquarters!

Due to our continuing growth spurt, we have outgrown all of our owned space and are currently renting space. Earlier this year, your Board, after at least 18 months of study, research, and deliberation, gave staff the go-ahead to build a new headquarters for ASWB in Culpeper, Va. Dwight is our building project manager and will discuss this initiative after lunch. I want to share a few thoughts though, about what this bold initiative means for ASWB. I believe having the honor to build our working space to support achievement of the Strategic Plan and to design our space to fit our business plan will position ASWB to reach even higher goals.

We will not have to adjust, accommodate, or fit how we work into the space available, but we will be in charge. Our new building will change how we look to the Culpeper community but also how we are able to work with members, stakeholders, and partners. We will

be able to relieve even more of your burdens.

Another exciting benefit: Staff is engaged and thinking about their own space and how they work. There is a sense of ownership and pride in the organization. For example, during October, which is Breast Cancer awareness month, the Philanthropy Team made a display in our reception area with the oversized presentation check from the Pamper Me Pink Mammogram Fund donation, homemade awareness ribbons, and information sheets with research on the topic. This month, November, is Domestic Violence Awareness month and now we have the purple awareness ribbons and research. I was touched when the FedEx driver picked up a ribbon and bracelet to take with her, and I was impressed by staff's desire to inform other staff members of these important issues that touch our lives.

Mobility and Portability moving forward with more speed and force

Where we are after the first face-to-face meeting of the ASWB Mobility Task Force? A major focus is how we will include our

membership. Also, the task force will supply clear answers to the key questions “Why?” “What are we trying to solve/achieve?” and “How are we gonna do it?”

Changes to ASWB will be seen in how our members relate to each other. There must be a larger focus and even more supportive and “organizing” relationship with ASWB. Finally, it's a Matter of Trust—and we will be a better organization and system of regulation as a result.

Closing thoughts

I'd like to say something to two of the more important women in my life—Dorinda and Jenise, my current Board President and Board President to be.

According to BoardSource, one of the most critical responsibilities of both the CEO and the Board President is to forge a mutually respectful and strategic partnership to manage and govern the organization.

I believe that you and I, Dorinda, could write an interesting chapter about doing just that in a time of leadership transition. I thank you for your leadership, your courage to try out new ideas and processes, your keen strategic mind, your

availability when I needed you... the enormous amount of time that you have given to ASWB over the years, and of course your sense of humor and never-ending stash of “My Daddy” stories. It's been a blast. Thanks, Dorinda.

And welcome, Jenise. So far, we are off to a good start and I look forward to our training together in D.C. later this month where we will have two full days to get this collaborative partnership grounded in what is right for our members and ASWB. I look forward to all the great ideas and actions we will create together over the next two years.

So, let's all Go Full Speed Ahead!
Into our next two days together!!