Exam Committee bids farewell and thank you

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ASWB President Timothy M. Brown, MSW, LCSW, ACSW

The Exam Committee recently wrapped up its final meeting as a complete group on August 3-5, 2018, in Nashville, Tennessee. Though the Clinical and Masters exam committees will meet again in September, the Bachelors exam committee has finalized its work for 2018. That meant it was time to bid farewell and thank you to those who are rotating off.

During the Nashville meeting, the committee’s chief task was to replenish the item banks for all categories by reviewing pretest items created by ASWB’s cadre of item writers. Lavina Harless, ASWB director of examination development, says Exam Committee members bring their expertise as they “spend hours reviewing, revising, and approving questions for the examinations, all in the name of helping to ensure safe and competent social work practice.” As a result, she says, “The ASWB exam program remains valid and reliable.”

Receiving awards for their service on the Exam Committee: (from left) Karen Slovak (OH), Ben Rosenberg (NY), Sharon Cutts (CT), Bora Sunseri (LA), Michelle Piper (AL), and Charu Stokes-Williams (HI)
Because Exam Committee volunteers meet in person up to four times each year for three years, they often form strong bonds of friendship. Bora Sunseri of Louisiana, who is rotating off the committee after two years as Clinical exam committee co-chair, began her service to ASWB in 2010 as a member of a standard setting panel and has also served as an item writer. Reflecting on her years of volunteer service, Sunseri says, “I enjoyed all of it. It has been a great way to meet people all over North America.”

ASWB president and Board liaison to the Exam Committee Timothy M. Brown presented Sunseri and several others with commemorative awards at the August meeting in recognition of their service. Remarking on the contributions of this dedicated group, Brown said, “The work of volunteers engaged in exam development are essential to the association’s goal of providing quality and definable social work licensure exams that measure an individual’s minimal competency for social work practice. When attending the Exam Committee meetings, I am amazed at how effortlessly social workers from all over North America, who practice in many different social work practice areas, collaborate as one to develop question items and exams.”

Two committee members had agreed to serve for an additional year beyond their three-year terms. In recognition of this extra year of service, Bachelors exam committee member Ben Rosenberg of New York and Clinical exam committee member Sharon Cutts of Connecticut each received a Jefferson cup.

Those rotating off the committee after serving three-year terms each received so-called tombstone plaques, named for their rectangular shape. Recipients were Bachelors exam committee member Karen Slovak of Ohio and Masters exam committee members Michelle Piper of Alabama and Charu Stokes-Williams of Hawaii.

And in recognition of her completion of a two-year term as Clinical exam committee co-chair, Bora Sunseri received a rosewood box. To her, though, the real reward was all that she learned from her experience. Working on the Exam Committee, she says, helped her realize “…what a great profession this is and how much integrity exists in the exam development process.”

The integrity of the exam is made possible by the diverse group of Exam Committee volunteers who are rotating off, those who remain, and those who will join in the future. Says Harless, “ASWB is grateful to the members of the Exam Committee for their hard work and dedication to the program.”