

Excerpts From Book:

(From Chapter by Jack Jernigan)

In April 1947, an enticing bulletin board announcement at the McKinney VA caught my attention...“Training Program for Clinical Psychologists Associated with Part Time Work in VA Stations where Neuropsychiatric Patients are Treated”...Students selected for the training program were hired by the VA and detailed to VA hospitals near an approved university. The student was to work 1056 hours a year (22 hours a week for 48 weeks). First year Interns received 22/40 of the full time salary of \$2644.80, plus a married veteran received a \$90 a month subsistence allowance and tuition, and books and supplies up to \$500 a year.

(From Chapter by Harold Dickman)

After one year at Kansas City, I began my internship at the VA in Topeka (in 1955). At that time the Topeka VA occupied the buildings of the old army base so all the buildings were one story barracks. It was then one of the thirty-eight psychiatric hospitals in the system... Weekly case presentations were a flag event with Dr. Karl Menninger occasionally attending as a consultant. I remember him as being very respectful of psychologists, even interns, though he was often tough on psychiatric residents.

(From Chapter by Charles Stenger)

The first conference on Vietnam issues...was scheduled on the day Vietnam Veterans Against the War planned their first incursion into Washington...I urged the [VA] administrator that we welcome any incursion into our meeting...It went notably well and the VA leaders at that meeting had a real opportunity to see--and understand--the intensity of the anger of these veterans...In another situation, a group of Vietnam veterans, falsely using my name, arranged to meet with the VA administrator in his office in VACO. When they arrived, they “captured” him and barricaded themselves and the administrator in his office! Needless to say, there was a hurried call to me to come up. When I got there, the place was swarming with police and the focus was on rescuing the administrator. Gradually the Vietnam veterans responded to the request of the police and the situation ended peacefully.

(From Chapter by Lee Gurel)

The area where PEP [the Psychiatric Evaluation Project] was spectacularly successful was in its sponsorship of opportunities for individual research projects...that opportunity was seen initially as a way to recruit and retain well-qualified staff...A quick count of a 1969 listing showed that PEP staffs had produced about 350 journal publications...Of course, our group included people like Jack Cohen, Len Ullmann, and Chuck Watson.

(From Chapter by Dana Moore)

The first [training].budget I did was in early 1978. It was pre-computer, by hand on long spreadsheets; it had to be completely accurate and balanced.....After any budget release,

chiefs of psychology who received what they asked for believed it was only appropriate. Chiefs who got anything less than they requested called to complain, frequently at length, about the criteria and how they had been applied...It was really special to me that I ran the VA psychology training program; VA had been the driving factor in the development of our profession. That was really why I spent so much time talking to Charlie [Stenger] and Cecil [Peck] about the early days. I wanted to know all about it, and I wanted to improve the program even further.

(From Chapter by Robert Waldrop)

In May 1952 I was asked...to accept appointment as chief of the Vocational Counseling Service in DM&S in the VA...At this point in time counseling psychologists were educated primarily for staff in counseling centers and school settings. The introduction of counseling psychologists to the medical setting required...[them] to be accepted, not as therapists for the emotionally disturbed, but as professionals aiding individuals seeking a satisfying and successful adjustment in their personal life, to society, and the world of work.

(From Summary Chapter by Rodney Baker)

After WWII, the psychology training program in the VA helped many begin their careers in psychology...The training program funded almost 36,000 psychology training appointments from its beginning in 1946 through 2005 and, in the first decade of training, 72% of those who received their training in the VA went to work for the VA...The late George Albee was in the first VA training class in 1946 and...readily told others that he was the first VA trainee as his name was first in an alphabetical list of the 215 trainees in that class.

Among the first group of psychologists appointed as a VA psychology chief was Roy Brenner... his wife, Golda, shared with me a number of stories that Roy used to tell about his start at Hines. He noted that when he got to Hines nobody knew what a psychologist was supposed to do and...no one even knew how to spell psychology. His wife also told the story that when Roy got to Hines, he had no office. There was only one office available in the basement, and management was trying to decide whether he or the barber was going to get that office. The barber got it, and Roy had to wait for another office to become available. He not only got his office but went on to recruit a talented staff that helped him develop a distinguished psychology program at Hines.

Ruth Hubbard was either the first woman or among the first women to be appointed a VA chief psychologist...appointed chief at the VA in Waco, Texas in 1948...It can parenthetically be noted that Hubbard was also among the first group of psychologists who received the ABPP in clinical psychology after that credential was established in 1946, a fact noted in a list of ABPP holders as of June 20, 1949.