



CANDIDATE FOR BOARD MEMBER

Charles "Chip" Benight, PhD

Title and Organizational Affiliation:

Presidential Teaching Scholar, Professor of Psychology and Director of the CU: Trauma, Health, & Hazards Center at the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs.

Education and Employment: I received my PhD in Counseling Psychology with an emphasis in Health Psychology from Stanford University. I was a Fulbright Scholar in West Germany from 1985 to 1986 working in cardiac rehabilitation. After graduating with my Masters, I worked for 2 years as a clinician seeing a wide range of clients. I completed a National Heart, Lung and Blood Post-doctoral Fellowship at the University of Miami. I joined the faculty at the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs in 1993. I received the rank of Professor in 2006. I founded the CU: Trauma, Health, & Hazards Center in 1999 and have served as the director since that time.

Qualifications Statement: I have been an active member of ISTSS for over 15 years. I have consistently attended the annual meetings and have gained a lot professionally and personally from my association with colleagues within the society. As a practicing psychologist and an academic I have specifically focused on the intersection between clinical challenges facing the field and the research mission of the society. I served as an Associate Editor for the *Journal of Traumatic Stress* from 2003 to 2007. I have served as a meeting abstract reviewer virtually every year since 2001. In 2004 I was a deputy for the Early Intervention and Disaster abstracts, and in 2013 I was a deputy for the Clinical Intervention track. More recently I have served on the Fund Raising Committee and am currently chairing the Awards Committee. I have been a member of the Early Intervention Special Interest Group since its inception. Recently, I started a Special Interest Group focused on Theory and Traumatic Stress Research in order to promote more theory driven research in the field. I served as a Senior Disaster Mental Health Mentor for a NIMH funded program led by Dr. Fran Norris. I founded and direct the CU: Trauma, Health, & Hazards Center (THHC) at the University of Colorado Colorado Springs which is a cross-disciplinary center focusing on research, education, community action, and policy related to extreme human events. I have directed the center since its inception in 2000. With over 5 million in funding the THHC has been very active in a number of trauma related areas including: disaster warnings, social media and disasters, secondary trauma and burnout, and web interventions for disasters/trauma, and trauma adaptation. Most recently we have opened a community clinic serving southern Colorado focusing on providing evidence-based treatment for trauma survivors with specific emphasis on Veteran wellness and technological support systems. Through the THHC I also started a peer support program for the Colorado Springs Fire Department, consult with the local Domestic Violence Center, and more recently serve on the Posttraumatic Stress Disorder Joint Congressional Taskforce. My research has focused on the application of social cognitive theory in understanding the importance of human empowerment in the evolving coping process following exposure to extreme human events. This work has been funded by NIMH, NSF, SAMHSA, and DOD. I am trained in evidence based trauma treatment.

Candidacy Statement: I am seeking a position on the board of directors for ISTSS for two primary reasons. First, I believe the society is in a transition with unique opportunities and challenges related to our international mission. The society must find ways to capture the synergistic potential with our international partner societies (e.g., the European Society for Traumatic Stress Studies, Australasian Society for Traumatic Stress Studies). The emergence of Division 56 in APA has complicated our role in the field. Now, more than ever, I believe our international commitment is what makes us unique. I believe it is essential for the society to move forward with enhanced relationships across the different traumatic stress organizations outside the U.S. and Canada. Second, the financial viability of the society has and continues to be one of the central challenges we face. The future is based on the appeal of the society to a broad base that includes clinicians, researchers, and students. Our funding base will be on more solid ground if we are able to diversify our sources of revenue and capitalize on the societies expertise. We are making strides in this direction and I would like to continue to assist in this arena. I believe this is a good time for me to give back to the organization that has been my professional home for most of my career.