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BGSP Faculty Member Elected President-Elect of Psychologists for Social Responsibility

Press Contact:
Stephanie Woolbert
617-277-3915
woolberts@bgsp.edu

Brookline, MA. – August 14, 2009 – Today the Boston Graduate School of Psychoanalysis (BGSP) announced that Professor Dr. Stephen Soldz has been elected President-Elect of Psychologists for Social Responsibility (PsySR). Dr. Soldz assumed his new position at PsySR's annual meeting this weekend in Toronto.

PsySR is an independent non-profit organization of over 800 psychologists and other mental health professionals headquartered in Washington, DC. PsySR applies psychological knowledge and expertise to the pursuit of peace, social justice and human rights while simultaneously seeking to transform the psychology profession to be more responsive to contemporary social and ethical problems. PsySR is part of an International Psychologists for Social Responsibility network of like-minded organizations.

"I am thrilled by this opportunity to provide leadership to PsySR at a time when our nation is confronting vast social problems. PsySR can be important in moving psychology to play a larger role in confronting those problems," says Dr. Soldz.

PsySR was founded in the 1980s as part of an international campaign for nuclear disarmament. In recent years, PsySR has focused particularly upon the pursuit of social justice for all, the psychology of war and peace, and the misuses of psychology in the design and implementation of alleged abuses in the U.S. government's interrogation and detention of detainees by the Department of Defense and the CIA.

"The misuse of psychological expertise to create methods of torment constitutes a moral crisis for the mental health professions," says Dr. Soldz. *"These professions must now decide whether they are truly committed to furthering human welfare or to carrying out the wishes of the powerful,"* he continues.

In his new position, Dr. Soldz will serve for three years on PsySR's Operations Committee, responsible for providing overall guidance as well as monitoring day-to-day activities. He will serve as President-Elect for one year from 2009-2010, as President in 2010-2011, and as Past-President from 2011-2012.

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Dr. Soldz has developed national and international prominence as a leading voice among psychologists challenging unethical uses of psychological knowledge and expertise. In recent years he became a leader in a movement of psychologists challenging the participation of psychologists in the development and implementation of military and CIA interrogation and detention programs. He asserts that some of the “enhanced interrogation” techniques that were designed in part by military and intelligence psychologists are examples of torture or other cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment which violate both professional ethics and domestic and international human rights laws.

Dr. Soldz was one of those responsible for the passage by the American Psychological Association membership in September 2008 of a referendum putting the APA on record against psychologist participation in detention sites – such as Guantanamo – allegedly operating in violation of international law or the Constitution.

Dr. Soldz, age 56, is a psychologist, psychoanalyst, and researcher. As a researcher he has published numerous articles in professional journals on issues of personality, psychotherapy process, substance abuse, and public health. He is recognized as an expert in research methodology and has consulted with numerous government agencies at the federal, state, and municipal level on research design and data analysis and interpretation. Dr. Soldz is a Professor at BGSP and directs the school’s Center for Research, Evaluation, and Program Development. He lives with his family in the Roslindale neighborhood of Boston.

BGSP is the only regionally accredited, degree granting, independent psychoanalytic school in the country. Since its founding in 1973, BGSP has opened doors to psychoanalytic study to exceptional students from a wide variety of academic backgrounds. Graduates of the school apply what they have learned in clinical settings as well as in education, business, politics, and the arts. Details on the school and its programs can be found on www.bgsp.edu.

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