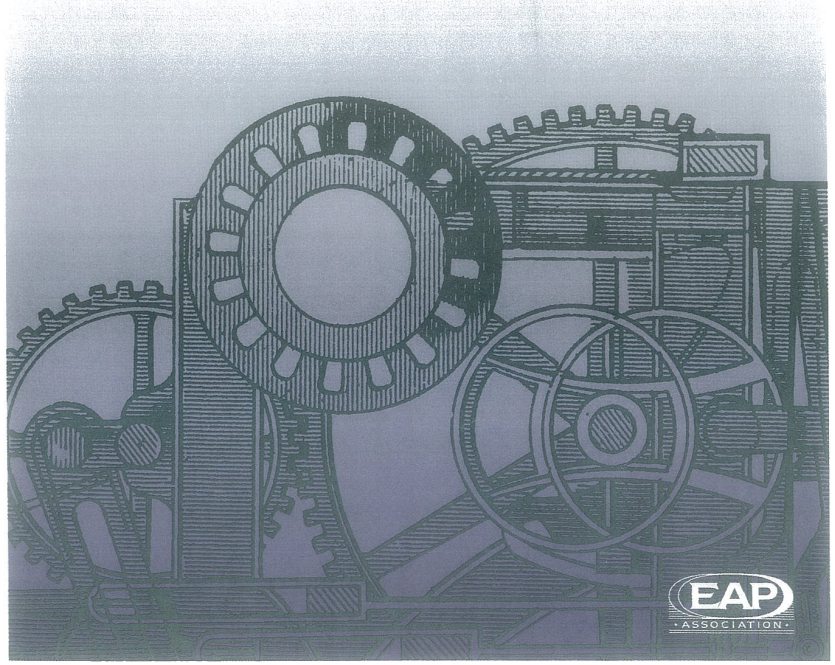
*25th Anniversary Commemorative Journal*

25th ANNIVERSARY
EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROFESSIONALS ASSOCIATION
HELPING EMPLOYEES

# MANY PARTS ONE PURPOSE




EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROFESSIONALS ASSOCIATION, INC. • 1971-1996

# The Labor Movement—Leaders of Yesterday and Tomorrow

*Written by Tom Delaney on behalf of the EAPA Labor Committee*

Organized labor has been a key participant in EAPA activities since the initial organizational meeting in 1971. Among those attending that first meeting was Art Stump, who was the AFL-CIO Community Services Representative assigned to work full-time with Ross Von Wiegand, who was then the director of the Labor-Management Department of the National Council on Alcoholism. When the first ALMACA chapter was started in San Francisco, its founding members included representatives of the AFL-CIO's United Transportation Workers.

Labor's interest in employee assistance programs actually began long before ALMACA was founded. This interest reflected the American labor movement's strong belief that workers should help other workers and their family members who were experiencing health or welfare problems. In keeping with that philosophy, the September/October 1972 issue of the Harvard Business Review included an article entitled "Company/Union Programs for Alcoholics," which was co-authored by the vice chairman of American Airlines and the executive vice president of the Transport Workers Union.

## Leading the Way

In the early days of ALMACA, labor's interest in EAPs was sometimes misunderstood. In 1976, organized labor decided to boycott the annual conference. By 1977, however, labor renewed its interest and became heavily involved in the Association's activities. Leo Perlis, director of Community Services for the AFL-CIO, was the featured conference speaker. By 1978, Perlis himself had become actively involved in ALMACA as had Jack Hennessy of the International Longshoremen's Association and Andy Anderson of United Auto Workers. That year, AFL-CIO President George Meany sent a telegram to the annual conference extending organized labor's best wishes to ALMACA.

Perlis' involvement with ALMACA stemmed from his leadership in the National Coalition for Adequate Alcoholism Programs, which was a collaborative effort to secure congressional support for substance abuse programs. Perlis was the first of many union leaders who taught ALMACA the importance of having an active public policy. In 1981, Bill Combs, member of the San Francisco Chapter and the International Association of Machinists, represented ALMACA in hearings before the House Education and Labor Committee. The committee was looking into President Reagan's proposals to cut back federal government support for substance abuse programs. Bill made an outstanding presentation and the hearing resulted in restoring some programs that were supposed to be cut.

Organized labor has also provided key financial support for EAPA at many critical junctures in its development. For example, the journal for the 1984 EAPA Annual Conference included 16 pages of paid advertising from unions. Probably the largest boost in membership from one company occurred when EAPA member Tom Pasco and the United Auto Workers persuaded the General Motors Company to let at least two people from each plant become EAPA members. Their attendance increased even more after GM medical and human resource personnel also became members.

## Organized Leadership

Current AFL-CIO President John Sweeney has had a personal interest in EAPs and in EAPA. As president of the Service Employees International Union, he maintained interest and support for one of its largest locals—32-BJ in New York City—to provide help to its members and families through their EAP. The 1992 Eastern Regional EAPA Conference recognized this outstanding program and its founder, Jack Anderson. Mr. Sweeney attended the conference and gave a speech during the plenary session.

When Paul Sherman was elected president in 1976, there were 54 members of the Labor Division in the ALMACA Membership Directory. Early in his tenure, he took a step that has boosted the growth of labor ALMACA members and provided a framework for their many successful contributions during the next 20 years. Sherman created the Labor Committee and gave it representation on the Board of Directors. The first committee chair was Jack Hennessy of the International Longshoremen's Association. Although many individuals have contributed to labor's vital role in ALMACA and EAPA, Hennessy's tireless efforts have been the key to their success. He chaired the Labor Committee for the next six years. When Ed Small was ALMACA President from 1980 to 1982, he included Labor Committee Chair Hennessy as a member of the Executive Committee.

Labor leaders continued to make their mark in EAPA history in subsequent years. Jack Hennessy was elected vice president for the Association in 1982, and from 1984 to 1986, he served as president. Tom Pasco served as Labor Committee Chair in 1983; in 1984, Andy Anderson took over as Pasco's successor. Pasco went on to become EAPA president from 1988 to 1990. And, lest we forget, another labor member—George Cobbs of the International Longshoreman's and Warehouseman's Union—served as EAPA president from 1994 to 1996.

Labor members have held other elected positions within ALMACA/EAPA. For example, Madeleine Tramm of the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Worker's Union served two terms as EAPA Treasurer. Dick Stanford of the Texas AFL-CIO was elected EAPA Secretary twice, and Frank Burger of the United Paper Workers International Union, also served as EAPA Secretary. Carole Stevenson, who was formerly with the Association of Professional Flight Attendants, served as EAPA Secretary from 1994 to 1996.

More recent chairs of the Labor Committee have included Tom Murgitroyde of the Philadelphia AFL-CIO, Jack McCabe of the Sheet Metal Workers International Association, and Ted Mapes of the Transport Workers Union. Labor persons, including Barbara Feuer of the Association of Flight Attendants, Dan Malloy of the National Maritime Union, Gary Maltbia of United Auto Workers, Keith McClelland from the Teamsters, and Ying Gee of United Auto Workers have chaired many Board and special committees.

The Employee Assistance Certification Commission (EACC) has also had the benefit of labor input and support. As mentioned earlier, Jack Hennessy helped organize the EACC and served as its first chairperson. Other labor members serving as EACC Commissioners were Richard Bollaert, George Cobbs, Terry Cowan (who also served as EACC chair), Geraldine Hooper, Tom Pasco, and Ron Winters.

I would love to cite all of the labor persons who have contributed to ALMACA/EAPA, but it is not likely that I could do so without leaving someone's name out. One thing is true, however: EAPA has enjoyed many accomplishments through the support and leadership of its labor members. Much like they do in their local unions, these loyal members just see a job that needs to be done and quietly go about doing it for the benefit of the larger group. As we celebrate 25 years of EAPA accomplishments, let's hear a round of applause for the benefits of our long-term association with labor and our hopes that it will continue long into the next century.

### Sometimes the Impossible Is Possible

"John" came to see me very early on a Monday morning. He appeared to be 40-50 years of age and in extreme need of help. His problem was that he was addicted to heroin. This 38-year-old man had a 15-year career as a transit system employee and a long history of substance abuse. I recommended that he enter a 28-day detox program and make visits once a week to see his EAP.

Before leaving that day, John then brought his wife in to my office. She was a beautiful, pregnant 43-year-old woman from Chile. Together they informed me that both he and she were HIV-positive. Though I see many difficult circumstances every day, I couldn't help but be touched by her optimism. She proudly told me that she had stopped smoking 10 days ago.

John and his wife followed their program, making twice weekly visits to a therapist and weekly visits to Narcotics Anonymous meetings and an HIV support group. They both went into full-blown AIDs within 18 months. It was very difficult to see any hope in this situation.

With time and by trying to see things through their eyes, I could see how much progress they truly made. Not only he, but also she, embraced sobriety. He finished his six-month program with the EAP and continued making monthly visits for the next 16 months by his own choice.

I continued to stay in contact with them to the end. Before they died, they told me how grateful they were to be clean and sober, in touch with God, and to have given birth to a healthy baby daughter who would be raised by her grandparents. It was no small miracle that their daughter was spared the AIDS virus.



EAPA Has Labor Leadership