

Biographical Sketch

David R. (Randy) Black, PhD, MPH, HSPP, CHES, CPPE, FASHA, FSBM, FAAHB, FAAHE is a distinguished scholar. He is fellow of five different health organizations and has received ~20 federal, national, and state awards or recognitions for his contributions to public health. He participated in the publication of six books and 20 book chapters. He has published ~150 peer-review manuscripts and participated in ~180 presentations and other 50 presentations that were invited. He has received numerous grants at federal and state level. As part of his educational training he received his Bachelor and Master degree at California State University Fresno with an emphasis in psychology and school psychology. He is licensed in California as an educational psychologist, and marriage, family and child counselor. He completed his doctoral degree at Stanford University. He is licensed in Indiana as a psychologist. He completed a Post Doctoral Fellowship at the Stanford Heart Disease Prevention Program and Laboratory for the Study of Behavioral Medicine. Later he accepted a faculty appointment at the University of Nebraska Medical Center. He remained there for 4 years and held a faculty appointment in the College of Pharmacy where he taught communication skills and statistics and in the Department of Preventive and Stress Medicine as well in Psychology. His next faculty appointment was at Purdue University where he has been since 1984. He is a full professor in public health and holds adjunct appointment in three other areas Health Sciences; Foods and Nutrition; and Nursing. The major focus of his teaching has been public health and prevention, epidemiology, design and analysis of health promotion programs, public policy, and service delivery of program interventions. When he completed his residency at the Stanford Counseling Institute and Stanford School of Medicine, he realized that there were not enough service providers to help all those in need of psychological and education assistance related to health issues. As a remedy he trained public volunteers who provided the same or better quality of care than trained professionals. He had the opportunity to observe Stanford students operating crisis and outreach centers and from those observations and experiences, he incorporated trained peer advocates into his research at the Heart Disease Prevention Program to help those who were obese and overweight. Each peer counseled several couples with one person of the dyad targeted as the primary focus of treatment and the other as the trained support person who would be there during the week to help with difficult decisions about eating and physical activity. The San Francisco media was impressed with the concept and incredible progress of the couples that several press interviews were conducted with program recipients and the peer advocates. At that time, there was no program like it in the nation and the ratings of program were so overwhelming positive that there was an outcry for programs designed similarly. The peer advocates made the difference and they worked with adults with lesser education than the peer advocates and a person who had won a Noble Prize. From that time forward, independent of the findings of research, Dr. Black witnessed firsthand that peer advocates could be powerful “instruments of behavior change” and educational differences and varied backgrounds seem unimportant.

Black has dedicated himself to service in professional organizations. He has made significant contributions to the National Peer Helpers Association (NAPP), now called the National Association for Peer Program Professionals (NAPPP). He held every office

in NAPP, was one of longest running Presidents, and was the longest running editor of the *Peer Facilitator Quarter*, now called the *Perspectives in Peer Programs*. NAPP awarded him the Barbara Varenhorst Award of Merit, their highest award of distinction and achievement, Scholar of the Year Award, and being voted unanimously President Emeritus of the organization. A few of his significant contributions to the organization are promulgating the concept of peer helping from “cradle to grave;” publishing a meta-analysis to demonstrate, what he observed in his training at Stanford, that trained peers are effective in changing human behavior and often as, if not more effective than, trained professionals; and was the leader in developing a rubric with his colleagues and Future Farmers of America for program evaluation. Dr. Black is a Certified Peer Program Professional and a Peer Program trainer/consultant.

There is another side of Black that few know about. He is a retired Colonel who served for 37 ½ years and is Iraq veteran. He has received many military awards to include one of their highest, the Legion of Merit. He has commanded every size unit from company, battalion, to brigade. He has been Commandant of the Indiana Military Academy and is a graduate of the U.S. Army War College, which graduates about 200 soldiers a year out of initial class of 400. Peer helping is a major part of the military and soldiers learn quickly in order to survive they must learn from and count on one another. He was a part of the State Partnership for Peace Program and travel worldwide to help cold war countries such as Slovakia to set up military operations to promote peace and not war. Slovakian soldiers today serve right along with American soldiers in conflicts occurring worldwide. He was selected to serve as the escort officer for the Slovakian Chief of the Staff, which is their highest military officer, and told and provided actual demonstrations as how the American military actually operates. Peer helping also is part of the military and soldiers quickly that in order to survive they must count on one another.

Last, Black is devoted to his students. He has hundreds of students all over the world. He hears from many of them regularly. Some have gone on to hold significant and prestigious positions around the world. His students become members of his family, modeled after the United Kingdom style and manner of education. He proudly notes that he has 2 children Brian and Diane, a daughter-in-law Abby that he considers a daughter, and a grand daughter Alissa Kay Black and a grandson soon to born, David Alexander Black, named after the author. Alissa’s middle name Kay was selected because her 2 deceased grandmothers, Judy Kay and Jacquelyn Kay Black, both shared the same middle name. Alissa is even using peer helping. She is teaching other children in her daycare program how to crawl. Peer helping starts early and naturally and continues throughout a person’s life if, people know about it and seize the opportunity. These observations are one of the reasons we believe peer helping operates from cradle to grave.