



MSU APA/MEA/NEA
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Calendar

APA Executive Board

MEA HQ

March 14, 2023 | 2:00
pm

If you know colleagues who are not receiving the APA Newsletter, encourage them to sign up at www.msuapa.org.

Michigan Education Association, PO Box 2573, East Lansing, MI 48823, USA

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A Word from the APA President

Posted on February 27, 2023 by Darius Bradley

We Cannot Heal Alone

Dear APA members,

Their names are Alex, Arielle, and Brian and these Spartans changed our lives forever.

When students arrive at MSU they become part of our Spartan family and we love them like our own. Never again will February 13, just be the day before Valentine's Day. A senseless act violated our Spartan family and we lost three beautiful souls while five others continue to fight for their lives. The wounds are fresh, even as we attempt to heal, Alex, Arielle, Brian, and their families will always be in our hearts

Run, Hide, Fight were the words repeated as that evening unfolded. We commend our law enforcement friends for their bravery and dedication to our Spartan family. They ran forward to protect and secure the rest of us while friends, families, and parents, frightened beyond belief, communicated with those hiding in their rooms and closets. A thank you does not seem adequate for their work.

Many of our APA positions are front-facing, having daily contact with our students. Our counselors, social workers, and our members in the housing and culinary areas are just some of the first that come to mind, you know our students as family and care for them deeply. Your work is from the heart and cannot be overlooked.

As your APA, our work is to support you, while you support our Spartan family. Our first concern was to bring in crisis counselors for members, and specifically for those with frontline contact with our students and coworkers. You cannot help us if you are not supported. MEA reached out to help us with 18 minutes of the first alert. I spent Tuesday in their office learning the lessons that had unfortunately come from previous shooting tragedies. Please know that the APA/MEA support is not just for these first moments but for the long haul.

The conversations we are having with our members help us understand their needs. We know that many are hurting too badly to talk now and that is okay. In time, know that we are here to hear your concerns when you are ready. We cannot heal alone and our APA/MEA resources and the MSU EAP services are there for us.

Our hearts are broken and may even harbor some anger. This will affect each of us differently as we give grace and time to our friends, coworkers, and Spartan community. We will get through this.

Their names are Alex, Arielle, and Brian, and these Spartans changed our lives forever.

Sincerely,

Martin McDonough

President

MSU APA

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MSU Administrative Professional Association

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MSU Administrative Professional Association

*Working together for a fairer, safer
MSU*

Coping Methods

Posted on February 27, 2023 by Darius Bradley

By Darius Bradley

Please visit the following links for information regarding to helping us all heal from the terrible events that took place on our campus on Monday February 13th.

[Guide to the Aftermath of a Workplace Shooting](#)

[Taking Care of Yourself After a Workplace Shooting](#)

Below are photos of the memorials that have been erected around campus to remember those who were injured and lost in this tragedy.



The Rock on MSU campus surrounded by flowers



Wider view of The Rock on MSU Campus surrounded by flowers



Entrance of Berkey Hall MSU Campus




Memorial at Sparty Statue on MSU Campus

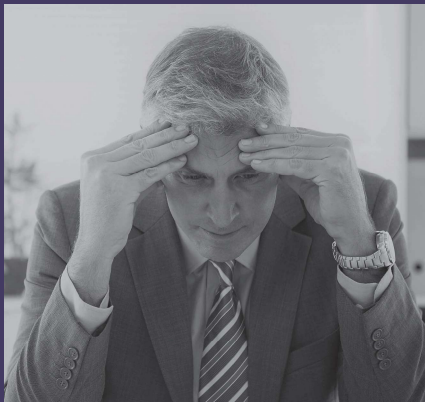


Closer view of Memorial at Sparty Statue on MSU Campus

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MSU Administrative Professional Association

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Leadership's Guide to the Aftermath of a Workplace Shooting

A shooting in the workplace presents unique challenges for the leadership of an organization. Productivity has been disrupted, and employees may be emotional or unsure of what is expected of them during such a time. It is important for an organization and its leadership to respond quickly in order to keep the workplace functioning, and to lead employees through this difficult time. It can be helpful to know what kind of reactions you might expect from employees, and what you can do to be helpful to them.

If you feel you need further assistance contact:

Employee Assistance Program

(866) 579-4634

COMMON REACTIONS

- Shock and disbelief - people may feel like "this can't be true" or feels "unreal"
- Fear and anxiety - about what happened and about it happening again in the future
- Anger and blaming - at coworkers, themselves, leadership, or the organization
- Sadness - over any injuries or losses that may have occurred
- Guilt - may wish they had acted differently or believe they could have somehow stopped the violence
- Preoccupation or worry - about those directly impacted by the event, and a desire to reach out to help
- Feeling unsafe - regardless of whether there is a current threat
- Confusion or difficulty thinking clearly
- Poor concentration and decreased productivity for a time - people will want to talk about what happened, so try to be flexible and allow them time to do so
- Irritability - may be on edge or quicker to anger
- Interacting more with others, or withdrawing
- Hyper-vigilance/hyper-sensitivity - any sight, sound, or smell that reminds them of the incident may trigger reactions similar to when it happened
- Reluctance to come into work
- Physical reactions - such as fatigue, headache, stomach ache, muscle tension, or difficulty eating or sleeping



WHAT LEADERSHIP CAN DO TO HELP

- As soon as possible, hold a meeting and provide factual, honest information about what happened. Periodically update employees as new information becomes known.
- Validate employees concerns about security at work. Let them know what the company plans to do to help keep them safe.
- Express care and concern for employees' safety and well-being by being visible and checking in with them individually. Listen to how they are doing, offering a compassionate response.
- Acknowledge and thank employees for appropriate behavior during and after the incident.
- Be flexible and understanding of how your employees are reacting and the impact the incident has had on their ability to work as usual.
- Allow employees some time to talk with each other and process what happened.
- Coordinate with HR regarding employee(s) attendance at funerals or memorial services.

- Consider conducting some kind of tribute to the deceased employee(s), like a memory book to give to the family. This is an optional way to share memories of their coworker.
- Acknowledge the anniversary of the incident, when memories and some reactions may reemerge.



WHAT TO AVOID

- Minimizing what happened or employees' reactions - saying things like "you will get over it" or acting like everything is business as usual
- Making employees talk about what happened - an avenue for sharing their reactions can be made available, but not required



TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF

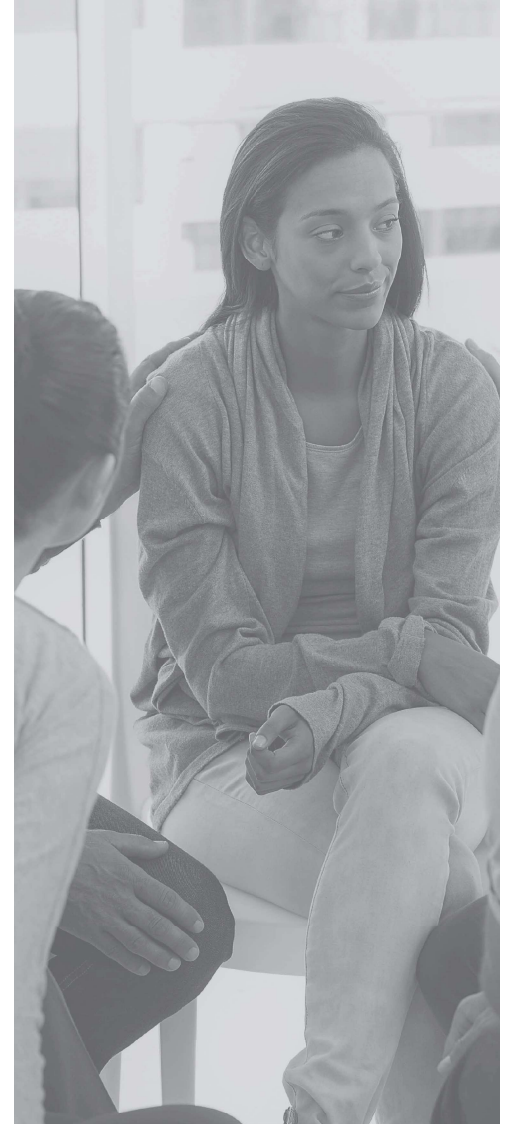
The aftermath of a shooting in the workplace is a stressful time for leadership as well. It is important to take care of yourself, especially during times of high stress, as it will enable you to be more productive and helpful to your employees. Here are some suggestions:

- Eat healthy and drink lots of water - your body and mind need the nutrients to recover from stress and expel the stress chemicals
- Engage in regular exercise - this helps to boost chemicals that improve mood, reduce stress, and improve sleep
- Try to maintain your usual sleep routine - if having trouble sleeping, get up and do a relaxing activity for a little while to distract your mind from worries
- Help someone else - be a support to your colleagues and employees
- Do some things you enjoy - part of taking care of yourself is making time to relax and have fun; this gives you a break from worries and helps to maintain balance
- Talk to someone - family, friends, coworkers, a counselor, faith mentor, or anyone else whom you feel comfortable sharing your feelings with and is helpful to you
- Return to routine - as soon as you are able to, engage in your normal routine; this may help you regain your sense of control and predictability of life
- Think about other times - when you have coped with difficult situations. What positive coping strategies worked for you then? Can you practice those now?

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It is important for an organization and its leadership to respond quickly in order to keep the workplace functioning, and to lead employees through this difficult time



Taking Care of Yourself After a Workplace Shooting

A shooting in the workplace is often traumatic. Whether the violence was directed at you or you were a witness, it is still reasonable to feel like your life was in danger. When we experience a traumatic event our brains try to make sense of what happened. This may result in a variety of unpleasant reactions, but these are a normal response to an abnormal event. In this guide are some common reactions, things to keep in mind, and coping strategies you may find useful.

COMMON REACTIONS

- Shock and disbelief - feeling that this is "unreal" or could not have happened
- Anger
- Going over and over the event in your mind
- Wondering "what if" - thinking about how things might have been if you acted differently
- Fear and anxiety - about what happened and about it happening again in the future
- Poor concentration or difficulty thinking clearly
- Depression or sadness
- Preoccupation or worry - about those who may have been injured, and a desire to reach out to help
- Feeling unsafe - regardless of whether there is a current threat
- Irritability - may be on edge or quicker to anger
- Hyper-vigilance/hyper-sensitivity - any sight, sound, or smell that reminds you of the incident may trigger reactions similar to when it happened
- Guilt - may be over own survival, or ideas about what you could have done differently
- Physical reactions, such as: rapid breathing, increased heart rate, headache, stomach ache, or difficulty sleeping or eating

THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND

- During a traumatic event, our body's natural survival mechanisms kick in. Our brain sends chemicals of survival. Our brain also stores the memory of the threat, so it can react more quickly if a similar event is encountered. Keep in mind:
 - Anything that reminds our brains of the threat, such as a sight, sound, or smell, can trigger our adrenaline and survival mechanisms, even if there is no real threat present
 - Our brain will try to figure out the event by way of flashbacks, dreams, and thinking about the event over and over again - don't be alarmed if this happens
 - Adrenaline and cortisol may tell our body to freeze, temporarily taking away our ability to react to the event in the way we may have wished
- Because our brain is trying to make sense of the traumatic event, it can slow down the recovery process if we try to deny our feelings or fight reactions. It may be helpful to realize that if flashbacks or dreams occur, it is a normal part of recovery and will usually diminish over time. If we are able to accept our reactions and not fight them, they typically go away faster.
- Everyone reacts to trauma in their own way and with varying intensities. Factors that impact how we react, include: previous experiences with violence and/or trauma, physical

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and mental health status prior to the event, relationship to others involved in the event, relationship to others involved in the event, the specifics of the event (how threatening or dangerous, presence of a weapon, degree of injury caused, etc.), social supports and coping strategies, religious beliefs, and other life stressors.

- Although asking "what ifs" or questioning how you reacted during the incident is common, there is no way to know if you could have done anything to prevent what happened. It is not fair nor realistic to judge your actions during the event, based on what you now know after the event. Focusing on "what ifs" takes away from processing what did happen and can lead to stress over what did not actually happen.
- Expect recovery. With the help of social supports and coping skills most people begin to feel better within a few weeks. It takes time to recover so be patient with yourself, but know that most people who experience a traumatic event do not develop post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).
- Avoid using alcohol or drugs to cope, as they prevent your ability to work through the thoughts and emotions brought up by the trauma. They also interfere with sleep, which makes it harder for your body to recover from stress.
- Be cautious of consuming caffeine and other stimulants, as they can increase anxiety and interfere with sleep.
- Don't be surprised if some reactions reemerge around the anniversary of this incident, this is normal, and the reactions will typically diminish.

COPING STRATEGIES

- Eat healthy and drink lots of water - your body and mind need the nutrients to recover from stress and expel the stress chemicals
- Engage in regular exercise - this helps to boost chemicals that improve mood, reduce stress, and improve sleep
- Try to maintain your usual sleep routine - if having trouble sleeping, get up and do a relaxing activity for a little while to distract your mind from worries
- Help someone else - be a support to your coworkers
- Do some things you enjoy - part of taking care of yourself is making time to relax and have fun; this gives you a break from grieving and helps to maintain balance
- Talk to someone - family, friends, coworkers, a counselor, faith mentor, or anyone else whom you feel comfortable sharing your feelings with and is helpful to you
- Return to routine - as soon as you are able to, engage in your normal routine; this may help you regain your sense of control and predictability of life
- Think about other times - when you have coped with difficult situations. What positive coping strategies worked for you then? Can you practice those now?

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Your Voice at MSU Board of Trustee Meetings

Posted on February 27, 2023 by Darius Bradley

By Martin McDonough

Your Voice at MSU Board of Trustee Meeting

The following are the speaking notes of APA President McDonough's statement that was presented during the public participation portion of the February 10, 2023 MSU Board of Trustee meeting.

Speaking Notes

MSU Board of Trustee Meeting on 2/10/2023

1. Introduction – Martin McDonough – President of the MSU Administrative Professional Association, otherwise known as the MSU APA.
2. I would like to congratulate our newly elected, re-elected, and appointed Board positions
 - A. Chairperson Vassar
 - B. Vice Chairperson Kelley
 - C. Trustees Knake-Jefferson, Denno, and Pierce
3. I appreciate this opportunity to bring the voices of over 3,000 APA Support Staff Professionals before this body.
4. The 2030 Strategic Plan Executive Summary states that “We will focus on effective student support systems, ... and providing holistic support for students’ physical, mental and emotional health and well-being.” We all agree that student success is the primary goal for everyone here. A critical element of their success is the work of our support staff professionals.
5. March 2020 changed the world for all of us. Please think about the importance of our support positions and what they mean not only to the university, but above all, student success. Our people are in:
 - A. Admissions
 - B. Housing and Culinary
 - C. Administrative
 - D. Research
 - E. Healthcare/Counseling
 - F. I.T ... and these are just some examples of the 350 support classifications whose voice we bring here today.
6. They exemplified their value to this university through their responses to the COVID crisis, a historic situation that tested the MSU support staff character.

- A. When we say Spartans Will, Well, our people did and they continue to do so every day.
 - B. I could not be more proud of how these people met that challenge
7. Recently President Woodruff, you asked me how our people were doing. I responded that they were hurting and broken.
- A. They are strained physically, emotionally, and especially financially.
 - B. These are the professionals who provide critical supports for our students and we need to invest in them accordingly. We cannot wait any longer. They are spent.
8. Looking at the 2030 Strategic Plan and understanding the importance of support staff to the success of our students and the University, the path is clear. The time to invest is now.
9. We succeed as a team and failure is not an option. Thank you.

Go Green

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Your Fellow APAs

Posted on February 27, 2023 by Darius Bradley

Meet Fellow APA Member Carolyn J. Miller



Carolyn J. Miller

By Gerlind Kiupel, Communication Committee Member

1. What is your job title? *Botanical Technologist II*
2. How long have you been at MSU? *7 years 7 months*
3. Have you been a member of the APA the whole time? *Yes*
4. What department do you work in, and can you tell me a little bit about what you do? *W.J. Beal Botanical Garden. I map all the trees and shrubs on campus using GPS & GIS technologies.*
5. What brought you to your current job at MSU? *My undergraduate degree was from MSU in plant biology. This job was my dream job, as well as being back on campus where I started my botany journey.*
6. What do you enjoy most about working at MSU?
I work with an incredible team of people, that all have a passion for plants and people.
7. What do you like to do when you are not at work?
Reading, homework (currently in grad school), gardening with native Michigan plants.
8. In high school I was known for *being a science nerd.*
9. People would be surprised to know I am skilled at *playing ice hockey.*
10. I have *1 cat (pets).*
11. I like *classical music.*
12. My favorite area restaurant is *El Azteco* and my favorite dish is the *blue corn enchiladas.*

13. My hobbies include *photography, camping, and hiking*.
14. My favorite junk food is *popcorn* because *I've always loved it!*



Carolyn J. Miller Hugging a Tree

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Calling All Advocates – Area Representatives Needed

Posted on February 27, 2023 by Darius Bradley

Check all the qualities you believe you possess:

- You are good at your job & respected by your colleagues
- People ask for your advice
- You have a strong sense of justice & clear principles
- You are responsible
- You are honest
- You are compassionate
- You are a good listener
- You like solving problems as a team
- You put interests of the whole first, ahead of your individual concerns
- You respect group decisions
- You are knowledgeable about MSU and your contract
- You can stay cool under pressure
- You handle stress well

If you checked 5 or more of the above, your *APA Administrative Professional Association* wants you!

For more information on how to get started as an Area Representative (AR), Contact: Pat Hampton at phampton@msu.edu

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MSU APA Upcoming Events

Posted on February 27, 2023 by Darius Bradley

MSU-APA March Executive Board Meeting

Tuesday, March 14th

2:00-5:00 p.m. MEA HQ

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