

The Francine Butler Scholarship

A little history....

It occurred to us that the award winners of this scholarship may really not even know who this great lady is and what she has meant to the field.

Imagine 40 years ago and you heard about this new weird modality where you could teach your body to change its physiology. There really may be something to this mind/body connection. Now here's the tricky part - computers were not commonplace for personal use and websites hadn't yet been launched. How did you find out about this emerging science?

Somehow word spread, interest grew, and in October 1969, the Biofeedback Research Society was formed. The first meeting was held in Santa Monica and the phenomenon of biofeedback officially received its name. And she was there through all of this. She worked at the CU Medical School with Dr. Johann Stoyva and under her guidance, the Biofeedback Research Society grew. Back then it was index cards in a shoe box, but it grew to an international society whose current name is The Association for Applied Psychophysiology and Biofeedback (AAPB).

In the late 1970's, the need for a credentialing program in biofeedback became apparent as the field was expanding. Insurance companies were exploring coverage for this new field (especially CHAMPUS, the military insurance program) and a need for demonstrating competence was clear. Implementation of such a program was not so easy. The primary driver of credentialing was Mark Schwartz, the visionary, who chaired the program that eventually saw BCIA come into recognition and acceptance.

Dr. Butler's role was facilitator, administrator, organizer, and any number of other titles and responsibilities. She worked with Dr. Schwartz to gain recognition for the fledgling program in the National Commission for Health Certifying Agencies (NCHCA) which had developed accreditation criteria for health certifying programs. The NCHCA evolved over time into NOCA (National Commission for Certifying Agencies) where she represented BCIA and served on their board through the chairs to President and remain active in credentialing issues. The organization is now called ICE, the Institute for Credentialing Excellence.

She served as Executive Director of BCIA since its inception in 1981 for some 30+ years to shepherd its growth in concert with AAPB, the membership association for biofeedback professionals, where she also served as Executive Director since its inception in 1969 thru 2010.

When Dr. Butler retired, BCIA decided the best way to honor her career and her many contributions was to offer a scholarship that would live on in her name to encourage the next generation of clinicians, researchers, and academics.

Now we hope you have learned a little about the history of the field and can better appreciate the name behind your scholarship. She will be proud of all the winners are going to bring to the field.