

Founding of the Colombian Society of Neuropsychology

In Colombia, the field of neuropsychology is quite young, having begun only approximately 30 years ago. It developed primarily in the country's largest cities (Medellín, Bogotá, and Cali). The field has advanced via various types of academic activities, including conferences and seminars, and several masters' programs. In addition, a few local scientific associations have been founded. Recently, neuropsychologists in Colombia identified a need to standardize and consolidate the profession of neuropsychology throughout the country. Therefore, in 2016, a group of 15 professionals working in neuropsychology from different Colombian cities began to meet and work together. They wrote the bylaws of a neuropsychological society and, in November 2016, the first Colombian Society of Neuropsychology was founded. The main mission of this organization was, and is, to support and promote the professional development of neuropsychology in Colombia.

One of the first joint actions of the organization was to carry out a study on the current state of the professional practice of neuropsychology in the country. The second joint action was to carry out a large-scale, national study to standardize several of the most commonly used neuropsychological tests in both children and adults. Prior to this study, most Colombian neuropsychologists reported using norms from other countries or not at all. The results of these studies were disseminated in many ways. Professionals and students from all over the country heard about the organization and the new norms via email communication, social media, face-to-face encounters, and word-of-mouth. For instance, two Spanish-language books were published and presented at several seminars/conferences in different Colombian cities (Arango-Lasprilla, Rivera, & Olabarrieta-Landa, 2017; Arango-Lasprilla & Rivera, 2015). Overall these events were attended by over 2,000 people.

Colombian Society of Neuropsychology held its first conference at the Universidad del Norte in Barranquilla, Colombia from September 21 to 23, 2017. Over 900 people attended from both Colombia and abroad. The conference was supported and sponsored by national and international organizations, including the International

Neuropsychology Society, as well as other professional and scientific organizations, universities, research centers, and private companies. Five pre-conference workshops were held to provide current, in-depth knowledge in specialty areas. The conference itself consisted of 8 keynote presentations (including renowned international speakers Dr. Donald Stuss and Dr. McKay Moore Sohlberg with simultaneous Spanish translation), 18 invited presentations, 6 symposiums (32 papers), 8 paper sessions (42 oral presentations), and 80 posters presentations. The quality of the speakers and presentations made this conference the most important academic event in the history of Colombian neuropsychology.

The Colombian Society of Neuropsychology is a young and growing organization with over 100 student and professional members. Special interest groups have been formed to tackle important issues to the field of neuropsychology in the country, such as professional training, regulation of professional practice, and research. The organization's website is <http://sociedadcolombiananeuropsicologia.com/>. It contains information about the organization and its members, links to its Facebook page and Twitter feed, and lists related events and resources for those in the field. Anyone working in neuropsychology who shares our mission is welcome to join. Please see the website for more details. Plus, the Organizing Committee of the second Colombian Conference of Neuropsychology is working hard to plan the next conference, to be held in 2019 in Cali, Colombia. We hope you'll join us!

1. Arango-Lasprilla, J.C., **Rivera, D.**, & Olabarrieta-Landa, L. (2017). *Neuropsicología Infantil* [Child Neuropsychology]. Bogotá, Colombia: Editorial Manual Moderno. ISBN: 978-958-8993-15-7.
2. Arango-Lasprilla, J.C., & **Rivera, D.** (2015). *Neuropsicología en Colombia: Datos normativos, estado actual y retos a futuro* [Neuropsychology in Colombia: Normative data, current state and future challenges]. Manizales, Colombia: Editorial Universidad Autónoma de Manizales. ISBN: 978-958-8730-63-9.