



2021-2022
Winter Newsletter



INTERNATIONAL DAY OF HUMAN RIGHTS

**THE ASSOCIATION
FOR MULTICULTURAL COUNSELING
AND DEVELOPMENT**

Vol 50 Ed 2

AMCD WINTER NEWSLETTER

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International Day of Human Rights

BY AFROZE SHAIKH, NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Human Rights Day is observed annually on December 10th. This date allows for reflection on equity, inclusion, and the rights entitled to all human beings, regardless of how they may identify. The Association for Multicultural Counseling and Development strives to defend these human rights through the advancement of our understanding of diversity, carried out across our many wonderful events and committees that you may read about below.

2021 was a year that challenged many to have conversations on the rights stolen from individuals, especially from more vulnerable members of society. The current pandemics called for critical action to identify efforts that address human rights crises around the globe. It was also a year that counselors and academics actively engaged in opportunities to turn these conversations into advocacy efforts that build up our communities.

In this new year, we will continue to be challenged by our work and our surroundings. I hope that you bolster your days with outpouring support and community, profound moments of joy, and enlightening insights to guide you during these times.

We are so grateful for our members, contributors, and readers for bringing meaning to our newsletter and engaging in efforts toward communal transformation and growth.

2021-2022

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

PRESIDENT..... Margarita Martinez
PRESIDENT ELECT..... Angela Coker
PAST PRESIDENT..... Kim Lee Hughes

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ASIAN AMERICAN/
PACIFIC ISLANDER..... Monica Band
AFRICAN AMERICAN..... Charmaine Conner
LATINX..... Laura Rendon Finnell
NATIVE AMERICAN..... Alaina Hanks
INTERNATIONAL..... Ann Shillingford
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MIDWESTERN..... Michelle Kerulis
SOUTHERN..... Mary Huffstead
WESTERN..... Sharon Bowles
SECRETARY..... Rachel Boykin
TREASURER..... Sachin Jain
PARLIAMENTARIAN..... Christian Chan
ACA GOVERNING COUNCIL REP..... Catharina Chang
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ETHICS..... Kathy Ybanez-Llorente
GOVERNANCE MANUAL..... Claudia Nguyen
CONFERENCE..... Asha Dickerson
DAY OF SERVICE..... Dan Terminal
CONFERENCE BOOTH..... Cha'Ke'Sha Spencer
50TH PLANNING..... Clemmie Solomon
MENTORSHIP..... Kirsis Dipre
WRITER'S CONSORTIUM..... Diana Gallardo
MEMBERSHIP..... Roberto Carlos Martinez
AWARDS..... Camila Pulgar
STATES FORMATION..... Karl Mitchell

JOIN US AT OFFICE HOURS

Join us on the second Saturday of every other month for AMCD Office Hours



3pm - 5pm EST
12pm-2pm PST
1pm-3pm MST
2pm-4pm CST

**LEARN ABOUT
AMCD**

**ASK
QUESTIONS**

**VOICE
CONCERNS**

**SHARE
SUGGESTIONS**

**CREATE
RELATIONSHIPS**

SAVE THE DATE

March 12, 2022

May 14, 2022

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear AMCD,

I want to take the time to say thank you for joining and continuing your membership. It has been a tough year and I want back everything this pandemic has robbed us. Even though I grieve I am also reminded of our resilience. If we have learned anything it is that our lives rely on the entire global community.

We dedicate this newsletter to the International Human Rights Day celebrated on December 10th. With everything else, deadlines are more difficult as we have to offer each other grace as we prioritize our health and sanity in these challenging times.

We are now gearing up to celebrate our 50th anniversary. Our organization has an incredible history of trailblazing and revolutionary leaders and I hope you had the opportunity to join our webinars and listen to the folks who paved the way. I hope you continue to join us in person or virtually for our 50th celebrations at ACA in 2022.

Lastly, I want to thank my Presidential Trio, our Immediate Past-President, Kim Lee Hughes, who has done a marvelous job interviewing the past presidents and who has now been tasked with being AMCD's Archivist! I want to also highlight our incoming President-Elect, Angela Coker, who has put a call for volunteers. You should jump at this opportunity to work with our new President!

Once again, thank you to everyone and especially to our amazing newsletter editor, Afroze Shaikh.

--Margarita



FROM THE PRESIDENT-ELECT

Dear AMCD members,

Greetings and Happy New Year to you all. As your current president-elect (2021-2022), and incoming president (2022-2023) I want to thank you for your collective and continued support of the Association for Multicultural Counseling and Development (AMCD). This edition of AMCD's newsletter is dedicated to human rights advocacy across the globe. It is an opportunity to reflect on the ways in which we individually and as an organization promote the dignity and rights of individuals through clinical outreach, scholarship, teaching, and service. This includes issues around the killing of citizens in Black and Brown communities, the reproductive rights of women, immigrant suffrage at US borders, Afghan girls' access to education, and the need for mental health support amid uncertain COVID pandemic conditions (just to name a few).

AMCD continues to provide leadership in advancing discourse about the needs of diverse communities through programming, collaboration with other ACA organizations, clinical training, and scholarship. My goals as incoming president (beginning July 1, 2022) are to continue building on AMCD's stellar accomplishments, honor its rich tradition as an agent for cultural competence development, and work collaboratively with other organizations to meet the needs of diverse individuals, families, and communities.

If you have an interest in serving (or continuing your service) on AMCD's Executive Council during the upcoming 2022-2023 year, please contact me at **presidentelect@amcd.info**

I look forward to hearing from you!

Angela D. Coker, PhD, LPCC (CA), LPC (MO), NCC

The following opportunities await your interest:

- Secretary
 - Treasurer
 - Parliamentarian
- Committee Chairs:
- Communications
 - Webmaster
 - Newsletter Editor
 - By-Laws, Strategic Planning
 - Ethics
 - Governance Manual
 - Conference
 - Day of Service
 - Conference Booth
 - Mentorship
 - Writer's Consortium
 - Membership
 - Awards

PRESIDENTIAL WEBINAR SERIES

BY KIM LEE HUGHES, PAST PRESIDENT

During our first Executive Board meeting in July 2021, Mx President Martinez suggested that I take the lead on a webinar series featuring conversations with our Past Presidents. After a robust dialogue about the merits and challenges of such an undertaking, the board voted affirmatively for me to move forward. Like many academics in the middle of summer, I was hopeful and daunted simultaneously. I love our history, especially since I had the honor of espousing a “Grow-Up Model of Leadership” during my presidential term. My trepidation was about ways to adequately assess who was available and interested spanning our 50 years of service to the division. How could we corral our Past Presidents and engage in conversations in front of our membership?

At our monthly Presidential Meeting, which Mx President Martinez affectionately calls our “Trio Meetings”, I shared my apprehension about the board’s vote to move forward with me at the helm. We discussed ways to move the charge ahead with immediacy and came up with the concept of starting with Past Presidents of AMCD who also served as Presidents of the parent organization ACA. The theme for the first six Past Presidential webinars was born. The promotional is attached.

As seems fitting, the first webinar was with our current ACA President, Dr. S. Kent Butler in September 2021. He arrived at our Zoom meeting in his affable and open sense dressed in his business suit. As the openness of our conversation started to flow, Dr. Butler did, too. He affectionately excused himself to get more comfortable and discarded his suit jacket for his Black Lives Matter t-shirt. We were truly engaged in hot topics and our experiment of casual conversations with our esteemed leaders was off to a promising start.

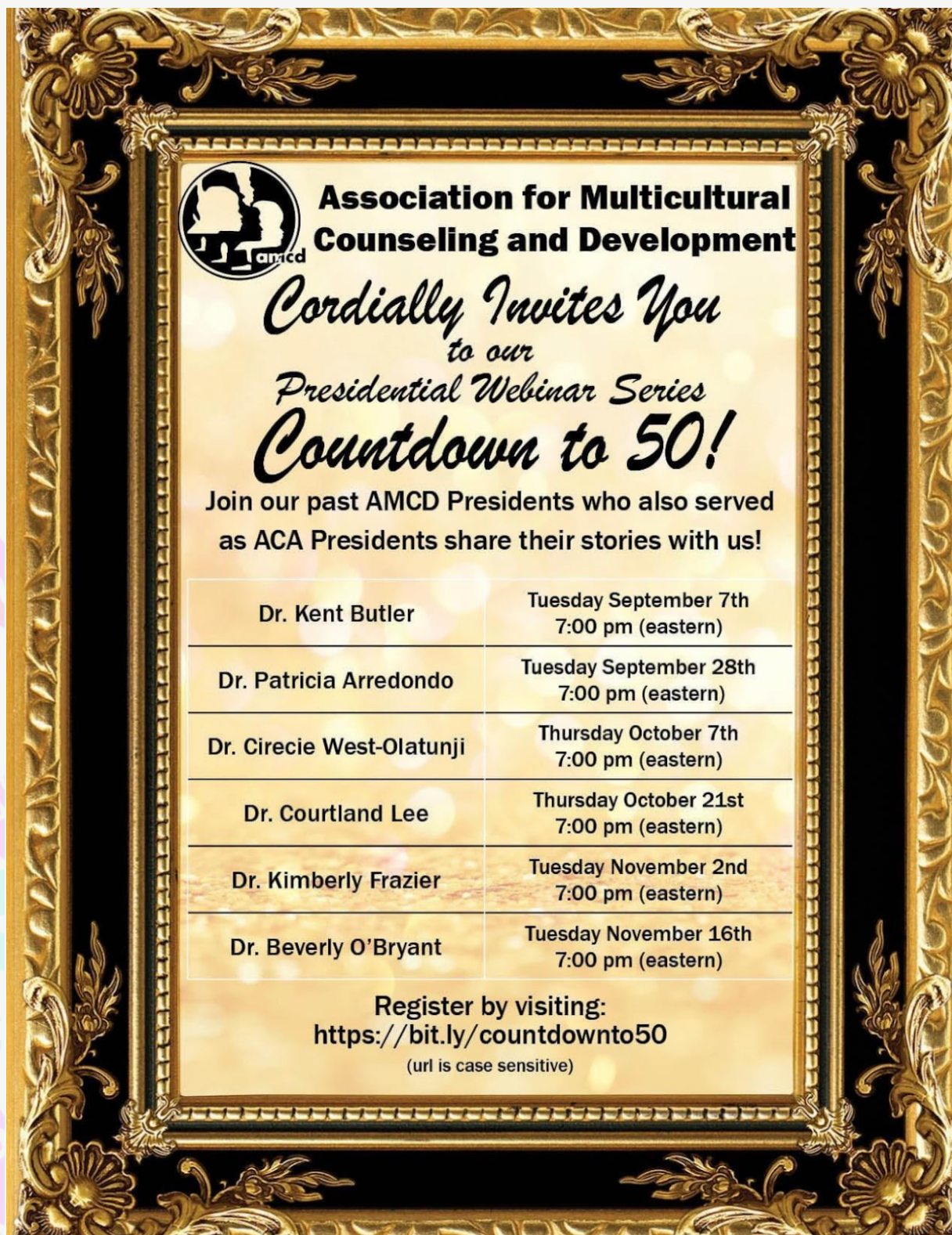
That momentum continued like a cool autumn breeze at an outdoor patio party with friends, when I interviewed Dr. Patricia Arredondo in late September. I introduced each Past President by sharing the first time I had the honor of meeting them at an ACA conference. In Dr. Arredondo’s case, I was a doctoral candidate at the ACA Conference in Oahu, HI in 2014. I had spent the day trying to catch her in a presentation, and the truth of the Buddhist manifested, she came to my table at the closing AMCD meeting and asked could she sit at my table.


These stories of connection ran through each interview like a clear water creek, refreshing my spark and love for our leaders and the gifts they lovingly share with each of us. Dr. Cirecie West-Olatunji causally mentioned to our audience that I meditate with her every Wednesday. A personal bit of sisterhood that I would have been too shy to share. Dr. Courtland Lee thanked me for my candor and showed us his excellence and vulnerability. Dr. Kimberly Frazier and I carried on

PRESIDENTIAL WEBINAR SERIES

BY KIM LEE HUGHES, PAST PRESIDENT

like the girlfriends that we are. We giggled, a lot. We closed that round of interviews with Dr. Beverly O'Bryant, the only AMCD Past President who was the President of ACA before serving as the AMCD President. It was a celebration of true love, which gave us the footing we needed to interview more Past Presidents on our road to 50 series. Thank you each of your for taking the journey with us. We love you unapologetically.



 **Association for Multicultural Counseling and Development**

Cordially Invites You
to our
Presidential Webinar Series
Countdown to 50!

Join our past AMCD Presidents who also served as ACA Presidents share their stories with us!

Dr. Kent Butler	Tuesday September 7th 7:00 pm (eastern)
Dr. Patricia Arredondo	Tuesday September 28th 7:00 pm (eastern)
Dr. Cirecie West-Olatunji	Thursday October 7th 7:00 pm (eastern)
Dr. Courtland Lee	Thursday October 21st 7:00 pm (eastern)
Dr. Kimberly Frazier	Tuesday November 2nd 7:00 pm (eastern)
Dr. Beverly O'Bryant	Tuesday November 16th 7:00 pm (eastern)

Register by visiting:
<https://bit.ly/countdownto50>
(url is case sensitive)

AMCD BYLAWS REVIEW UPDATES: WE NEED TO HEAR YOUR VOICE!

BY SUSAN BRANCO, SHE/HER/ELLA, BYLAWS COMMITTEE CHAIR

PH.D., LPC (VA), LCPC (MD), NCC, ACS, BC-TMH

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, COUNSELOR EDUCATION, ST. BONAVENTURE UNIVERSITY

The AMCD Bylaws committee has worked for the past 18 months to update the 2016 Bylaws. The process was initiated under the leadership of the 2020-2021 Bylaws Committee Chair, Dr. Jeff Wolfgang, and the AMCD Bylaws Committee. Now we are in the finalization stage where we seek AMCD membership consultation on the revisions created in the past year. This year the Bylaws Quad – Dr. Casado Pérez, Dr. Ybañez-Llorente, Claudia Nguyen, and I met several times to plan how we will seek AMCD membership feedback. The Bylaws Committee members, Drs. Hyun and Ramirez, are preparing the revised bylaws to share with membership in January 2022. The bylaws are the foundation of AMCD and guide our procedures to include elections, committees, and awards, among many other things. The revisions are vast so you will see our rollout for your comments in two surveys to be distributed in January and early February. This is your opportunity to share your voice and contribute to how AMCD is organizationally structured and managed. Once we have your approvals, comments, and feedback we will collate the responses and share final recommendations to the AMCD Governing Council. The Governing Council will vote to approve or recommend further action at the American Counseling Association (ACA) Annual Conference in April 2022. Once the AMCD Governing Council approves the AMCD revised bylaws they will be forwarded to the ACA Bylaws Committee for final ratification.

Please find the link to the **Bylaws revision survey** and comment liberally! If you have any questions about the AMCD Bylaws and or the process, please attend the January AMCD Office Hour and or reach out to me at **bylaws@amcd.info**.

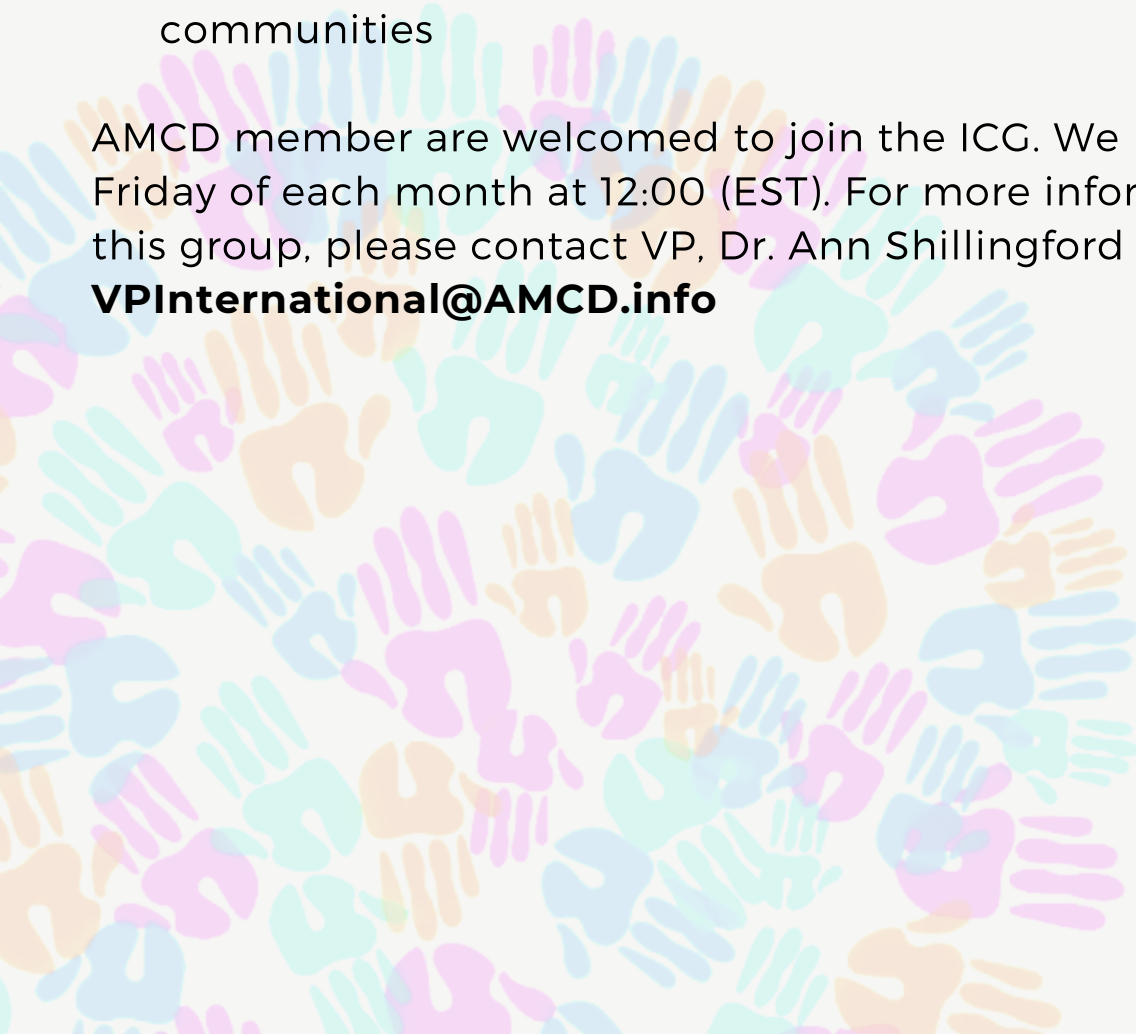
AMCD'S INTERNATIONAL CONCERNS GROUP

“A right delayed is a right denied” Dr. MLK, Jr.

AMCD's International Concerns Group (ICG) recognizes the importance of upholding and advocating for human rights globally. We believe that our very humanity is questioned when we do not do our part in challenging oppression. The ICG is in a unique position to support counselors and counselor educators within AMCD, in the struggle to affirm fundamental human right through scholarship, domestic and international collaborations, and community engagement. Specifically, the ICG aims to:

- Stimulate scholarship related to internationalization of counseling
- Stimulate professional growth amongst AMCD membership as it related to international work
- Increase interests in counseling topics as it relates to international students here and abroad
- Raise awareness of counseling within different international communities

AMCD member are welcomed to join the ICG. We meet the first Friday of each month at 12:00 (EST). For more information about this group, please contact VP, Dr. Ann Shillingford at **VPInternational@AMCD.info**



UPCOMING WEBINARS

Is it really trauma?: Helping Black clients across the lifespan process traumatic experiences

Brean'a Parker & Charmaine Conner

February 7, 2-3pm EST

Raising our voice: Discussing legislation affecting women and food

Audrey Elion & Kaye Cole

March 16, 6-7:30pm EST

Clinical application of cultural considerations in working with complex trauma of AAPI populations

Monica P. Band & Ramya Avadhanam

May 4, 7-8pm EST

You deserve wellness

Kimberly N. Frazier & Michele Kerulis

May 12, 1-2pm EST

Counseling Afro-Caribbean LGBTQ+ clients

Alfonso Ferguson

June 7, 2-3pm EST

All webinars are free to AMCD members, CE credits available

UPCOMING EVENTS

AAPI Book Club for Counselors

Monday January 31 7-8pm

Calling Counselors, Counselor Educators, & Counseling Students! Crying in H Mart by Michelle Zauner will be our book club read starting in Jan. 2022.

****Disclaimer: This is not a therapy group!****

****You do not have to be a member of the AAPI community to join. However, conversations will center primarily around AAPI lived experiences and mental health. Respect is required.****

CALL FOR AMCD MENTEE APPLICATIONS

WE ARE NOW ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR THE 2021-2022 MENTORING PROGRAM. **MATERIALS MUST BE RECEIVED BY JAN 17, 2022 11:59 PM (EST).**

In 1992 the AMCD Mentoring Program was developed by Dr. Quincy Moore to provide access and support to graduate students through mentorship. During the program's conception, a three-pronged approach was used which included (a) student's exposure to a panel of professionals, (b) a college fair for recruitment purposes, and (c) an opportunity for students to network via a professional reception. Since then, the Mentoring program continues to evolve and grow with added elements such as the Research Symposium and opportunities for students and new professionals to assist with AMCD's Annual Service Day.

In this way, the AMCD's Mentoring Program is designed to have a positive influence on AMCD at the organizational level (i.e., leadership nationally and statewide) and the participant level (i.e., mentor and mentee). The goal of the AMCD Mentoring Program is to make sure that our mentees: are in an appropriate context for self-discovery, gaining a sense of direction and purpose, and developing professional and leadership skills while being surrounded by AMCD mentors, leadership team, and members to assist with their professional process.

Each year, the AMCD Mentoring Program Committee selects 3-5 students/professionals to be AMCD mentees. The mentees will be matched with a mentor who will provide mentorship by playing an active role in the mentee's professional development during conferences and throughout their career journey. Also, the mentors will assist in the development and creation of the mentee's Research Poster for the AMCD Summit.

Selected mentees will attend ACA 2022 Conference in Atlanta, GA (April 7-10, 2022) and serve as volunteers for the various AMCD sponsored events. Also, the selected mentees will receive full registration reimbursement for the ACA Conference. **Two types of applications are being accepted:** a) Graduate counseling students (masters or doctoral level) and b) New professionals (applicants that have graduated with no more than 3 years of professional experience).

To be eligible for the Mentoring Program, applicants must:

- a) Be an AMCD member
- b) Be a graduate student of a new professional
- c) Submit an application packet

If you have any questions regarding the Mentoring Program, please email **mentorship@amcd.info**.

CALL FOR AMCD AWARD AND GRANT SUBMISSIONS

We are pleased to announce that the nomination process for a wide variety of awards and grants is open! The recipients of these awards and grants will be recognized during the 2022 AMCD Reception at the ACA Annual Conference. In addition, these recipients and their accomplishments will be featured in the AMCD Newsletter and on the official AMCD website. We encourage you to nominate those you believe to be eligible and to share this call with others.

GUIDELINES AND DIRECTIONS

Please keep in mind that when making a nomination you will need to submit the following documents in a single PDF file:

1. Complete Awards/Nominee Form
2. Narrative (up to 2000 words)
 - For awards: please describe why you or the person you are nominating is eligible for this award
 - Recent professional experience
 - Contribution to multiculturalism
 - Awards and Honors
 - Publications and presentations
 - Leadership and service
 - For grants: please describe what this initiative is and how it will further support the mission of AMCD
3. Curriculum Vitae (2 pages max)
4. Two (2) letters of support (a description of the reasons why you think the nominee is deserving of this recognition.)

All nominations must be submitted electronically by midnight on **January 25, 2022**. All supporting documents are to be scanned and emailed as a single PDF file to the Awards Committee Chair, Dr. Camila A. Pulgar at **awards@amcd.info** with "AMCD Nomination" in the subject line. Other formats and multiple attachments will not be accepted. All nominations will be reviewed according to the guidelines and requirements as listed for each award. The Awards Committee will notify all nominees and nominators of the outcome by approximately March 4, 2022. For more information, please contact Dr. Camila A. Pulgar at awards@amcd.info.

AMCD AWARDS AND GRANTS

- **AMCD Research Grants** are open to all AMCD members and are designed to fund initiatives that support the mission of AMCD. Two grants of \$250 each are available.
- **Samuel H. Johnson Distinguished Service Award** honors an AMCD member whose service at the local, state, national, or international level has stimulated interest in multicultural counseling and development and/or enhanced the well-being of members of the populations served by AMCD.
- **Kitty Cole Human Rights Award** honors an AMCD member whose work has exemplified AMCD's commitment to human rights and made a significant contribution in one or more areas of the broad spectrum of human rights.
- **Professional Development Award** honors an AMCD member who has created original models or techniques that have shed new light on multicultural counseling and development.
- **Advocacy Award** honors an AMCD member who has exemplified competent practice in advocacy and/or fostered an awareness of advocacy among members of the counseling profession.
- **Exemplary Diversity Leadership Award** honors an AMCD member who has exemplified a career-long commitment to multiculturalism and diversity and/or promoted and enhanced cultural sensitivity among members of the counseling community and the society at large.
- **Young Emerging Leader Award** honors an early-career AMCD member who has demonstrated a commitment to multicultural counseling and development and the potential for future leadership in the counseling profession.
- **Emerging Graduate Student Leader Award** honors an AMCD student member who has demonstrated a commitment to multicultural counseling and development through outstanding scholarship, service, or leadership.
- **Compadrazgo/Comadrazgo Award** honors a member of the Latinx Network of AMCD who is active in the mentorship of Latinx counseling students or professionals, demonstrates a commitment to multiculturalism and social justice, and has demonstrated leadership (or leadership potential) within the Latinx Network.
- **Asa Hillard, III Black Education Scholarship** honors an ACA and AMCD student member who has demonstrated a strong commitment to the promotion of wholeness among individuals of African descent. This commitment must be demonstrated in the application essay, work in the community, and current scholarship. The scholarship recipient will receive a non-renewable award in the amount of \$350.00 to support scholarly pursuits related to Black education. *This award has its own nomination procedures. Nominations should be sent directly to Dr. Cirecie West-Olatunji at colatunj@xula.edu for the Asa Hillard Scholarship Award*

CELEBRATING INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS DAY

BY JUSTINA WONG AND DEBBIE C. STURM

Every year since 1948, when the United Nations General Assembly created the Universal Declaration of Human Rights [UDHR], December 10th has marked the celebration of International Human Rights Day (UN Human Rights, 2017). This is a day to honor fundamental human rights, equal rights of human beings, and the worthiness of every person (UN Human Rights, 2017). The UDHR, comprised of a preamble and thirty articles, outlines the fundamental rights and freedoms that every person is entitled to regardless of nationality, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, or any other status (UN Human Rights, 2017). The United Nations General Assembly, determined to ensure the inhumane atrocities that occurred during World War II would never happen again, has leaned into the UDHR as a guiding document to create legislation, laws, and other documents for all nations that joined the United Nations (UN Human Rights, 2017).

The Association for Multicultural Counseling and Development (AMCD) is an excellent example of how the UDHR has guided the creation of associations to honor every person's fundamental human rights and freedoms. AMCD was originally created from an interest group called the Association for Non-White Concerns [ANWC] (Association for Multicultural Counseling and Development [AMCD], n.d.). ANWC became a division of the American Personnel and Guidance Association (APGA) in 1972, with Samuel H. Johnson as the founder and Emeritus President (AMCD, n.d.). The APGA is known as the American Counseling Association (ACA) today. In 1985, ANWC became AMCD (AMCD, n.d.). In 1992, the AMCD Multicultural Counseling Competencies (MCC) were created to promote counselor awareness of beliefs, assumptions, values, and bias that affects a counselor's work with clients (AMCD, 1992). After a revision in 2015, the AMCD MCC became the AMCD Multicultural Social Justice Counseling Competencies [MSJCC] and included social justice as an important component of counselor awareness and advocacy (Ratts, Singh, Nassar-McMillan, Butler, & McCullough, 2016).

The ACA human rights committee and the author invite everyone to celebrate International Human Rights Day. A day to honor the human person. As



Justina Wong (she/her), M.A., APCC, NCC is a 2020 graduate of the Clinical Mental Health Counseling Online program at the Chicago School of Professional Psychology. She is currently earning hours towards licensure in the state of California. Justina is currently serving as a Graduate Assistant to AMCD President, Margarita Martinez and is a member of the AMCD AAPI Concerns Group. She is also a professional member of the ACA Human Rights Committee.

CELEBRATING INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS DAY

BY JUSTINA WONG AND DEBBIE C. STURM

counselors, it is significant to honor the fundamental rights and freedoms of clients, colleagues, and ourselves. The UDHR could serve as a guiding document for legislative efforts within the counseling profession so every person who struggles with mental health may gain equal access to mental health services. The UDHR can also guide counselors in places where there is a threat of harm or violence against a person due to their nationality, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, or other identities. As counselors, we must uphold the UDHR as much as we uphold the MSJCC.



Dr. Debbie C. Sturm (she/her), Ph.D., LPC, is a 2008 graduate of the UNC-Charlotte's Counselor Education program, a Licensed Professional Counselor, and currently a Professor at James Madison University in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia. She is the current chair of the ACA Human Rights Committee. She received the 2013 SACES Award for Outstanding Teaching and the 2020 SACES Courtland Lee Social Justice Award.

FACILITATING CULTURALLY COMPETENT COUNSELOR COMMUNICATION WITH VETERANS

BY MICHAEL A. ROBINSON AND MICHELLE D. MITCHELL

Aspiring to become a more culturally competent counselor is a foundational principle the Association for Multicultural Counseling and Development (AMCD) strives to promote within the field of counseling. However, often when discussions around the importance of engaging diverse and marginalized populations arise, the veteran population is left out of the conversation. The US veteran population is comprised of millions of individuals; in fact, it has been projected that the US Veteran population is projected to encompass approximately 17.5 million individuals by the year 2024 (Amaral et al., 2018). Moreover, within this veteran

FACILITATING CULTURALLY COMPETENT COUNSELOR COMMUNICATION WITH VETERANS

BY MICHAEL A. ROBINSON JR. AND MICHELLE D. MITCHELL

population, two of largest racial minority groups include persons who identify as African American/Black and Latino/x, which are projected to represent 13 and 7 percent respectively by 2024 (Amaral et al., 2018). Therefore, it is imperative that we better understand and address the cultural context of veterans, particularly Black and Latino/x veterans reintegrating back into civilian life.

The reintegration process for veterans is difficult and often involves common challenges such as issues: (a) relating to people who are uninformed concerning the experiences of military personnel, (b) reconnecting with family whilst re-establishing a role in the family, and (c) preparing to enter the work force (Veterans Affairs, 2021). Another challenge for many veterans is a well-intentioned greeting, “Thank you for your service”. According to the Cohen Veterans Network (CVN), 49% of active and former armed service members feel uneasy with the expression, while 91% of Americans use the expression (Veterans Day 2019, 2019). I recall my first encounter with this banal phrase and the ambiguity that accompanied it. As an African American male, I am not foreign to attracting “unwarranted attention.” However, this was a different type of attention. I noticed the primordial stages of disconnect. A barrier of communication and language between both the veteran and the civilian that would viscerally transcend well-intentioned platitudes. The poll discovered that most veterans preferred gratitude that extended beyond simple gestures and that tried to connect with them on a more personal level (Veterans Day 2019, 2019).

In addition, to the challenges related to reengaging with the community, identity disruption and its association with mental health among veterans reintegrating can be difficult (Mitchell et al., 2020). Identity disruption reflects discontinuities in identity that arise in response to major life changes. Therefore, disruptive events can call existing identities into question and require individuals to reconfigure their identities in light of new conditions. Research suggests changing life circumstances may interfere with self-continuity, even during adult life stages that are thought of as relatively stable in terms of identity (Mitchell et al., 2020). Veterans in their twenties, thirties, and forties reported identity disruption themes. Additionally, identity disruption was associated with greater post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) symptom severity, lower life satisfaction, and greater reintegration difficulty. These results suggest there is a relationship between veterans who reported identity disruption and poorer psychosocial outcomes than those who did not (Mitchell et al., 2020).



Michael A. Robinson Jr., B.S

FACILITATING CULTURALLY COMPETENT COUNSELOR COMMUNICATION WITH VETERANS

BY MICHAEL A. ROBINSON JR. AND MICHELLE D. MITCHELL

As counselors, we are called to honor diversity and utilize a multicultural approach when engaging with clients (ACA, 2014). In particular, the multicultural and social justice counseling competencies (MSJCC; Ratts et al., 2016) provide counselors with the framework to address and conceptualize clients through an intersectional lens. Given the rates of Black and Latinx service members (Amaral et al., 2018), the stigma around veteran health, lack of awareness concerning aspects of the military and veteran culture (Ward Sr., 2020), and minimal (13%) evidence-based training on the military and veteran culture among service providers (Botero et al., 2020), counselors are needed to assist and destigmatize mental health among this population. Thus, it is imperative counselors develop competence in the cultural implications of the military.



Michelle D. Mitchell, Ph.D.

Given our training, counselors are perfectly positioned to: (a) combat the negative stigma around veteran mental healthcare, (b) help veterans be better understood in treatment and (c) offer hope to those impacted by mental health difficulties. Counselors can assist veterans (particularly racially diverse veterans) by engaging in culturally competent communication, which can be fostered through the following steps.

- Take a moment to reflect on your thoughts and feelings relating to military service, active duty, service members, and veterans. If applicable, identify and address conflicting beliefs, values, and/or biases relating to military culture.
- Become familiar with some basic terms and phrases frequently used among military service personnel.
- Seek out knowledge and continuing education units relating to the military and military culture, especially for racially diverse service members and veterans.
- Become familiar with the Commander John Scott Hannon Veteran Mental Health Care Improvement Act of 2019 and the several policy changes related to the Act including the requirements for Licensed Professional Mental Health Counselors.
- Call veterans into discussions about their military service and the intersections of their experiences. Connect veterans with community resources as needed.

Ultimately, there are a considerable number of transition-related challenges veterans face when seeking help. It is evident that mental health issues are a leading factor in this problematic process. Successful care is contingent upon the

FACILITATING CULTURALLY COMPETENT COUNSELOR COMMUNICATION WITH VETERANS

BY MICHAEL A. ROBINSON JR. AND MICHELLE D. MITCHELL

counselor being both culturally competent and assuming a role of advocacy. To be successful, clinicians must work continuously to identify and overcome (a) threats to veterans' accessibility to services, (b) concerns about stigma, and (c) be willing to better understand veterans so they can establish positive interpersonal relationships and be encouraged to unpack their experiences with a professional counselor.

Veteran Competence Training Resources

- SAMSHA Cultural Competency for Serving the Military and Veterans
- NCTSN Evidence-Based Practices for Military and Veteran Families
- US Department of Veteran Affairs: Veteran Cultural Competence Training

“TEACH-IN: REACTION FORUMS FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE AND REFORM”

BY TIFFANY BROOKS AND QUENTIN HUNTER

Our job as counselor educators never feels done. On Labor Day 2020, I (Tiffany) was scrolling through my social media and read about the Scholar Strike for Racial Justice, a national event organized by Anthea Butler and Kevin Gannon to encourage educators to take action against inequities in higher education and society at large. I quickly leapt into action mode trying to figure out how I was going to organize an institutional response to the #scholarstrike, which was beginning the next day. As a counselor educator I value our role in taking a stand against racism, and I think it is vital we lead the way at our institutions to create anti-racist pedagogy, programs, and, hopefully, institutions.

Working with colleagues in the counseling program, we decided to create a campus-wide event, “Teach-In: Reaction Forums for Social Justice and Reform,” a forum for all students to process our roles in social and political movements such as #scholarstrike. Within one week, we planned and implemented a campus-wide program that focused on creating conversations for our students about #scholarstrike. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, our event was hosted on a video conferencing platform. A benefit was that this made the event more accessible to



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“TEACH-IN: REACTION FORUMS FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE AND REFORM”

BY TIFFANY BROOKS AND QUENTIN HUNTER

our distance and online students. To ensure there was adequate space on our platform, we required registration. This was not only a good way to maintain a count; it also reduced the risk of video-teleconferencing hijacks (i.e., zoombombing) and provided a way to solicit questions from our academic community. We opted to create two forums, one for our attendees who identify as White and one for our BIPOC attendees. In each forum we had a small group of faculty to serve as a panel to discuss several questions submitted about the current social, political, and civil unrest. Each moderator organized submissions by relevance to their respective forum. Following the discussion of the prepared questions, the remaining time was dedicated to open forum for attendees to share comments, experiences, and their own questions.



Quentin Hunter (he, him, his), PhD, LPCA, Assistant Professor with Eastern Michigan University

Both forums had a great turnout, and both students and faculty commented on how important forums like these are to their professional and personal development. We believe students were able to ask poignant questions of our faculty and begin to spark conversations pertaining to the important anti-racist work that is needed on our campus. During this experience we experienced pushback from a few faculty and students, which included racial microaggressions about the current social and civil unrest occurring in our country. Naturally, we know and understand that planning these types of events are going to create opportunities for conversations that may cause faculty, staff, and/or students who disagree with the need for anti-racist work. As counselor educators we understand that this work is timely and necessary because we know our students, particularly those who identify as BIPOC, need educators and peers who embody advocacy and activism. Pushback from other educators could not and would not deter our desire to participate in the #scholarstrike.

As we move forward, we plan on continuing to create forums where our students and faculty can continue on their path of practicing anti-racism, which is a vital part of human rights. We plan to continue this initiative to maintain a focus on issues of racism and inequity on our campus and in our communities. We believe our students need space to process their role in this work, but we also want to begin to move towards action. So, we plan to continue to scaffold these learning experiences, so we can continue to partner with other departments and disciplines. We want this to become a campus-wide initiative that focuses on how all academic disciplines can continue cultivating an anti-racist institution.

I WISH MY PARENTS KNEW... THAT MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS!!!

BY DEBRA WILLIAMSON

Speaking from a school counselor's perspective, mental health matters more today than ever before. These uncertain times that we are currently navigating are causing us to adapt in many ways. Some adults are experiencing heightened levels of anxiety. Just think if we are experiencing it as adults, what do we think children are experiencing. Helping children and adolescents talk about mental health and wellness at an early age can support their development of healthy ways to navigate life.

I have always viewed children as adults in small bodies. They experience feelings and emotions just as we do, but developmentally, they are unable to identify what they are feeling. I have found that when I ask kids to tell me feeling words they immediately know happy, sad, and mad. However, some children feel so much more and do not have the adequate outlet to express what they are feeling. Not being able to fully verbalize and understand what is happening emotionally could possibly send a child to a spiral downfall.

As I watched the Summer Olympics, I was so ready to see Simone Biles perform. When she withdrew from the competition, I was flabbergasted. What could possibly be going on? When she explained the "twisties" and how it made her feel and she feared for her safety, I immediately understood. Sometimes children get the "twisties" in life and they do not know how to convey it or even what to do about it. Therefore, that is why I think mental health matters. As parents, school counselors, clinicians, and counselor educators it is our job to help young children understand and process the emotions and feelings they have, address traumas they may encounter, and advocate for community and school programs that can provide wrap-around services aimed to support the child and the family system.

Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) has affected children and young people directly and indirectly. Beyond getting sick, many young people's social, emotional, and mental well-being has been impacted by the pandemic. Trauma faced at this developmental stage can continue to affect them across their lifespan. Some of the challenges children and young people face during the COVID-19 pandemic relate to:

- **Changes in their routines** (e.g., having to physically distance from family, friends, worship community)



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- **Breaks in continuity of learning** (e.g., virtual learning environments, technology access and connectivity issues)
- **Breaks in continuity of health care** (e.g., missed well-child and immunization visits, limited access to mental, speech, and occupational health services)
- **Missed significant life events** (e.g., grief of missing celebrations, vacation plans, and/or milestone life events)
- **Lost security and safety** (e.g., housing and food insecurity, increased exposure to violence and online harms, threat of physical illness and uncertainty for the future)

Isn't this enough to give you the "twisties" at some point in your life. As educators, we pride ourselves on educating the whole child. This means addressing mental health needs with the family system. We can use our positions as school counselors, clinicians, and counselor educators to share knowledge on topics that are relevant and important to the welfare and well-being of the children in the communities we work and live. Issues such as the current abortion law court hearings, the defunding of planned parenthood programs, debates over what curriculum should be taught in schools can have lasting repercussions on the children who will endure results of the decisions made. Many of them will have a large effect on young girls.

As a school counselor I believe my job is to help guide your child to mental clarity and peace. Along with continuing our mental health counseling education, we must educate ourselves about community and global issues and work to provide support, resources and solutions for our children's future. Through collaboration, we can help parents understand and agree that mental health and wellness is important and more specifically, that their child's mental health matters!

ORPHANED CHILDREN AND THE FAMILIES WHO ADOPT THEM

BY ERICA RHOADS

When considering human rights, orphaned children and the families who adopt them should not be overlooked. It is estimated that there are around 153 million orphans worldwide who have lost at least one parent (Worldwide Children's Statistics, n.d.). Along with those numbers the effects of Covid-19 has added an additional 1.5 million children who have lost a primary caregiver within

ORPHANED CHILDREN AND THE FAMILIES WHO ADOPT THEM

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the last 18 months (Hillis et al., 2021). With this in mind, it is important to recognize that each adoption story starts with a loss (Hegar et al., 2013; Palacios et al., 2019). Most families envision adding a child to their loving family and the love that they offer will make everything wonderful for the new addition. The reality is that many families are unprepared for the accompanying challenges (O'Dell et al., 2015). Children offered for adoption often have significant trauma histories and most potential parents are not sufficiently educated about trauma and how it affects a child's ability to function emotionally, academically, and behaviorally (Jay Miller et al., 2018). Not only is their knowledge lacking, but there are also many expectations that go unmet (such as strong attachment bonds, academic or social performance), especially for highly educated parents (Leake et al., 2019). These factors, at times, lead to adoption breakdown, occurring in as many as 10 to 25 percent of adoptions (Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2012). The high rate of adoption breakdowns highlights the need for more preparation of both adoptive parents and the counselors that support them (Atkinson et al., 2013).

Quality pre-adoption counseling offers better outcomes both in parental satisfaction and more stable placements (Lee et al., 2018). Support systems including family members, community organizations, spiritual and religious groups; services and resources available to families; as well as personal factors of the adoptive parents and the family system are all factors in adoption success (Shelton, 2020). Further, Quade et al. (2021) report that organizational support from workplaces can benefit adoptive families by providing a more stable environment, showing the importance of advocacy for a supportive community, including employers.

In the past there was a focus on the adoptive child and the issues that they brought into the family (Shelton, 2020), but today's counselors need to recognize the importance of a more comprehensive way to look at the complete picture of past, present, and future of not only the child, but all facets of their life and relationships. Preparing adoptive parents and those in their community to welcome an adoptive child through appropriate adoption training, access to trauma-informed mental health professionals, and ongoing supportive policies can impact outcomes for not only the adopted children, but their families as well. As counselors it is our duty to be well informed of current research, resources for referrals, and evidence-based therapies that can be used to mitigate the losses for children and parents.



Erica Rhoads (she, her, hers), MA, NCC is a mobile therapist and adoptive mother working on her PhD in counselor education and supervision. She is an advocate for helping children from hard places.

ACA MEMBER TOWN HALLS

Join us and let your voice be heard at our virtual town halls of 2021. Hosted by ACA President S. Kent Butler and ACA CEO Richard Yep, the monthly town hall is a space where ACA members can engage in dialogues with members of your professional community.

Taking place on the third Wednesday of each month, each town hall session will focus on a different topic of discussion. If you miss the live session, you can always catch the recording on ACA's YouTube channel one week after the town hall occurs. Meetings are held virtually each month, on the third Wednesday from 2 pm to 4 pm ET.

VOICE OF COUNSELING VODCAST

The Voice of Counseling is a video podcast series showcasing issues and ideas relevant to the professional counseling community. Hosted by the American Counseling Association's 70th president Dr. S Kent Butler, each 50-minute episode features special guests in conversation about topics relevant to the professional work and identity of counselors, the business of counseling, and mental health care.

Join us for a special "counseling hour" and get the lowdown on all things counseling. Tune in, get set and get ready to be inspired!

ACA 2021 ELECTIONS ARE OPEN

New leadership means new ideas and areas of focus, which can have a direct impact on where the counseling profession is heading. We strongly encourage all members to vote in this year's elections.

[Find out more about these candidates!](#) The deadline to cast your ballot is Monday, January 31, 2022, at 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time.

ACA 2022 CONFERENCE & EXPO

Be on the lookout for conference registration to join us at the AMCD mixer!

GRADUATE STUDENT CORNER

"I think my takeaway from the year is to rest and reconnect. We have all been working through the middle of a pandemic that has left us exhausted and at times isolated. It is important to give ourselves grace that we are doing the best we can and that we need to allow ourselves rest and a chance to connect with those who love us and lift us up." - Jordan Mike

"Plans fail for lack of counsel, but with many advisers they succeed" (Proverbs 15:22). A cherished faculty member shared these words at the onset of the dissertation process, and my... how these words have stuck! In recalling the passage, I can attest to the indispensable value and blessing of being surrounded by exceptional mentors, cheerleaders, advisors, and spiritual guides for nearly every professional and personal endeavor along life's journey. For the current and perpetual students alike: Seek to surround yourself with multiple wise and trusted mentors, who (a) grasp and share in the heart of your life's vision, (b) guide with humility, truth, accountability, and compassion, (c) aid with meaningful goal-setting and goal-clarification, (d) afford safe spaces and covering for the growth and evolution process, and (e) genuinely and unconditionally invest in your success and well-being." - Brittany G. Suggs

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GRADUATE STUDENTS**

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