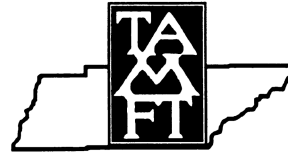


The TAMFT Marriage and Family

NEWS



Tennessee Division of the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy

December 2008

From the President...

By: Linda Oxford, LCSW, LMFT

What a great year it's been for our division!

In our June meeting, the Board approved the TAMFT 2009-2013 Strategic Plan that has been under development since this time last year. This long-range plan will serve as a guide to our efforts and a measure of our accomplishments over the next five years, and can be reviewed on our website at www.tnamft.org.

In February our membership adopted a legislative priority goal to have the state government create a job classification for LMFTs. The Legislative Committee was charged with advancing this goal, and has lobbied four state Departments: Corrections, Children's Services, Mental Health and MR, and Health for this classification. The Legislative Committee presented to them and the state Human Resources department examples of state job classifications in other states, and lobbied the state legislature's House and Senate State Government committees in regard to this legislative goal.

The Legislative Committee also solicited input and advice from other AAMFT state divisions on getting LMFTs into state job classifications, particularly seeking to learn what other divisions have done in

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FROM THE ELECTIONS

COMMITTEE

By Celia Ferguson

The Elections Committee has announced the results of your recent balloting. Of 135 total ballots returned, 48 were from Student/Associate members who elected Amy Frew as their new Student/Associate Representative to the TAMFT Board of Directors. Clinical Members' balloting results were as follows: President-Elect: Richard Gillespie; West Tennessee Representative to the TAMFT Board: Melissa Canterbury; Middle Tennessee Representative to the TAMFT Board: Zenola Diggs; Amendment to Bylaws Articles IV and V: passed overwhelmingly (85 clinical members voting YES and 1 voting NO with a few ballots not marked on this question).

Formal appreciation has been expressed to all the candidates who allowed their names to be nominated for these positions. Congratulations to those elected; and equal amounts of gratitude to those not elected. When you have the opportunity, please add your personal appreciation to all those TAMFT members who were willing to be nominated for these positions. In addition, many thanks to Carole Webb, 2008 chair of the Elections Committee, for her leadership throughout the lengthy nominations and elections process.

So, now we look to 2009. A 2009 elections slate of nominations for the following positions will be needed: *East Tennessee Representative to the Board*, *East Tennessee Elections Committee Representative*, and *Secretary*. Each of these positions carries important responsibilities necessary for members throughout the state to have a voice in YOUR organization.

The Elections Committee is eager to receive suggestions for nominations for the 2009 positions. Prior to nomination, persons will be contacted and asked to complete an "Application for Candidacy to TAMFT Board of Directors." If you are interested in being nominated for any of these positions or if you would like to suggest someone else for nomination, please contact Celia Ferguson, 2009 Chair of Elections Committee, at celiafer@gmail.com.

Finally, Linda Oxford, TAMFT President, is currently searching for members and chairs for the Ethics Education, Marketing and Promotions (formerly networking), and Membership committees. Please take this opportunity to let Linda know of your interest in serving TAMFT through participation in one of these areas. You may contact Linda at lkoxford@bellsouth.net. ❖

terms of action with various departments of state government.

Department of Education

Our division recently was featured in "AAMFT Division Success Stories 2008," noting that TAMFT has become a partner with the Tennessee Department of Education in new legislation addressing school violence to set up a statewide safety plan for local school districts. We continue to cooperate with Mike Herrmann, director of school safety for the state, on how we can advise and help families and children through the Violence in Schools Project and have identified marriage and family therapists in the state who are interested in helping these families in their local school districts. Please thank Richard Gillespie and Terry Browning for their excellent leadership in this initiative (and thanks to all of our members who indicated an interest in serving in this arena). In addition, AAMFT noted that TAMFT was the sole mental health professional association participating in the Tennessee state legislature's Children's Mental Health Study, testifying about the mental health needs of children and families and presenting research-based evidence on the efficacy of marriage and family therapy.

Your Legislative Committee has worked tirelessly to advance the priorities of our division, and you should make it a point to thank all those who serve on this committee for the tremendous work they have done in meeting our division's legislative priorities for 2008! In addition, they are actively pursuing opportunities for expanding areas of service for MFTs, and are currently working with the American Red Cross to explore what opportunities exist for collaboration with MFTs in disaster relief efforts.

Special Election

A special election was held in September to fill the vacant office of President-Elect, and I am delighted to welcome Richard Gillespie to this role. Richard's leadership as chair of the Legislative Committee has underscored his dedication, perseverance, and effectiveness in advocacy and promotion of the profession. Richard's term of office began on October 29, 2008.

A regular election was also held in September, with those elected scheduled to take office in January 2009. Please welcome your new Board members. (See "From the Elections Committee, pg1) Also take a moment to express your gratitude to the other candidates who ran for these offices for their willingness to serve our division: Barry Greenlee, Candidate for the Board of Directors-West Tennessee Representative; Amanda Daly, Candidate for Elections

Committee Middle Tennessee Representative; and Emily Stone, Candidate for Student-Associate Representative. An amendment to the bylaws to split the office of Secretary/Treasurer into two separate offices was also on the ballot, and was approved by our membership.

AAMFT Annual Conference

The 66th AAMFT Annual Conference was held in Memphis, Tennessee, on October 30-November 2, with the theme of "Ethical and Legal Challenges in Contemporary Family Therapy." The hospitality booth hosted by our division provided conference attendees

... the highlight of the conference for me... was our division's networking breakfast on Saturday morning - ...

with a warm welcome to the great state of Tennessee and information about everything from where to find the best Memphis barbecue to what clubs boasted the best of the Memphis music scene. Special thanks from our division and from AAMFT to Ed Gray, Jen Algren, and the volunteers who manned this booth and exemplified "Southern hospitality" at its finest!

The annual conference featured over 100 workshops and three specialty tracks (supervision, spirituality and Crucible Approach theory, practice and research). These presentations offered rich opportunities for "group scrutiny" of our collective ideals of ethics, morality and professional accountability and how they apply in the challenges encountered by MFTs in emerging technologies, evolving therapeutic techniques and the changing demographics of our clients.

Plenary sessions featured such provocative speakers as Michael Yapko, who challenged us to not only question what we know, but to challenge our presumptions about what we know that isn't so; Frank Thomas, who called us to consider the relationship between the virtue of goodness and the successful practice of marriage and family therapy; and Stephanie Coontz, who highlighted the changes in marriage, parenting and family life over the past forty years and the ethical and moral questions raised for therapists by these changes.

The highlight of the conference for me (okay, besides getting to conduct a pre-conference institute workshop on ethics with my dear friend Rebecca Rucker) was our division's networking breakfast on Saturday morning- it was a delight to connect with the MFTs from our state and share our conference experiences.

I can hardly wait for our division's conference in February! ❖

East Tennessee Goes West

By Ron Schumann, East Tennessee Board Representative

It was a clear, October day as I set off to Memphis. I had been that way just a few weeks earlier and was excited to see the foliage as a part of my journey. The earlier trip proved to be a disappointment; at least in terms of the fall colors. The leaves were either brown, a bit wilted or already fallen. I was afraid I either missed the peak of the autumn season, or we just weren't going to have one since it had been so dry. So, during this second trip, I prepared myself to enjoy a sunshine-filled day with no expectation of seeing the many colored leaves. The journey had other ideas in store for me.

The purpose of this trip was a TAMFT Board Meeting prior to the AAMFT Annual Conference. While most of the board meetings take place somewhere near Nashville, this one was scheduled to coincide with AAMFT. I have to admit there was some concern on my part as to whether we would have enough present

...sometimes I think we set our expectations too low; maybe as a way of avoiding disappointment...

To conduct business and then wondered if AAMFT would experience low participation due to the economic crisis and other factors. Well, we did have enough to conduct TAMFT business and there seemed to be a good response for AAMFT. Meeting with the Board turned out to be productive as well as revitalizing. The Leadership Conference for AAMFT reminded me of the advances we have made in marriage and family therapy.

As I was returning to the Knoxville area, I realized I was stuck in this pattern of low expectations. You know, sometimes I think we set our expectations too low; maybe as a way of avoiding disappointment. At least that is what I discovered about myself. It was as if a part of me had taken over and was protecting me from experiencing any more loss. As I gazed at the burnt-orange, red, yellow and burgundy leaves surrounding Interstate 40, a revival of hope began to emerge from within. Color broke forth – not just from the forest of trees lining the interstate, but also from within me as I joined the dance of the leaves. A dance of hope and life filled with high expectations.

Even when we lose sight of the hopes and dreams we once had, life has a way of reviving us on our journey – a journey that reconnects us with those people, places and experiences. TAMFT and AAMFT is certainly a great place for networking, growing and being a part of the process of advancing MFT's and our field. If you have not already starting attending one of the networking luncheons in your area, then this might be a good time. If you are like me, it seems our schedules become so crowded that we forget to take care of ourselves. It's funny, when one of our clients describe their life in such a way that they aren't taking care of themselves, we are quick to help them discover how this pattern can be self destructive. How hard it is for us too. Join us for our networking luncheons and start making plans to join us for the Annual Conference. It may seem the journey is going to be colorless; but don't give up, give it a chance. You too might be delighted in what the journey has in store...❖

Middle Tennessee Update

By Susan Lahey, Ph.D., Middle Tennessee Board Representative

I am pleased to announce that Trevecca Nazarene University will be assisting Lipscomb University with the bimonthly TAMFT luncheon meetings. Lipscomb University, under the direction of Dr. Paul Cates, have been hosting all these meetings thus far. We are so thankful for all of their hard work! We are encouraging attendance at all these meetings. Remember, you can earn one continuing education credit.

Middle Tennessee has seen a rise in 'transplant' therapists. Since I have assumed responsibility as Middle Tennessee Representative, I have been contacted by numerous individuals relocating to Nashville and surrounding areas. I am so grateful that they found TAMFT as a resource as they relocate to this area. Those that already live in Middle Tennessee are encouraged to contact TAMFT with any needs of their own.

Marriage and family therapists, approved supervisors, marriage and family therapy interns, and students, we are so grateful for your contribution to the field as well as aid given to those in need. During this time of year, I wish all of you and yours a peaceful holiday season! ❖

A LETTER FROM THE 2009 CONFERENCE COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON

Dear Friends:

The Annual Conference of the Tennessee Association for Marriage and Family Therapy is coming soon! I hope you will mark February 27-28, 2009 on your calendar and make plans to join us at the Scarritt-Bennett Center in Nashville.

The conference is certainly a highlight of the year for our Association. The Conference Committee is working hard to plan a conference that provides both learning opportunities to enhance clinical knowledge, as well as opportunities to share information and network with peers.

Due to the positive response received year after year, we will once again include a luncheon and awards ceremony on Saturday. This year we have changed our schedule to offer the keynote presentation in two segments both on Friday and the two rounds of workshops on Saturday morning. In addition, we will be offering a 3 hour ethics class on Saturday morning in order to meet the licensure requirements for AAMFT. Also, this year there will be a "get together" after the workshops on Saturday for anyone interested in receiving or providing LMFT supervision. This is a time for anyone in either of these situations to be introduced to each other and pursue licensure supervision needs.

In addition to the workshops, we are very pleased to have James Alexander, Ph.D. as the keynote speaker. Our morning session will focus on therapist attitudes, perspectives, value systems, and clinical "techniques" that, from the perspective of Functional Family Therapy (FFT: An Evidence Based Intervention), greatly enhance the rate of family engagement, motivation to change, and ultimately positive outcomes. Using Functional Family Therapy as the organizational framework, our afternoon session will describe the change process from beginning to end.

Be on the lookout for more information and registration materials. We look forward to seeing you in February!

Sincerely,

Megan James LMFT, 2009 Conference Committee Chairperson

Legislative Update Legislative Update Legislative Update

By Richard Gillespie M.Div., Legislative Committee Chair and President-elect-TAMFT

The TAMFT Legislative Committee has surveyed our members to find how many are willing to help with the local school districts and the state Department of Education project on school violence. We had 35 therapists respond which is wonderful. Terry Browning will be communicating with members and the department about how we will proceed next in this area.

We have taken part actively in the state's children mental health study in the needs survey and in providing evidence-based materials about the efficacy of marriage and family therapy in working with children and their families. New recommendations from this Task Force will come out later and we have offered to serve on the Steering Committee. The state will go to an evidence-based approach for state clients in three years, and we have presented strong evidence for MFT being effective. We have strongly advocated and coordinated with national AAMFT on

the Medicare initiative. We advocated with two of our Congressman to co-sponsor our standalone legislation in this area with Congressman Bart Gordon agreeing to do this. We have advanced our legislative priority goal to get a state government job classification for LMFT's. In this we advocated for this purpose with the state Departments of Corrections, Children's Services, Health, Mental Health, Personnel, and Legislative Committees on State Government. We had positive responses from Mental Health and Children's Services. However, there is a hiring freeze on with no new positions being created at the state level due to the poor economy. We are going to lobby more legislators and look for co-sponsors for legislation in this area in the days to come. We plan to write a legislative grant to send to AAMFT with the idea of hiring a part-time lobbyist to advance our legislative agenda. We need help in identifying possible lobbyists and in writing the grant. ❖

“Snakes on a Plane!”

By Gary Mauldin, PhD, Treasurer - TAMFT

The recent political season and historic presidential election has reminded me of the precarious nature of our work in such a socially and politically conflicted world. I was reminded of the recent film hit, “Snakes on a Plane!” It is the story about a cross country airplane flight where hundreds of snakes attack all of the passengers on the plane. The practice of marriage and family therapy at times begins to look that frightening with the questions that arise out of our work and the ethical dilemmas that confront us on a daily basis.

There are obviously a number of issues surrounding the current debate in American and world culture over politics, social issues and family values that will impact our work and certainly the lives of those persons with whom we work.

A key issue that is being debated in a number of states and in particular in California is the nature of mental health licensure laws. At issue is will there continue to be a diversity of licenses from a variety of disciplines or will the move be toward a “generic” master’s level license with perhaps sub specialties such as counseling, marriage and family therapy and social work.

I am a Marriage and Family Therapist by both theoretical and professional orientation and commitment. I believe the profession of marriage and family therapy and the license to be a marriage and family therapist is something we need to preserve both now and into the future.

Therefore, I am leading an effort along with Richard Gillespie and our President Linda Oxford to establish a Tennessee Marriage and Family Therapy Political Action Committee and Fund. Richard is working on attaining grants for the Tennessee MFT PAC-Fund. I will be leading a Funding Campaign to collect funds from our Tennessee Marriage and Family Therapy Members to do our part in funding this important and vital effort.

We hope to be able to raise enough money both from our membership and outside grants to hire a professional lobbyist to work at the State level on our behalf. The purpose of the Political Action Committee would be to support the work of our profession on the State level to ensure our profession continues to grow and remain vital into the future.

We need your help. I am suggesting you look over the following levels of support and choose a level that fits your budget. We cannot use any of our current or future budget monies for the work of our PAC. These funds have to come from other sources both by State law and our own by-laws. So, if it’s going to happen then I need your help. Our profession needs your help. Please consider one of the levels of giving. The amount you give can be paid in one lump sum, by credit card, or over a 12 month period. Each year we will then renew our pledge for the new year.

All PAC-Fund supporters will have a special tag on your name tag at our Annual Conference that will signify your support for this effort. Let me thank you in advance for your gift. You can use the form on the back of this page to send in with your gift. ❖

**Tennessee Marriage and Family Therapy
Political Action Committee Fund (PAC-FUND)**

Member Supporter	10 Dollars
Silver Supporter	50 Dollars
Gold Supporter	100 Dollars
Platinum Supporter	500 Dollars
Trail Blazer	1000 Dollars

**Each of these gifts is ANNUAL gifts and may be paid at one time or over a 12 month period
January – December.**

Name _____ Address _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Support Level _____ I will pay my contribution:

One lump Sum _____

Quarterly _____

Monthly _____

Annually _____

Credit Card _____

Name on Card _____ Exp Date _____

**Please mail to: Sally Childress, Admin Coordinator-TAMFT, P.O. Box 5653, Maryville, TN 37802
Make checks payable to TAMFT. Memo "PAC" on your check.**

West Tennessee Perspective on AAMFT Conference

By Terry Browning –West TN Board Representative

The recent AAMFT annual conference was my first national MFT conference. I enjoyed it and was very pleased with the range of offerings. For workshops, I chose the supervision track which consisted of six sessions and provided 15 of the 30 hours required. I was impressed at the breath of the course and pleased to see that much thought went in to this preparation for effective supervision and continuity of the fidelity of training in our field.

I met several people including a manager of a free clinic in Columbia Mo to a faculty member in an MFT program in Minnesota. The opportunities to meet new people as well as old friends matched any conference I've attended.

The posters were also of a good quality and very broad range of topics. The plenary sessions were thought provoking. The opening talk from Anna L. Allen, Ph.D., J.D. set the tone well. I especially enjoyed Michael Yapko, Ph.D.'s talk about what we

know about memory and clinical applications of hypnosis. I also heard several discussions about Frank Thomas and his discussion of "Being Good, Doing Good: The Virtue of Goodness in Ethical Practice. The Saturday Plenary speaker, Stephanie Coontz, M.A. described interesting, fascinating and sometimes frightening changes in the family over time and how it affects what we do.

We have had a good response of those in our Tennessee association who are interested in supporting students and their families in the school systems. We are compiling the information in the Legislative committee and will be providing information about progress there.

Finally, I would like to say thank you for the opportunity to serve as West Tennessee Representative on our state board. I am encouraged by the potential of our organization and I feel that we have a very positive future in our field. ❖

Join us in Nashville for the TAMFT Annual Conference, February 27 & 28, 2009 **We welcome James (Jim) F Alexander, PhD**

Morning Session: Engaging And Motivating Difficult to Treat Families

As the famous Marriage and Family expert (Woody Allen, of course) one said, "80% of success is just showing up." Estimates may differ regarding the impact of clients' and families' engagement and motivation to change on the ultimate outcomes of intervention. However, most clinicians agree that high conflict families with youth disruptive behavior disorders (e.g., CD, substance abuse, truancy,) who also often are struggling with co-occurring dysfunctions (including parental) and/or external stresses, rarely have successful trajectories without effective engagement and retention in treatment. Our morning session will focus on therapist attitudes, perspectives, value systems, and clinical "techniques" that, from the perspective of Functional Family Therapy (FFT: An Evidence Based Intervention), greatly enhance the rate of family engagement, motivation to change, and ultimately positive outcomes. Specific videotape examples will be provided

Afternoon Session: An A-Z Framework for Helping Families Attain Growth and Positive Outcomes

Using Functional Family Therapy as the organizational framework, our afternoon session describe the change process from beginning to end. We will review the phasic and synergistic processes that help very troubled families, even those with long histories of unhappiness and dysfunction, to (fairly) quickly begin new trajectories (behavioral, emotional, and multisystemically linked); which lead to hope, positive change, and the maintenance of those positive changes. One topic receiving particular emphasis will be what is *not*, as well as what *is*, necessary to change in order to help individual family members as well as the family (and larger systems) as a whole. ❖

TAMFT Networking Lunches

West Tennessee Luncheon Meeting First Monday, 11:45-1:00 in the hospitality room at Harding University Graduate School of Religion, 1000 Cherry Road, Memphis. The hospitality room is located in the W.B. West Building (the education building). This group does not meet in summer and around holidays so check with Keith Fussell before the meetings to confirm. kfussell@sycamoreview.org or 901-372-1874.

Middle Tennessee Lunch Meetings

Second Friday of every other month, 11:00am-1:00pm. TAMFT will certify the meeting for one hour of continuing education. Lipscomb University: Counseling Center, Elam Hall, Lower Level Address: 3901 Granny White Pike Nashville, TN 37204. The counseling center is located in the basement of Elam Hall. Please email paul.cates@lipscomb.edu or call 615-269-1792 to attend so Lipscomb can plan for the meal.

Knoxville Area MFTs Luncheon Meetings

Wednesdays at Ball Camp Baptist Church, from 11am - 1pm. We will start meeting again in January or February, 2009. Lunch is provided (at a cost) or you can bring your own. For more information, contact: Ron Schumann TAMFT East Tennessee Representative: Ball Camp Baptist Church, 2412 Ball Camp-Byington Road Knoxville, Tennessee 37931 ronbcbc@bellsouth.net Tel: 865/693-1641 ext. 26 ❖

This is the last mailing of the TAMFT Marriage & Family News.
Future newsletters will be posted on www.tnamft.org