

# The TAMFT Marriage and Family

# NEWS



Tennessee Division of the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy

DECEMBER 2010

## From The President

By Linda Oxford, M.A.R., M.S.S.W



With the close of this year, so also ends my term as President of TAMFT. I am profoundly grateful to have had the opportunity to serve the division in this capacity, and, as I look back over the accomplishments of the past three years, am extremely proud of what our division has achieved. At both national and divisional levels, our association has actively responded to the challenges that face our profession and practice.

In June 2008, the Board approved the TAMFT 2009-2013 Strategic Plan (posted on our website at [www.tnamft.org](http://www.tnamft.org)), which guides our divisional activities and serves as a measure of our divisional performance. Using the TAMFT Strategic Plan and the Division Balanced Scorecard performance assessment tool, the Board determined in 2008 that our high priority needs were 1) membership recruitment, engagement and retention, 2) leadership recruitment and development, 3) having well-defined annual political advocacy agendas, and 4) ensuring the financial health and viability of the division.

A very real concern for our association at both national and divisional levels is that, as an organization, we are growing older. The majority of our clinical members are in their forties and fifties, with many nearing retirement. Closer to home, many MFT-trained therapists are choosing to become licensed in Tennessee as Professional Counselors rather than as Marriage and Family Therapists, and about half of the therapists licensed in Tennessee as MFTs are choosing not to join our professional association. As an association, it is vital that we continue to enhance our status as a relevant professional resource that is highly valued by MFTs.

At both national and state levels, we have been gathering members' feedback about how the association can best serve their professional needs and preferences and help them successfully meet the challenges and opportunities they face in their practice of marriage and family therapy. In their 2008 book, The Decision to Join, (American Society of Association Executives, Washington, DC) James Dalton and Monica Dignan reported the results of their survey of 17,000 professionals, citing three primary reasons people join associations:

1. Networking
2. Timely, up-to-date Professional Information
3. Professional Development (career opportunities, career advancement)

A 2010 survey of AAMFT members confirmed the findings of Dalton and Dignan. These priorities inform the work of the TAMFT Annual Conference Committee and the Regional Repre-

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## FROM THE PRESIDENT (continued)

sentatives in providing networking and continuing education events. MFTs say they prefer interactive programs that mix the didactic with small group discussion and engagement with colleagues (1 and 2). They want programs on cutting edge clinical topics (2), and MFTs – particularly new professionals - value opportunities that assist in with licensing exam preparation, connect them with supervisors, offer practical ideas and contacts for finding professional positions, and help them get their careers up and running (3).

The TAMFT Conference Committee, led by Dianne Bradley and Linda Miller, took our divisional conference to new heights of success in 2010, and is poised to repeat that performance in 2011. After this year's landmark event and the continuing energy and enthusiasm it has generated, I can hardly wait to see what next year's conference brings!

In 2008, 2009 and 2010, TAMFT members identified divisional legislative priorities and charged the Legislative Committee with developing and implementing a strategy to accomplish these objectives. Led by Richard Gillespie and Robbie Hutchins, the committee has successfully achieved each of the legislative priorities identified by our membership over the past three years, notably the passage of a bill creating a state job classification for LMFTs and a bill including LMFTs as service providers in third party reimbursement for covered mental health services.

In 2009, a milestone pursued by AAMFT for decades was achieved: all fifty states in the USA now recognize and license MFTs. And, after AAMFT's successful lobbying for Congressionally mandated inclusion of MFTs in VA mental health and family-based services for veterans, the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) in September 2010 issued qualification standards formally recognizing Marriage and Family Therapists as mental health specialists within that agency's clinical division, the Veterans Health Administration (VHA). As a result of this action, individual VA facilities have begun posting job openings for MFTs to serve as mental health specialists.

TAMFT has been working hard over the past three years to provide its members with leadership development opportunities such as committee membership, mentoring relationships, and serving in elected positions on the Board of Directors. We value your ongoing feedback about what roles you would like to explore in our organization and how we can help you prepare for them. Equipping our members for service and leadership roles is just as critical to our division's health and well-being as membership recruitment and retention.

Despite the economic challenges that our country and profession have been facing over the past three years, our division has remained in good general financial health, due primarily to the exceptional work of our Treasurer, Mike Runcie. We as a Board have sought creative ways to meet unbudgeted but needed expenses, such as the creation this year, through the voluntary contributions of our members, of a fund to support the division's lobbying activities, which has been a major factor in the success of our legislative agendas.

While there has been great progress and impressive achievements on the part of our division, major questions of identity and emphasis continue to challenge MFTs and our association. What matters more to us – that marriage and family therapy is provided by any practitioner who can do it, regardless of their professional title or license, or that marriage and family therapists, trained and licensed as such, can obtain jobs, reimbursement, and recognition for the full range of services they provide?

These conversations are not easy, and tend to evoke strong feelings and a tendency to "choose sides." However, grappling effectively with difficult issues and emotional intensity is one of the things that we are uniquely equipped to do by our systemic training and orientation. It's an exciting time to be a part of the evolution of our profession and practice – let's embrace the challenges and celebrate the emerging opportunities!

Thank you for allowing me to serve in the role of President of our division. It has been a great honor and privilege to lead this association over the past three years, and I have been richly blessed by all of you.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Linda

Linda Oxford, LCSW, LMFT

President

Tennessee Association for Marriage and Family Therapy



## **ELECTION RESULTS**

**THANK YOU TO ALL THE CANDIDATES RUNNING FOR OPEN TAMFT BOARD POSITIONS! RESULTS ARE POSTED BELOW.**

**President-Elect - Linda Hazel, MA**  
**Secretary - Susan Lahey, PhD**  
**Middle Tennessee Representative - Ashley Dumas**  
**Student Associate Representative - Amy Frew, MMFT**  
**West Tennessee Elections Committee - Leanne Braddock, MA**  
**PROPOSED BYLAWS CHANGES - ACCEPTED**

## **WEBSITE UPDATE**

We have begin using Google Analytics which is a program that helps us analyze the usage of our TAMFT website with the purpose of increasing it's usage. We found that in the period of Nov. 22-26TH, we had 60 visitors on our website. Eighty-five percent of this was new visits with an average of 3.08 pages per visit and 4.03 minutes average time on the site. We feel that the website has improved by going on the Ohana website and thank Ann Ninness of Central Office Solutions for progress in this area. We are exploring the idea of advertising on Google or Facebook in order to increase traffic to our website. The purpose would be to connect clients to Therapist Locator so that they could find marriage and family therapists in their area. The ultimate goal would be to increase referrals and business for our members.

## **A NOTE OF THANKS**

I wanted to take a moment thank several people for their fine service to our association this year. We have made progress on legislative issues this year thanks to fine leadership of Robbie Hutchens as Legislative Chair and Dr. Brad Bull, Mike Runcie, Dianne Bradley, and the other members of the legislative committee. I also want to thank our lobbyist, Todd Bouldin, for his fine efforts on our behalf. Also, thanks to Phil Barkley for his leadership in this area.

I wanted to thank Grady Williams for his long service as webmaster of our website. He has given long and dedicated service to this association.

I also wish to thank Linda Oxford for the leadership she has given our organization in good and difficult times and for her working with me as a partner in these two years. I also appreciate deeply the way that Mike Runcie as Treasurer and Terry Browning as Secretary stepped up to help TAMFT when there a real need. Thanks to all the board and committee members of TAMFT for their wonderful service to our profession in the past year.

Richard Gillespie, L.M.F.T. and M. Div.  
President-elect, TAMFT

## REGIONAL UPDATES

### MIDDLE TENNESSEE

With the New Year approaching, we are all likely evaluating many areas of our lives. My hope for Marriage and Family Therapists, students, educators, administrators, etc. is that we can come together for a common cause; helping our clients. This cause is the ultimate goal of all clinicians in the field. I propose that we, in using systemic language, work collaboratively. I call all clinicians to refer to other clinicians when necessary, to find new ways to collaborate to better help our clients, and to potentially share ideas that we are perhaps personally unable to accomplish. In a field that is growing, I have seen a sense of competition that can occur. My hope for the New Year is that we find a way to collaborate rather than compete.

My term as Middle Tennessee Representative is coming to an end. These three years has gone by very quickly. I have enjoyed working with the board immensely. I have also served as a transition point of contact for individuals moving to the area. In a system where licensure, jobs, etc. can get confusing, I tried to provide information to help ease the process. I also am grateful for the opportunity to work with an organization with such integrity. Thank you all!

On another note, our Middle TN meetings have been going very well. We recently had a meeting about the ever increasing issue of domestic violence. We are excited to note that we will be collaborating with Trevecca Nazarene University for January's meeting. All local organizations from other disciplines within the counseling field will be joining us as well. We will be taking our normal January meeting and, instead, will be meeting in conjunction with Trevecca Nazarene University. We are honored to be a part of a live webinar with Dr. Susan Johnson. She will be streaming live from Ottawa, Canada. She is the founder of Emotionally-Focused couple therapy. She will present a lunchtime webinar about **Working with Emotion in Effective Couple Therapy**. There is no cost for this event, and our normal lunch will not be provided. CEUs are available. Also, join us for a chance to ask Dr. Susan Johnson a question live.

Please join us: **Friday, January 21, 2011 at 11:30 AM-1:00 PM**

**Boone Convocation Center, TNU campus, 333 Murfreesboro Rd, Nashville, TN**

**For more information or to RSVP contact 615-248-1384 or [jharvey@trevecca.edu](mailto:jharvey@trevecca.edu) or**

### WEST TENNESSEE

On January 10, 2011, the West Tennessee Network Luncheon will be held at Harding Graduate School with a presentation by Clay Phillips, on "Mediation, Education and career opportunities in the field of mediation and conflict resolution." Mr. Phillips is a TSC Rule 31 Mediator Trainer, Family & General Civil Mediator, and is Specially Trained in Domestic Violence Issues.

This networking luncheon will be from 11:45 a.m. through 1:00 p.m. A certificate of attendance is available for those who attend.

Future Network Luncheons are going to be planned for February- May 2011 and September- December 2011. If you are interested in presenting or have topic recommendations for future networking luncheons please email Keith Fussell at [keithbfussell@gmail.com](mailto:keithbfussell@gmail.com) or Melissa Canterbury at [westTNrep@tnamft.org](mailto:westTNrep@tnamft.org).



## EASTERN TENNESSEE

### MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR 2001 LUNCH MEETINGS!

- January 14, 2011-Richmond Graduate University  
Chattanooga, TN
- March 11, 2011-Sequoyah Hills Presbyterian  
Church Knoxville, TN
- May 13, 2011-Wesley Memorial UMC  
Johnson City, TN
- July 8, 2011-Richmond Graduate University  
Chattanooga, TN
- September 9, 2011-Sequoyah Hills Presbyterian  
Church Knoxville, TN
- November 11, 2011-Wesley Memorial UMC  
Johnson City, TN

Sequoyah Hill Presbyterian Church  
3700 Keowee Ave  
Knoxville, TN 37919  
Phone# (865) 522-9804  
<http://sequoyahchurch.org>  
Contact Person @ location: Mr. Michael V.  
Stanfield

Wesley Memorial United Methodist Church  
225 Princeton Rd.  
Johnson City, TN 37601-2052  
Phone# (423) 282-6722  
<http://www.wesleymemorialumc.org>  
Contact Person @ location: Judy Buttolph

### LOCATIONS:

Richmont Graduate University  
1815 McCallie Avenue  
Chattanooga, Tennessee 37404  
<http://richmont.edu/chattanooga>  
Phone# (423)-267-4073  
Contact Person @ location: Dr. Philip A  
Coyle

If you would like to volunteer to present on a topic, please  
contact [cindy@helping-heart.com](mailto:cindy@helping-heart.com).

Let me know if this is enough.

Thanks,

Cindy Gamble, LMFT  
TAMFT East TN Representative

## Advertisement Opportunity

Opportunities to advertise in this quarterly  
newsletter are now available. You can submit  
training events, job opportunities or other an-  
nouncements in our newsletter. The advertisements  
must be consistent with AAMFT's and TAMFT's  
mission. The price for advertising in our association  
newsletter shall be as follows:

Non-Members or Agencies:

1 page \$250.00

½ page \$150.00

¼ page \$100.00

**Members of TAMFT receive a 50% discount.**

For more information contact the Ann at  
[ann@centraloffice1.com](mailto:ann@centraloffice1.com)

## CONFERENCE COMMITTEE UPDATE

You will not want to miss the 2011 Annual Conference as we welcome Dr. Scott D. Miller back to present “Achieving Clinical Excellence”. If you attended last year, you know how entertaining and informative Scott’s presentations are and he is returning with a fresh presentation. The conference committee is committed to providing you with the best experience in continuing education and in delivering a premier event. We outgrew our venue last year and have moved the March conference to the Nashville Airport Marriott, a beautiful hotel with a special conference rate for attendees.

We have interesting workshops planned. Topics include Women and Internet Addiction, Emotionally-focused Therapy for Families of Domestic Violence, Treating the Disease beneath Addictions, Providing Mediation, Putting Clinical Excellence into Practice, and Intercultural Competence beyond Graduate School Courses. A networking event is planned to help students and job-seekers meet supervisors, employers, and practicum site representatives, followed by a reception to relax and mingle. An Ethics update course is planned for Saturday afternoon, while those who need to update their supervisor training requirements can attend the pre-conference refresher course on Thursday.

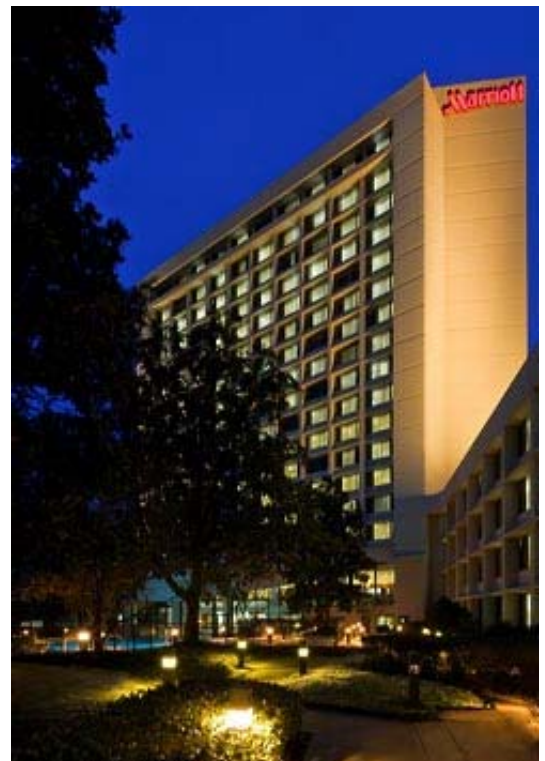
If you are a student, you may want to participate in the Student Poster Competition. Last year’s first place winner took home \$1000, laptop computer, and a Dave Ramsey Course, while second and third place winners received laptop computers. Who knows what the prizes will be this time! Please check the website information on the poster competition and consider entering. It is a great way to build your CV.

The Town Hall Meeting will be on Saturday morning and everyone is invited. We will have several new Board members and this is a great way to meet them and find out about the committees. Come get to know what is going on in your association and add your voice.

Please take advantage of the Early Bird registration rates. Student rates are very reasonable and there is a good discount for registering before January 12. Also, hotel conference attendee rates are discounted (\$129) but this rate is limited. The conference committee and I have tried to deliver a valuable event to our membership. We hope that you will join us and enjoy a great educational and social experience!

- Conference Overview
- Conference Brochure
- Conference Registration Form
- Hotel Reservation
- Student Poster Competition Information

Dianne Bradley  
Conference Committee Chairperson



## CALL TO ACTION from AAMFT!

**TAMFT MEMBERS - Please read the special request from AAMFT regarding DSM-IV Field Trials! If you have not responded yet, please do so as soon as possible.**

Good afternoon,

I hope you are doing well and able to enjoy the holiday season!

I am personally writing to you asking for your assistance. As you know, the American Psychiatric Association wants to include marriage and family therapists in Field Trials phase of the DSM-5 development process. The APA is looking for 2,000 MFTs for participation and, to date, I am embarrassed to report we have less than 20 registered.

This invitation is really a “call to action” for positive representation of our profession. Without participation, our actions may reinforce the idea that MFTs are not serious about recognition on par with other mental health professionals such as counselors, psychologists and social workers.

The American Psychiatric Association has taken the step of recognizing MFTs and now we must respond!

I am asking that division leaders please send an email to all clinical members in your division stressing the importance of participation in the Field Trials. Below, I have included a template for your use (feel free to personalize for your members and use any portion of this email) and AAMFT will also include another announcement in the next edition of the AAMFT Enews. I want to thank those divisions having already sent out a message to your members. I realize that many members are already busy with the holidays fast approaching and preparations for the new year and ask that you send another reminder message to your members.

Please, emphasize to members that we cannot let this critical moment pass.

Wishing you the best,

Tracy Todd, Ph.D.  
Director-Professional and Public Affairs

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### Clinicians Needed for DSM-5 Field Trials

Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists are needed for field trials for the fifth edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5).

DSM-5 Field Trials in Routine Clinical Practice Settings are designed to test the feasibility and clinical usefulness of the proposed diagnostic criteria and diagnostic-specific measures in real-world clinical settings; to examine whether the measures adequately capture changes in patients’ or clients’ symptom levels over time; and to examine whether they are informative for treatment planning.

The American Psychiatric Association wants to include clinicians from multiple disciplines in this important phase of the DSM-5 development process. Participating clinicians will be recognized as contributors in DSM-5 and receive continuing education credits for completion of the required online DSM-5 training session and participation in the field trials.

For more information about field trials and about volunteering, visit [www.psych.org/dsm5-rcp-fieldtrials](http://www.psych.org/dsm5-rcp-fieldtrials).



CHECK OUT THE NEW WEBSITE!

[www.tnamft.org](http://www.tnamft.org)

**QUESTIONS?**

*If you have any questions, please  
do not hesitate to contact the  
TAMFT Central Office.*

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