

CLINICAL PERSPECTIVES

The Clinical Social Work Association of Savannah

May 2010

News and Announcements

Ethics Training a Success!

The Ethics Workshop held on May 1st was an excellent and dynamic approach to an often too arcane, esoteric, or even insipid topic. Yet, 22 CSWA members and 5 non-members attended and the response was predominantly positive. Dr. Stephen Howard gave a historical perspective on ethics and discussed the theoretical origins of perspective in which ethics are considered. He explained how personal morality enters into our thinking on ethics and is therefore not "scientific" but rather experientially biased.

Dr. Howard also discussed when our own value system maybe at times compromised in order to achieve an ethically-based decision. He used the example of a client admitting to having taken part in the murder of someone years after the fact. Some of the challenges one would

consider when making a judgment on whether or not law enforcement should be involved were addressed, such as "Is someone serving prison time for this crime?" "Is this client at risk for committing further acts of violence?" "If there is no duty to warn issue, should the client be encouraged to turn his/herself in?" These were a small representation of the in-depth discussions that ensued throughout the training.

The credit for this excellent speaker goes to Maggie Lee, Program Committee chair. An honorable mention also goes to Lisa Seago and Mary Hill for registration. Thank you all for helping to make this a wonderful event.

—Helen Schandolph

Mayor Recognizes CSWA-S Leadership

May 5, 2010: At the Social Work Advisory Council Annual Meeting and Breakfast, the Honorable Otis S. Johnson explicitly stated that Dr. Cathy McRae and Mary Hill were two of the original pioneers that helped establish SSU's Social Work program. He spoke of how they traveled great distances, from Savannah to Athens on a routine basis, working with the University of Georgia in an effort to establish a satellite social work site in Savannah. Through their tremendous effort, sacrifice, tenacity, and relentless

work, this site eventually became the Savannah State University School of Social Work. The Mayor reminded those in attendance that without these pioneers' exhaustive labors, many in the Savannah social work community would not be employed, and many more would not have been able to take advantage of the educational opportunities provided by the program, and countless lives would not have been so positively impacted. —Adrian Anderson

Table of Contents:

News and Announcements
page 1

For Your Consideration
page 2

Collaborative Divorce
page 3

Licensure Rule Change
page 4

Calendar of Events:

- 05/26/10: Monthly meeting at the Hoskins Center of Memorial Hospital. Topic is "A Healthier Way to Divorce" by the Collaborative Law Practice of Savannah. Lunch is scheduled for 11:30am. To RSVP for lunch and CEUs., please e-mail Lisa Seago at lseago@pinewoodsretreat.org
- 06/23/10: CSWA Annual Meeting. Please refer to June Clinical Perspectives for additional information.



For Your Consideration

Trailblazing Social Worker Recognized

May 6, 2010: Sallie Campbell, a founding member of CSWA-S and former President of NASW-SC, received the Pioneer of the Year award, from the College of Social Work, at the University of South Carolina.

A Clinical Assistant Professor in the Institute of Psychiatry, Medical University of South Carolina, Charleston, Sallie still holds a special appreciation for CSWA-S and joined us for the Annual Conference.

Congratulations, Sallie, on this unique recognition for your commitment to professional social work. –Mary Hill

Job Opening

GA Mentor has an immediate opening for a Case Coordinator. The office is located at 7130 Hodgson Memorial, Savannah, GA. For more information, contact GA Mentor at 354-8990.

-Angela Taylor

Wellness Campaign Offers Training Teleconference

To help consumers and providers explore the health issues of nicotine use, the SAMHSA 10x10 Wellness Campaign invites you to a free training teleconference titled “New Frontiers in Smoking Cessation to Support Wellness among People with Mental Health Problems” on Wednesday, May 26, 2010, 3:00 p.m.–4:30 p.m., Eastern Time (ET).

Presenters will be Chad Morris, PhD, University of Colorado Denver Department of Psychiatry, Marlene M. Reil, PhD, C.A.S.A.C of the New York Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, and Yasmin Halim of CHOICES (Consumers Helping Others Improve their Condition by Ending Smoking).

To learn more and to register, please visit the following page: <http://www.esi-bethesda.com/10x10teleconference/>.

Please note: Registration will close at 5:00 p.m., ET, on Wednesday, May 19, 2010.

Job Opening, Part Deux

The Interfaith Hospitality Network is looking for an Executive Director. The program serves homeless families with children. For more information, please contact Ruth Foster at RFoster@SavannahGA.gov or 912-651-6564.

Parting is such sweet sorrow, that I shall say good night till it be morrow

Dr. James Williams has announced his retirement from teaching at Savannah State University, ending a long and storied career in civil rights and social work. His presence and demand for excellence will be missed in the local academic community.

Dr. Williams will continue to serve the community as a member of various social service-related boards, such as the Latin American Service Organization (LASO), the Chatham County Mental Health Court, and the Savannah Rape Crisis Center.

Collaborative Divorce: A Different Way

- Elizabeth McCloat

Taken individually, the words “collaborative” and “divorce” may not seem to fit together. In this constructive option for couples who have decided to part, the words do fit. Collaborative takes a fresh approach that promotes cooperation among the parties rather than confrontation in the courtroom. The number of couples opting for this divorce alternative has grown steadily since Collaborative Practice of Savannah was established. The professional members are specially trained in the Collaborative Process, are committed to Standards of Conduct, and follow the Guidelines of Practice established by the Collaborative Law Institute of Georgia.

WHY CHOOSE THE COLLABORATIVE PROCESS?

- 1) **IT’S FASTER:** The non-adversarial nature of the collaborative process shifts decision making into the hands of the clients rather than into the hands of a third party. The experts who practice collaboratively protect the privacy and dignity of all concerned.
- 2) **TAKES TEAM APPROACH:** Collaborative involves a supportive team: each spouse has an Attorney, with other experts called in as needed to assist in resolution. The Lawyers have an expertise in domestic relations (family law). The Financial Neutral, who works for both parties, has knowledge of asset divisions, child support guidelines, budgets, cash flow analyses, and basic tax implications. The Mental Health professionals are well-versed in family systems, and include Child Specialists to help the couple evaluate and develop parenting plans.
- 3) **CONTROL OVER OUTCOME:** Creative solutions are encouraged in resolving issues. Individuals have more control over the outcome through a greater sense of involvement in the decision making and an honest exchange of information.
- 4) **FAMILY IS FIRST:** The interests of children are foremost in this “family friendly” process. Family relationships are preserved in a positive climate that produces a more satisfactory resolution for all parties.
- 5) **COST-EFFECTIVE:** Collaborative is generally less costly and time-consuming than litigation.

Once both parties agree to resolve their differences together and each has retained a collaborative attorney, the lawyers contact one another to discuss their clients’ needs and desires. The attorneys develop an agenda and schedule an initial meeting which includes both lawyers and both parties. Any pressing issues may be covered in that first meeting, after the required participation agreements are signed. At this time, the parties will also identify the other professionals with whom they will be working.

More information about The Collaborative Practice of Savannah can be obtained by calling 912-232-7944, or going online to the Web site: www.collaborativelawsavannah.com

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We're On The Web!

<http://www.socialworksavannah.com>

Licensure Rule Change Alert

The Composite Board has been talking about this for several years, but it finally came to be last week. It is a strange set of events, but the quick version is that several years ago someone sued the Board (Sec'y of State's Office) or at least made a big stink about the June deadline and having to pay more after June to renew. The fact that this was set up to assure that most licensees weren't renewing too late to have their license continue as active didn't matter. It was determined by the lawyers that charging this fee (for renewing between July 1 and September 30) was illegal. So last year the Board dropped the fee for renewing between those dates. It wasn't good enough for the SOS or the new head of all the Boards. They harped on this saying that the expiration date of the licenses should be the same as the CE deadline.

I think the Board saw that objecting would not get them anywhere.

So, we are in a position of having to let everyone know about this and the implications. The Board staff is sending an email to everyone. If the email is returned, they say they will mail a postcard. However, I'm certain there will be those who don't get the news. All of us that go to the meetings agreed to send it out and ask others (YOU) to do the same.

I know the bottom line is that licensees are responsible for keeping up with rule changes, but so many just don't think about it. If someone waits too late to renew and is caught in the random audit, they could potentially be practicing without a license.

the end of the last cycle, I worked with a woman who was changing jobs, but was not going to be hired because the agency with whom she applied verified her license on-line and saw it was listed as pending. It took some doing, but they were finally ok with it and understood her CEUs were in order and she would have an active license within a few weeks.

'Tis a mess, but hopefully it will only be for this cycle.

-Susan R. Fort

Executive Director

NASW-GA