

groupassets



Scholarship Program Thrives

Connie Concannon, LCSW, CGP, DFAGPA, Editor, Group Assets



As the Foundation has grown and flourished, so has our Scholarship Program. The seeds of the Scholarship Program were planted in 1982 with the establishment of a limited number of endowed scholarships funded by individual donations. Each one awarded one scholarship specifically established to support an area of training or social interest.

This meant initially, we were awarding eight scholarships a year. This year, the Foundation awarded more than 200 scholarships, and since the program's inception more than 2,000 unique individuals have received scholarships to one or more Annual Meetings.

The biggest change in our Scholarship Program occurred in 2001 after we received a grant from the New York Times Company Foundation, which supported training for those mental health workers providing 9/11 support and services. It was during this period that we fully appreciated the positive impact of the Scholarship Program and committed to building the funding in our organization beyond the limits of the grant.

We began with asking for annual leadership pledges to provide ongoing support for the program. There was a positive response to this request. The members in leadership could see and experience the growing vitality of the Annual Meeting with the presence of the next generation of group therapists. We were moved by the letters that were written by scholarship recipients, who shared their experiences in attending the Annual Meeting and what it meant to them personally and professionally. I would like to share one of the letters that we received this year.

"I wanted to sincerely thank you for the full tuition scholarship you awarded that allowed me to be able to attend the AGPA Annual Meeting earlier this month. It was an incredible experience not only in making more professional connections, but also in helping me understand myself even more as a group therapist. I am particularly grateful that I was able to attend because last week I was hired to be the new Groups Coordinator at my university, and I know that I am better equipped for this role thanks to the incredible training I received at

AGPA this year. Thank you for all work you do to make these scholarships available, and thank for choosing me as one of the recipients. I am incredibly grateful."

The general membership also began to give generously, experiencing the positive impact of the program. It is important to note that many scholarship recipients have become donors to this same program they benefited from, and are now serving in governance and participating as faculty at the Annual Meeting. This is an incredible rendition of paying it forward and passing it on.

The local Affiliate Societies have also joined in with direct contributions, many hosting fund raising events to raise monies for the Scholarship Program. These local activities have ranged from social events with special themes, to honoring local members who have served in leadership positions at the affiliate or national level. It has been great to have the Affiliate Societies aboard to support this effort, and at the same time build strong local community ties. It's been rewarding to see AGPA's culture of contribution spread to the local communities. It's a welcome addition to have them as part of the team.

The Endowed Scholarships have also expanded beyond the original eight. Generous members and others whose lives have been positively impacted by groups have funded these Endowed Scholarships by direct contribution or fund raising. In the last few years, we have added quite a few new Endowed Scholarships as the desire to fund training has increased. These include those sponsored by Eleanor Counselman and Leslie Vestrich (Lorelle Machen Scholarship), Chuck Dachis, Barbara & Albert Dazzo, Kathy and Kent Rider, the Southwestern Group Therapy Society, and Robert and Sara Jane White. The funding of these new endowments have provided a strong foundation for continuity of the program that supports the sustainability of our organization. In this issue of *Group Assets*, we feature Kathy Rider, our newest contributor, in the Faces of the Foundation column. The article will give you a glimpse into what inspires those in our membership to create this legacy of giving. We are deeply appreciative of their leadership and their generosity.

Continues on next page

Apply for a Scholarship Today

Attending the Annual Meeting allows recipients to learn and grow personally and professionally, making connections that will last a lifetime. Through the generosity of its donors, the Group Foundation will again offer multiple funding opportunities to attend AGPA's 2018 Annual Meeting, February 26–March 3 in Houston, Texas.

To apply for a scholarship, visit AGPA's website at www.agpa.org/Foundation/scholarships, where there is detailed information and required application forms. Application deadline is November 1, 2017. Additional questions? E-mail mallo-rycrisona@agpa.org.

If you are interested in contributing to the Group Foundation to help qualified candidates attend the 2018 Annual Meeting in Houston,

contact the Foundation office at 212-477-2677 or visit the website and click on "Donate Now."

APPLICATIONS BEING ACCEPTED FOR TWO NEW SCHOLARSHIPS THIS YEAR!

This year, for the first time we are accepting applications for the following two new scholarships:

Kathy and Kent Rider Scholarship:

The fund will support a scholarship for the AGPA Annual Training Week for a clinical social worker who is a new professional or student. The scholarship was endowed by Kathy, a long-time member and Fellow of AGPA and current member of the Group Foundation Board of Directors. The establishment of the scholarship as a memorial to her husband Kent, who passed away in September 2016, combines their support of

the Foundation with their desire to address the need for comprehensive group psychotherapy training for new professionals and students.

Chuck Dachis Scholarship: The fund will support a scholarship for the AGPA Annual Training Week for a student, new professional, or agency employee who demonstrates academic or clinical promise in the field of group psychotherapy and is in need of financial support to attend. The scholarship was endowed by Chuck Dachis of Austin, Texas, who is a supporter of the field of group psychotherapy and the Foundation's work in helping change lives through group.

The Group Foundation is grateful to Kathy and Chuck for their leadership and generosity in establishing these scholarship funds. 🍎

THE FACES OF OUR FOUNDATION

Connie Concannon, LCSW, CGP, DFAGPA

It is my pleasure to highlight my friend and colleague, Kathy Rider, LCSW, BCD, CGP, FAGPA, and long-time Foundation Board Member.

Kathy is a clinical social worker, who is currently in private practice in Austin, Texas, where she sees adults, families, couples, and adolescents.

She has practiced in a variety of settings, including: community mental health; at the University of Texas School of Social Work, where she is a clinical faculty member; and as legislative liaison for mental health issues. She has served as Faculty at AGPA's Annual Institute and Conference and served in the governance of AGPA over the years.

Beyond her clinical work, Kathy is active statewide and nationally, serving on nonprofit and professional boards, including The Settlement Home for Children in Austin, the New Milestones Foundation, and as an elected public official for the Austin School Board, where she served for more than 10 years. She received the Group Foundation Social Responsibility Award in 2014.

As an involved activist, Kathy is always ready to contribute to those causes and organizations that she believes in. Kathy is a humble person, who is more comfortable doing grass roots work than being in the spotlight. Given that preference, we appreciate her willingness to let us highlight her in *Group Assets*. As usual, Kathy is always willing to stretch herself for a greater common good.

These qualities have made her a vital part of our Foundation Board. She brought a wide breadth of experience to the Board, and this year, she made another major contribution by funding an Endowed Scholarship—Kathy and Kent Rider Scholarship—to honor her husband Kent, who recently passed away. What moved her to make this generous gesture?

"I first attended AGPA in the mid-seventies in San Antonio and was impressed by the depth and breadth of the offerings of the Institute and the Conference, she said. "AGPA provides the best training for group therapy. My husband, Kent, was a civil trial attorney and was my biggest supporter of attending AGPA annually. Kent knew how valuable the training was and how important AGPA was to me, especially the people and relationships formed.

"In Kent's memory and to honor all the support he provided me and our family, I wanted to establish a scholarship to provide ongoing monies for needed group training to student and new professionals. As a member of the Group Foundation for Advancing Mental Health, I have seen all the programs, research, and outreach AGPA members are able to provide with the help of the group."

We feel a depth of gratitude for all the work Kathy has done in AGPA and the Foundation and for the field of mental health. I'm delighted to shed some light on her contributions and the honorable personable qualities that she brings to our organization. Thank you my friend!



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Additional Foundation Awards and Grants

In addition to its extensive Scholarship Program, the Group Foundation for Advancing Mental Health presents the following awards:

- The **Social Responsibility Award**, to be presented at the 2018 AGPA Annual Meeting (February 26–March 3, Houston, Texas), recognizes an AGPA member or group of members whose exceptional service ultimately benefits the public-at-large, either nationally or internationally. (Deadline for nominations for this award only is **October 1, 2017**.)
- The Foundation supports **Research** that demonstrates the effectiveness of group psychotherapy.
- The **Group Foundation Tribute Program** is a campaign of appreciation, recognizing mentors, colleagues and others of importance in our lives emphasizing their part in fostering the personal and professional development of group psychotherapists. It is an opportunity to express your personal appreciation to someone through a gift to the Group Foundation for Advancing Mental Health. If you would like to take this opportunity to make a more significant gift, there

are also opportunities to name a program at the upcoming 2018 Annual Meeting; please contact the Foundation office for information.

- The **Alonso Award for Excellence in Psychodynamic Group Theory** reasserts, in a concrete way, the value of original thinking about psychodynamic group theory. Individuals may qualify in a variety of ways. Suitable entries include doctoral dissertations, videos, published papers, and other creative research.
- The **Aaron Stein Memorial Fund** annually recognizes organizations in the locale of the upcoming AGPA Annual Meeting that utilize the creative applications of group theory and technique to benefit the community, particularly in non-psychotherapeutic settings.

Detailed award and grant descriptions, as well as application requirements, are posted on AGPA's website at www.agpa.org. The application deadline for these Group Foundation programs, unless otherwise noted, is **November 1, 2017**. For additional information, contact Diane Feirman, CAE, Public Affairs Senior Director, at 212-477-2677 or dfeirman@agpa.org.

SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM THRIVES

Continued from front

The growth of the Scholarship Program has changed the face of the Foundation and has contributed to our ability to support our tri-organizational goals. The scholarships allow us to reach out to new professionals who are working in mental health settings where group training is not traditionally given or supported. This was the target group that we knew was missing at the Annual Meeting, but we knew could not afford to attend. The settings they work in are the places that most group work is being conducted. Expanding our Scholarship Program has allowed us to meet our goal of inclusion, diversity, and support for the best practices of mental health interventions in communities.

Through this program, we have also been able to support our unique and high caliber Annual Meeting. It is here where we come together to teach, train, and inspire in an optimum-learning environment that is respectful of all the complexity of being a mental health professional and a human being.

What has made this part of our fund raising so successful? Simply put, it's not a hard sell. Giving is a shared community value, and at so many levels, it's the right thing to do. Thanks to all of you who have contributed to supporting this relational work and the respect for the power of the group.

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