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Affiliate Societies Are Strong Supporters of the Foundation

The spine to the organizational body of AGPA, Affiliate Societies offer local networking, collegiality, and places for training and consultation. Although their memberships and services are independent of those of AGPA, Affiliates reflect the mission of AGPA and the Group Foundation, dedicated to changing lives through therapeutic group work by advancing the most effective and innovative approaches to group therapy education, training, research, and community outreach. Here, in their own words, are the reasons why many of the Affiliate Societies are ongoing contributors to the Group Foundation.

ATLANTA GROUP PSYCHOTHERAPY SOCIETY

"The Atlanta Group Psychotherapy Society (AGPS) believes in AGPA's mission and the amazing training it provides," said Jessica Buchholz, PsyD, AGPS Board Member and Chair of its Membership Committee. The Scholarship Program is the major reason AGPS supports the Foundation.

In fact, that's how she got involved with the Affiliate. "When I was in my second year of post doctorate work, my supervisor said I should attend AGPA Connect. Until then, I didn't even know about AGPS. I applied and received a scholarship from the Foundation." Buchholz received a second Foundation scholarship the following year. "I was looking for training, community, and networking. Attending the meeting allowed me to get involved in a professional community."

Supporting the Foundation also benefits the Affiliate. "You live in a bubble when you are in graduate school. When scholarship recipients attend AGPA Connect and learn about their local Affiliates, they become involved, infusing new blood and energy into the Affiliate. Everybody benefits in the end."

AUSTIN GROUP PSYCHOTHERAPY SOCIETY

"We all believe in the power of group," said Deborah Sharp, LCSW, CGP, President, Austin Group Psychotherapy Society (AGPS). "We believe in being well trained as group leaders and investing our time in the process of becoming group leaders."

Austin has a local scholarship fund, which allows members to participate in continuing education offered through the Affiliate. "Many of our members became involved because they received a Group Foundation scholarship, allowing them to attend AGPA Connect," Sharp said. "It would be hypocritical to ask our members to individually support our local scholarship fund if we didn't organizationally support the Group Foundation."

Sharp emphasized that supporting causes you believe in is important, both individually and organizationally. "Since we all believe in the transformational quality of group therapy, we all have a responsibility to contribute. Contributing to the Group Foundation is our way of giving back to the 'mothership'."

GROUP PSYCHOTHERAPY ASSOCIATION OF LOS ANGELES

"The Group Psychotherapy Association of Los Angeles (GPALA) supports the Group Foundation because the Foundation and AGPA support us in incredible ways," said Eddie Hunt, MA, LMFT, GPALA President.

As the others, Hunt cited the Foundation's extensive Scholarship Program and the value of AGPA Connect. "When I attended my first AGPA meeting, I was very unsure about my skills as a clinician and intimidated about the size of the meeting itself. The experience of attending was so connecting. I learned so much from the Institute."

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THE FACES OF OUR FOUNDATION

Keith Rand, LMFT, CGP, FAGPA

I was raised in an observant Jewish family, where my mother kept a kosher home, in Long Branch on the Jersey Shore. I had three sets of grandparents, all of whom came over from Russia or Poland in the early part of the last century to find a path to new and better lives. As a child, I went to an old-fashioned Hebrew School, in the rear of a very old teacher's home, three times a week. I also went with my stepfather and younger brother to our Orthodox synagogue every Sabbath morning where services were only in Hebrew.



It was in that nurturing environment where I learned one of those key values—that of giving to charity and being generous of heart (and wallet) to others. The Hebrew word for this is tzedakah. We were not a wealthy family. My stepfather was an attorney who did a lot of work for the poor and, in my mother's mind, didn't charge enough for his services. His integrity was so respected that he became the town judge. Even though we didn't have a lot, he always taught us that giving to organizations that helped others was a mitzvah—a commandment and a good deed.

I am indebted to him for instilling this value in me because I now find that being generous feels good. It is with this motivation that I joined the Board of the Group Foundation for Advancing Mental Health in 2011. Having just survived three years of awful liver disease, I saw the importance of doing what I could for AGPA in whatever time I had left on the planet. I had been running three process groups a week for 20 years, and the work was an enjoyable and meaningful part of my life. So why not give back and, as we now say, "pay it forward?"

Through the money we raise, we make it possible for students and new professionals with fewer resources to experience the training and warm community that AGPA offers us. The Scholarship Program has made it possible for many of my younger friends to take a step into AGPA, and most of them now ongoingly add to the organization. It thrills me to watch this.

But the Group Foundation does so much more. We provide services at man-made and natural disasters, as well as to veterans, military and their children; award research grants; and advocate and spread the word about the group modality.

As a Board member, I constantly ask people for money (not necessarily fun nor easy) to support the work the Foundation does, and I hope that people will be as generous as they can be, since it's true that every bit helps. In the beginning years of my AGPA membership, my husband and I gave only a little, but we have since been fortunate enough to give more. I think that if others can do the same, this will feel good to them, adding to their self-views, so I learned to see my asking as a gift and invitation, whether I ask AGPA members, family members, or friends, and whether it's for no special reason or to mark a special occasion.

I left the Board of the Group Foundation last year when my work as an AGPA Board member became my main focus. But I continue to be so grateful for the time I spent on the Group Foundation Board, for the wonderful family I developed there, and for the gifts you have given to the Foundation in response to our asking. It is so much appreciated.

See all the wonderful people we have highlighted in the Faces of Our Foundation column at www.agpa.org/Foundation/donors/the-faces-of-our-foundation.

LEGACY SOCIETY

We appreciate the provisions these planned gift donors have made for the Group Foundation.

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Lorraine Wodiska
Elliot Zeisel & Mary Sussillo

Apply for a Scholarship Today

Attending AGPA Connect 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



February 25- March 2,
in Los Angeles, California.

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, 2018.** Additional questions? E-mail mallorycrisona@agpa.org.

If you are interested in contributing to the Group Foundation to help qualified candidates attend AGPA Connect 2019, contact the Foundation office at 212-477-2677 or visit the website and click on Donate Now.

You can hear from scholarship recipients directly about the benefits of attending AGPA Connect on our YouTube channel:

<https://youtu.be/Rw4g8dVJ3ds>
<https://youtu.be/rffZzL4nR6s>

Additional Foundation Awards and Grants

In addition to its extensive Scholarship Program, the Group Foundation offers the following awards:

- The **Social Responsibility Award**, to be presented at AGPA Connect 2019, 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, 2018.**

- The Foundation supports **Research** that demonstrates the effectiveness of group psychotherapy.
- The **Alonso Award for Excellence in Psychodynamic Group Theory** recognizes the value of original thinking about psychodynamic group theory. Suitable entries

include doctoral dissertations, videos, published papers, and other creative research.

- The **Aaron Stein Memorial Fund** annually recognizes organizations in the locale of AGPA Connect 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 listings of past recipients, are posted on AGPA's website at www.agpa.org.

The application deadline for these Group Foundation programs, unless otherwise noted, is **November 1, 2018.**

For additional information, contact Diane Feirman, CAE, Public Affairs Senior Director, at 212-477-2677 or dfeirman@agpa.org.

2018 CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE GROUP FOUNDATION FOR ADVANCING MENTAL HEALTH

GIFTS ACKNOWLEDGED HERE ARE FROM JANUARY 1, 2018 THROUGH JUNE 30, 2018

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- Donald Wexler (Charles Pohl)

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Attending has strengthened my skills as a facilitator."

The more people who have access to that experience, the better, said Hunt. "There's no doubt the conference supports clinicians getting well trained in group, but there are also community-building benefits that help us as an Affiliate."

HOUSTON GROUP PSYCHOTHERAPY SOCIETY

"The legacy of giving is part of the work we do as an organization," said Helen Chong, LCSW, CGP, PLLC, President of the Houston Group Psychotherapy Society (HGPS). "We feel that contributing to the Group Foundation is an investment in our future as an Affiliate. The Foundation provides education and training of future members and allows us to invest in the richness of members we bring into the organization."

Many HGPS members have received scholarships to attend AGPA Connect. "The meeting provides more than a professional connection," said Chong. "There's an emotional connection as well; you become friends," she said.

Chong also pointed out that a number of senior HGPS members have set up named scholarships. These include the Josephine M. Cunningham Tervalon Scholarship and the Robert E. White, MD, and Sara Jane White, PhD, Scholarship Fund. "These members have set a precedent for investing in an organization they believe in and leaving a legacy for the future," said Chong.

MID-ATLANTIC GROUP PSYCHOTHERAPY SOCIETY

"Giving to the Group Foundation is a matter

of tradition," said Lorraine Wodiska, PhD, ABPP, CGP, FAGPA, President of the Mid-Atlantic Group Psychotherapy Society (MAGPS). "The Group Foundation gives scholarships which encourage students and new professionals to come to AGPA Connect," said Wodiska. "At that time, they get a chance to have the extraordinary professional and collegial experience of AGPA. Hopefully, this will result in additional membership in both AGPA and MAGPS."

NORTHEASTERN SOCIETY FOR GROUP PSYCHOTHERAPY FOUNDATION

The Group Foundation receives an annual contribution from both the Northeastern Society for Group Psychotherapy (NSGP) and its Foundation. The NSGP established its foundation almost 20 years ago as the philanthropic arm of the Affiliate. Much like the Group Foundation, it provides scholarships to train clinicians, offers educational programs, supports research, and educates the public about the benefits of group psychotherapy.

"We give because the Group Foundation is our 'mother' organization. We are all connected," said Kathy Ulman, PhD, CGP, DFAGPA, NSGP Foundation President. "We believe strongly in the mission and values of the Group Foundation. We believe in providing outstanding training and in supporting scholarships that allow our younger colleagues to attend these programs and experience that we are a warm, intellectually stimulating group of people."

Ulman pointed out that many people who once were AGPA Foundation scholarship recipients are now actively involved in

AGPA. "This translates to the local level as well," she added.

ROCHESTER AREA GROUP PSYCHOTHERAPY SOCIETY

The Rochester Area Group Psychotherapy Society (RAGPS) Board recently articulated why the Affiliate contributes. "The conversation allowed us to reflect on the primary purposes of the RAGPS—to enhance and promote the development of high quality training in group psychotherapy and group dynamics; and to nurture a community for professional growth and stimulation through educational exchange and professional networking," said Arjan Berkeljon, PhD, RAGPS President, and "how allocating our funds keeps within our society's purposes and benefits our local community."

Berkeljon noted that many RAGPS members were past Group Foundation scholarship recipients. "Their experiences and learning at AGPA Connect in turn enriches our local community. Attendees find AGPA Connect invigorating, and they return with enthusiasm for group. They want to maintain connected to AGPA. RAGPS benefits because they are more likely to also be involved with our society. A strong national organization with a rich network of local Affiliates helps us all."

It's no surprise that Affiliate Societies are consistent donors to the Group Foundation for Advancing Mental Health. Our overlapping missions, the outstanding level of training at AGPA Connect, and the desire to give back to the professional community we all serve topped their reasons for contributing. It's a win-win for everyone! 🍎

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EDITOR
Connie Concannon, LCSW, CGP, DFAGPA

MANAGING EDITOR
Marsha Block, CAE, CFRE

EDITORIAL/PRODUCTION MANAGERS
Diane Feirman, CAE
Nicole Millman-Falk

GROUP FOUNDATION FOR ADVANCING MENTAL HEALTH
25 East 21st St., 6th floor,
New York, NY 10010
212-477-2677
toll-free: 877-668-AGPA (2472)
fax: 212-979-6627

e-mail: info@agpa.org
www.agpa.org