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Association for Death Education and Counseling®
The Thanatology Association®

Connects



Phyllis Kosminsky,
PhD, LCSW, FT

President's Message

The past month was a period of re-entry, and like many such transitions, this one left me feeling a bit dazed. Holiday breaks are lovely, but the world doesn't stop. It takes a while for me to catch up, and the longer it takes, the more there is to do, the more pressure I feel to speed up, the more off balance I end up feeling. Even the weather conspires to befuddle me: last week I was comfortable outside without a coat; today I am hunkered down as I wait for the plow to clear my driveway of snow.

Keeping track of all of life's moving parts, and of its unpredictability, can be hard.

Hardest of all is what feels like the annual toll of friends and family lost at this time of year. A call from a friend's husband on Christmas. The following week, an email from another friend. The week after that, a telephone message from a client. I go to the funeral, respond to the email, return the call.

I was having breakfast at a little place in Vermont last week, and I got into a conversation with Tina, goddess of waffles with fruit and a side of local sausage. We talked about my "kids," whom she has known since they actually were kids. And she told me about her recent camping trip with a group of women she's been friends with for upwards of thirty years. "The girls" make this trip at least annually. There are sometimes as many as forty women, and they always have a theme, with appropriate costume requirements. Tina went on to tell me that they have "a little fund" they all contribute to, so that if one of them hits a rough patch, they can help out.

"That's a wonderful thing," I said.

"We're there for each other," Tina said with feeling; and then, added: "One of the women has Stage 4 breast cancer." She shook her head. "We all just made a circle around her and held her."

I nodded. "It's what we're here for."

Neither one of us found the conversation depressing (I certainly didn't, and I'm pretty

sure she didn't either). We were talking about love: its joys, its sorrows, the strength we get from others and how we draw on that strength to carry us through fear, through grief. It was a little sad. But sad is okay: it's what we feel when we're faced with the illness or loss of someone we care about.

Since joining ADEC 12 years ago I've met a lot of people who are comfortable with sadness. People who know all about love and loss from the inside out. People who draw on this knowledge, and the strength they've gained from it, to help others. In a few months, I'll be seeing many of these people – including, I hope, many of you reading this message – at this year's conference in Columbus. If you've never been to an ADEC conference, it may be hard for you to imagine how much fun we have. That's not why we get together, of course. This is, after all, an opportunity to learn from each other and to fill up our tanks with information and inspiration that will take us through the year ahead. But it is, also, a lot of fun. All the best people are there, people who circle around each other, people who laugh together in the good times, support each other in the rough times, understand each other and understand the beauty of the work we all do.

It's what we're here for.

Until next time,
Phyllis



ADEC's 2020 Conference in Columbus, Ohio!

ADEC's Conference Planning Committee is working hard to provide rich experiences during the 42nd Annual Conference!

Pre-Conference Institute: April 28 - 29, 2020

Conference: April 28 - May 2, 2020

Hyatt Regency - Columbus

Columbus, Ohio, USA

Register by Monday, March 2 to take advantage of early bird rates!

Hotel reservations at the ADEC rate closes Monday, April 6, 2020.

[Learn more about rates and book your hotel room today!](#)



Conference Schedule

Registration is open for the Pre-Conference Institute, Tuesday and Wednesday, April 28-29, 2020. The Professional Development Courses provides opportunities for specially designed two-day in-depth training in the field of dying, death, and bereavement.

The *Essentials Course* will be taught by Harold Ivan Smith, DMin, FT; the *Intermediate Course: Grief Counseling* will be under the leadership of Jane Bissler, PhD, LPCC-S, FT; while the *Advanced Course* features instructors, Darcy Harris, RN, RSW, PhD, FT and Carrie Arnold, PhD.

Specialty Workshops are offered on Wednesday, April 29, 2020:

Full Day Workshops: 8:30 AM – 5:30 PM

- *Unfinished Business in Bereavement: Resolving Relational Issues with the Dead* taught by Drs. Robert Neimeyer, Jason M. Holland, and Agnieszka Konopka
- *Restorative Retelling: Support After a Sudden, Traumatic Death* with Laura Takacs, LICSW, MPH

Half-Day Workshops 8:45AM – 12:00 PM

- *Counseling Individuals with Life-Threatening Illness* presented by Ken Doka, PhD and joined by Lynda Shand, PhD
- *Fostering Post-traumatic Growth in Bereaved Children and Adolescents* with Pamela Gabbay, EdD, FT

Half-Day Workshops 1:30 PM – 4:45 PM

- *Post-traumatic Growth from Young Adult to Later Life Losses* taught by Melinda Moore, PhD
- *Meeting the Unique Needs of Widowed Parents* presented by Justin Yopp, PhD

Wednesday afternoon, April 29, 2020

- *The Leadership Recruitment and Development Committee (LRDC)* offers a three-hour workshop with CE credit at no cost to the participant, Wednesday afternoon, April 29, 2020.
- *Leadership in Non-Profit Associations: Preparing to Serve Professional Societies Like ADEC* Presenters: Louis Gamino, Sherry Goldstrhom, and Janet McCord
Volunteers are vital to ADEC's existence. Presenters will explore principles of leadership in non-profit associations.

Wednesday evening, April 29, 2020 begins with the *New Member/First-time Attendee Gathering*, an activity with an overview of the conference program, and an opportunity for those unfamiliar with ADEC to ask questions. This gathering is followed by the *Welcome Reception*.

Thursday morning opens the three-day conference with ADEC President, Phyllis

Kosminsky, welcoming attendees. ADEC Award recipients will be recognized on Thursday and Friday mornings. **Keynote Speaker, Brook Griese, PhD** begins the conference cutting-edge presentations by sharing research on *Elevating Childhood Bereavement as a Public Health Priority*.

Friday morning, Dr. Jan Aldridge, our Ira Nerken International Speaker, will share how practice and research are informing palliative care in her presentation, *Taking Research into Practice*.

The conference will close on Saturday afternoon with ADEC's own, Dale Larson, PhD with his presentation, *The Helper's Journey: Empathy, Compassion, and the Challenge of Caring*.

Register for Conference Today!

Our **Exhibit Hall** opens Thursday following the General Session and will feature resources to enhance the work in hospice, hospitals, counseling centers, and university settings. Our exhibitors and sponsors are a valuable part of the ADEC Conference. In addition to the exhibits, the Author's Fair will give an opportunity to visit with authors and purchase signed copies of their books. The refreshment time provides opportunities to network with colleagues and dialogue with Poster Presenters as well.

Other **special activities** during the conference include:

- *Yoga for Grief* with instructor, Antonio Sausys
- *Ritual Archive Project Room* sponsored by the Diversity and Inclusion Committee
- *Contemplation/Reflection Room*.
- “*To Absent Friends and Family:*” visit this activity for instructions from Sharon Strouse in remembering deceased friends and family.
- *Pet Remembrance* offers a quiet time to remember the impact of pets who have died.
- *The Service of Remembrance* lead by Harold Ivan Smith, Galen Gobon, and Brenda Atkinson is a time to reflect on losses of ADEC members, family members, and friends.
- Visit the SNAP (Students and New Professionals) silent auction and pick up a limited edition conference t-shirt. The proceeds of the auction and t-shirt sales raise funds to assist students to attend the conferences. Keep reading for more details!

If you can't make it to Columbus, you can join through *Conference Webcasts*. The Keynote Speakers and one presentation during each of the thirteen concurrent sessions will be webcast. These recordings will be available after the conference.

SANP At The Conference

The Student and New Professional Committee (SANP) is a division of ADEC for students and new professionals from all disciplines who are interested in thanatology. Make sure to [follow SANP on Facebook!](#)

Congratulations to t-shirt design winner Emily Mroz! Emily's design (featured on the left) will appear on this year's limited



edition Conference T-shirt! **Shirts are available for purchase on the website until March 17** (to be picked up at the conference) or you can buy one on site when you arrive in Columbus.

SANP Silent Auction and Raffle: Donations Needed

Please consider donating items to benefit the 2020 Student Silent Auction and Raffle, which take place at the 42nd Annual ADEC Conference.

Auction items may include:

- text books (autographed items are always sought after!)
- manuals
- poetry
- classic movies (DVDs)
- popular music (CDs)
- framed artwork
- photography
- sculptures
- note cards
- jewelry
- registration for a CEU workshop, webinar, or certificate course
- artwork
- pictures of nature
- sport, concert or entertainment event tickets

Proceeds from the 2020 Student Silent Auction and Raffle will directly benefit ADEC's Student Scholarship Fund providing students with the opportunity to participate at the 2021 ADEC Conference.

If you have any questions or are unable to attend the conference but would still like to contribute to the silent auction, please [email Nancy Thacker](#). *Mailed donations must be received by April 3.*

At the conference, we encourage you to introduce yourself to SANP members! Look for the word "student" on our nametags or just stop by the Silent Auction, Raffle or T-shirt area where we'll be volunteering throughout the conference. We would love to connect and share our gratitude for your generous support. We look forward to seeing you in Columbus!



Rebecca Morse, Ph.D.

Featured Member Profile

Connects is featuring stories on selected individuals so that the ADEC community can get to know its members!

Do you have a mentor/role model who has significantly affected your career path in thanatology? Tell us why you chose this career path.

When I first started studying psychology, I was interested in research with children and adults diagnosed and living with rare genetic conditions; in particular, those who have different developmental trajectories.

Through an undergraduate NIH internship, this expanded to include working with children who had either cancer, or HIV/AIDS. Because of my research interests, I signed up for an elective class in thanatology at Hood College, co-taught by Drs. Dana Cable and Terry Martin. Halfway through the course, Terry started encouraging me to consider getting a Masters in thanatology, as it was a "natural fit" both with my interest in the field, and as an adjunct to my interests in developmental and behavioral psychology.

Through the program at Hood, and mentoring from Dana and Terry, it cemented my appreciation for all things thanatological, including my love of ADEC. Since joining ADEC, I have had numerous mentors, guides, and friendships which have helped me to flourish, both professionally, and personally. To this day, I still use that core knowledge base, even when working with families who don't have terminal diagnoses: for some of the families with whom I've worked, the non-death losses are significantly life altering. Currently, I am more focused on Death Education and Research, and have found vocational fulfillment in working with those who are new to the field. I only hope that I can mentor new "thannies" as well as I was!

What advice would you offer a more junior professional in the field on growing their career or keeping their work fresh?

In terms of career growth, the best opportunities happen outside of conference sessions. So being present, showing up early, sticking around late, and attending networking events will: lead to conversations > those in turn lead to connections > connections lead to relationships > relationships lead to opportunities.

Come to ADEC! In all seriousness, attending conferences, and reading journal articles (such as those in Omega or Death Studies), is the best way to stay current in any field. I think it is particularly important to invest in conferences and professional membership in a smaller field, such as thanatology.



Student Profile

So that the ADEC community can get to know its students, Connects is featuring stories on individuals who are ADEC scholarship recipients.

My name is Thy-Thy Quach (pronounced Tee-Tee) and I am from Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada. I am a student in the thanatology program through Marian University and currently working on my final capstone project. I am employed with the Faculty of Social Work at the University of Regina as an academic advisor and hope to find work in the field of palliative care and bereavement when I am done my MSc. program.

I also pet sit on the side! I love to travel, practice yoga and barre, and volunteer with my local palliative care unit. The path toward thanatology revealed itself to me in 2015 and opportunities have been presenting themselves with every step. It is a blessing to be part of this community.

Do you have a mentor/role model who has significantly affected your career path in thanatology? Tell us why you chose this career path.

In 2013, my partner died of brain cancer and to cope with the loss, I participated in the services offered by my local bereavement center. I did everything! Yoga for grief, group sessions, one on one sessions, presentations, and all the resources in their library. Right after my bereavement group had gone through and I finished up my last one on one session, the provincial funding for the center was cut and all of the free services were stripped away. I knew then that these services are needed more than ever, and that the need for them will continue to rise. I started to steer my skills of helping people toward a more focused area of grief and bereavement.

The bereavement coordinator of palliative care services in Regina, Marlene Jackson, is a big role model for me. She is so inspiring and the work that she does is exactly what I hope to do down the road as well. She is also a wonderful and compassionate person and has provided great volunteer opportunities for me so that I can gain some experience.

I consider Dr. Janet McCord, director of the thanatology program at Marian, to be a great mentor. I received the Ronald Barrett scholarship with Dr. McCord and it was as a result of the amazing opportunity she provided with her Ugandan Conflict course. She has vast knowledge and experience and provides a space for her students to grow and cultivate their learning. She's running an amazing thanatology program.

What advice would you offer a more junior professional in the field on growing their career or keeping their work fresh?

I am also a junior professional, so I think I would just say follow the breadcrumbs! I have really just been taking it one step at a time down this path, and when something reveals itself, I go exploring. People have asked me what I plan to do after receiving my degree and my answer changes all the time. This field is growing and changing, and what I thought what I was going to do back in Fall 2015 when I first started this journey has evolved to something different today. I thought I would have focused on young adults but now I have an interest in gerontology. I had mindfulness practices as a focus point as well, but now the field of pet therapy has revealed itself. I also did not think I could work with children, but now I'm embedded in a pediatric palliative home care case. This was all due to networking, connections, and stepping out of my comfort zone. Attending the ADEC conference was a huge part of this. All these great minds and knowledge all at your fingertips in one location. I soaked it all up and definitely recommend attending one, even as a starting point!

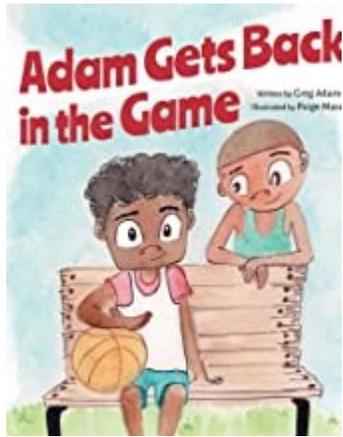
What do you think the future holds for your work and that of others like you? How will that impact what you do?

I think that this work will be vital in the micro and macro levels. We are in a climate crisis right now and economic hardship which is affecting us all. Mental health issues are climbing and our population is aging. There will always be work to be done, because death (or change) is inevitable. This work is long term, and not a quick fix. One does not just attend one group session or bereavement session and is cured. Grief is lifelong inner work that will always be a part of a person's journey. As a result, those who help and companion those who are grieving will always have a purpose for their work, whether it is professionally or in their personal daily lives.

What's New Books by ADEC Members

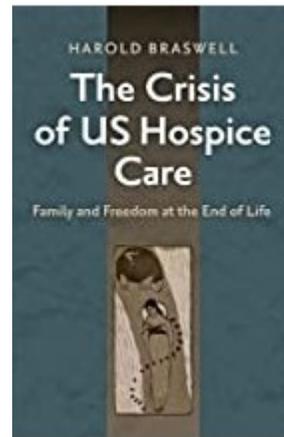
What's New is a column that has been included in ADEC publications since 1996. It is currently included in each issue of *ADEC Connects* and previously in *The ADEC Forum*. It is mostly focused on books, but has also included other items such as video and even a grief board-game.

What's New celebrates our members' considerable contribution to the Thanatological literature by offering a brief review of books and other educational materials written or produced by ADEC members. Each review is run once to provide an opportunity for our membership across the world to be aware of resources in the dying, death and bereavement field.



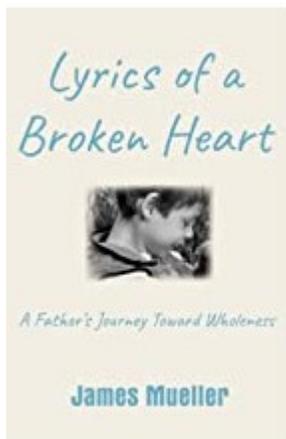
Adams, Greg. *Adam Gets Back in the Game.*
Little Rock, AR: Et Alia Press, 2019.
ISBN: 978-1-944528-84-3.
Softcover, unpaginated.

Adams has written a brief book telling the story of ten-year-old Adam who, in healing from an injured hand, learned lessons that he drew from later when his best friend died suddenly in an accident. Adams nicely depicts the internal dialogue of grief that so often starts with anger and avoidance but can move to acceptance when reflection and support enable new growth. That internal processing of grief enables Adam to get back into his favorite game, basketball. Well illustrated with imaginative scenes, this book can serve as a read alone or read aloud book. Child counselors, parents, and other child caregivers will find it informative and useful in supporting a grieving child.



Braswell, Harold. *The Crisis of US Hospice Care: Family and Freedom at the End-of-Life.*
Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2019.
ISBN: 978-1-4214-2982-3.
Hardcover, 267 pages.

Braswell offers a penetrating analysis of what he sees as the social, cultural, and fiscal flaws imbedded in the model of hospice care that prevails in the United States. His account of how his mother died, in an “Afterward” chapter, poignantly illustrates his experience that our country’s end of life care system is sorely limited and led him to write this substantive ethnographic study. The six chapters, “Beyond the Right to Die; Depending on the Family; Birth of a Crisis; What Happens to Dying People When Love is Not Enough; Caring Across the American Political Divide; and When the End of Life Begins,” explore bioethics, the Medicaid Hospice Benefit assumptions that U.S. hospices could be built nearly exclusively on a familial care model, and the resulting loss of freedom to live and die hospitably in our country. His book is engaging and will be very rewarding personally and professionally for clinicians, health care professionals, academics, and thanatologists in multiple settings.



Mueller, James. *Lyrics of a Broken Heart: A Father's Journey Toward Wholeness.*
 Delray Beach, Florida: James Mueller & Associates, LLC.
 ISBN: 978-1-7342973-2-4.
 Softcover, 55 pages.

Mueller offers a moving narrative of the lovely life alongside the medical challenges of his son, Luke Andrew, interspersed with over two dozen poems that move from heart rending lament to poems of hope and rebirth. The middle child of three, his son was born with life altering chronic medical conditions. Heroic medical and family care sustained Luke with love until his death in hospice care at age 21. Mueller's account of his son's life and adjoining poems are filled with realism, compassion, and profound self disclosure. The book gives a rewarding glimpse into the journey of a father/parent as he moves through the process of losing his son, but ultimately finding "I am whole, almost complete/As I recognize that Luke is part of me/I am who I am because of him/I celebrate his life each day" (p.54).



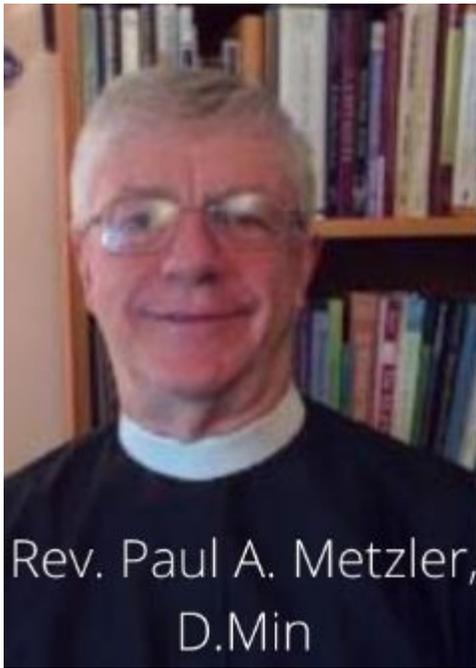
Schuurman, Donna. *Family Ties Through an Advanced Serious Illness. Supporting Connection, Communication, & Creating Memories.*
 Portland, OR: Dougy Center, 2019.
 ISBN: 978-1-890-534271. Boxed kit.

Schuurman and members of the Dougy Center staff offer an engaging, useful kit of resources for families living through the experience of a family member with advanced serious illness. The kit includes an "Activity Journal" for kids and teens, an "Adult Guidebook" to facilitate activities for families, a "Huddle or Hoopla" card game for children, and a supply of "Heart Note" cards to encourage adults to write affirmative words or phrases to their child. The many creative ideas demonstrate the clinical insights and love of children that are hallmarks of the Dougy Center staff. The kit can serve as a thoughtful gift in support of a family and can also be utilized by counselors in clinical settings to enrich their interactions with children and families.

Want to have your publication included in *Connects*?

Have your publisher send a copy (not just an announcement) of recent material (2016 - present) to:

The Rev. Paul A. Metzler, D.Min.,
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In Case You Missed It! Recent ADEC Webinars



The recording of this webinar, which was originally held on January 15, is now [available for purchase on ADEC's website](#).

In this webinar, attendees will increase their understanding of how to embrace and respect the psycho-spiritual aspects of the mourning process. Specific techniques and practices will be offered for addressing the theological issues that often face the dying and the bereaved. Supportive tools such as guided meditation, creative rituals, and genogram exercises will be introduced, along with insights, best practices, and research-based evidence on the intersection of spirituality, psychology, and religion.

Dr. Terri Daniel, CT, CCTP is a hospice and hospital-trained clinical chaplain (interfaith). She is certified in death, dying and bereavement by the Association of Death Education and Counseling, and in trauma support by the International

Association of Trauma Professionals. The focus of her work is to assist dying and grieving individuals to discover a more spiritually and socially spacious understanding of death, grief, and beyond. She has a BA in Religious Studies from Marylhurst University, an MA in Pastoral Care from Fordham University, and a Doctor of Ministry in Pastoral Care and Counseling from the San Francisco Theological Seminary.

Members' Corner

ADEC Members' Corner is a regular column in *ADEC Connects* that highlights one or more members' activity as an ADEC professional. *Members' Corner* is open for contributions from all ADEC members; to be included, please send your article to [Amanda Brace](#) or [Beverly Rollins](#).

Lucy Bregman retired in June 2019 from the Temple University Department of Religion. She is now Professor Emerita. In 2019, with Timothy Knepper and Mary Gottschalk, Dr. Bregman co-edited *Death and Dying: An Exercise in Contemporary Philosophy of Religion*, published by Springer.

Stephen Connor continues as Executive Director of the Worldwide Hospice Palliative Care Alliance with over 350 members in 105 countries. He traveled over 200,000 miles last year to speak and to advocate for palliative care worldwide including at the World Health Organization and the United Nations. He's working on the 2nd edition of the *Global Atlas of Palliative Care* to be published with WHO this spring and also on several research projects including in Bangladesh, India, and with Capital Caring Health in the DC area. Dr. Connor is also enjoying spending time with his lovely granddaughter, Ayla.

Kenneth J Doka's new book, *When We Die: Extraordinary Experiences at Life's End*, will be published by Llewellyn Press this spring. In addition, Dr. Doka and Amy Tucci will publish *Intimacy and Sexuality during Illness and Loss*, the companion book to this year's Annual Hospice Foundation of America's spring program.

Daniel Fasko recently retired from Bowling Green State University (Ohio) and is now serving as Professor Emeritus of Educational Foundations, Leadership & Policy. Dr. Fasko taught at institutions of higher education for 35 years and received the Distinguished Researcher Award in 2000 while teaching at Morehead State University.

Donna Gaffney, DNSc., Joe Primo, MDiv., Irwin Sandler, Ph.D., and Jen Sandler, Ph.D. recently wrote an article on children's grief and the death of Kobe Bryant that included a lot of background on childhood bereavement. The Hill, a top U.S. political website, ran [the article in its entirety](#).

William G. Hoy will be presenting the webinar, *Who Am I Now? Life After Caregiving Ends*, on February 18 for the Hospice Foundation of America. Dr. Hoy will be discussing how individuals can effectively cope with the range of emotions that may occur when caregiving has ended.

Dale G. Larson's book, *The Helper's Journey: Empathy, Compassion, and the Challenge of Caring* (2nd Edition) was recently published by Research Press. Dr. Larson's book offers updated skills to improve helping relationships for healthcare professionals, clinical counselors, clergy, and mental health workers.

Polyxeni Stylianou announced that she served as the Scientific Editor for Words on Waves, a children's grief book published by the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Cyprus Pedagogical Institute. Published in pdf form, it's available free on the [Institute's website](#). Dr. Stylianou is an ADEC member in Cyprus.

Katherine Shear and The Center for Complicated Grief are excited to announce that individuals can now attend their workshops ONLINE on how to recognize and effectively help those suffering from complicated grief. Additional online training opportunities include a video series with clips from actual treatment sessions, webinars, and the Complicated Grief Therapy manual and assessment tools. [See their website for more information](#). If you're in the San Diego area, don't miss the Center's on site workshop, Practice Focused Training in Complicated Grief Therapy (UCSD; March 21-22) presented by Dr. Shear.

Laura Danielle Watts, CT, NCC, MA, MA recently had a children's book on grief published entitled *The Week I Tore Up My Book: Recognizing Grief Expression in Young Children*.

Dr. Alan Wolfelt and the Center for Loss and Life Transition has announced the locations of its 2020 educational workshops. The content of these workshops helps participants understand their own grief, how to companion others in their grief, and the significance of when words are inadequate. For information about these workshops or to explore sponsoring a program in your community, contact DrWolfelt@Centerforloss.com or phone at 970-226-6050. For additional dates, please visit the [website](#) and select "Hear Dr. Wolfelt Speak."

In Closing...

Announcing the 2020 International Summer Institute Scholarship Program at The Dougy Center

In partnership with the New York Life Foundation, The Dougy Center is pleased to provide annual scholarships for the International Summer Institute held at The Dougy Center's Portland location. Each year, we will award four applicants with a scholarship for free tuition, equal to \$1,300.

[International Summer Institute](#) participants will join The Dougy Center's knowledgeable staff for an opportunity to discover the fundamentals of developing and operating peer support groups for grieving children, teens, and families. Learn with colleagues from around the United States and beyond who plan to start or who have already directly established programs for grieving children.

The 2020 Summer Institute will be held July 20 24, and the scholarship deadline is April 1, 2020.

[2020 International Summer Institute Application](#)

For questions, please contact Monique Mitchell at monique@dougy.org or (503) 836-3645.

Contact *Connects*

Connects is interested in your thoughts and work. Please reach out to us with content submissions, suggestions or ideas.

For consideration in the May 2020 issue of *Connects* please submit your ideas/content by Thursday, April 30, 2020 to Amanda Brace or Beverly Rollins..

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