President’s Message
Rebecca S. Morse, PhD

In sitting down to write this letter, I realize that I am thinking in memes... in particular, feeling all the feels. This coming Saturday will be our mid year Board meeting. Having served on the Board previously, I can say that there is something about coming together in person that is so invigorating amidst all of the hours of volunteering. And something so synergistic to brainstorming and problem solving in a concentrated amount of time where we set aside all other responsibilities, and focus on ADEC, and seeking to fulfill our mission. In this physically distanced and increasingly virtual world, we are meeting via Zoom this year.

And despite the fact that my baseline personality skews to the character of Joy from the movie Inside Out (as one student described my style: oppressively optimistic!), I currently find myself resonating with sadness that we are meeting virtually.

As mentioned in the last issue of Connects, we are all working ceaselessly to tend those around us. Many of the individual members I have spoken with have shared that one surprising and unexpected response to current events is an increasing sense of imposter syndrome...of a pressure to have things together.
-- as though somehow as Thanatologists who study and work with the one of the biggest of all milestones -- the end of life, we have some magic formula for resiliency. Yet when our internal state belies what we feel is expected of us, it can undermine our sense of self-efficacy, or leave us feeling a bit like we are representing something which is somehow false...a cat in fish’s scales, if you will!

So, for those of you struggling with the dreaded imposter syndrome, know you aren’t alone, and that you are having a far greater impact on those around you than you will ever realize.

Yet despite the move to virtual space and feeling a bit like we are all faking it till we make it (!), I continue to be excited about the incredible work of our volunteers.

Michelle Ramírez, along with Brenda Atkinson, Kris Green, Jolene Formaini, and Joy Berger, along with MHQ staff Michelle B, Bekka, Isaiah, and Jen, offered our first virtual membership orientation!

Peggy Whiting, our amazing VP offered a heartfelt welcome, as I was personally ill with COVID and unable to talk without coughing. We had numerous attendees who learned about our credentialing process, volunteering, and the various member benefits (like how to access the Journals Omega and Death Studies). It was an amazingly informative event and was eye opening even for those of us who have been long-standing ADEC members.

I am also ecstatic that we not only will be hosting our inaugural Wolfe Report on November 14, but that it has been developed into a half-day workshop: ADEC Connections: Life, Death, and Healing During Difficult Times. Melanie Wright, the Professional Development Committee, MHQ, and Peggy Whiting and I have worked countless hours to help bring this vision to fruition. It’s a first for ADEC, and the topics selected for the panel presentations (CEU’s available) are near and dear to all of us on the Board. The theme couldn’t be timelier, as we enter Autumn, and turn to reflect on what is behind us in 2020, and what lies ahead: elections, the holidays, how to unite our communities, and continuing uncertainty about COVID and its implications for our families and careers. Together, we will make it through 2020...I envision us as all being a bit like Joy’s character, gathering up as many happy and good moments as possible, and determinedly dragging, pushing, and pulling our way through to 2021!

Blessings to all of you,

Rebecca

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

Jolene Formaini, RN, MA, CT

Jolene retired in 2011 from a 41 year nursing career in home care/hospice and bereavement program development. In 1999, she earned an advanced degree in Adult and Community Education with a Thanatology concentration and has held the CT since 2003. She also started a private business in 2004, providing bereavement education and support services. Introduced to ADEC in 1996, Jolene has been a long time ADEC volunteer having served initially on the Abstract Review Team and Test Committee. She was elected to the Credentialing Council in 2014 and served two, three year terms until April 2020 when she was appointed as Chair of the Credentialing Council.

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 my early hospital nursing days, dying patients taught me about living and dying and inspired my transition to hospice nursing. The one person though who has inspired and mentored me since the mid 90s is my grad school professor, Dr. Gordon Thornton. His class on Childhood and Death empowered me to work with children – before and after the death of a family member – and to provide education to parents and teachers on helping bereaved children. Gordon, a past president of ADEC, introduced me to this organization that I call home and I continue to seek his advice to this very day!

What advice would you offer a more junior professional in the field on growing his or her career or keeping the work fresh?
If you are passionate about Thanatology, balance your passion with self care so the fire never burns out. Keep your ego in check prior to every human interaction by asking yourself “What can I learn from this?” rather than “What do they need for me to teach them?”

What do you think the future holds for your work and that of others like you? How will that impact what you do?
The volunteer work I do now for ADEC is my way of “paying it forward” and I see it as my ongoing contribution to the field. I hope I can inspire other retired professionals to donate their time and expertise to an organization that provides networking and educational opportunities for both new and seasoned professionals in the field of 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.

Nicole Zina, BS, CCLS, CT

As a child, I knew I wanted to support children going through hospitalization but did not want to be doing medical procedures – I wanted to help children through the experience. Applying to college I discovered the field of Child Life and began my path to become a Certified Child Life Specialist (CCLS). I have worked with children and families for 15 years now with the last 8 years being in a Residential treatment program, the Emergency Department and Pediatric Palliative/Hospice Care. Over the last 6 years I have been provided with the opportunity to not only work within the United States but gain experience working in Italy, England, Kuwait and South Africa as well as completing mission work in Malawi, Jordan and Egypt. Working with children and families facing devastating healthcare experiences and other life hardships, I have been exposed to the reality that children do die.

Do you have a mentor/role model who has significantly affected your career path in Thanatology? Tell us why you chose this career path.
I learned early on in my career that I was able to really support children, siblings, and families through anticipatory grief, during the end of life, and through their grief process. It was a tough understanding to have, and a confusing path to take as death is a difficult topic for many. But while working in the Emergency Department in England, I had a Child Life mentor who really supported my interest in enhancing my skills in Thanatology. I took a position in Kuwait to start a Child Life Program for a pediatric hospice. It was during this position that I entered a master’s degree program and began my journey to become Certified in Thanatology. Being involved in the field of Thanatology for the last few years, I have not only grown to understand the impact that a professional can have in the field but the realization that there are many people who understand your passion and who are there for you.

What advice would you offer a more junior professional in the field on growing their career or keeping their work fresh?
The field of Thanatology is beautiful and as a young professional unsure if they
want to work within the field or to determine how to move forward in the field, I just want to share how big the need is. Death is unfortunate, but it is real and it happens daily. There are so many paths a young professional can take to grow within their chosen profession and become a supporter to children or adults faced with grief and the reality of death. My biggest advice is to become a member of an organization such as ADEC that provides a community of professionals who understand each other and allows a young professional the ability to network and learn within the field of Thanatology.

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

After becoming Certified in Thanatology, I accepted a position for a hospice in Nevada, and am currently creating the Child Life Program for the pediatric palliative care and hospice program, CareOusel Pediatrics. This position allows me to apply my skills as a CCLS and support children who have a life limiting condition, their siblings, and families as well as children of adult patients with a terminal diagnosis. I am excited for this opportunity and feel the field of palliative care and hospice is a hugely needed field for passionate professionals to join. There is so much opportunity for medical, psychosocial, and spiritual staff to move into the world of palliative care and hospice care. Being able to support a patient and their family through the trajectory of a difficult diagnosis and not just at the very end but throughout the process allows families to cope with their grief and bereavement more effectively and allows opportunity to support that patient through their own grief and death. The need for education about the subspecialty of palliative care, more trained professionals in the field, and the need to raise standards of care creates a huge opportunity for young professionals to have an impact in the near future. As a CCLS, I am excited about the impact that the skills of our profession and the growth in the number of Child Life Specialists is having on palliative care and hospice programs.

**ADEC Committees: Membership**

*To keep members abreast of what is happening within the ADEC committees, Connects is featuring articles discussing their latest activities.*

**Brenda F. Atkinson, M.Div., CT**

The Membership Committee, just as every Committee of ADEC, has had challenges during the 2020 Pandemic. We were planning the new member orientation meeting for Columbus and was looking forward to meeting all our new members. This year the new member orientation took place on Zoom on September 29. Michelle Ramirez and Kris Green worked diligently to make this happen. They plan to reorganize the member benefit page, as well. We were also planning
a dinner with the Young Professionals while in Columbus to receive ideas about how to reach more young professionals. Our hope is to meet with them via Zoom.

The ADEC Board decided to open membership renewal in September and as of September 8 the 2021 renewals were 109 which includes 23 new members. (Another reminder to renew your membership!) Remember that the membership fee for “New Members” is prorated based on the date they join and the number of remaining days in the current calendar year. This way a “New Member” can join knowing that they are getting a great value in their membership. Only individuals who have never been ADEC members are eligible for this member type.

Tim Copeland is our liaison from the ADEC Finance Committee. He joined our September meeting for the first time and will join the monthly meetings as he is able. We discussed new ideas for membership revenue.

The Membership Committee feels that the Ambassador page on the ADEC website needs to be updated so ADEC members will have something to give perspective members. Jen Newberg, our liaison from MHQ, will share the updates to the page.

Joy Berger, from the Membership Committee, has taken the responsibility of volunteer engagement and has been working on updating the committee lists and reaching out to the committee chairs. Should your committee need volunteers please contact Joy and she will be glad to help you.

On behalf of the Membership Committee, thank you for your contribution to ADEC! Please stay healthy and safe!

**What’s New: Attention ADEC Authors!**

*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. It is mostly focused on books but has also included other items such as video and even a grief board-game.

**A Caring Sanctuary: Suncoast Hospice Forty Years of Caring**
Mary Jean Etten and Betty A. Oldanie

Etten and her colleague Betty Oldanie at the Suncoast Hospice in Clearwater, Florida, teamed up to write this history of one of the foundational hospices in the USA. Chartered in mid 1977 and named initially in honor of Elizabeth Kübler Ross, it immediately grew exponentially as it met crucial end of life needs in the wider community. Many in the ADEC world have heard of Suncoast Hospice as it has offered national leadership on many fronts. The chapters of this book capture the excitement of the early days of hospice across the USA through the story of this particular program. Her book underscores why Suncoast Hospice, with its numerous programs and national awards, is one of the largest and most respected nonprofit hospice programs in this country.

*Empath Health, 2019.*
*Softcover, 124 pages.*

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**The Grief of Infertility**
Alan D. Wolfelt

Wolfelt has applied his classic conceptualization of the “Six Needs of Mourning” to the invisible pain and grief of infertility. He notes it is “the most intimate and singular” of losses since it involves mourning an absence. Infertility loss may also be understood as an instance of ambiguous loss or disenfranchised grief, two other important conceptualizations that offer clinicians useful frameworks to support individuals (or couples) dealing with infertility challenges. Infertility problems may also have
been preceded by or lead to miscarriage or stillbirth, which clearly are further complicated grief situations. Designed primarily for those experiencing the anguish of infertility, this booklet will be validating, informative, and healing.

Ft. Collins, CO.
Softcover, 54 pages.

Want to have your publication included in Connects?
Have your publisher send a copy (not just an announcement) of recent material (2018 - present) to:

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Register for ADEC Connections Today!
ADEC Connections: Life, Death, and Healing During Difficult Times

Saturday, November 14, 2020
12:00 - 5:00 pm EST | 11:00 am - 4:00 pm CST

Join your colleagues in this new and engaging half-day virtual workshop. Participants will have a chance to learn about the latest ADEC efforts from President Rebecca Morse, gain insights from a phenomenal line-up of panelists covering critical areas of outreach and relevant knowledge, and have time to connect and learn from each other in small breakouts during the closing Connections Hour.

Click here to learn more and register for ADEC Connections!

In Case You Missed It! Recent ADEC Webinars

Both of the webinars listed below, along with other ADEC webinars, are available for purchase on ADEC’s website. Click the button below to explore the webinar offerings and to purchase a webinar.

Click to view and purchase ADEC webinars!

Incorporating Culturally Spiritual Symbolic Practices with Latinx Communities

The recording of this webinar, which was originally held on October 20, is now available on the ADEC website.

Understanding Childhood Grief in the Context of the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Scientist-Practitioner Approach

The recording of this webinar, which was originally held on September 22, is now available on the ADEC website.
Patricia A. Galán Cisneros, MA, LMSW, is a Ph.D. candidate at The Catholic University of America. She completed a master’s degree in social work at Our Lady of the Lake University in 2006. She attained a Master of Arts degree in Pastoral Ministry degree from the Oblate School of Theology in 2004. Her practice experience includes hospice social work, end of life community education, bereavement intervention, working with individuals experiencing homelessness, at risk youth and adolescent offenders, and early childhood intervention. Research interests include disparities experienced by Latino populations, educational mobility, spirituality, and bereavement. She has instructed practice, field, human behavior and the social environment, and elders’ courses. She is a National End of Life Nursing Education Consortium trainer.

Bereavement is a universal phenomenon that is experienced distinctively based on one’s cultural roots. Latinx people can be Hispanic, Latino or Spanish in origin and can identify with any race. This webinar will focus on the cultural grief expressions distinctive of the Latinx

Julie Kaplow, Ph.D., ABPP, is a licensed clinical psychologist, board certified in Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology. Dr. Kaplow serves as Executive Director of the Trauma and Grief (TAG) Center at the Hackett Center for Mental Health and oversees the development and dissemination of trauma- and bereavement informed “best practices” to community providers nationwide. A strong proponent of a scientist-practitioner approach, Dr. Kaplow’s research interests focus on the behavioral and psychological consequences of childhood trauma and bereavement, with an emphasis on therapeutically modifiable factors that can be used to inform interventions.

The death of a loved one in childhood is one of the most common life adversities that an individual may experience, with an estimated 5.2 million children experiencing the death of a parent or sibling before the age of 18 (Burns et al., 2020). While most bereaved youth are resilient, research shows that, for some, bereavement can adversely affect long-term
people. It will demonstrate how the increasingly influential concept of continuing bonds is evident in the purpose-filled life aspects of Latinx traditions, reviewing cultural beliefs about life and death. The webinar will highlight the rich Latinx cultural tradition of Día de Los Muertos (Day of the Dead), which is rooted in relationship, tradition, and sacredness, honors the dead, values life, and connects to symbolic displays of grief in the Latinx culture. This webinar will also draw on the Community Cultural Wealth model to offer a cultural strengths perspective with the goal of supporting professionals in understanding and honoring the significance Día de Los Muertos among those Latinx people who practice this tradition.

Learning Objectives

1. Apply Community Cultural Wealth model to enhance effective clinical practice.
2. Explore the tradition of Día de Los Muertos filled with religious and spiritual symbolism of life and death to facilitate culturally attentive, effective practice.
3. Describe a deeper understanding of life and death within a Hispanic cultural paradigm.
4. Identify interventions and methods that can be incorporated into clinical practice.

functioning in multiple life domains. Given that a “one-size-fits-all” approach to grief support is typically ineffective (Kaplow et al., 2019), a critical task for professionals is to effectively decide which type of grief support (e.g., peer support and/or individual therapy) and practice elements are most appropriate based on the unique needs and strengths of the children they serve. Using multidimensional grief theory (Kaplow et al., 2013) as a foundation, this webinar describes specific bereavement related challenges that youth typically face after the death of a loved one.

Learning Objectives

1. Identify three dimensions of grief that youth typically experience after the death of a loved one.
2. Describe the ways in which the pandemic may exacerbate children’s adverse grief reactions.
3. Identify several evidence-based practice elements that can help to address bereaved children’s grief-related needs.

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.
Helen Chapple and Heather Servaty-Seib provide the following brief update on the progress of the 3rd edition of the Handbook of Thanatology: The volume follows the Body of Knowledge outline and the feedback and revision process is ongoing and iterative. The majority of the 21 chapters are already “in press.” Helen and Heather are currently working on the Handbook’s introduction, which is the last step. Look for 3rd edition at the 2021 ADEC conference!

Gail Rubin, CT, is holding her 4th annual “Before I Die New Mexico Festival” as a virtual event, October 30 to November 2, 2020. The online event will feature entertaining and educational elements, including video field trips to the Office of the Medical Investigator; funeral homes and cemeteries; Zoom panel discussions with authors and experts; and even a Day of the Dead/Halloween online party. Learn more at www.BeforeIDieNM.com.

Harold Ivan Smith has just published Almost Everything Worth Knowing About Harry S. Truman. (ScholarWork, 2020. ISBN: 9-0578-646688. Softcover, 261 pages.) While it is not focused on death and grief in the life of Truman, it is an interesting and entertaining read regarding the 33rd President of the USA.

Dr. Alan D. Wolfelt and the Center for Loss and Life Transition announces the availability of a webinar addressing COVID 19 and Grief Overload. Dr. Wolfelt explores the concepts of grief overload and secondary trauma and outline practical ways to cope during this naturally difficult time. For more information on availability and pricing, contact the Center for Loss at info@centerforloss.com or (970) 226 6050. For more information on the Center for Loss visit www.centerforloss.com.

ADEC’s Certification/Recertification Process Moves to a Seamless On-Line System!

This new web based system ensures that all things “Credential” can be found in one place on ADEC’s website. This change also makes the application process more user friendly. Click the blue button below to access all things new including information and forms.

Access New ADEC Credentialing Information and Forms
Why Join?

ADEC offers substantial membership benefits including:

- Online subscriptions to three professional journals – Omega: The Journal of Death and Dying; Death Studies; and Grief Matters, the journal of the Australian Centre for Grief and Bereavement
- ADEC Connects
- The Thanatology NewsBrief
- Discounts to the annual conference
- Professional certification
- Professional recognition
- Connection with other ADEC members
- Professional development
- Networking
- Volunteer opportunities
- Tuition discounts
- Two free webinar recordings a year

Renew Your Membership!

In the midst of unprecedented circumstances, ADEC has striven to remain strong and relevant for you, the ADEC membership community. There are not promises that the challenges we’re currently facing will relent anytime soon, but if anyone knows a thing or two about resilience, its ADEC members. In the midst of the current uncertainty ADEC invites you to look ahead and support your professional home by renewing your membership for 2021.

ADEC strives to serve you. And needs you to keep ADEC strong. Please renew your membership today.

Click here to visit the ADEC website and renew your membership today!
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 December 2020 issue of Connects please submit your ideas/content by Monday, November 30, 2020.

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