Dear @first_name@.

As we now stand firmly ensconced in 2021, like many of you, I wish with all of my being that I could fly away somewhere; Italy would be my preference, but honestly some days I’d settle for anywhere! My winter was a series of days and weeks feeling “Rome-sick” … Seriously, is anyone else feeling homesick for a place not actually, well, home??

2021 didn’t start as hoped as we wished farewell to 2020…but as thanatologists, we are also well-familiarized with the fact that there is nothing magical about one year, and that measuring time has little meaning outside of relationships and experiences, and how that temporal distance between connections affects us.

One of the things that I typically would be counting down the “time until” would be our ADEC annual conference…

By this time each year, I would have already made my packing list (yeah, I’m that kinda gal), booked my flight and hotel long before, and emailed or called up my favorite people I want to see to find out when their flights arrive.

This year will be different (guess I don’t need to pack my travel-steamer!), but it’s still something we can all anticipate.

We have several panels and live presentations that will enrich our professional knowledge, a wide array of pre-recorded sessions and poster presentations that we can mainline in lieu
of our Netflix-fix, and several opportunities to connect and see our fellow “thannies.”

Between our Welcome Reception, Global Networking session, Living Legacy Circle, and Networking Groups, we will have real-time, real-human interaction!

Additionally, we are still going to have our annual ADEC Town Hall, but in the interests of connection and fellowship, it will be a Town Hall “Meet & Greet” with two different options for everyone to choose from: one an opportunity to share, brag, and commiserate on the Professional Pivot so many of us had to do since March 2020,

and one on Self-Care, where we can explore how we are working to thrive—not-just-survive (although kudos to just putting one foot in front of the other – anyone else have Frozen and Frozen II on loop?).

Both of these areas (professional and personal challenges) are near and dear to our members and having a chance to meet with others who can encourage us, as we encourage them, is exactly why ADEC exists…

It grew out of a small cadre of professionals who needed a professional home, and a community to foster our mutual growth and development in the field of death and dying.

So, as we look ahead, and count the time until we can meet again…
Peace be with you all,

Rebecca S. Morse, PhD
President, Association for Death Education and Counseling

Update Your ADEC Profile

To ensure that your ADEC profile is up to date, please [login to the ADEC website](https://www.adec.org). Once you are logged in, if you are not redirected automatically, simply click on the “My Profile” button in the top navigation panel.

Make sure to review your professional and personal information and edit with the “Edit” link in the headers. Additional contact details as well as your education and experiences will be a helpful resource for your colleagues when searching the Membership Directory.

For reference, your username is @@username@@. You can find more account information by scrolling to the bottom of this newsletter or logging into ADEC’s website using the bottom above.
Join ADEC for its first-ever virtual conference!

ADEC's Annual Conference is the premiere educational, interdisciplinary meeting for professionals working in the field of death, dying and bereavement: mental health professionals, social workers, counselors, educators, clergy, funeral directors, hospital and hospice personnel, and psychologists. This year's virtual format will allow ADEC to offer new opportunities and further connect with professionals across the world.

Why attend the ADEC Annual Conference?

- Learn about cutting-edge research and clinical practice in thanatology.
- Customize your conference experience — choose session types and topics that suit your discipline and interests.
- Network with peers in formal and informal settings, and establish connections that will stay with you for years.
- Identify new resources, products and services that can help move your practice forward.
- Earn continuing education credits, available in a variety of disciplines, including social work, marriage and family therapy, psychology, counseling, nursing and more.

Order Your Conference T-Shirt!
Our heartiest congratulations to the talented Kirsten Reberg-Horton who designed the conference t-shirts this year!

Kirsten’s design for the 2021 ADEC conference was inspired by the butterfly as a symbol of rebirth and transformation.

Even in a virtual space, we can connect across the globe as we work to promote and deepen Thanatological research and practice. Although we grieve the loss of our physical togetherness, we can be inspired by our ability to continue our vital work.

All proceeds from the sale of Conference t-shirts support ADEC Student and New Professionals Scholarships.

Thank You to ADEC’s Conference Sponsors

The Center for Complicated Grief

Marian University

Are you or your organization looking to support ADEC in new ways?

There are still Conference Sponsorship opportunities available, so check out ADEC’s website for more information!

2021 ADEC Election Results Are In…

The Leadership Recruitment and Development Committee (LRDC) is pleased to announce
the results of ADEC’s 2021 election of officers and Board members as well as representatives to the LRDC and the Credentialing Council. This year’s robust candidate pool provided an impressive leadership roster for consideration.

Thank you to all those who participated in the election. Votes were collected from 19 percent of the members for the Leadership Election, and 19 percent of the CT/FT eligible voters for the Credentialing Council position. The LRDC certified the results on Friday, February 5, 2021.

The individuals elected in 2021 to ADEC Board positions include:

- Vice-President – Jennifer Matthews (succeeding to President in 2022)
- Board of Director Member – Tashel Bordere (3-year term)
- Board of Director Member – Joy Berger (3-year term)
- LRDC Elected Member – Jillian Blueford (2-year term)
- CT International Representative to Credentialing Council – Olga Nikolajev (3-year term)

Please join us in congratulating these candidates on their election to these vital positions in our association and in pledging our support to help them carry out their requisite duties.

**Member Profile**

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

**Fran Solomon**
Founder, HealGrief®

An entrepreneur, visionary, developer, and executor, Fran is the Founder of HealGrief®, an all-encompassing virtual platform serving the bereaved. After years in the private sector, Fran’s grief journey led her into the field of bereavement care. She’s a trained group facilitator and served for almost a decade as a Board of Director, former Chair for Our House Grief Support Center, where her private sector experience was instrumental in the turnaround and development of management and policy. During her tenure, Fran saw a need for bereaved family and friends to connect globally. This need inspired her vision for HealGrief®.
HealGrief® is serving users from around the globe. Programs include Let’s Talk Death, Loss Project, Actively Moving Forward® and the AMF App. Fran also serves on the Board of Governors for Cedars Sinai Hospital in Los Angeles where she currently resides.

**Tell us why you chose this career path.**

Actually, I believe it chose me. After my father’s death, I did what I thought I was supposed to do. On the Sunday after my dad’s funeral, I put my grief in a box, wrapped a pretty bow around it, tucked it on a shelf, and prepared myself for work on Monday. I was “moving on,” so I thought.

Years later, the birth of my daughter triggered the grief I thought I had left behind. The one thing my father wanted more than anything in the world was to see a granddaughter. His absence spun me into deep grief. It was then I learned, grief is not something you move on from. It becomes a lifelong companion.

Once I accepted this notion, I learned to embrace my grief as a testament to the love I continue to hold, and when a trigger evokes my emotion, I’ve learned to take a deep breath, smile, and remember. I wanted to help guide others to a similar place.

**What have you done as a leader to advance the field?**

Some common grief themes are isolation, the feeling of loneliness, and a sense that no one understands. We’ve seen the power of healing when grief experiences are shared with others who understand the grief journey. Traditionally, bereavement care centers have been the place this healing begins. We here at HealGrief®, home of Actively Moving Forward®, have taken a more modern approach to address these feelings of grief by providing a virtual community of others who understand because they too are grieving a death loss.

Recognizing that today’s primary means of communication is through our hand-held devices, text messaging and apps have become a direct method to connect. So, to facilitate this best, we created the AMF App. In the App, we offer various communities for like-minded people to connect and share while offering resources available by a finger’s tap.

All of our community members are vetted. And once a member, they can connect with others via text messaging and group chats or by posting on our community comment boards. The App is loaded with resources, reading materials, and videos all carefully selected to validate one’s feelings, inform, and inspire hope. We also offer facilitated virtual support conversations and book clubs that allow members to form stronger connections with each other.

We also make deeper connections possible by allowing our members to find others of similar age, who are grieving a similar death loss, and who are at about the same point in time from the date of death.

It’s been a gift to see the connections made and the friendships formed. Because an App has no geographical boundary, we are witnessing relationships develop with members from countries worldwide. Our tagline is…No one ever needs to grieve alone. Our mission is to provide community, support, and connections are genuinely realized through our AMF App.

**How do you see the impact of your work and its place in the future?**

I think we’ve created a whole new paradigm of bereavement care. It’s a great supplement to the great work already being done. Indeed, it doesn’t take the place of human connectivity. Yet, it is an additional support service and easy to access. And let’s be thoughtful; some individuals may be homebound or not have the ability to travel. Or work and time constraints might prohibit one’s ability to access local support. Our App provides
those who might not have the ability to participate in local support groups the ability to access support virtually.

We also believe our virtual support group model, seldom seen before COVID-19, will become additional programming offered by bereavement care centers and become a standard way to serve the community at large on a more routine basis.

Student Profile

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

Haley K Scott, MA

I am a doctoral student in the Social Work and Anthropology (SWAN) Ph.D. program at Wayne State University (WSU) in Detroit, Michigan. I graduated with an MA in medical anthropology from WSU in 2019 and am pursuing a Masters’ in Social Work (MSW) concurrently with the Ph.D. Utilizing an interdisciplinary approach offered through my SWAN degree, I aim to implement social programs and design community outreach programs addressing social justice issues of death and dying. I have drawn on my previous experiences as an autopsy technician within several medical examiner’s offices to explore and address gaps in public awareness of death education and outreach.

My doctoral research focuses on applying ethnographic methods to gain insight into death and dying, including social justice issues related to the stigmatization of certain deaths (homicide, suicide, and overdoses), the politicization of dead bodies, and issues related to public facing death education.

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 have been fortunate in finding several mentors who have helped to shape my career in Thanatology: co workers, internship supervisors, academic advisors, and anthropological/social work researchers in the field. Each person has mentored me and I draw on my Thanatological background and education as I seek to enhance my thinking about challenging issues on death and dying using an applied research perspective. My interest in this career path was not only affected by professional interests through past employment in medical examiner offices, but through personal loss and involvement in death care. These elements have all converged as motivating factors in the endeavor to address social justice issues after death.
What advice would you offer a more junior professional in the field on growing their career or keeping their work fresh?

My advice is to be curious! Explore all the facets of Thanatology that you might be slightly interested in. In my experience I have found that the connections between research topics will help guide you to find gaps in knowledge, new intersections to explore, and a wide range of methodology that can be applied to your main interests. This also extends into networking (virtually or in person) and talking with fellow Thanatologists about their experiences, challenges, upcoming projects, or opportunities for collaboration.

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

I anticipate innovative methodology used in research to better address questions in death and dying. I am very much looking forward to incorporating interdisciplinary work to Thanatology, especially with ethnographic methods.

ADEC Committees: Diversity and Inclusion Committee

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

Committee Chairs: Darwin Huartson, MDiv., Willow List, MA, and Michelle Ramirez, MS

The Diversity and Inclusion Committee is a subcommittee of ADEC’s Membership Committee. As a member of ADEC, volunteers are invited to participate in the Committee’s ongoing efforts to invite diverse professionals to join ADEC, contribute to ADEC’s professional networking community and empower other Thanatology professionals by submitting relevant research, education, and personal experiences to the various learning opportunities that ADEC offers its members for supporting diverse and historically disenfranchised groups. ADEC remains committed to Diversity, helping all professionals feel welcomed, as well as empowered to serve diverse communities excellently.

Bi-monthly committee meetings are now scheduled on the 4th Tuesday of each month at 3:00 pm CST beginning in April.

The Committee’s current call to action is to encourage submissions of an award winning abstract, present it at a future ADEC conference and receive one fully paid scholarship to the event! Submission deadline is the same as all abstract submissions so please look out for deadlines coming this Fall.

Each year The Ronald K. Barrett, PhD Scholarship for Diversity and Multicultural Presentations awards to a presenter(s) whose presentation(s) demonstrates diversity and/or multicultural sensitivity to traditions, concerns, and rituals in the field of death, dying, education, and counseling to raise awareness to end of life caregiving as it pertains to people of diverse ethnicities. We look forward to reviewing amazing abstracts during this next submission period. Let us continue to have conversations that elicit empowerment, dialogue and healing amongst our membership and communities.

Brief History and Background on the Scholarship Award’s Namesake
Ronald Keith Barrett, PhD, F.T., Psychologist, Professor, Author, Lecturer, Chair of the Department of Psychology, Loyola Marymount University, Los Angeles was a dedicated member of ADEC and founder of the People of Color Forum. Dr. Barrett passed away on May 31, 2015 and through his estate left a gift to ADEC for the purpose and mission to
support and increase opportunities for presentations on diversity and multicultural concerns to broaden awareness and sensitivity to end of life caregiving. His legacy remains with ADEC to continue to empower professionals, who themselves represent diversity but also who serve diverse communities. What an honor to continue to celebrate his powerful legacy through this annual award.

In Recognition of Previous Award Recipients

- **2018**: Tashel Bordere, PhD, CT; Mary Alice Varga, PhD; and Lindsey Murphy
  **Abstract Title**: Grief and Coping among African American Female College Students
- **2019**: Janet McCord, PhD, FT, and Thy-Thy Quach
  **Abstract Title**: Death, Grief and Mourning in Uganda: A Study Abroad Experience
- **2020**: Shannon Johnson, PhD, and Patricia Galan Cisneros, MA, LMSW
  **Abstract Title**: Spiritual Change Among Homicide Survivors of Color

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.

What’s New: New Books from ADEC Members

"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.

**The Grief Road Map: Finding Your Road and Life After Loss**

*Bruce Leisy*

Leisy offers a road map for grieving persons to enter into the unique journey that is theirs as they drive through the foreign territory of grief. A hospice grief and bereavement counselor, Leisy expands upon a curriculum he developed for grief workshops to assist griever to design their destination even though feeling lost. Serving as a workbook its four parts (1: Your Destination Awaits The Road Ahead; 2: Doing – The Main Road;
3: Being – The Inner Road; 4: Detours, Growth, and Destination – The Hard and Beautiful Road) offer a griefer reading, reflecting, writing assignments, and other activities to discover a new identity and a future without the person who died. His consistent use of car metaphors such as road maps, steering, milestone tips, Road Scholar Assignments, tune-ups, etc. will appeal to those grievers who seek familiar language to find the way forward during bereavement.

**Columbia, SC.**
**Grief Road Map Publishing, 2019.**
**ISBN: 978-0578614144.**
**Softcover, 168 pages.**

---

Nature Heals: Reconciling Your Grief Through Engaging with the Natural World

**Alan D. Wolfelt**

Wolfelt explores how healing in grief can come from engaging the natural world. He mentions studies that show the positive benefits for body and mind that come when we intentionally return to nature. Many of us live, work, and play indoors, tethered to technology, so he encourages intentional efforts to reconnect to nature. While there is help for grievers indoors – meeting with a counselor, reading books or information online – Wolfelt argues that there is an innate human need for the natural world. Since location or mobility issues may rule out the proverbial “walk in the woods,” he details other ways to engage nature such as gazing at a tree through a window, tending a potted plant, experiencing the smells and sounds of nature through scented products or recordings, even though photos, posters, or paintings hung on a wall. This small booklet may also be helpful during this Age of COVID not only for grief following a death, but for the many other losses imbedded in the world-wide pandemic.

**Ft. Collins, CO.**
**Companion Press, 2021.**
**ISBN: 978-1-61722-301-3.**
**Softcover, 53 pages.**
Want to have your publication included in Connects?
Have your publisher send a copy (not just an announcement) of recent material (2019 - present) to:

The Rev. Paul A. Metzler, D.Min., Editor
Books & Other Media
ADEC Connects
5305 Kenrick View Dr
Saint Louis, MO 63119
Cell: (315) 415-4731
Email: paul.metzler2010@gmail.com

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.

Essence M. Jones is currently a Doctorate in Organizational Leadership Candidate (DOL) at Hood College in Frederick, Maryland. She also holds a certificate of Thanatology. She has defended her dissertation proposal and is currently awaiting IRB approval. Her dissertation is entitled “An African American Perspective of Bereavement and Grief: Focusing on Women Who Lost Their Mothers to Death During Adolescence in the District of Columbia.”

She has also self published two children’s books on Amazon: “Strong Brown Boy” and “Strong Brown Girl.” You can see them here.

Amy Kitsembel is providing grief support by virtual platforms and finding that grief programming is reaching further through the community. The work is exciting, and although it has a steep learning curve, it is essential for the future of grief programs, especially in Wisconsin. The weather will no longer cause Aspirus to cancel offerings!

Dr. Alan Wolfelt will be presenting a keynote presentation at the International Cemetery, Cremation, and Funeral Association Convention on May 13, 2021 in Las Vegas, Nevada. His presentation is titled “Exploring the Significance of Permanent Placement: Understanding and Teaching the WHY.” He will also be introducing new educational tools surrounding the significance of this topic. Dr. Wolfelt is a previous recipient of the ADEC Death Educator Award. For more information go to: www.centerforloss.com
Renew Your Commitment to ADEC

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.

Members’ benefits (listed below) have recently been enhanced in that Members now get two free webinar recordings per year and that includes CEUs at no additional cost. In addition, paid access to webinars has been streamlined; attendees will now pay one fee for total access (i.e., live/recorded access for three years, $45 for members/$70 for non-members).

ADEC strives to serve you. And needs you to keep ADEC strong.

Why Join ADEC?

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
- Two free webinar recordings a year
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 April 2021 issue of Connects please submit your ideas/content by Friday, March 26, 2021.

Contact Us
Editor – Amanda Brace Ed.S., LSC, PCC-S
Assistant Editor – Beverly Rollins BSW, MGA, MA

Your ADEC Information

Your Account Information:

- Your name: @@first_name@@ @@last_name@@
- Your username: @@username@@
- Your email address: @@email@@

Your Membership Information:

- Your member type: @@member_type@@
- Your member status: ##MEMBERSTATUS##
- Your membership expiration date: @@membership_exp_date@@

If you need assistance accessing your ADEC account or resetting your password, please contact the ADEC office at adec@adec.org or 612-337-1808.

ADEC Quick Links

- ADEC Homepage
- Be an ADEC Member
- 2021 Annual Conference
- Renew Your Membership
- Webinars: Live & Recorded
- Thanatology Certifications
400 South 4th Street
Suite 754E
Minneapolis, MN 55415

Phone: 612-337-1808
adec@adec.org
Monday - Friday 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM CST

If you no longer wish to receive ADEC emails, please click here: @@unsubscribe_url@@