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Association for Death Education and Counseling®  
The Thanatology Association®

# Connects

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*Some ADEC members did not receive the February issue of Connects. We wanted to resend it, with a few new updates as well. Enjoy!*

## President's Message

**Louis A. Gamino, PhD, ABPP, FT**



I have loved being your ADEC President this year—plain and simple.

Once again, I thank you for your confidence in electing me and for the marvelous support you have given me all year. In the many “asks” I have made, I almost always got a “yes” in reply. That enthusiasm is what makes ADEC pulsate with energy and potential. When we tap into that passion stream, there’s no telling what we can accomplish.

I look forward to introducing to you our Executive Director, Isaiah Allen, in Atlanta. I will also tell you at the ADEC Business Meeting in Atlanta about the progress made during this governance year on a variety of initiatives important to the association, including the latest on our website conversion and plans for a third edition of our Handbook of Thanatology.

I have been signaling that we are going to try something novel with our annual ADEC in Conversation exchange this year. The ADEC Board is calling it, “Revisiting Our Heritage & Purpose While Re-envisioning Our Future.” It’s going to be an old-fashioned, around-the-kitchen-table conversation. Unplugged. Honest. Respectful. It is your chance as ADEC members to speak and the Board intends to listen.

In order to frame the conversation, the Board has created a hand-out featuring the four key questions to guide our discussion.

- What does belonging to ADEC mean to you?
- How do you define ADEC’s purpose?
- What excites you about being part of ADEC?
- How can ADEC do the most good in the world?

For those members who wish to preview the handout, [it can be accessed electronically](#). Anyone who will not be able to attend the Atlanta conference but wants to submit written responses to the questions [can post those online](#).

I guess my final Presidential “ask” is this. If you are coming to Atlanta, please include ADEC in Conversation on your dance card. It should be a very constructive and stimulating way to tap into that passion stream that is ADEC’s lifeblood. You are a vital part of the pulsating organism that is ADEC. So “tap in” to hear where we are as an association and where we may be going next.

In closing, I salute everyone who has helped me this year—in ways both small and large—to lead our cherished association. My goal is to shake the hand of every conference attendee in Atlanta and let you know personally that you are important to ADEC. I shouldn’t be hard to spot—look for the guy with the flashy necktie and the big Texas smile! See you there.

## Rituals Archive Project



At this year's Conference in Atlanta, we will re-open the doors to The Diversity and Inclusion Committee's ***Rituals Archive Project*** room. The committee would like to invite you to actively participate by bringing to the conference an article, memento, photography, or any other artifact that depicts a memorial ritual in your corner of the world or family culture. As ADEC is dedicated to promoting excellence and recognizing diversity in death education and taking into consideration that everyone celebrates life and honors their deceased loved ones in many different ways, we highly encourage you to participate and share your story with ADEC.

Join us in appreciating our differences and similarities by portraying to others the diverse manners in which we honor and remember our deceased loved ones in this magnificent world. [Please send Michelle Ramirez an email](#) letting her know if you will be participating and what you are bringing to ensure there are adequate space accommodations in the ritual room. Let us plan on making our **Rituals Archive Project** room a meaningful learning and sharing opportunity for ADEC.

You can bring a photo, an artifact, a symbol, etc. but please include with your artifact a brief description of the image for others to read. Please bring it ready to be displayed. The item drop off will be coordinated via email so please let us know that you will be bringing an item. All photos, mementos, and artifacts have to be picked up by their respective owners on Saturday morning of the ADEC conference.

## Student Profile

So that the ADEC community can get to know its students, Connects will continue to feature stories on ADEC students as well as scholarship recipients.

### Amanda Marie Brown

Amanda is a mature student pursuing concurrent degrees with an Honours Specialization in Thanatology and Bachelor of Social Work at King's University College at the University of Western Ontario. As a mother to 4 young children and a passionate and enthusiastic student, Amanda definitely keeps busy! After finishing up her degrees at King's, Amanda plans to obtain a Master's degree in Health Sciences in Bioethics at the University of Toronto. Amanda's research interests include ethical considerations surrounding medical assistance in dying, culturally conscious palliative care, and quality end-of-life care for marginalized populations. Amanda firmly aligns herself within the death positive movement and believes that the culture of silence surrounding death should be broken through discussion, gathering, art, innovation, and scholarship.



Amanda lives with her partner, 4 children, 2 dogs, and 2 cats in London, Ontario. In her spare time she enjoys spending as much time as possible with her family in nature.

**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 can't accurately express the amount of admiration and respect I hold for my program coordinator, Dr. Darcy Harris. Dr. Harris has proven to be an unending source of support, direction, and inspiration for me. As a woman scholar in the field, Dr. Harris has done so much to make Thanatology open, accessible, and real. As much as the program is about death, dying, and bereavement – it's about living life fully, openly, and intentionally. Her empathy, compassion, curiosity, drive, engagement, and unquenchable thirst for knowledge inspires me daily. I feel so much gratitude for her mentorship and the privilege to walk in her footsteps. Thank you, Dr. Harris.

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

The most important thing for me so far has been truly just leaning in to the process. Don't be afraid to meet with people outside your comfort zone, learn new things, and gain new perspectives. I think as academics we can sometimes get tunnel vision and lose sight of the people we're in this profession to support. Challenge yourself to look for new perspectives daily and stay "real."

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

With the aging Baby Boomer population, I believe work in the field is of paramount importance. Lifting the taboo surrounding death and promoting engagement, discussion, and making end-of-life wishes known will be a critical stepping stone in the years to come.

# ADEC 41st Annual Conference

## April 9-13, 2019

Hilton Atlanta, Atlanta, GA

Pre-Conference Institute: April 9-10, 2019



Register for the 41st Annual Conference in Atlanta, Georgia!

[ADEC 2019 Conference Website](#)

## Book Your Hotel by March 26



All Conference activities will take place at the Hilton Atlanta. ADEC has negotiated discounted rates of \$168 USD for single/double occupancy rooms and \$175 USD for triple/quad occupancy rooms.

**[Reserve your room by Tuesday, March 26](#) to receive discounted rates.**



## Support the Future of ADEC!



To help ensure the future sustainability, growth and advancement of ADEC, we are committed to supporting the involvement of students and new professionals.

We ask that you consider helping the next generation of professionals, those who are currently studying and newly working in the field of death, dying and bereavement, by donating an item to the Student and New Professionals Committee's Annual Student Silent Auction and Raffle.

The Student Silent Auction and Raffle will take place at the Atlanta conference, April 9-13. All proceeds benefit the advancement of the Student and New Professional's Scholarship Fund.

Donation suggestions include thanatology-related items such as: textbooks, counseling resources, children's books, movies (DVDs), music (CDs), artwork, photography, jewelry or gift cards.

To donate an item, please email [Gae Savino](#), LCSW (2019 Student Silent Auction Chair), or [Ashley Overman-Goldsmith](#), MA, LPC, NCC (2019 Raffle Committee Chair and 2018-2019 Student Scholarship Recipient) and let them know that you will donate an item and bring it with you to the Conference.

ADEC's 2019 student scholarship recipients are eager to say thank you! Stop by the Student Silent Auction and Raffle area and introduce yourself to a Student Scholarship recipient volunteering at conference. They want to extend their gratitude for your support!

Remember when you were a student or perhaps you are currently a student...we invite everyone to participate in the Student and New Professionals Committee's Student Silent Auction and Raffle to help support the advancement of the Student Scholarship Fund so even more students and new professionals can attend ADEC's 2020 Conference!

## ADEC Member Benefit Highlight



### A Word on Conference Discounts

*By: Michelle Ramirez*

I've attended every ADEC conference since 2013. This will be my 7th conference.

As an independent bereavement professional, I have looked to each ADEC conference to meet my professional development growth needs with reputable and evidenced-based bereavement education and training. The ADEC conference has also helped me surround myself with colleagues and friends who share the same empathetic heart for others during the most difficult days of their lives.

The ADEC member conference discount nearly equals the cost of a full annual ADEC membership! So along with my ADEC membership, I am provided this substantial discount which allows me, as an independent professional, the opportunity to enjoy the membership of ADEC for that year as well as the conference attendance rate for basically the same cost a non-member pays to attend. This is an absolute help for independent professionals, organizations that have limited budgets toward professional memberships and conferences, and lay volunteers who are paying personally to learn how to better serve others.

Attending an ADEC conference has always been beneficial to me professionally. At the conference, I gain education that I can confidently apply to my work. I gain friendship and support from other professionals. We are a breed of our own, aren't we? We are privy to the very confidential, vulnerable journeys of others and unable to share – so having a colleague that you can laugh, cry, hug and grow together with is worth the investment of attending the conference.

I have also been given the opportunity to serve other bereavement and thanatology professionals as a volunteer. After my first conference I began volunteering with the Multicultural Committee and continue to serve on the Membership and Diversity & Inclusion Committees as well as on ADEC's Board of Directors. ADEC conference attendance provides opportunities to give back in meaningful ways. Many committees meet at the conference, so this is a valuable part of conference attendance. Making a difference!

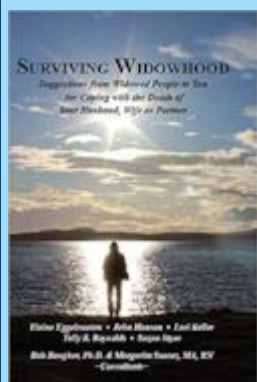
So yes, for me, my ADEC conference discount is a huge member benefit that has helped me in many more ways than mere dollar savings. It has continued to make conference attendance feasible and within budget. Consider taking advantage of your conference discount this year and in the years to come! Make sure to say hello to me. I will be there! I look forward to gaining you as a new friend and colleague!

## What's New: New Books from ADEC Members

By The Rev Paul A. Metzler, D.Min

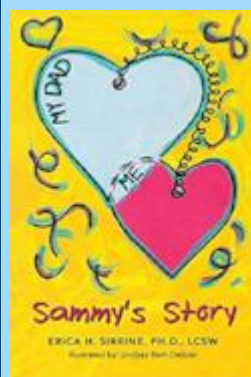
What's New offers a brief review of educational materials written or produced by ADEC members. Each review is run once and is intended to showcase the contributions of our membership to the death, dying, and bereavement field. Send a review copy (not just an announcement) of recent material (2016 to present) to:

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**Baughner, Bob and Suarez, M.** Consultants.  
*Surviving Widowhood.*  
Seattle, Washington:  
Caring People Press, 2018.  
ISBN: 978-0-9968692-1-8.  
Softcover, 122 pages.

**Baughner**, along with other contributors, offers a brief, practical, engaging handbook for surviving widowhood. It is drawn from the experience of many who lost their partner, whether married or not, and contributed elements of this book with information and ideas that “would have helped them when they thought nothing would” (p.1). The book is organized into 12 chapters, and each section is carefully focused on the



**Sirrine, Erica H.** *Sammy's Story.* Publisher: Author  
(2017). ISBN: 978-0-69258-894-9. Softcover, 25 pages.

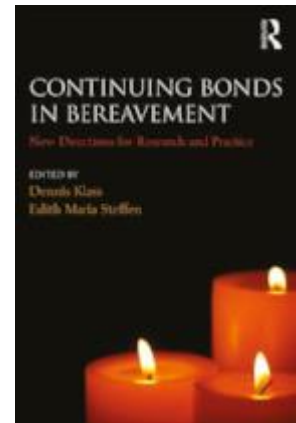
**Sirrine** has written a tender read-aloud book for children ages 3-7 who are in the more-frequent-than-we'd-wish position of anticipating a parent's death. This brief book has colorfully engaging illustrations to accompany the text which conveys the likely sequence of a life-threatening illness. In addition to concepts about illness, dying, and death, she thoughtfully addresses the complex subject of how a bereaved child can maintain a continued bond with a parent following the death. Parents,

perspective of “What Helps.” The Appendices provide additional resources to support those grieving the death of a partner. Unusual for a published work, the copyright page notes that “Parts of this book may be copied without permission.” This book will be very useful to widowed persons or be a resource for leaders of bereavement support groups.

therapists, and other helping adults will find this book helpful in engaging and supporting children through anticipatory bereavement.

## Former ADEC Member Still Contributing to the Literature

Dennis Klass, former ADEC member now retired as professor emeritus of Webster University in St. Louis, is still splendidly productive. He has just edited, along with Edith Maria Steffen, *Continuing Bonds: New Directions for Research and Practice* (Routledge, 2018). It would be hard to overstate the significance of the paradigm shift in bereavement studies that the 1996 book, *Continuing Bonds: New Understandings of Grief* (Taylor Francis, 1996) introduced to Thanatological studies. Denny also served as a contributing editor of that earlier book along with the late Phyllis Silverman, also an ADEC member. Indeed, the new book is dedicated to her memory. When he set out to work on the current book it was imagined to be a second edition, but what evolved is justifiably a new book. Many other ADEC members are represented among the contributors to this *New Directions* edition. Its 24 chapters move the theoretical, clinical, and research conversation forward, offering substantive scholarship to enrich the thinking of all Thanatologists. We all are indebted to him, Phyllis, and the many other ADEC members who have played such a crucial role in the development and deepening of our understanding of the importance of continuing bonds in bereavement.



## ADEC Member's Corner





## New Catalog Released of Dr. Alan Wolfelt's Publications

Companion Press announces the publication of its 2019 catalog. The new catalog highlights more than 80 books and other publications available from Companion Press and Dr. Alan Wolfelt. Companion Press is dedicated to the education and support of the bereaved and bereavement caregivers.

Featured in the catalog is the publication, *Healing Your Chronic Illness Grief: 100 Practical Ideas for Living Your Best Life*. It will be available in July 2019. It was written by Dr. Wolfelt and his daughter, Jaimie A. Wolfelt based on their experiences with Jaimie's diagnosis of Type 1 diabetes at the age of 9. The diagnosis of this chronic illness changed everything about her life. In this new book, the authors have crafted 100 tips, affirmations, and simple activities to help the reader live the best life physically, cognitively, emotionally, socially, and spiritually.

In October 2019 Dr. Wolfelt published, *First Aid for Broken Hearts*. This book is for the broken-hearted; whether the reader is struggling with a death, break-up, illness, unwanted life change, or loss of any kind, this compassionate book will help with understanding and support.

Also featured in the catalog is Companion Press's June 2019 title, *The Dementia Care Partner's Workbook*. This book, by Dr. Edward Shaw, a dually trained physician and mental health counselor, provides lessons for support group participants or individuals who are care partners of a loved one with Alzheimer's disease or another type of dementia.

Author, educator, and grief counselor Dr. Alan Wolfelt serves as Director of the Center for Loss and Life Transition in Fort Collins, Colorado. He is committed to helping people mourn well so they can live well and love well and is available for interviews.

The Companion Press catalog is available in both physical and digital formats. To view and to learn more about Dr. Wolfelt's books on grief and loss, visit [centerforloss.com/bookstore](http://centerforloss.com/bookstore).



## 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 2019 issue of Connects please submit your ideas/content by **Wednesday, March 27, 2019**.

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