President's Message

As we arrived in the beautiful city of Portland to gather for the 39th Annual Conference spring was in the air - flush with cherry blossoms in bloom and the renewal and hope of the new season.

In many ways, here in the 41st year of ADEC, our beloved association is also gearing for a new spring – of renewal, change and growth ahead for us in the weeks and months ahead. Your Board of Directors has been meeting every week for months now to make sure we ensure a strong and viable, thriving organization.

For the last several years, the leadership of ADEC have been diligent gardeners, planning for the next spring. Like all gardeners know, the reward of the beauty of bloom and fruit is an expression of long periods of a labor of love – tending, nurturing, planning and planting the seeds of that vision.

Student Member Profile - Casey Smith

Casey Smith was reared in the funeral directing business by his father, a career-long funeral director. The experience instilled in Casey a desire to meet the needs of others during the death, dying and grieving process. He currently operates his own funeral services company, Smith End of Life Services.

Life-long learning is paramount to adapt to changing industries and Casey Smith is a true student of that ideology. Casey is a graduate of Grand View University with certifications from

Board Member Profile - Dr. Phyllis Kosminsky

Phyllis Kosminsky is a clinical social worker specializing in life threatening illness and grief. Over the past 22 years, Dr. Kosminsky has provided individual counseling to hundreds of bereaved individuals and has conducted trainings for mental health professionals nationally and internationally on the treatment of normal and problematic grief. Her book Attachment Informed Grief Therapy: The Clinician’s Guide to Foundations and Applications, co-authored by John R. Jordan was published in 2016 by Routledge.

How I came to work in the field of grief and loss

I grew up in a New Jersey suburb. I had a sister who was eight years younger than I. My father ran his father’s hardware store with his brother and went to work early every morning.
The Forum's Conference Reflection

By Janet McCord, PhD, FT

I am pleased to present a number of reviews of 2017 ADEC conference presentations! We had a wonderful conference with attendance at 574! If you were unable to attend, I hope you will enjoy these reviews of some of the presentations. All the keynote presentations were just spectacular, and all can be viewed once the conference video recordings are made available to ADEC members. In addition to keynote presentations, a number of other conference presentations were streamed and will also be available for purchase.

So many good things come from ADEC conferences. New friends are made, old friends hug and reconnect. New initiatives get sparked and need only to be developed so they can happen. One initiative coming out of the conference, currently in early planning stages, was inspired by the Ira Nerken Keynote Address by Okello Kelo Sam from Uganda. Members of the Committee on Diversity and Inclusion would love to see ADEC plan and implement a "learning trip" to Uganda, to visit Hope North and to plan ways to help this school to grow. As Immediate Past President as well as the director of a university program in thanatology, I will work this summer to begin planning such a learning trip as a collaborative effort between ADEC and Marian University, where those to travel will be able to earn university credit. Okello is excited about the possibilities, and we have already sketched a possible itinerary of two weeks that will start at Okello's "Roots EcoResort,” continue to Hope North, spend a couple of days in Gulu District in the village, and finishing up with a couple of days on safari at Murchison Falls National Park. Please contact me directly at jsmccord12@marianuniversity.edu if you would like to be involved in a small planning committee!

As Co-Chair of the Communication Committee, I would like to invite all members to consider submitting articles to The Forum — The Forum has seen hard times lately. We currently have no chief editor, and have not had articles submitted for publication for many, many months. If editing articles is something you are good at, I invite you to contact me to work with us as The Forum editor. If you have ideas for articles, please let us know.

The Forum - John (Jack) Jordan, PhD, Presentation Report

By Christiane Manzella, PhD

John (Jack) Jordan’s presentation was from a strong clinical perspective that highlighted attachment informed grief therapy (AIGT) and an video excerpts of his clinical work with a suicide loss survivor. While he acknowledged that AIGT has strong research and theoretical findings suggesting the efficacy of this approach, he kept the presentation on the clinical application and that was a strong and moving presentation. His work with the woman (the suicide survivor) was moving and clearly made a huge difference in her life – and we in the audience (which was surprisingly full for the last keynote of a conference) witnessed this positive change and accommodation to the suicide of her son.
Strategies from Complicated Grief
Speaker: Dr. Bonnie J. Gorscak, PhD
Indicators: Practice report; Professional issues
Reporter: Dr. Ramona Fernandez, PhD

At some point clinicians may have wondered whether a particular client's grief seems prolonged, persistent in the acuteness, and "stuck" in a place that is unable to adapt and move with the ebbs and flows, between loss and restoring a life after loss. We may wonder if we need to use a different intervention, to allow for more time or to categorize as "Complicated Grief". Then the question is what to do about it in the therapy hour.

The Forum - The Impact of Parental Loss of a Child Report
By Matthew Nurczyk, student (Marian University Master of Science in Thanatology)

The Impact of Parental Loss of a Child: Linking Theory and Practice
Phillis Kosminsky and Jane Bissler, presenters

Kosminsky and Bissler presented three areas of concern in parental bereavement that they wanted to discuss and then emphasized their points with a discussion of two of Bissler's case studies.

The first item discussed was a "new spirituality," what Bissler referred as "continuing bonds on steroids." It was suggested that some therapists may have some trouble with this notion. In explaining, Bissler stated that parents have a desire to have a continuing relationship with their child in a more mystical sense.

The Forum - Feeding the Bereaved Session Report
By Rachael Hill

Feeding the Bereaved: Balancing Somatic Aspects of Grief w/Nutrition
Presenters: Lyn Prashant and Frances Holmes

The workshop "Feeding the Bereaved: Balancing Somatic Aspects of Grief with Nutrition" was extremely informative and thought provoking. The session started with Lyn Prashant discussing how important it is to take care of our bodies, including why this is especially true for

The Forum - Medical Marijuana Session Report
By Mark Shelvock, Thanatology student at King's University College

Medical Marijuana – Contemporary Issues in Palliative Care
Franca Posner, MSW, LCSW-C, LICSW, CT, presenter

The politics and policies of the use of medical marijuana are rapidly changing in Western society as scientific information is now infiltrating this contemporary debate. To my surprise, the controversy and illegalization of medical marijuana stems from racist and disenfranchising politics that occurred only in the last few decades in US history. In this presentation, Posner will lead you “thicker into the weeds” by providing an insightful analysis regarding the use of marijuana historically, and how
the bereaved. There are so many things going on within the body of a bereaved individual, and when well-meaning supporters bring food, it is often “comfort” food rather than food that actually nourishes the body.

power-hungry US politicians created policy changes regarding marijuana as an attempt to control marginalized groups.

READ MORE

New Books From ADEC Members

By The Rev. Paul A. Metzler, DMin


Abraham has long been committed to public and professional education to enable choices that foster a good death. He helped found one of the earliest hospices in the USA and established a course in death education in 1977 at Auburn University. His conviction that “the right to hasten one’s death is the next great civil right” (p.15) has led him in recent years to join with others in establishing the “Final Exit Network.” This book is a compendium of his perspectives that offers practical information and resources to prepare knowingly for dying and death. It includes fifteen chapters, an Epilogue on “Death and Humor” and a potpourri of additional resources collected into a twelve item Appendix. It will be familiar material to many who have studied dying, death and bereavement, but is a valuable book since it presents many thanatology resources into a single volume.

READ MORE

Miscarriage Research Project - Participants Needed

ADEC student member, XiXi Tian, MS, is working on a study examining how married couples or domestic partners talk about miscarriage in an effort to cope with this particular loss.

To participate in this study, you must:

1. Be at least 18 years of age or older

2. Be currently married or in a domestic partnership for at least a year

3. Have experienced a miscarriage or have a spouse/partner who experienced a miscarriage within the past 2-6 months

4. Not have a spouse/partner who already participated in the study.

If you meet these criteria and agree to participate, you can access the survey online with the link below:

https://pennstate.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_9pGISPtqohMgJa5

Participation in this study will require approximately 30 minutes of your time. If you have any questions regarding this study, contact information is available by clicking the link above. Thank you for considering contributing to this important project!

Snapshots from ADEC17

The 2017 Annual Conference in Portland, OR, was a fantastic success. ADEC had one of its highest turnouts ever, and for the first time, introduced the ADEC conference app. Here are just some of the great photos you
shared. You can also view pictures from the conference on ADEC’s Facebook page. Check them out and tag yourself and friends!

**Job Bank**

ADEC members can add postings to the ADEC job board for free. Email any listings to ADEC Headquarters.

**Pathways Center for Grief & Loss**  
Bereavement Counselor  
Mount Joy, PA

**Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Center**  
Part-time Bereavement Coordinator  
Cincinnati, OH

**Member's Corner**  
*Healing the Empty Nester’s Grieving Heart: 100 Practical Ideas for Parents After the Kids Move Out, Go Off to College, or Start Taking Flight* by Dr. Alan Wolfelt.
This book helps parents understand their normal and necessary empty-nester grief. The 100 practical tips and activities are designed to help parents acknowledge and express their feelings of loss, foster love and respect, build a new and rewarding kind of relationship with their children, and, over time, re-instill their lives with meaning and joy. Tips for nurturing a marriage or partnership through this challenging time are also included.

Upcoming Events

June Webinar

Loss in the Lives of LGBTQ+ People
Laura S. Wheat, PhD, LPC, NCC
Wednesday, June 21, 2017
12:00 p.m. - 1:30 p.m. CDT

REGISTRATION LINK

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---Back to Top---