



AMERICAN GROUP
PSYCHOTHERAPY ASSOCIATION
GROUP FOUNDATION
FOR ADVANCING MENTAL HEALTH
INTERNATIONAL BOARD FOR
CERTIFICATION OF GROUP
PSYCHOTHERAPISTS

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For Immediate Release

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INTERNATIONAL BOARD FOR CERTIFICATION OF GROUP PSYCHOTHERAPISTS PRESENTS 2024 HAROLD S. BERNARD GROUP PSYCHOTHERAPY TRAINING AWARD TO AARON BLACK, PHD, CGP, AGPA-F

NEW YORK, February 27, 2024— The International Board for Certification of Group Psychotherapists will be presenting the 2024 Harold S. Bernard Group Psychotherapy Training Award to Aaron Black, PhD, CGP, AGPA-F. The presentation will take place during AGPA Connect 2024 in National Harbor, Maryland at the Gaylord National Harbor Resort and Convention Center on Wednesday, February 28, during the Annual Tri-Organizational Awards Ceremony, 6:00 – 7:30 PM.

This award was established in 2001 and is given annually to an individual or organization whose work in group training and/or education contributes to excellence in the practice of group psychotherapy. It was renamed through a legacy gift provided to the Group Foundation for Advancing Mental Health by Dr. Bernard for the purpose of endowing the award. Throughout his lifetime, training in group psychotherapy was near and dear to Dr. Bernard's heart. His legacy bequest and this award insure that individuals and programs meeting a high standard of training quality be identified and honored for their contributions to the field in developing the next generation of clinicians who use group psychotherapy to help people.

Dr. Black is being recognized with this award due to his significant contributions in training and leadership in the field of group psychotherapy on a local and national scale, as well as across the spectrum of mental health disciplines. He has led numerous presentations at AGPA Connect and other organizations over the years. He has also been on the faculty for The Center for Group Studies since 2015 and has been instrumental in the professional development of many group therapists through that training venue. He is particularly skilled in the integration of Attachment Theory and Modern Analysis. Dr. Black has also published a number of articles and received awards, with the most recent being Fellowship status in AGPA.

The scope of his impact was clearly conveyed through the comments received from those who recommended him for the award, with just a few examples being: "what truly qualifies Dr. Black for this award is his rare combination of expertise, confidence and humility;" "Aaron possesses a remarkable skill for simplifying complex ideas into relatable experience;" and "Dr. Black has been the most influential person in my professional development as a group and individual therapist."

"Dr. Black is a respected and generous teacher whose dedication to supporting and growing the field of group psychotherapy personifies this award," said Steve Van Wagoner, PhD, CGP, AGPA-F, Certification Board Chair. "His work has had an impact on innumerable trainees and practitioners, benefitting the profession and the public."

The past few years' recipients of the award are as follows; the full list can be found [here](#).

2023: Toronto Institute of Group Studies (TIGS)

2022: Howard University Counseling Service

2021: Farooq Mohyuddin, MD, CGP, AGPA-F

2020: J. Scott Rutan, PhD, AGPA-DF

This award presentation is a highlight of AGPA Connect 2024 in National Harbor. Entitled "Turbulent Times: using Groups to Overcome Divisions and Foster Engagement" this meeting attracts group therapists, researchers and scientists of all disciplines from around the world, as they gather to learn the most effective techniques in working with a variety of populations in groups, an increasingly utilized modality due to its effectiveness and cost-effectiveness. The theme reflects the meeting's emphasis on the power of groups to effect change in meaningful ways on personal and societal levels. For more information, contact AGPA at (212) 297-2190 or visit www.agpa.org.

About the International Board for Certification of Group Psychotherapists

The International Board for Certification of Group Psychotherapists is a standard setting and certifying body. This multidisciplinary credentialing body has over 1,000 certified clinicians, including psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers, nurses, clinical mental health counselors, marriage and family therapists, pastoral counselors and creative arts therapists who are recognized as group specialists through the Certified Group Psychotherapist credential.

About AGPA

The American Group Psychotherapy Association (AGPA) is the foremost professional association dedicated to the field of group psychotherapy, operating through a tri-partite structure: AGPA, a professional and educational organization; the Group Foundation for Advancing Mental Health, its philanthropic arm; and the International Board for Certification of Group Psychotherapists, a standard setting and certifying body. AGPA represents 2,000 mental health professional members including psychologists, psychiatrists, and social workers, as well as mental health, family, creative arts therapists and pastoral counselors, many of whom have been recognized as specialists through the Certified Group Psychotherapist credential. Its members are experienced mental health professionals who lead psychotherapy groups and various non-clinical groups. Many are organizational specialists who work with businesses, not-for-profit organizations, communities and other "natural" groups to help them improve their functioning. The association also has local and regional societies located across the country.

AGPA is committed to supporting the dignity and psychological safety of every individual without discrimination regarding race, ethnicity, gender, religion, sexual orientation, age, or disability. Central to our mission is a belief in the power of groups to treat mental illness, heal the scars from traumatic events, and enhance the well-being of adults and children in their families, schools, corporate settings, and communities.

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