

groupassets



Voices of Support

Karen Travis, LCSW, BCD, CGP, FAGPA



What do the Group Foundation Board members' and Donors' partners* have to convey about their support and involvement in the Foundation? In this issue, we will hear their voices.

We want to pay

homage to and say how much we thank and appreciate them for their gifts. Group Foundation Board Members and Donors give much, and so do their partners. To serve on a volunteer Board means being attentive to the governance duties and responsibilities, serving on committees, fundraising, and participating in hours of meetings and phone calls. Serving in leadership roles such as Chair, Vice-Chair, and Committee Chairs and Co-Chairs takes considerable amounts of planning, scheduling, and arranging.

Author Annie Dillard said, "How we spend our days is of course how we spend our lives." I emphasize time here because, as we know, there is finite amount of time each of us has in our life. To give time is to believe in the cause we are working toward, which is raising money and awareness for mental health advancement especially for the promotion of group work.

Our featured couple Jeffrey Hudson, MEd, LPC, CGP, FAGPA, and Robert (Bob) Blodgett, PhD, give us a more in depth look as Bob's article takes us down memory lane. Each person on the Board of Directors, along with their partner, has their own memory lane with regard to becoming involved with the Group Foundation.

As I listened to the voices, I was keeping in mind that

not all Board members' partners are in the mental health profession, although, of course, some are. This distinction did not seem to matter as a great similarity appeared. The theme that developed across the various comments was that they supported the Group Foundation because the organization and the field was important to their partner, their partner wanted to serve on the Board, volunteer or donate in some way, they loved and cared for their partner and wanted to back them and the cause they believed in. Along the way, many made their own relationships within the organization, which were important to them and which kept them involved, and some even took away group-related information that they applied in their own work.

Here are some quotes collected that will surely make clear the theme, as well as other reasons partners chose to support the Group Foundation.

"Seeing my spouse grow into her gifts (talents), whether innate or inspired, has been a journey not to be missed. The encouragement of new professionals/students to experience the power within themselves and forge new possibilities in their careers is the simplest reason to favor the Foundation."

"I am in awe of how much love and time he devotes to the Group Foundation and how much he receives in return. Of course, I support his work with the Group Foundation. I love him, and it is part of who he is. We both have a great desire to make the world a better place, reduce suffering, and do all we can to leave the world a little better off than we found it."

"I support her essentially because I love her so damn much. I also love AGPA and its members almost as much as she does. I would never work as hard as she does, but I certainly support what she does. Whatever she wants, I try my best to give it to her. It is as simple as that."

"I support the Group Foundation because my spouse dedicated a big part of her life and time supporting the

Foundation's goals. It all gets down to the quality of people that make up this organization."

"I enjoyed meeting interesting, successful people from all over the US and even other countries. It was a nice time to see these people in social situations that allowed me to communicate with them and offer my thoughts while listening to theirs. I enjoyed my spouse's success in the organization and saw her gain the respect of so many leaders in the field. AGPA brought home to me the many ways that the group process was present in my profession and specifically my own group."

"This has been an opportunity to support the leadership of AGPA, which has always addressed the central issues in our culture that reflect in how we treat ourselves and our clients. This has been a life work for my partner, and I'm thrilled to be part of it."

I encourage you to share this article with those who support you in your work. Our thanks go to everyone who shared their thoughts, along with all those who make it possible for the volunteer and donor structure of our organization to succeed. If you run across the family member of one of our Board or Donor partners, be sure to stop and thank them, too, for supporting the Group Foundation and helping to make our work become a reality, and let each of us thank our own family and friends for backing us in our endeavors. After all, it is the thankful season. I wish each of you a happy autumn and Thanksgiving holiday.

*NOTE: We use "partner" throughout the article to refer to any significant other.

"Our thanks go to everyone... who makes it possible for the volunteer and donor structure of our organization to succeed."

Joining AGPA's Extended Family

By Robert Blodgett, PhD

My husband, Jeffrey Hudson, MEd, LPC, CGP, FAGPA, recently completed 14 years as a Group Foundation Board member, including two terms as Vice Chair. In addition to giving Jeff encouragement and emotional support, I have spent countless hours of enjoyable and rewarding work on behalf of the Foundation and AGPA. This work has expanded my life with a wonderful circle of friends, giving me a feeling that I have contributed to the growth of both organizations.

My involvement with AGPA and the Group Foundation started with preparations for the 2007 AGPA Annual Meeting in Austin, Texas. Hosting visitors in our hometown has always been a treat—having friends and colleagues stay in our home, sharing interior Mexican food and Texas barbeque, and going to hear live music. The 2007 meeting was no exception when we took Anne Alonso, PhD, and David Hawkins, MD, CGP, DLFAGPA, to hear British folk guitarist Richard Thompson at the Cactus Café, the venue where Jeff and I met close to 35 years ago.

The 2007 meeting was also pivotal for Jeff's Group Foundation work. He and Katie Griffin, MA, LPC, CGP, FAGPA, co-chaired a committee to raise scholarship money for students and new professionals to attend the meeting. That committee became the model for a national effort, which Jeff has led, to increase the number and diversity of participants in AGPA Connect. I have enjoyed being part

of this effort; it has been an extension of my work as a community college geology professor to support and advocate for the education and training of BIPOC and LGBTQIA+ students and professionals. As a professor, I organized an LGBTQIA+ social group in the Geological Society of America in 1991, profiled BIPOC and female geoscientists in a textbook that I co-authored, and helped establish a scholarship for geoscience students at my college.

Helping Jeff with Group Foundation fundraising allowed me to use and develop skills beyond the geology classroom. I prepared press releases for Group Foundation events, following rules that I learned as an editor for my junior high newspaper, organized a database of potential Group Foundation donors with a structure developed when I was chair of a Texas Water Resources Data Management Committee, and made signs and photos for Group Foundation fundraisers with illustration techniques I used for my natural hazards textbook. Helping with Foundation events has also been educational; I knew next to nothing about stage lighting until I rented equipment for a performance by AGPA member Gabriela Kohen, MA, of her play *Decoding the Tablecloth* at an Austin fundraiser.

The last Group Foundation priority that I have felt connected to is AGPA's outreach following disasters



and traumatic incidents. As a former Air Force disaster preparedness officer and author of a textbook on natural disasters, I participated in an AGPA disaster and trauma workshop led by Suzanne Phillips, PsyD, ABPP, CGP, FAGPA, Jeffrey Kleinberg, PhD, CGP, DFAGPA, Robert Klein, PhD, ABPP, CGP, DLFAGPA, and Earl Hopper, PhD, CGP, DFAGPA, and helped organize a public education event highlighting AGPA's community outreach with Suzanne, Jeff, and Bob at our home in 2010.

Working on Group Foundation and AGPA projects has been a great experience, in part because of the support I received from Marsha Block, CAE, CFRE, former CEO, and Diane Feirman, CAE, Public Affairs Senior Director in the AGPA office, the Foundation Board, and other Austin volunteers who helped with fund raising. Many of these AGPA members have become part of my family of choice.

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"I'm amazed by the wealth of professional and personal growth that occurs, as well as the sense of community and belonging that is cultivated."

2021 AGPA Connect Scholarship Recipient

Attending AGPA Connect allows recipients to learn and grow personally and professionally, making connections that will last a lifetime. Through the generosity of its donors, the Group Foundation will again offer multiple funding opportunities to attend AGPA Connect 2022, which will be held virtually.

To apply for a scholarship, visit AGPA's website at <http://www.agpa.org/Foundation/scholarships>, where there

is detailed information and required application forms. Application deadline is December 15, 2021. Additional questions? E-mail tamzennaegele@agpa.org.

If you are interested in contributing to the Group Foundation to help qualified candidates attend AGPA Connect 2022, contact the Foundation office at 212-477-2677 or visit the website and click on "Donate Now."

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