

groupassets



EDITOR'S NOTE



In this issue of Group Assets, we hear about the momentous work of the AGPA Community Outreach Task Force, which it accomplished through the support of the Group Foundation. As the article is read, I hope each of us will pause and take special note to the significance of pain and trauma that people and their communities suffer. If you have wondered, doubted, or were curious about the work of the AGPA Community Outreach Task Force, we hope those questions will be answered, and for those of us who know of their diligent work, this article will be a reminder, painfully so, that this Task Force is needed. The good news is the Task Force is in place, and the sad news is that it is very active and needed. Let us take another moment of pause and thank Craig Haen, PhD, LCAT, CGP, AGPA-F, and Suzanne Phillips, PsyD, ABPP, CGP, AGPA-DF, Co-Chairs of the Task Force, Diane Feirman, CAE, AGPA Public Affairs Senior Director, and all who are involved on this Task Force. I hope you will reach out to those who outreach to communities in need and give them a thank you. As always, those of us at the Group Foundation want to hear from you, our readers, and donors. I wish you, your family, and your community a thankful and safe autumn.

Karen Travis, LCSW, BCD, CGP, AGPA-F

Helping Communities Heal: Community Outreach Work Supported by the Group Foundation

Craig Haen, PhD, LCAT, CGP, AGPA-F, and Suzanne Phillips, PsyD, ABPP, CGP, AGPA-DF, Co-Chairs, AGPA Community Outreach Task Force, and Diane Feirman, CAE, AGPA Public Affairs Senior Director

"Our community is suffering. Having something like this happen here is surreal. Our clients are processing the news and we are guiding them with compassion and resources. Thank you for highlighting what AGPA has to offer. We will share those resources with our clients as they continue to deal with the impact of this event on our community."

"Thank you so much for the deeply felt and comforting message...We all appreciate and have felt the support and presence of AGPA in our communities in times of crisis."

"Thanks so much for your kind words during such a difficult time in our city. I remain appreciative of all the good work AGPA does and, especially, of your thoughtful leadership of our organization in the complicated, painful years we have faced (and are facing) as a country and world."

"Our immediate family and friends are ok. But familiar names and faces of wider social networks are among the dead. I will be leading a debrief with first responders this Saturday night and have been consulting with local school and community officials to provide psycho-education and support. These are dark days...Your concern is comforting."

The Group Foundation is dedicated to changing lives through group psychotherapy by advancing the most effective and innovative approaches to group therapy education, training, research, and community outreach. One of the key ways it does this is by supporting AGPA outreach programs that respond to communities affected by traumatic events, or ongoing marginalizing treatment, including political rhetoric. AGPA provides the Group Foundation with a vehicle to advance this mission most efficiently and effectively with an infrastructure that exists to provide these programs through activities led by the Community Outreach Task Force. We know people are often interested in this mission and what it means, so we want to take this opportunity to share an overview of the work AGPA and its members have done with the Foundation's support.

As a preface to sharing the outreach that has been offered, we want to underscore that traumatic events often disrupt, as well as expose deeply personal aspects of people, families, and communities. As such, we view the people and communities with which we work as if they were clients whose identities need protecting. We don't want to jeopardize their safety or privacy at a time when there is often considerable intrusion by outsiders and the media. As we seek to provide information on work that has been done, please understand that this is why in many cases we shield the details of the communities we and others have been privileged to work with on behalf of AGPA. There are some cases in which we have an ongoing publicly shared partnership, and as such, we can provide more details.

One of the most general and immediate ways that the Community Outreach Task Force responds in the aftermath of a traumatic event is to reach out to AGPA members and local AGPA Affiliate Societies about resources that AGPA has available to assist them and letting them know that we are available for consultation and support if needed. The quotes at the top of this article are in response to these supportive communications; the events AGPA members have responded to include tragic shootings in schools, communities, and houses of worship, as well as natural disasters in the United States and internationally. Events such as these affect our members and the commu-

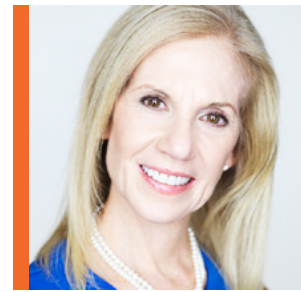
nities in which they live and work. Even if not directly impacted, the ripple effects are felt including in work with clients, many of whom may have histories of trauma. We provide a compassionate presence so that affected communities know that we are available if needed.

In a number of cases, through an existing connection with an AGPA member, an introduction is made nationally or internationally and AGPA is contacted for additional support and consultation. This outreach usually starts with initial meetings to introduce AGPA and our members to clarify their experience and the tenets of group work that make it a good community-based intervention. We don't engage in a hard sell; we listen to the needs, share some education on common responses to the circumstances, discuss what can help, and offer what we can do directly and indirectly. Sometimes, that initial conversation is all that is needed or wanted; oftentimes it confirms the local expertise in place and people feel supported in what they are doing. Other times, additional efforts may be requested and engaged in. The following are examples of some of the ways in which we have provided community-based outreach and support of local clinicians and other caregivers.

- Administrative consultation and a series of support groups for an educational institution that experienced an on-campus shooting.



Craig Haen



Suzanne Phillips



Diane Feirman

- A variety of programs for a community that experienced a school shooting: trainings and consultation for a group that provides social support services to schools in the area, including virtual workshops on self-care for approximately 300 staff members and volunteers, in-person trainings on resilience, and staff support groups. Training for a local AGPA Affiliate Society also occurred and was attended by individuals working directly in affected communities as they began to build a trusting relationship with AGPA clinicians.
- Care for the Caregivers program for a community organization working with primarily immigrant populations during a time of heightened rhetoric against these communities.
- Consultation, support, and resources to mental health professionals running a series of online support groups for individuals from not-for-profit and non-governmental organizations working in stressful conditions and with vulnerable populations affected by ongoing war.
- Consultation and group leaders for a mental health care initiative for young people affected by or displaced by war, who are seeking to continue their education and seek safe spaces of community to build resiliency together.
- Consultation to AGPA members and other individuals who were directly providing interventions locally after shootings, fires, transportation accidents, as well as for increased stress responses during the pandemic.

The Community Outreach Task Force also has ongoing relationships, offering the following programs as group-based support to communities:

Continued on back page

LEGACY SOCIETY

We appreciate the provisions these planned gift donors have made for the Group Foundation.

Ramon Alonso

Maryetta Andrews-Sachs

Shari & Allan Baron

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Eleanor Counselman

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2023 CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE GROUP FOUNDATION FOR ADVANCING MENTAL HEALTH

GIFTS ACKNOWLEDGED HERE ARE FROM JANUARY 1, 2023 THROUGH SEPTEMBER 30, 2023

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Group Foundation Awards and Grants

The Group Foundation for Advancing Mental Health presents the following awards and grants.

We encourage you to apply or nominate others!

- The **Social Responsibility Award** recognizes an AGPA member or group of members, an Affiliate Society, or an affiliated organization of mental health professionals who has provided an exceptional service that ultimately benefits the public-at-large (deadline for nominations November 15, 2023).
- The **Humanitarian Award** is presented to an esteemed individual whose ability and position, either personal, corporate, foundation, and/or politically based, has enabled them to do work reaching into and providing vitally needed services to a community (deadline for nominations November 15, 2023).
- The Foundation supports **Research** that demonstrates the effectiveness of group psychotherapy and is soliciting proposals for original critical research reviews, either qualitative or quantitative (particularly meta-analyses), that focus on some selected area of group psychotherapy (deadline for nominations November 15, 2023).
- The **Alonso Award for Excellence in Psychodynamic Group Theory** reasserts, in a concrete way, the value of

original thinking about psychodynamic group theory. Individuals may qualify in a variety of ways. Suitable entries include doctoral dissertations, videos, published papers, and other creative research (deadline for nominations November 15, 2023).

- The **Group Foundation Tribute Program** is a campaign of appreciation, recognizing mentors, colleagues, and others of importance in our lives emphasizing their part in fostering the personal and professional development of group psychotherapists. It is an opportunity to express your personal appreciation to someone through a gift to the Group Foundation for Advancing Mental Health. If you would like to take this opportunity to make a more significant gift, there are also opportunities to name a program at AGPA Connect 2024; please contact the Foundation office for information.

Detailed award and grant descriptions, as well as listings of past recipients are posted on AGPA's website at www.agpa.org. For additional information, contact Diane Feirman, CAE, Public Affairs Senior Director, at 212-297-2143 or dfeirman@agpa.org.

Scholarships Available for AGPA Connect 2024

"Because of you, the world has gained more group therapists, and more patients will be served through this unique and important modality" 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 our donors, the Group Foundation will again offer multiple funding opportunities to attend AGPA Connect 2024, to be held in National Harbor, Maryland (outside of Washington, DC), February 26 - March 2.

To apply for a scholarship, visit AGPA's website at <https://24-connect.events.agpa.org/>, where you can find detailed information and an online application form. The application deadline is November 15, 2023. Additional questions? E-mail info@agpa.org.

If you are interested in contributing to the Group Foundation to help qualified candidates attend AGPA Connect 2024, contact the Foundation office at 212-297-2190 or visit the website and click on "Donate Now."

HELPING COMMUNITIES HEAL: COMMUNITY OUTREACH WORK SUPPORTED BY THE GROUP FOUNDATION

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- Camp Galaxy is a long-running program for military families run by Dr. Phillips for the children of Guard members affiliated with the 106th Air National Guard Wing at Gabreski Air Force base in Westhampton Beach, New York, as well as children with military parents in any of the services in the New York area. It takes place annually with varying themes, such as Mission to Mars - *The Power of Group to Reach the Unthinkable* and *Camp Galaxy Takes on Climate Change*.
- A longstanding relationship with the Voices Center for Resilience continues annually with presentations at its 9/11 Remembrance Symposium, and virtual support groups before and after the event, with both small and large group process experiences led by AGPA members.

Additionally, the Task Force annually provides trainings at AGPA Connect on trauma, violence, systemic racism, and anti-racism practices to ensure that mental health providers are receiving ongoing education and training in these areas that affect their client populations.

Traumatic events are an ongoing reality in our communities, as well as in the lives of our clients and ourselves. We believe that healing and resilience-based growth can occur in communities, and group-based interventions provide the opportunity for this healing to occur. The Group Foundation and its donors help make it possible for the AGPA Community Outreach Task Force to carry out these programs. We hope this article provides some insight into the impact of your support.

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