

groupassets



Group Foundation Board of Directors Retreat A Weekend of Cohesion Building, Mission Commitment, and Program Planning

Darryl Pure, PhD, ABPP, CGP, AGPA-F, Chair of the Board

The Group Foundation Board of Directors held a retreat on Lake Anna, in Mineral, Virginia, graciously hosted by Board member and AGPA President Lorraine Wodiska, PhD, ABPP, CGP, AGPA-F. Our goal was to review and recommit to the Group Foundation's mission and funding priorities and review programs that advance the mission to ensure effectiveness, relevance, and key outcomes.

Although not everyone was at the retreat, the full Board membership is shown in the sidebar, as this is the group that will be working to ensure that the mission of the Group Foundation is carried out and that donors' generous gifts are used with intention and impact.

My intention is to be transparent with the Board's process, demonstrating the work we are doing with our donors' support and inviting your feedback and input. If you find areas of our work call to your interests and passions, please let me know.

To keep our focus clear, we arrived at the retreat with our objectives clearly defined and communicated to attendees:

- Join together as a working Board and build cohesiveness;
- Have clarity on and commit to the mission;
- Review the priority areas of funding and have a shared understanding of them;
- Review funded programs and activities to clarify how they advance the mission, and to ensure effectiveness, continued relevance; and drive communications; and
- Consider the Board's role and participation in efforts, as well as what resources or training we need to move forward.

We began with small group work (three/four people to a group), sharing our experiences and history of how we came to the group therapy field as a way to get to know one another and connect with our own purpose and reasons for supporting the Group Foundation. The questions we asked ourselves were (I encourage all of those reading this article to think about these questions as they relate to your Group Foundation/AGPA experience):

- Why were you drawn to group?
- What has been a memorable part of your group/AGPA journey?
- Why were you drawn to Board membership? What do you hope to learn/accomplish (e.g., in two years, how would you like to answer this question: "I'm glad that when I was on the Group Foundation Board I got to ...")

As Chair, I then kicked off the overview portion of the meeting by reviewing the mission and priority program and funding areas of the Group Foundation.

The Group Foundation Mission: The Group Foundation for Advancing Mental Health is a philanthropic organization dedicated to changing lives through therapeutic group work by advancing the most effective and innovative approaches to group therapy education, training, research, and community outreach.

Role of the Group Foundation Board: The Board of Directors promotes the goals, carries out the purposes, and assumes ultimate responsibility for the affairs of the Group Foundation, including having an active role in fundraising to reach its development goals. The Board represents and speaks for the Group Foundation. The Board is the legal representative, individually and collectively, of the Group Foundation. The functions of the Board generally cover the following areas—development planning, fundraising, organization, operations, and audit. At the retreat,

we focused on the program funding areas, reminding ourselves about the projects and programs the Group Foundation currently funds and ensuring they are advancing the mission in the best way possible.

Group Foundation Funding Priorities: I want to clarify that the Group Foundation carries out its funding of programs predominantly, though not exclusively, through AGPA, as it provides the Foundation with a vehicle to most efficiently and effectively advance our mission with an infrastructure that exists to provide these programs. Our general funding covers:

- Education, Training, and Scholarships;
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion;
- Research;
- Community Outreach;
- Technology.

A more detailed breakdown is as follows:

Education, Training, and Scholarships

- A \$100,000 annual educational grant to AGPA supports AGPA Connect and e-learning programs. This helps to keep program quality high and costs down and guarantees year-round availability of online institutes, webinars, and journal-based trainings, ensuring easy, affordable access to training and continuing education in group therapy.
- Educational Endowment Fund supports three plenaries and 20 additional programs each year at AGPA Connect.
- Approximately \$100,000 in scholarship support is provided to 80 to 150 attendees (mostly registration fees, some travel for endowed scholarships), including membership for those who have never previously been an AGPA member.
- Agency Training (currently no direct support, on volunteer basis or contracted outside of scholarships).
- Society/Speaker Awards: Currently \$2,500 is awarded annually to local AGPA Connect hosting society. The Foundation also provides grants through the DEI Fund for society trainings on diversity-related issues.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Fund

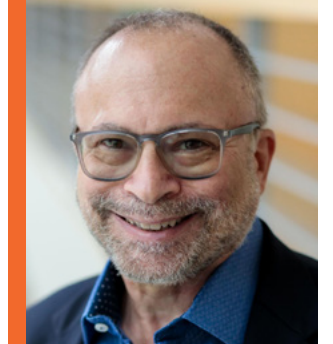
To advance anti-racism initiatives, supported through previously received dedicated funds (right now approximately \$50,000 uncommitted) and ongoing fundraising. This is the most expansively defined area in terms of suggested programs due to a focus over the last two years.

- **Membership—Access, Engagement, and Healing**
 - Make a more DEI-friendly website; provide a DEI reading list.
 - Waive AGPA membership fees for students/early career members.
- **Certification, Recognition, and Leadership**
 - Expand scholarship support to include CGP fees.
 - Conduct DEI education for leadership.
- **Education, Learning, and Research**
 - Provide funding to Affiliate Societies for training on culturally responsive group leadership.
 - Provide scholarships to culturally diverse candidates and expand scholarship support to include e-learning registration fees.
 - Supplement honoraria to AGPA Connect presenters who present on DEI/alternative models.

- Fund antiracist research into alternative models and cultural approaches.
- Sponsor non-Eurocentric model presentations.
- **Structure and Leadership**
 - Fund trainings and mentoring for BIPOC members to develop groups on an ongoing basis.
 - Provide funding to increase access to leadership, Board meetings, or funding for members (or discounts on membership/AGPA Connect) for those who are volunteering time to help DEI work in the organization.

Research and Community Outreach

- Research
 - \$25,000 website funding just completed; \$2,500-5,000 annually or less frequently for critical research reviews through a grant process (supported by \$40,000 in a restricted fund).
- Community Outreach (\$55,000 annually to AGPA for outreach work); Examples include:
 - Consultation and support for local clinicians or organizations for responding to traumatic events/trainings for local groups.
 - Care for the Caregivers programs and support.
 - Consultation to leaders of groups being offered to nonprofits working with various populations.
- Technology—\$25,000 annually to AGPA to support technology infrastructure, e.g. public education website, e-learning platform, and therapist referral site. This will be addressed in the upcoming year and may change as the AGPA website begins a major redesign



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2024 CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE GROUP FOUNDATION FOR ADVANCING MENTAL HEALTH

GIFTS ACKNOWLEDGED HERE ARE FROM JANUARY 1, 2024 THROUGH SEPTEMBER 30, 2024

Our thanks and appreciation to the donors whose support makes our programs possible. In recognition of our belief that gifts of all sizes are important and contribute to our mission to advance the field of group therapy, the Group Foundation will be presenting its donor listing in alphabetical order. We will continue to explore ways to acknowledge and thank our donors and welcome your feedback.

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GROUP FOUNDATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS RETREAT

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process, so it was not a focus at the retreat as planning would be premature.

In preparation for working in small groups to consider the program areas of funding, the Board was encouraged to think about what motivates them individually. To be outstandingly successful, you need to have a desire—a passion—to achieve some wider social good, and it is imperative to frame and organize our passions and personal motivations for the Foundation’s mission and programs.

The Board then engaged in World Café Style small group work, exploring each of the program areas outlined above. For those not familiar with this format, it provides an opportunity for a large group to break into smaller groups to discuss issues and provide input on all areas. For our process, there were three tables, each with an assigned leader and topical area: education, training and scholarships; diversity, equity, and inclusion; and research and community outreach (combined as one topic for the discussion tables as these areas were smaller in scope). Attendees broke into three groups, and each group spent 20 minutes addressing the assigned program area using the following prompts:

- What is most important to you in this area, including needs you see in the mental health community?
- What doesn’t seem to advance the mission/field and could be reduced/sunsetted?
- What is missing? What are we not doing for this purpose?
- Will this excite donors to want to support it?

At the end of 20 minutes, each group rotated to the next table to address another program area in the same way, we

then did a final rotation to repeat the process for the third topic area. Table hosts remained at the table for each new group, sharing key insights from prior conversations so others could link and build using these ideas. At the end of the hour, all attendees had an opportunity to voice their insights on all areas, and table hosts reported to the full group.

Board members were encouraged to engage in personal reflection following the retreat to consider why they want to do this work, as well as where they want to be involved based on the weekend’s discussions. Committees of the Foundation are as follows, and we welcome involvement from others as well.

- **Communications Committee:** Editor of *Group Assets* and oversees the content of the Group Foundation website.
- **Development Committee:** Develops and oversees fundraising and stewardship activities.
- **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Fund Committee:** Recommends to the Board priorities for the DEI Fund and processes for dispersing funds.
- **Education Committee:** Oversees any fundraising events through the year and helps coordinate Foundation-sponsored activities at AGPA Connect.
- **Scholarship and Awards Committee:** Oversees the selection process of qualified candidates for scholarships, as well as the Robert H. Klein Social Responsibility Award and the Humanitarian Award.
- **Search Committee:** Recommends persons with diverse skills and expertise to participate on the Group Foundation for Advancing Mental Health’s

Board of Directors. Formed every two years (next is Spring of 2025) and consists of two Group Foundation Board members, two AGPA Board members, and the AGPA President-Elect.

- **Study Grants Committee:** Oversees, in coordination with the AGPA Research SIG, the annual process of reviewing research grant applications and recommending funding to the Foundation Board.

A full report from the retreat will go to the entire Board at our November meeting for final consideration and for defining the next steps to refine our work in advancing the field of group psychotherapy through the Group Foundation. We will provide an update on progress in future issues of *Group Assets* and other donor communications, as well as continue to invite our donors’ feedback on our work, as well as your involvement. I always want to hear from you and encourage you to reach out to me in care of the Group Foundation office at dfeirman@agpa.org. I also encourage you to consider applying for funding support through the Foundation for scholarships, as well as for DEI initiatives as outlined above.

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