

# groupassets



## Farewells Can Be Fond and Service Meaningful

Karen Travis, LCSW-BACS, CGP, AGPA-F, Editor, *Group Assets*



In this issue of *Group Assets*, there is a big lineup of congratulations, appreciations, thank yous, goodbyes, and affirmations of what the Group Founda-

tion for Advancing Mental Health accomplishes through our generous donors. Please read on.

AGPA Connect 2024 is a memory we now carry with us. The Group Foundation enabled 133 tuition scholarship recipients and 20 endowed scholarship recipients to attend the conference. Experiential training is vital to group therapy, our professional treatment of choice, and the missions of the Group Foundation. In our last *Group Assets* issue, we heard from former scholarship recipients. It was clear attending AGPA Connect made a difference to them in their careers. The Group Foundation Board wants to hear from more recipients, past and present.

Also, please note the Tribute Gifts (see listing in this issue) that honored Connie Concannon, LCSW, CGP, AGPA-DF, Joel Frost, EdD, ABPP, Carol Vaughan, LCSW, CGP, AGPA-LF, and Elliot Zeisel, PhD, LCSW, AGPA-DF. These individuals have been instrumental over the years in the practice of group therapy, as well as for their contributions to the Group Foundation and AGPA. We sincerely hope each person felt honored and acknowledged.

“I leave the group with gratitude. I certainly stretched myself with giving time and gifts and asking for money which can be a difficult thing to do.”

A big thank you for service, gifts, knowledge, leadership, and devotion as members of the Group Foundation Board of Directors goes to Gary Burlingame, PhD, CGP, AGPA-DF, serving four years, Connie Concannon, LCSW, CGP, AGPA-DF, serving 18 years, Jacquelin Darby, PhD, CGP, serving two years, Barbara Ilfeld, MSN, RNCS, CGP, AGPA-F, serving 18 years, Enrique Ortiz, PsyD, serving two years, Keith Rand, LMFT, CGP, AGPA-F, serving 14 years, Kathy Ulman, PhD, CGP, AGPA-DF, serving 16 years and myself, Karen Travis, LCSW-BACS, CGP, AGPA-F, serving 14 years. We all rotated off the Group Foundation Board in March 2024.

This is my last issue as Editor of *Group Assets*. Rotating off the Group Foundation Board was a very thoughtful decision. Being a Board member for 14 years, including four as Chair and then an additional four following those two terms, I felt it time to say goodbye. I am committed to

continuing to support the Group Foundation’s mission. After being asked to join the Group Foundation Board, and accepting with some guardedness, I can say unequivocally that I am thankful for the experience. I grew up with parents who were not formally educated (laborers and dairy farmers) in a small predominantly Protestant/Southern Baptist rural community. Tithing and helping your neighbor were instilled values, and selling dozens of cakes and cupcakes for the school bake sale was easy as my mother was an excellent baker. I was in early training (and didn’t know it) to work on a fancy New York City-housed philanthropic organization. Meeting group members through the Group Foundation has been one of the most rewarding experiences I have had, and finding another way to spend time with those I already knew was a bonus. In a recent conversation with Diane Feirman, CAE, Public Affairs Senior Director, she framed my experience perfectly: “Karen, the Group Foundation was your presidency.” The depth of appreciation I have for Diane and our work together is without limit.

“I confronted parts of myself that weren’t sure about being Chair and have grown immensely, which is what one wants from a group experience.”

There are many more highlights to my Board experience, and much history in our world has taken place. To name a few: supporting the 75th Anniversary of AGPA, working on a strategic plan, which took an in-depth look at our purpose and meaning as a philanthropic organization, and fully understanding the integral part we play for AGPA and the group therapy field. The diversification of the Board has been rewarding to see happen. Opening Board positions to emerging leaders and giving space for those voices in the Group Foundation will keep it moving forward, insuring the longevity of its existence. Significantly, through the support of family and friends, I was able to create the Karen Travis Scholarship Fund to give the gift of an endowed scholarship so that each year someone can receive the benefits of attending my beloved professional organization’s AGPA Connect.

“New members are being sought for the vacant chairs left by those who have rotated off the Board. The group goes on.”

The Group Foundation is 42 years old and is thriving. As Editor of *Group Assets*, I have had the challenge of creating stories that have hopefully been interesting and informative to the reader. I have certainly wanted our donors and all AGPA members to know what the Group Foundation is doing. We hope all members of AGPA will become donors and any amount is appreciated. Again, I thank Diane Feirman and Nicole Millman-Falk for all their help in editing my columns over the years.

I leave the group with gratitude. I certainly stretched myself with giving time and gifts and asking for money, which can be a difficult thing to do. I confronted parts of myself that weren’t sure about being Chair and have grown immensely, which is what one wants from a group experience. I quote John Schlapobersky from his book, *From the Couch to the Circle*: “Anyone joining a group goes on a journey. In journey literature—writing on group and personal development—we find that what the group can do for the individual is bound up with what the individual does, in and for the group. Growth and change work in both directions.” Knowing I gave myself to the group and its workings, I trust the group received from me as well.

The Group Foundation is in good hands with Darryl Pure, PhD, ABPP, CGP, AGPA-F, Chair, Kathy Rider, LCSW, BCD, CGP, AGPA-F, Vice-Chair, Angela Stephens, CAE, CEO, Secretary-Treasurer, Diane Feirman, CAE, Staff Liaison, and all continuing Board members. New members are being sought for the vacant chairs left by those who have rotated off the Board (if you are interested in serving, please contact [dfeirman@agpa.org](mailto:dfeirman@agpa.org)). The group goes on.

“The diversification of the Board has been rewarding to see happen. Opening Board positions to emerging leaders and giving space for those voices in the Group Foundation will keep it moving forward, insuring the longevity of its existence.”

### 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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Joseph Shay & Laura Zimmerman

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Elliot Zeisel & Mary Sussillo

## TRIBUTE GIFTS

The following individuals were honored by the contributors listed with a program in their name at AGPA Connect 2024 (donors are listed in italics).

### CONNIE CONCANNON

Beyond Recovery – Using Group to Build Resilience in Face of Ongoing Trauma and Race-Based Medical Inequities

*Mitchel Adler  
Geri Alpert  
Ildiko Gabor  
Martha Gilmore & Haim Weinberg  
Justin Hecht, & Erik, Lili, and Rasmus Hjorth-Reider  
Barbara & Fred Ilfeld  
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Leah Niehaus  
Andrew Pojman  
Darryl Pure & Raquel Corré  
Keith Rand & John D'Amico  
Kathy Rider  
Karen Travis*

### JOEL FROST

On Being “Full of Beans”: Uses of Poetry in Older Adult Groups

*Adeyinka A. Akinsulure-Smith  
Michael Andronico  
Bonnie Buchele  
Samuel James  
Leo & Sharon Leiderman  
Darryl Pure & Raquel Corré  
Keith Rand & John D'Amico  
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D. Thomas Stone  
Karen Travis  
Lorraine Wodiska*

### CAROL VAUGHAN

Difficult People, Defensive Process, and Countertransference: Using the Unique Properties of Group

*Judith Armogida  
Patricia & Merle Barth  
Richard Beck  
Bonnie Buchele  
Travis Courville  
Jerry & Nancy Gans  
Martha Gilmore & Haim Weinberg  
Jeffrey Hudson & Robert Blodgett  
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Keith Rand & John D'Amico  
Kathy Rider  
D. Thomas Stone  
Karen Travis  
Constance Vernon  
Robert White*

### ELLIOT ZEISEL

Master Class: From the Andes to the Couch: A Journey from Coffee Fields through Religion to Psychoanalysis

*Brian Ashin  
Chap Attwell  
Aaron & Lara Black  
Jeanne Bunker  
Rita Drapkin  
Laura Ebady  
Myrna Frank  
Anna Graybeal  
Deborah Healy  
Jeffrey Hudson & Robert Blodgett  
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Paul LePhuoc  
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Janice Morris  
Rhea Pledger  
Jordan Price  
Andrea Pully  
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Keith Rand & John D'Amico  
Britt Raphling  
Kathy Rider  
Marie Sergent  
Karen Travis  
William Watson*

## EDUCATION AND SCHOLARSHIP FUND DONORS

Our appreciation to the Education and Scholarship Fund donors whose gifts make possible the Group Foundation's support of AGPA Connect through a grant supporting the meeting, as well as scholarships for more than 130 attendees.

Alexis Abernethy	Lynn Hamerling	Robert Pepper
M. Sophia Aguirre	Donna Harris	Rhea Pledger
Stewart Aledort	Deborah Healy	Charlie Pohl
Maryetta Andrews-Sachs	Justin Hecht, & Erik, Lili, and Rasmus Hjorth-Reider	Margaret Postlewaite & Gerard Kiernan
Anonymous (5)	Barry Helfmann	Alice Powsner
Seth Aronson	Judye Gershman Hess	William Prasad
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Kathleen Ault	Hayley Hoffman	Andrea Pully
Kamlesh Balchand	Hayley Hoffman	Darryl Pure & Raquel Corré
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Sandy Demopoulos	Hallie Lovett	Joseph Tarantolo
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David Dumais	Marian Margulies	Rick Tivers
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Anna Graybeal	Jill Penaloza	Lorraine Wodiska
Les Greene & Michelle Collins-Greene		Deborah Woolf
Nadia Greenspan		Shannon York
Katie Griffin		Elliot Zeisel & Mary Sussillo
Betsy Hague		

## Group Foundation Honors Scholarship and Award Winners

The Group Foundation for Advancing Mental Health, the philanthropic arm of the AGPA, celebrates its 2024 scholarship and award winners. A myriad of awards that support the training of group therapists and the use of group in communities to effect change are distributed through the Foundation. Those recognized at AGPA Connect 2024 included:

The Alonso Award for Excellence in Psychodynamic Group Theory was given to Winnie Fei, PhD, Ruthellen Josselson, PhD, and Molyn Leszcz, MD, FRCPC, CGP, AGPA-DF, for their paper “When Chinese Culture Encounters Western Interpersonal Group Psychotherapy,” published in Volume 73, Issue 4 (2023) of the *International Journal of Group Psychotherapy*.

Group Foundation Scholarships enable the attendance of those who demonstrate great potential in the field of group psychotherapy. Endowed scholarship recipients honored at AGPA Connect 2024 were:

- Anne Alonso Scholarship: Özge Kantas
- Donald T. Brown LGBT Memorial Scholarship: Mariana Cisneros
- Barry Bukatman MD Memorial Scholarship: Abidemi Onabadejo
- Chuck Dachis Scholarship: Jocelyn Litrownik
- Barbara and Albert Dazzo Scholarship: Nita Tchabashvili
- Durkin-Glatzer Scholarship: Irina Rivera
- Howard & Barbara Goldstein Scholarship: Ayesha Bhatia
- Ruth Hochberg Scholarship: Rachele Rene
- International Scholarship: Eleni Kanellopoulou
- iScholarship: Helen Chao
- Lorelle H. Machen, PhD Memorial Scholarship: Jon-Erik Misz
- Red Well Theatre Scholarship: Brett Simon
- Kathy and Kent Rider Scholarship: Teresa Crenshaw
- Saul Scheidlinger Scholarship: Kinsey Ellis
- Southwestern Scholarship: Ozlem Hokeleki
- Mary M. Tanenbaum Scholarship: Laura Zarandona
- Josephine M. Cunningham Tervalon Scholarship: Markie Silverman
- Karen Travis Scholarship: Ciera Lewis
- Kathleen Hubbs Ulman, PhD Scholarship: Archandria Owens
- Robert E. White, MD and Sara Jane White, PhD Scholarship: Zachary Michel

In addition to these endowed scholarships, there were more than 130 attendees at AGPA Connect 2024 supported through the generosity of donors to the Group Foundation Education and Scholarship Funds.

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