

groupassets



To Be or Not to Be – The True Existential Question To Give or Not to Give – Our Question to You

Maryetta Andrews-Sachs, MA, LICSW, CGP, AGPA-F, Group Assets Editor

What motivates you to donate to the Group Foundation for Advancing Mental Health?

Do you know where your donation goes?

I asked a younger colleague, a new AGPA member, her thoughts about donating to the Group Foundation, and I think her responses speak for many:

“I don’t know exactly what it does...”

“There are so many things to give to right now...”

“Wouldn’t this just go to wealthy White therapists?”

“Why would I pay a membership, then a fee to go to the conference, and then donate to this?”

“I want to feel the money I give is valued.”

“How many requests for money do you get every day?! I have decision fatigue!”

Typical questions, I assume. How do we on the Group Foundation Board respond?

We must highlight the need for groups, the healing power of groups, the cost-effectiveness of groups, and the good training needed to run them well. This is for everyone, not just wealthy White folks!

A recent musing: If every therapist in the U.S. got sufficient training to run one weekly group, how might that improve the mental health of this country? Think of the impact this could have on the epidemics of isolation and polarization. And yet group therapy training is often not offered by graduate programs and lacking elsewhere. For those of us who deeply believe in the power of a good group therapy experience, as well as the various types of groups that offer needed support across the board, this reality should be a clarion call. We need to do better in how we promote group therapy to the world, and we need to continue to find multiple ways to offer the training necessary to do this well. This brings up a key focus of the Group Foundation.

We want to keep expanding our reach! Any donation you give—at any amount—supports the following endeavors:

SCHOLARSHIPS — We offered 272 scholarships for Connect 2026 in New York (please see the scholarship and awards listing in this issue). These scholarships were made possible through a combination of Endowed Funds, the Education and Scholarship Fund, and the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Fund. Our intention is to be able to offer scholarships to anyone who will benefit from support to receive group therapy training with the goal of expanding the group therapy workforce and the use of groups to help people.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH — When there is a flood, a fire, a terrorist attack, ongoing marginalizing treatment, and other needs in communities, the Group Foundation helps sponsor initiatives to respond to these through a grant to AGPA. AGPA provides the Group Foundation with a vehicle to most efficiently and effectively advance this mission with an infrastructure that exists to provide these programs through activities led by its Community Outreach Task Force.

RESEARCH — We want to be able to document the cost-benefit value of this modality, so solid research continues to be something we need and support, through funding of resources and critical research reviews. Examples of recent support include the highly valuable Evidence-Based Group Treatment Website found at <https://evidencebasedgrouptherapy.org/> as well as research review papers on perfectionism, group work in support of migrant communities, and group work in disadvantaged communities to help bridge the mental health treatment gap.

EDUCATION — We support e-Learning offerings throughout the year for continual access to group training and continue to support AGPA Connect to ensure the training can be offered at a high level (more on that below!)

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION WORK — The DEI Fund invests in a diverse and culturally responsive mental health community and workforce, with a focus on anti-racism work. It does this through such areas as training grants for Affiliate Societies, scholarships, AGPA Leadership and AGPA Connect faculty DEI training, Institute Instructor Designate training for BIPOC clinicians, and membership and certification support.

AWARDS — Through our yearly Humanitarian Award, our Robert H. Klein Social Responsibility Award, and the Alonso Award for Excellence in Psychodynamic Group Theory, we recognize groups or individuals who have significantly contributed to our field and our community.

How do funds from the Foundation continue to subsidize AGPA Connect? Until I served in governance, I had no idea how much it costs just to provide coffee at our conference! Imagine finding hotels willing to clear out over 80 guest rooms so that the two-day Institutes and multiple conference workshops can be held in them. Offering this high-quality training is a costly endeavor, and,

through grant and scholarship support, the Foundation helps contain registration costs. It also helps provide rich programming at plenaries and other events. Please see the sidebar for key programs the Group Foundation helps support at Connect through endowment funds annually (along with another 15 programs that are also supported each year through donor endowments).

I tell the group therapy graduate students I teach at Howard University—in their usual haze of exhaustion—that to be really skilled, they need to get their degrees and to keep on training! Over the years, the continued training I have received and given, especially through our Affiliates, our e-Learning offerings, and AGPA Connect, as well as serving in leadership positions, has been invaluable to me. Amy Poehler said, “Find a group of people who challenge and inspire you, spend a lot of time with them, and it will change your life forever.” Essentially, the Group Foundation seeks to make this type of training and connecting accessible to all in order to increase the group therapy community’s capacity to provide mental health services.

GROUP FOUNDATION SUPPORTED PROGRAMS AT AGPA CONNECT

Anne and Ramon Alonso Educational Endowment Fund

Belonging and the Power of Group in Stressful Times
Leonardo Leiderman, PsyD, ABPP, FAACP, CGP, AGPA-F

Marsha S. Block Endowment Fund

Core Principles of Group Psychotherapy, Parts I and II
Katherine M. Zwick, MA, LPCC, CGP, Director

Sally B. Henry Endowment Fund

Showing Up as a Transformative Act: The Wish to be Known
Joseph Shay, PhD, CGP, AGPA-LF

Mitchell Hochberg Memorial Public Education Fund

The Body is not an Apology
Sonya Renee Taylor

Louis R. Ormont Lecture Fund

Coming Together Without Falling Apart
Beverly J. Stoute, MD, DFAPA, DFAACAP, FABP

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TRIBUTE GIFTS

The Group Foundation seeks to honor individuals in recognition of their dedication to group therapy and our organization over the years. The following individuals were honored by the contributors listed with a program in their name at AGPA Connect 2026 (donors are listed in italics).

CARLOS CANALES

Against Depth: Richard Rorty's Pragmatism and Group Psychotherapy

Mitchel Adler
Maryetta Andrews-Sachs *Leo Leiderman*
Claudia Arlo *Molyn Leszcz*
Cindy Aron *Margaret Postlewaite*
Chera Finnis *Darryl Pure*
Martha Gilmore *Keith Rand*
Barbara Ilfeld *Deborah Sharp*
Nancy Kelly *Rick Volden*
Yair Kramer

DONNA HARRIS

But What About Me? Applying Group Therapy Principles in Agency Settings

Maryetta Andrews-Sachs
Brian Ashin *Jill Lewis*
Richard Beck *Darryl Pure*
Marcée Brennan *Kathy Reedy*
Christine Carpenter *Kathy Rider*
Tom Hurster *Deborah Sharp*
Leo Leiderman *Angela Stephens*
Molyn Leszcz *Karen Travis*
Hillary Levine

MARGARET POSTLEWAITE

Thinking About the Unthinkable: Contemplating Aging and Retirement

Michael Altshuler
Maryetta Andrews-Sachs *Gerard Kiernan*
Claudia Arlo *Leo Leiderman*
Shari Baron *Molyn Leszcz*
Richard Beck *Mindy Levine*
Bill Behr *Joseph Lynch*
Shoshana Ben-Noam *Laurie Nisco*
Marsha Block *Darryl Pure*
Suzanne Burger *Keith Rand*
Carlos Canales *Anna Rickell*
Carol Dallinga *Kathy Rider*
Chera Finnis *Jean Seibel*
Tony Gambuzza *Tony Sheppard*
Aviva Gaskill *Nathaniel Smith*
Martha Gilmore *Elizabeth Stuntz*
Robin Good *Peter Taylor*
Jo Hariton *Karen Travis*
Laura Himmelstein *Julie Willstatter*
Jeffrey Hudson *Elliot Zeisel*
Barbara Ilfeld

LORRAINE WODISKA

"Can I Say That in Here?": Making Space for Polarized Perspectives in Group

Maryetta Andrews-Sachs *Molyn Leszcz*
Kathleen Ault *Mary Nicholas*
Aaron Black *William Pinney*
Marsha Block *Charlie Pohl*
Bonnie Buchele *Lenore Pomerance*
Gary Burlingame *Darryl Pure*
Carlos Canales *Keith Rand*
Jessica Chan *Kathy Reedy*
Angelo Ciliberti *Ann Reifman*
Cathi Cohen *Kathy Rider*
Molly Donovan *Scott Rutan*
Myrna Frank *George Saiger*
Arthur Gray *Joan Scherf*
David Hawkins *Robert Schulte*
Barry Helfmann *Deborah Sharp*
Jeffrey Hudson *Tony Sheppard*
Barbara Ilfeld *Kumea Shorter-Gooden*
Nicholas Kirsch *Anita Sokol*
Leo Leiderman *Jonathan Stillerman*
Karen Travis

GROUP FOUNDATION HONORS SCHOLARSHIP AND AWARD WINNERS

The Group Foundation for Advancing Mental Health, the philanthropic arm of the AGPA, celebrates its 2026 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 included:

- The **Alonso Award for Excellence in Psychodynamic Group Theory**, given to Paul Hewitt, David Kealy, Anna Kristen, Martin Smith, Ella Davidson, and Danielle Molnar for their article "Therapeutic Mentalization in Group Therapy: Development and Preliminary Validation of a Measure of Experienced Mentalization," published in Volume 75, Issue 4 (2025) of the *International Journal of Group Psychotherapy*.
- The **Robert H. Klein Social Responsibility Award**, given to Ms. Latoyia Griffin for her commitment to social justice, social responsibility, human rights, and DEIA initiatives within AGPA as well as in communities-at-large.
- The **Humanitarian Award**, given to **Irondale Ensemble Project**, a Brooklyn, NY, Theater that melds art, education, community engagement, and social justice.

You can read more about the Social Responsibility and Humanitarian Award recipients and their work in the Winter 2026 Issue of *Group Assets*.

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 were as follows:

- **Anne Alonso Scholarship:** Yujia Lei
- **Donald T. Brown LGBT Memorial Scholarship:** Chris Truong
- **Barry Bukatman, MD, Memorial Scholarship:** Elizaveta Mitrofanova
- **Chuck Dachis Scholarship:** Kim Anh Nguyn
- **Barbara and Albert Dazzo Scholarship:** Jingxiong Pu
- **Durkin-Glatzer Scholarship:** Jennifer Yazzie
- **Howard & Barbara Goldstein Scholarship:** Nathaniel Zingboim
- **Sally B. Henry International Scholarship:** Sebastian Heß
- **Ruth Hochberg Scholarship:** Hairee Hayden
- **Institute for Individual and Group Psychotherapy Scholarship:** Aleksandra Jevtic
- **International Scholarship:** Sophiko Gogochashvili
- **iScholarship:** Evelyn Lee
- **Lorelle H. Machen, PhD, Memorial Scholarship:** Sarah Stark

Jacob and Zerka Moreno Foundation Scholarship: Sara Airoidi

Red Well Theatre Scholarship: Sandra Cheah

Kathy and Kent Rider Scholarship: Ruth Perez

Saul Scheidlinger Scholarship: J'Kera Taylor

Smith Giesbrecht Canadian Scholarships: Melissa Gansner and Chris Graham

Southwestern Scholarship: Seena Ounsinegad

Josephine M. Cunningham Tervalon Scholarship: Mary Baldwin

Karen Travis Scholarship: Ethan Isaac Glasserman

Kathleen Hubbs Ulman, PhD, Scholarship: Jordan Munger

Robert E. White, MD, and Sara Jane White, PhD, Scholarship: James Burden

Lorraine and Dan Wodiska Family Scholarship: Caryn Zaner

In addition to these endowed scholarships, another 250 scholarships were provided thanks to the generosity of our donors. The impact of this support is immense. The scholarship program increases access to training for the next generation of group therapists, benefiting those seeking mental health services through groups and ensuring the future of our field.

Behind The Circle: Group Therapists Share Their Journey A Special Interview Series Benefitting the Group Foundation!

The Behind the Circle Webinar Series is being reimagined as a monthly interview that will be recorded and distributed as a program available to the entire AGPA membership and mental health community free of charge. This will be an opportunity to expand upon the visibility of group therapy by introducing the members and the broader mental health community to group therapists, the work they do, and the personal journey that led them to this work. Keep an eye out for more information on the program launch.

In the meantime, we are working on bringing together a giving circle of people and organizations to present as the series sponsors. We invite members to consider joining this effort. Sponsorships are available at the Benefactor Level at \$1,000, Patron Level at \$500, and Friend Level at \$250 for one year (12 sessions) of the series. To become a sponsor of the event, visit <https://members.agpa.org/sponsorships/become-a-sponsor> and pick your preferred sponsor level.