

2017 – 2018 ALASGW Officers

PRESIDENT – DR. VERA MCKETHAN



Dr. McKethan works as a Technical Course Developer/Instructor with Sonoran Technology. She has her Master's in Human Development and Counseling, and she is currently working on an Ed.S. in Community Counseling at Troy State University, Montgomery, AL. She is an active member of ACA, ALCA and ALASGW. Her goal is to integrate her educational experience with counseling principles and methodology to counsel, train, and advocate.

PRESIDENT – ELECT - DR. CARRIE HEMMINGS



Dr. Hemmings is an Assistant Professor of Counselor Education in the College of Education Counselor, Leadership, & Special Education at Auburn University Montgomery. She is dedicated to multicultural issues and advocacy efforts in counselor education and supervision. She incorporates these topics in the courses she teaches and within her supervision of counselors in training. Her research interests include: the efficacy of professionals in regard to race-based trauma among African Americans, and promoting efficacy among professionals when working within the culture of poverty.

PRESIDENT ELECT - CHRIS JOHNS, LPC



Mr. Johns is a native of New Orleans, LA and a graduate of Faulkner University and Auburn University Montgomery. He is a Licensed Professional Counselor. In his current capacity as Counselor/Coordinator of Groups & Workshops, he assists students with tackling day-to-day issues and overcoming obstacles to succeed at Alabama State University and beyond.

TREASURER – DR. CAROLYN THOMAS, LPC



Dr. Thomas helped charter the Alabama Association for Specialists in Group Work serving as treasurer since the emergence of the organization and is currently serving in that role. Her involvement with the organization is to sustain the vitality of group work. She is a Licensed Professional Counselor, Licensed Social Worker and Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist.

HISTORIAN- DR. MALTI TUTTLE



Dr. Tuttle is an Assistant Professor at Auburn University in Counselor Education. Previously, she was a school counselor for 14 years where she conducted small groups on various topics with students in grades 3-6. She is an advocate for small groups in schools. Additionally, Malti has presented on the topic of small groups for school counselors."

IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT – DENISE WHITTLE-SMITH, ED.S., LPC



Ms Whittle-Smith has been a Behavior Interventionist at Brewbaker Middle School (6years), McIntyre Middle School (1 year), and currently Bellingrath Middle School (4 plus years). She has committed many efforts to improve student behavior. It is always her mission from one school to the next to influence behavior positively by enhancing the climate and culture so teachers can teach and students can learn. She has provided individual, group, and family counseling for students and parents.

MEMBER AT LARGE - SHIRLEY JOHNSON, ED.S., LPC



Mrs. Johnson is a School Counselor with the Montgomery Public School System. Her interests include group work, the use of creative arts, bibliocounseling with children, and working with older persons. Mrs. Johnson has a long history of leadership in ALCA. She is past president of the Alabama Association for Specialists in Group Work.

MEMBER AT LARGE - VIRGINIA MAJORS, ED.S, LPC



Mrs. Majors is a licensed professional counselor with an Education Specialist degree in Community Counseling from Troy University Montgomery. She retired after 27 years from teaching psychology and mathematics to high school students. She has a private practice, Counseling Center for Women, LLC, located in Montgomery, AL.

MISSION OF ALASGW

The purpose of the Association is to establish standards for professional and ethical practice; to support research and the dissemination of knowledge; and to provide professional leadership in the field of group work. The Association is committed to preventing social problems, maximizing positive human growth and development, and helping individuals to replace self-defeating behaviors with self-enhancing behaviors.

ALASGW Members in Action in 2016-2017

2016 ALCA Conference



Alabama Association for Specialists in Group Work members participated in the Alabama Counseling Association 50th Annual Conference celebration on November 16 - 18, 2016, at the Sheraton Birmingham Hotel, in Birmingham, Alabama. The theme was *Alabama Counseling Association, 1966-2016, 50 Years of Service*. The conference activities focused on celebrating the extraordinary growth and success in its long history. The ALASGW members enjoyed nationally known keynote speakers and a variety of professional development opportunities. The 2016 keynote speaker was Mr. Phil Chalmers, America's leading authority on juvenile homicide and mass murder. Mr. Chambers has been studying youth culture and teen murder for 30 years, which included interviewing over 200 teen killers and school shooters. He also authored numerous books and documentaries, including his latest two book

releases, *Inside the Mind of a Teen Killer* and *True Lies*.

The Division sponsored several content sessions, including two that were taught by ALASGW's President-Elect, Mr. Chris Johns: *Serving the Student Who Is A "Diamond in The Rough"* and *Mandated Counseling – How Effective Is It?* ALASGW attendees expressed great satisfaction with the 2016 ALCA Annual conference, including the Awards Breakfast, diverse content sessions, networking opportunities, and celebration dance.

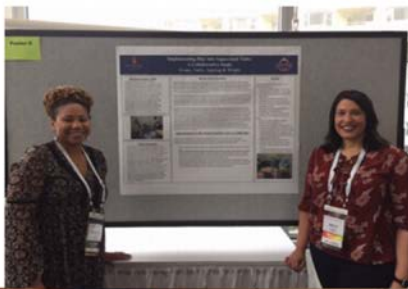
2017 American Counseling Association (ACA) Conference

Bottom Left Photo

Left: Ms. Christi Jones (doctoral student at Auburn University)

Middle: Dr. Carrie Hemmings, Assistant Professor at AUM,

Right: Ms. Whittle-Smith Behavior Interventionist at Bellingrath Middle School



Left Photo

Left: Dr. Brandee Appling, Assistant Professor at Auburn University

Right: Dr. Malti Tuttle, Assistant Professor at Auburn University



The American Counseling Association (ACA) historic 65th annual Conference & Expo was held March 16–19, 2017, in San Francisco. Attendees were able to earn up to 35.5 CEUs through a wide variety of progressive education sessions and to collaborate with counseling peers from around the globe. Several ALASGW members took advantage of this remarkable opportunity. They attended the ACA 2017 Conference & Expo to invest in their professional development and to enhance attendees' knowledge. Dr. Carrie Hemmings, Ms. Christi Jones & Ms. Whittle-Smith presented a workshop entitled *"Creative Strategies in Group Counseling: School and Clinical Settings."* The focus of the presentations was on creative arts interventions that have been formalized through the disciplines of music therapy, art therapy, dance/movement therapy, poetry therapy, drama therapy, and play therapy.

2017 ALSGW Winter Workshop

Alabama Association for Specialists in Group Work partnered with Alabama Association for Multicultural Counseling and Development to have another successful Winter training session, on March 11, 2017, at Auburn University Montgomery. Mr. Vincent Hinton and Ms Ashley Dudley presented “Ethics in Group Work”. The session covered the standards for ethical and competent practice and professional behavior required of group counselors. Also, Dr. Sherrionda Crawford and Dr. Jessica Fripp presented on “Ethical Considerations When Working with Diverse Populations in A Group Setting.” This session focused on the ethical issues that counselors should be aware of when working with culturally different group members. Attendees had rave reviews for this workshop. Fun was had by all.



What's Happening

Important Dates to Remember

2017 ALCA Annual Conference

November 15-17, 2017

Mobile, Alabama/Mobile Convention Center

Renaissance Riverview Hotel & Historic Battle House Hotel

2018 ASGW National Conference

February 1-3, 2018

Savannah, GA

Savannah Hilton DeSoto

2018 ACA National Conference & Expo

April 26-29, 2018

April 25-26 - Pre-conference Learning Institutes

Georgia World Congress Center

Atlanta, GA

Congratulations to Dr. Carolyn Thomas on Her Retirement



Dr. Thomas has been a counselor educator at Alabama State University and Auburn University-Montgomery (AUM) for 41 years. On April 3, 2017, she retired from AUM, but her influence will continue. Countless lives have been impacted through the knowledge she imparted and will continue to do so in her retirement.

Group Work Articles, Activities, and Resources

SUBSTANCE ABUSE TREATMENT: GROUP THERAPY.

GROUP LEADERSHIP

Personal Qualities: Although the attributes of an effective interpersonal process group leader treating substance abuse are not strikingly different from traits needed to work successfully with other client populations, some of the variations in approach make a big difference. Clients, for example, will respond to a warm, empathic, and life-affirming manner. Flores (1997) states that “many therapists do not fully appreciate the impact of their personalities or values on addicts or alcoholics who are struggling to identify some viable alternative lifestyle that will allow them to fill up the emptiness or deadness within them” (p. 456). For this reason, it is important for group leaders to communicate and share the joy of being alive.

Leading Groups: Group therapy with clients who have histories of substance abuse or dependence requires active, responsive leaders who keep the group lively and on task, and ensure that members are engaged continuously and meaningfully with each other. Leaders, however, should not make themselves the center of attention. The leader should be aware of the differing personalities of the group members, while always searching for common themes in the group. To determine the type of leadership required to support a client in treatment, the clinician should consider the client’s capacity to manage affect, level of functioning, social supports, and stability, since these factors have some bearing upon alcohol or illicit drug use. These considerations are essential to determine the type of group best suited to meet the client’s needs.

Reference

Center for Substance Abuse Treatment. Substance Abuse Treatment: Group Therapy. Rockville (MD): Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (US); 2005. (Treatment Improvement Protocol (TIP) Series, No. 41.) 6 Group Leadership, Concepts, and Techniques. Available from: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK64211/>

ACTIVITIES

1. Practice trusting your fellow group members by having one person wear a blindfold and another person help them to complete a task without the use of vision.
2. Write down a list of worries and/or fears, then tie the list to a balloon and release it into the air to symbolically let go of your burdens.
3. Imagine the group is going to a deserted island and can only bring ten items. Decide as a group which ten items to bring.
4. Discuss the meaning of friendship. What makes someone a true friend? What makes someone a fake friend?
5. Discuss self-harm. What constitutes self-harm? What are some of the reasons people choose to self-harm? Brainstorm a list of activities to do instead of self-harm, should the temptation arise?

For more information, go to” <https://twodreams.com/dream-journal/216-60-more-substance-abuse-group-therapy-activities>

“Members of a cohesive group feel warmth and comfort in the group and a sense of belongingness; they value the group and feel in turn that they are valued, accepted, and supported by other members.”

— Irvin D. Yalom, *The Theory and Practice of Group Psychotherapy*



JOIN TODAY

Membership in the Alabama Counseling Association is required before becoming a member of ALASGW. Visit the ALCA website’s membership page and complete the form:

<http://alabamacounseling.org/meminfo.htm1>