



Association for Adult Development and Aging

Greetings!

Getting to know More About Your AADA President!



Greetings AADA Members!

Questions 1. ***Why did you want to become a counselor?***

I graduated with a degree in psychology and was working as a Service Coordinator for an agency in Northeast Wisconsin, serving older adults and individuals who experience disabilities and qualify for HUD housing. I found that, though I was good at providing connections and resources, I craved a deeper understanding of the issues that brought my clients to me. I looked into graduate programs, not knowing much about Counseling as a professional field, and thankfully found my way to a very strong counselor training program (the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh). The education and training I received there set the stage for continuing engagement, and eventually leadership, within the counseling profession.

Questions 2. ***Can you tell us about your clinical background?***

I am a Licensed Professional Counselor and a Licensed School Counselor. I am currently serving as the Chair of the Clinical Mental Health Counseling program at Judson University in Elgin, Illinois. I am also the Interim Director of Counseling and Wellness for my University. I have worked with individuals from age 4-94 in a variety of clinical and human service settings. Though adult lifespan development is my passion, I have a special fondness for working with older adults and their families.

Questions 3. ***What are some of your plans for the AADA for the year of 2019-2020 to promote its mission?***

My goals for this year include increasing the visibility of AADA within the Counseling field, increasing member engagement, and focusing on resource provision for members. I hope our members feel welcome to get involved in any way and to any extent they are able and interested. We have an excellent Board and leadership team and we are always looking to include new people.

Question 4. ***How would you like the AADA members to get involved in the division's activities planned for the year of 2019-2020?***

Please consider joining a Task Force! Our three Task Forces (Emerging Adult, Middle Adult, and Older Adult) help drive this organization forward through research, advocacy efforts, and practice resources for members. To join a Task Force, please contact:

John Nance (Emerging Adults Task Force) at john.nance6@gmail.com
Marcela Kepic (Middle Adults Task Force) at marcikepic@gmail.com
Matthew Fullen (Older Adults Task Force) at mfullen@vt.edu

About The October AADA Newsletter

Greetings!

This October newsletter will include numerous voices of our AADA members. In order to give the AADA members an opportunity to get to know more about Amber Randolph, Ph.D., AADA President, the newsletter editor interviewed her. This interview will be followed by the highlights from the AADA annual conference held in Chicago this past August.



This October newsletter will also be featuring a report from the AADA Older Adults Task Force, two articles by our own AADA members, and news on *Adultspan Journal*, the journal of the AADA, a division of the American Counseling Association.

Yoon Suh Moh, Ph.D.
AADA Newsletter Editor

Highlights from The Association for Adult Development and Aging's Annual Conference in Chicago, Illinois

The Association for Adult Development and Aging (AADA) had a successful annual conference in Chicago, IL this past August.



Look at this stunning view of Chicago!



AADA President giving a welcome speech at AADA.



AADA Executive Council and Leadership Team

Photo Credit: John Nance

A Report from the AADA Older Adults Task Force (OATF)

The Older Adults Task Force focuses on Practices, Advocacy, and Research that advance the counseling profession's ability to meet the needs of people as they age. One of our members, Mary Chase Mize, a doctoral student at Georgia State University, recently presented her work on suicide prevention for older adults at the 2019 AADA Conference. Not only is Mary Chase one of the emerging leaders in the counseling profession when it comes to the study of aging, she is also the Graduate Student Committee Co-Chair for AADA! If you are a graduate student and would like to learn more about how to get involved with AADA or the Older Adults Task Force, please reach out to marychasemize@gmail.com.



Next Meeting for the Older Adults Task Force

- Please join us in San Diego during our in-person meeting at the ACA Conference!
- Exact time and location will be listed in the Conference program.

If you would like more information, or to join our mailing list, please contact Matthew Fuller at mfullen@vt.edu.

Sincerely,

Matthew Fuller, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor, Virginia Tech
Chair, AADA Older Adults Task Force

A Call to Action: Increasing Student Engagement in the AADA Conference

It is estimated that approximately 98.2 million Americans will be age 65 or older by the year 2060 (Administration of Aging, 2017). As the baby boomer cohort continues to age, the mental health field will need skilled and competent clinicians to work with aging populations. Training competent clinicians that will provide mental health services to aging populations begins by increasing student engagement in the Association for Adult Development and Aging (AADA). Student engagement in external gerontological counseling skills trainings, research, contributions to gerontological counseling literature, and aging advocacy can be galvanized at the annual Association for Adult Development and Aging Conference.

Importance of Student Engagement

Increasing student engagement in the gerontological counseling specialization has potential benefits (Foster, Evans, & Chew, 2014). For example, professionally trained students assume professional roles in the profession, thus allowing them to advocate for the unique concerns of aging populations. Engaged students can participate in conducting research, producing scholarly publications, and educating others about the growing population of older adults. Conversely, limited attention to this specialty area within training programs may limit student opportunities for engagement. Broadly speaking, this is concerning because "Professional training barriers among the helping and health professions also may reflect systemic ageism" (Fuller, 2018, p.108). Moreover, specifically, a lack of access to gerontological counseling education or training could thwart the next generation of counselors in training from providing clinical services to older adults.

The most prevalent predictor of gerocounseling specialization is student interest (Foster, Kreider, and Waugh, 2009). However, interest alone does not always correspond to gerocounseling training and employment (Fullen, 2018).

Although the gerontological counseling specialty was removed from the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs 2009 Standards (CACREP, 2009), students still want to learn and receive training on working with older adult clients (Foster et al., 2014). Many students learn about implementing interventions and issues impacting populations via peer-reviewed literature. A content analysis of the research on older adults found that publication of articles addressing older adulthood and aging in counseling journals is low, and there has only been an average of 7.23 articles published annually over the course of twenty-six years in twenty-four journals (Fullen, Gorby, Chan, Dobmeier, & Jordan, 2019). Students can also learn about gerontological counseling by attending local and international aging conferences. While surveying counseling students' perceptions of working with older adult populations, Foster, Kreider, and Waugh (2009) found that 66% of students surveyed were willing to seek additional education in gerocounseling via conference attendance.

Generating Student Engagement

Students may develop an interest in gerontological counseling if educators and supervisors make a point to broach the unique concerns of older adult clinical populations and intentionally incorporate older adult research into assignments, class discussions and supervision. "Infusing the counselor education curriculum with theory-based, empirical research about how counselors can best address the needs of older adults may stimulate student interest, leadership, and future scholarship" (Fullen et al., 2019, p.394). Additionally, students can participate in gerontological advocacy by adding to the literature on gerontological counseling, with the mentorship of other gerontological counseling scholars (Fullen et al., 2019). Students can become connects, and meet individuals contributing to gerontological counseling literature at the Association for Adult Development and Aging Conference.

How can we translate students' interest in gerontological counseling into tangible experiences that will assist them in becoming skilled and competent clinicians? We address existing ageism, be intentional with counseling curriculum, and ensure our students have access to external aging training and educational opportunities. Educators can incorporate unique learning opportunities such as having a mock departmental older adult and aging conference or facilitating an activity to legislatively advocate for an issue that impacts older adults in lifespan development and leadership and advocacy courses. Another activity would include asking students to do the research on existing educational opportunities and trainings for gerontological counseling nationally and then reporting their findings in class. Subsequently, educators can encourage students to translate their experiential learning into a proposal for a local or national conference on aging.

Fullen (2018) asserts that ageism is a training barrier that could negatively impact older adult clients, but can be counteracted in the domain of counselor education by integrating topical aging discussions throughout a student's curriculum, presenting students with opportunities to work in practicum or internship settings where older adults can be served, and finding supervisors that have a background in working with older adults. Counselors, supervisors, and counselor educators can assist in combating student ageism by asking students to apply their theoretical orientation to case vignettes with older adult clients and incorporating older adult cases in each course. They may also want to assess their student, mentee, and supervisee's interests in aging, share their own experiences in working with older adults, and encourage attendance at the next AADA conference.

Suggestions from an Aspiring Counselor Educator and Advocate

Aligning with the mission of the Association for Adult Development and Aging (2019) in promoting standards for professional preparation for counselors of adults across the lifespan and improving the skills and competence of American Counseling Association members, all current counselors, supervisors, and counselor educators interested in aging or gerocounseling will need to foster opportunities for their mentees, interns, supervisees, and students to join AADA, attend a Summer conference, or become involved in a state branch of AADA.

In order to translate interests into learning and skill building opportunity, counselors, supervisors, and counselor educators should:

- Cultivate and pique the interest of the next generation of counselors in becoming active members of AADA
- Invite students, mentees, and colleagues to attend the 2020 Association for Adult Development and Aging annual Summer conference in Charlotte, North Carolina
- Share information about conference sessions and showcase the wide range of topical areas in aging from each conference (access conference programs and share session descriptions)

- Inform students of the service opportunities in the AADA Graduate Student Committee
- Publicize the graduate student poster session opportunity at the annual AADA conference
- Encourage students to engage in aging and older adult research by applying for one of AADA's Adult Developmental Research Grant or an Evelyn Chasan Research Grant, and then disseminate their findings at the AADA National conference
- If you are submitting a conference proposal, invite students to contribute to the presentation and assist them in gaining national presentation experience
- Aid students in finding funding (scholarships, departmental travel funds, etc.) to attend the conference
- Introduce students to state branch divisions of AADA and encourage them to find out how they can serve in various capacities

Encouraging student attendance at the AADA conference is beneficial for the profession. It fosters networking and the exchange of ideas, skills, and information that can help aging adults globally. It can also assist students in understanding what aging counseling job opportunities exist for them upon graduation. Attendance can deepen one's sense of community and professional identity. There are many realistic challenges in increasing student engagement in the AADA conference, such as financial restrictions, knowledge of student interest, having a proposal denied for the conference. However, encouraging student presence can create a trickle-down effect in which students return to their program cohorts and share concepts that will assist others in working with the increasing aging population. Further, there could be a beneficial ripple effect with an increase in students dedicated to serving older adults through clinical practice, research, advocacy, and teaching. The Association for Adult Development and Aging Conference is the living exemplification of the AADA's mission statement and all students with an interest in aging should have the opportunity to attend with the assistance of their teachers, mentors, and supervisors.

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About The Author

Janelle Jones is a second year counselor education doctoral student at the University of Alabama. Janelle is a Nationally Certified Counselor, and obtained her Master's degree from Georgia State University with a graduate certificate in Gerontology. Janelle is a 2019 NBCC Minority Doctoral Fellow and her research interests include studying the lived experiences of Black baby boomers, mentorship with counselor education faculty of color, and multiculturally competent supervision.

When I started out as a counselor, I worked in a nonprofit agency. After seeing six or seven clients and facilitating two groups each day, I would come home exhausted. I was new at it and had not built up enough resilience in the form of "counselor muscle." I was drained, not ready to party or to otherwise engage. It became an interesting phenomenon and something of a pattern when friends noticed and tended to say the same thing as though it was a conspiracy of sorts: "Why are you so tired? All you do is listen to people all day." They couldn't have had it more wrong. They could never have understood the concept of active listening. They couldn't imagine how hard it can be to maintain consistent empathic understanding for each client. They thought I put on my "counselor's hat" when I entered my therapy room and took it off when I left. The idea that it had become a way of being eluded them and continues to elude to this day.

I have exercised my "counselor muscle" over the years and sometimes astound myself at how resilient I have become being able to giving full attention and all my resources to the last client of the day as I do the first. It is still tiring because - make no mistake - it is hard work. One of the ways I have found to help me stay sharp is to mix it up; to work in the profession from several viewpoints. I no longer work in a non-profit, but maintain my own practice. Doing volunteer work at St. Barnabas Hospice brought a new perspective. I learn much about the grief process and have come to understand that every client who brings their presenting problem to the table has an element of loss somewhere in there from loss of a loved one to loss of self-esteem to loss of freedom to loss of a job to loss of the dream and so on that has eluded them or has suddenly evaporated. Presenting on suicide assessment, stress reduction and mental health in general at the Picatinny Arsenal has taught me that because people look like they are well, wellness is not a definitive state of being but, instead, must be continually maintained.

Ten years ago, I began to pursue a PhD in Counselor Education and have taught at Montclair State, Kean University and, of late, at Fairleigh Dickinson. It became immediately obvious that teaching informed my counseling and counseling informed my teaching. Bringing my years of knowledge and experience to the classroom was immensely valuable to a new cadre of "counselors becoming." They reveled in stories of experiences with clients that made it real for them and even a bit daunting at times.

Early on, in my master's program, I have to say that Career Counseling was not my favorite course. I am fully responsible for the B+ I received. As it turned out, in the early 2000's, the looming recession brought me up short. More and more clients were presenting work related problems from re-evaluating career choices to the transition to a new job to good old unemployment that is by no means good, but rather a trauma unto itself. Far too many clients were older Americans faced the threat of ageism. Loss continually loomed. As I struggled to deal with clients from a career perspective, I had my own "aha moment." We are change agents and change is all about transition. M.Scott Peck said, "Life is difficult." I might add that it is change that makes it difficult. However, it needn't be unhealthy. After all, as agents of change we operate from a wellness perspective. That makes all the difference. I refocused my approach to one of "moving through" the current set of circumstances disdaining the idea of "moving on." Moving on implies leaving something behind. Most clients in transition are not quite ready to leave anything behind. That makes change far more difficult. While it is true that things may not be as they used to be or as we expected them to be, we must find the resources to distinguish between what is lost and what is not. Starting there certainly debunks the idea that change is the end of the world. It never is.

Transition as an overarching theme is a concept I now embrace in all my work. It is a form of evolution that occurs in a self-directed way. Counseling is, in its most basic form, a catalyst for self-exploration. As Yalom posits, we are constantly struggling with the givens of life. It becomes less about dealing with disorders and more about dealing with the sheer velocity of life in this century, but make no mistake, disorders still exist on a regular basis from trauma to adjustment and everything in between. It is incumbent upon us as counselors to rule out where we can and to view our assessment as preliminary. As more information comes to light and our client grows in insight everything can change. Where we cannot rule out, we utilize best practices to reframe thought patterns; to help develop meaningful coping mechanisms; to help clients gain awareness and insight into alternatives, options and possibilities. In the end, counseling is all about change. That is the goal both simple and profound goal. It may take the unpretentious form of just doing something different and that, in and of itself, can be transitional.

About The Author

Vincent S. Viglione is the owner of Beacon Counseling Associates LLC in Denville, NJ. He was formerly an assistant professor at Fairleigh Dickinson University. Previously, he was an adjunct professor at both Montclair State University and Kean University. He received his PhD in Counseling Education from Montclair State University. Formerly, he was a Sr. V.P. of Operations for a private investment banking firm in New York City. He is married and has two married sons, one of

whom is recently retired from the USAF, and one new grandson.

His credentials include Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC-NJ), National Certified Counselor (NCC) and Approved Clinical Supervisor (ACS-NJ). He has worked as a clinician at the COPE Center Community Agency in Montclair, NJ and as a bereavement counselor at St. Barnabas Hospice in West Orange, NJ. In private practice, he specializes in treating adults working through a variety of life transitions as well as both active duty military and civilian engineers at the Picatinny Arsenal in Morris County, NJ. Additionally, he is actively supervising LAC's in pursuit of their LPC licensing.

Adultspan News

This past year, we welcomed some new reviewers to our editorial board. These include Mary A. Hermann, a faculty member at Virginia Commonwealth University; Ben Willis, who's at the University of Scranton; and Nathaniel Wagner, at Indiana State University. If you are interested in being a member of the Editorial Review Board, please send a copy of your CV and a letter of interest that highlights your relevant editorial and publication experience to the editor at adultspanjournal@gmail.com.

Note: All AADA members receive free access to the journal which is available online. To access the electronic journal, please use the link below.

Step 1: <https://www.counseling.org/publications/electronic-journal-access-members>

Step 2: Sign in to your ACA account which can be accessed through the link above.



Suzanne Degges-White, Ph.D., Editor
Wendy Killam, Ph.D., Associate Editor

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Please consider submitting something for our AADA newsletter in the future! We are always looking for news, updates, events, book recommendations, and articles from our talented membership.

STAY CONNECTED

