



The Iowa Marital & Family Therapist

A Bulletin of the Iowa Association for Marriage and Family Therapy

Presidential Report

by Neal Sheeley

In late June, IAMFT reached a plateau in the campaign to achieve recognition of licensed marriage and family therapists (LMFTs) in Iowa as providers of mental health services on par with other licensed professionals of the healing arts (LPHA). Wellmark Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Iowa decided to include LMFTs as reimbursable providers. Wellmark immediately began work on developing a credentialing process and writing changes into the many health benefit plans that Blue Cross and Blue Shield markets and administers in Iowa. We can all take a breath of the fresh air and congratulate those who labored so long and hard for this day.

It is important to celebrate this milestone and to recognize the IAMFT leaders and members who contributed to these efforts. Taking a well-earned respite is in order as well. We are anxiously awaiting news from Wellmark about the credentialing process so we can extend and expand the availability of mental health services to more Iowans.

At the start of my message I referred to the Wellmark decision as a plateau with good reason. Credentialing and provider panel recognition for LMFTs is a critical step in our journey, but it is not the destination we seek. There are many large companies in Iowa who are self-insured. These companies make decisions about who are reimbursable providers independent of Wellmark--even if they hire Wellmark to administer their health benefits plan. Examples of such companies include Tyson Foods and all three state universities. Many of you are aware that Iowa State University is home to the only COAMFTE approved MFT educational program in Iowa. It is ironic that the health plan that covers over 5000 lives throughout

the state (via the Extension Service and at the Ames campus) does not currently recognize LMFTs as reimbursable providers of mental health services.

This state of affairs continues to exist despite IAMFT efforts to influence the decision-makers at ISU and several of the self-insured companies. The decision by Wellmark in June provides us with many things beyond participation on provider panels. An additional benefit is further justification and support for our efforts to have several other self-insured companies alter their plans in the same way Wellmark is doing.

Another way to achieve the desired end is through state legislation. Some states have legislation that mandates inclusion of LMFTs on mental health provider panels. Since the Iowa legislature has a strong aversion to business regulation, this approach is likely to take some time to become law. Your board of directors believes the same approach that succeeded with Wellmark is the best way to proceed with the self-insured companies.

We intend to begin the next phase of our campaign in our own backyard--in discussions with the highest levels of management at Iowa State University. As members of the IAMFT, all of you are encouraged to assist in this effort to expand our provider status further. It is important work and will, in my opinion, determine the future of our profession. Please contact me to contribute your time and talents to this next phase so we may coordinate our efforts to the greatest benefit for all.



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Inside this issue:

Presidential Report	1
Advertising Information	2
Ethics Corner	
Student Spotlight: Scott Blair, M.S.	3
Good Stuff From the Treasurer Web Watch IAMFT Neighborhood	4
Student Spotlight: An-Ti Shih	5
Student Spotlight: Tara Dekkers	6
Communications Report Job Connections Upcoming Dates	7
IAMFT Board of Directors	8

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Display advertising must be submitted camera-ready (unless exclusively text, then it must be typed and double spaced) and pre-paid at the following rates:

Submissions are to be sent directly to the editor. Please make checks for advertising payable to IAMFT and send to

Price	Type	Size
\$25 (\$20 members)	Classified listing	5 lines
\$50 (\$40 members)	Business card size	2x3 1/2
\$90 (\$72 members)	Quarter page	3 9/16 x 4 3/4
\$150 (\$125 members)	Half page	7 1/2 x 4 3/4
\$300 (\$200 members)	Full page	7 1/2 x 9 1/2
FREE for IAMFT	Job Postings	—

Megan J Murphy Ph.D., 4380 Palmer Building, Iowa State University, Ames, IA 50011-4380; 515-294-2745; mjmurphy@iastate.edu.

The editor reserves the right to reject, abridge or modify any advertising or other submitted material as deemed appropriate. Opinions expressed by the editorial staff of *The Iowa Marital & Family Therapist* by articles published, advertisements, and letters to the editor do not necessarily reflect the views of AAMFT, the IAMFT officers and board of directors, or the IAMFT membership.

ETHICS CORNER

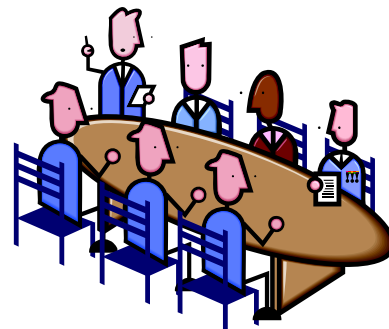
The Ethics Committee invites ethical questions to be discussed by the committee and then discussed in the newsletter. This is an educational tool only. Answers to questions will not be considered official, but be a form of brainstorming. Please send any questions or ethical dilemmas to peg@lisco.com. Peg O'Rourke PhD, Chair, Ethics Committee, IAMFT.

The ethics committee is currently working on a workshop for the 2007 IAMFT Conference on March 30-31 in Newton, Iowa. The workshop will feature an acting troupe that will portray several therapy scenarios. Our conference workshop will also feature a panel that includes a family law attorney, an LMFT, an LMHC, and a social worker.

This three hour workshop will satisfy the required three ethics CEUs for licensure renewal. Beyond satisfying the ethics CEU requirement, we hope we can continue to engage everyone in our organizations to continue to learn more about ethics and the application of our codes of ethics in everyday practice.

Peg O'Rourke Ph. D., Ethics Committee Chair

WANTED: Ethics committee members! This important committee meets 3-4 times a year and plans the ethics workshops for the IAMFT Conferences. We focus on education about AAMFT ethics. We would welcome new members! If you are interested, please contact Peg at peg@lisco.com.



Student Spotlight - Scott Bair, M.S.



Education

Iowa State University (COAMFTE Accredited), 2006; Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in Human Development and Family Studies, ABD; Area of specialization: Marriage and Family Therapy; Dissertation: *Client Adult Attachment as a Predictor of Therapy Outcome*. Auburn University (COAMFTE Accredited), 2001; Masters of Science in Human Development and Family Studies; Area of specialization: Marriage and Family Therapy; Thesis: *Couples' Perceptions of Fairness in the Allocation of Housework*. Brigham Young University, 1997; Bachelors of Science (B.S.) in Sociology; Area of specialization: Social-Psychology; Senior project: *Warner's Agentive Theory Applied to Baumrind's Model of Parenting*.

Research Interests

Adult and childhood attachment; Parent child relationships; Premarital and marital dynamics; Agentive theory; Therapeutic working alliance; Equity in work/family relationships

Credentials

Clinical Member of AAMFT
Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist, Iowa

Brief Bio

I have a private practice as a marriage and family therapist where I see a variety of clients, including couples, individuals, and some families. I use a mix of theoretical models in my clinical work, including emotionally-focused, solution-focused, narrative, and structural-strategic therapies. This last year's keynote speaker at the IAMFT conference, Barry Duncan, introduced me to some

wonderful possibilities in my clinical work which I have put to use, including the use of brief outcome measures in each session. I also work as the guidance counselor for a Catholic elementary school where I get to visit all the grades each week and do role-plays and puppet stories with awesome kids. This is like the dessert for my week, and brings a lot of joy to my life.

I work for two academic institutions: DMACC in Ankeny, where I teach three sections of Psychology 111, and North Central University in Prescott Arizona, where I teach online graduate courses in the MFT program. Between these various jobs I have precious little spare time, but I work in about five hours per week for completing my dissertation. My topic is adult attachment style as a predictor of therapeutic alliance. I am very grateful for the help and support that I've received from other clinicians here in Iowa for this research project, who accepted the invitation to help provide data from their caseloads. I now have all my data collected and the data analysis is moving along; I took some time out from my Saturday plans for my dissertation to complete this brief biography.

When I'm able, I enjoy spending time with my family; our favorite family outing is going to the zoo. Shauri and I were married in 1998, and we have three incredible children, ages 2, 4, and 6. Our family is active in our local LDS (Mormon) church where my wife and I serve in the children's Sunday school and youth ministry programs.

I speak Spanish and avidly follow current events. For recreation, I fight in a medieval combat club and volunteer as an instructor for a religious institute. My guilty pleasure is seeing (clean) blockbuster movies on opening night. I can't turn down a chance to eat strawberry cheesecake ice cream or fried chicken gizzards (but not together). I'm afraid of roller coasters and people who drive under the speed limit. I no longer freeze up when I speak publicly--that was a major problem when I was a child, but since I now speak monthly at two congregations for my church, I think I can say that I'm mostly over it, though not by any virtue of my own. My faith is a vital part of my life and gives me the meaning and joy that holds everything together for me. I was raised in Utah and my wife is from Arizona, but we both love it here in Iowa. Currently, we'd love to stay for another five or ten years, and then see where our lives are at that point.



GOOD STUFF

2007 IAMFT-IMHCA Conference

We are pleased to welcome the Iowa Mental Health Counselors Association, again, as co-sponsor of the 2007 conference!

The 2007 IAMFT-IMHCA Conference will feature Insoo Berg co-developer of the solution-focused brief therapy model. Ms. Berg travels the world lecturing on many topics and we are pleased to have her accept our invitation to speak on *Brief Treatment of Children and Parents Who Are Hurting* on March 30, 2007.

Insoo Berg has written eight books in 10 years, two of which are *Tales of Solutions: Hope Inspiring Stories From Around the World* and *Interviewing for Solutions*. Please mark your calendars for March 30 and 31, 2007. This exciting conference will offer a unique ethics workshop and will also feature Jeannie Kerber who will present on *Motivational Interviewing*.

FROM THE TREASURER:

Did you know you can make tax deductible donations to IAMFT? Your contributions help IAMFT remain financially healthy. Because the IAMFT had no lobbying expenses this year, 100% of your donations are tax deductible. To make a donation, you can write a check made out to "IAMFT" and send it to: Megan Murphy, Ph. D., 4380 Palmer Bldg., Ames, IA 50011-4380.

DON'T FORGET TO VISIT
OUR WEBSITE
FOR MORE INFORMATION
ON HOW IAMFT IS
WORKING FOR YOU.

[WWW.IAMFT.COM](http://www.iamft.com)

WEB WATCH

AAMFT website:

www.aamft.org

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www.iamft.com

APA website:

www.apa.org

ACA website:

www.counseling.org

NASW website:

www.naswdc.org

NCFR website:

www.ncfr.org

Iowa Board of Behavioral Science
Examiners:

[http://www.idph.state.ia.us/licensure/
board_home.asp?board=be](http://www.idph.state.ia.us/licensure/board_home.asp?board=be)

Association of Marital and Family
Therapy Regulatory Boards:

[http://amfrb.org/](http://amfrb.org)

Stay abreast with important
state legislation:

www.legis.state.ia.us

IAMFT NEIGHBORHOOD

In 1968, Andy Warhol boldly predicted "In the future, everyone will be world-famous for 15 minutes." The future is now! Don't settle for 15 minutes, be immortalized through the IAMFT Neighborhood. We are looking to bring our organization together and get to know one another. I hope you will consider sending a digital picture of yourself along with a brief background discussing your professional highlights, personal interests, and clinical contact information for potential referrals to IAMFTCommunications@yahoo.com. You may be as brief or as detailed as you wish and I hope to feature several IAMFT members each issue. Let's get to know one another!



Student Spotlight - An-Ti Shih



An-Ti Shih is currently a fourth year doctoral candidate in the Marriage and Family Therapy program at Iowa State University. She completed her Master of Arts in sociology (specializing in social welfare and social welfare policy) from National Chengchi University (Taiwan) in 1998. She was awarded the nationwide Tuzen Shyan Wu Social Behavioral Science Scholarship award for her thesis entitled: “The Life Adaptation of People with HIV in Taiwan.” This thesis was pioneering qualitative research focused on life adaptation strategies of people with HIV, as AIDS is an unbearable stigma in Taiwan.

Upon receiving her master’s degree, she modified her thesis and published in related journals, including *Human Rights Magazine*, and *Chinese Journal of Medical Social Work*, and presented at several related conferences asking for attentiveness to the dilemmas and struggles of people with HIV. With her enthusiasm for the welfare of the disadvantaged, she also was selected as the Standing Trustee of the Taiwan Love and Hope Association, which is concerned with the welfare of HIV/AIDS patients in Taiwan.

After a few months, Shih took up her career in the Bureau of Social Affairs of the Kaohsiung City Government. She was in charge of child welfare policy and domestic violence prevention for the city, with a population of over one and one-half million people. Within those three years, even with a high workload, she passed “Senior Examinations for Professionals and Technologists of Social Workers” and became a licensed social worker in Taiwan. She was also promoted as an administrative supervisor of child welfare and domestic violence prevention with her dependable

and commendatory work performance. During the process of working, she recognized that many family problems are related to social problems — and the work for helping people cannot just rely on passion — it needs professional training and clear thinking. This realization became her motivation to obtain higher and more specific education.

She does not regret giving up her stable job and coming to Iowa State University for her life goal; although she struggled at the beginning, it did not take her long to adjust to American life. After accommodating herself to her new life, she learned that the therapist is in a field to help people get out of their stuck situations and find solutions to deal with the problems in their lives. However, the manner in which people view the “problem” depends upon their interpretations, beliefs, environment, resources, and cultural background. Therefore, from her perspective, after meeting basic needs from the social welfare system, the way to help people find relief from their suffering relies on providing them an alternative way of thinking to handle their problems.

“Never give up” is her belief stemming from Confucianism, and “Try another way” is her new belief from her training in MFT. “We will always gain and learn something after our efforts, no matter what the result looks like” is the philosophy she developed after she combined her culture and learning. She does what she can do best and makes herself appreciate everything that happens to her. These beliefs and philosophy not only are her guides for helping her face challenges in her life, but also for her therapy.

Recently her research interests focus on tension, adjustment strategies and satisfaction in family business. She believes that people who own family businesses might face different problems than people who work as employees. This is a new field of work for MFTs. On the other hand, prevention of domestic violence is her long-term research interest. With more understanding of diverse family dynamics, she believes that the domestic violence might be prevented by reducing tension and providing appropriate strategies to the family.

Although she grew up in a very big city, she enjoys her tranquil life in Ames. When she has free time, riding her bike or just walking in parks, observing stars, listening to light music, sketching portraits, and writing are her ways to achieve balance

Student Spotlight - Tara Dekkers



Greetings! My name is Tara Dekkers and I am currently a second year masters student in the Department of Human Development and Family Studies at Iowa State University, specializing in the Marriage and Family Therapy program. I was born and raised in the northwest corner of Iowa, in the small town of Sioux Center. I have one younger brother and I am very close to both of my parents, who have been married for 28 years. In my spare time I enjoy participating in church activities, camping, fishing, hiking, biking, playing sports, running, golfing, reading, baking, and spending time with family and friends. I have been married to my life partner and best friend, Steve, for 3 years. He works as a farmer, a teacher, and a caretaker. Together we have a beautiful son who was born this past August. Since then, my spare time has lessened significantly to incorporate the joyous and challenging role of parenting.

I completed my undergraduate degree at Dordt College, which is located in Sioux Center, Iowa. I received a B.A. in psychology and minored in sociology. I finished my degree in 3 ½ years before moving with my husband to Des Moines, where we lived for a few months before coming to Ames and Iowa State University.

I entered college initially knowing that I wanted to do something with helping people, and become some sort of counselor. Through my course work, life experiences, and relationships with faculty at Dordt College, I gradually came to understand the complexity of peoples' difficulties. I was introduced to the systematic perspective offered in my sociology and psychology classes and realized that it matched closely with my view of the world. While in college, I worked with incoming freshman and individuals who had mental

handicaps. It was through these experiences, and my own life experiences, that I realized that difficulties come about by more than one cause. I began looking into universities which offered a marriage and family therapy degree, and began applying to a variety of different programs. I interviewed and was accepted by a few other programs, but was excited to accept the offer to attend Iowa State University. The current students and faculty at Iowa State were so supportive and helpful and were prompt in answering all my questions and concerns. I also appreciated the variety of research interests that were offered by the faculty.

I have really enjoyed my time at Iowa State and have been challenged in many ways by the supportive faculty and staff. I have had the opportunity to be a part of a number of experiences such as doing client intakes, assisting Dr. Megan Murphy with entering data she is gathering on problem resolution in couples, and conducting research with Dr. Ronald Werner-Wilson regarding communication and resolving conflict. I plan on presenting "Investigation of Sex Differences during Conflict Resolution" at the national AAMFT conference in Austin, Texas in October, 2006. I attended the IAMFT conference this past year and hope to attend this year's conference and many more in the future. Currently, I have the opportunity to be a teaching assistant in two undergraduate classes: Human Sexuality and Parent and Family Diversity Issues. I have also been seeing clients at Iowa State's MFT clinic and have enjoyed the challenge of supporting and assisting the client population in my role as a therapist.

I have a number of research interests. I am particularly interested in couple dynamics in relation to power, control, conflict-resolution, and decision-making. This is the topic of my thesis, which I plan on proposing within the next few months and defending early next summer. I am also interested in couple dynamics, marital satisfaction, and how they change throughout the life course. Diversity issues in families and couples are also research interests of mine.

After I graduate, I hope to find employment as a therapist and would like to work specifically with couples, but also with families. After getting experience in the field, I hope to begin a practice of my own and may work towards a doctorate one day.



Communication Report

I am excited to present our October, 2006 IAMFT online newsletter to you. Learn about the exciting news on IAMFT efforts with Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Iowa, as well as our 2007 conference. In addition to the regular features, we have added what I believe will be useful links to the "Webwatch" section. These links include the Iowa Board of Behavioral Science Examiners and the Association of Marital and Family Therapy Regulatory Boards.

The link to the Iowa Board of Behavioral Science Examiners will allow readers easy access to the important information and activities of our state regulatory board. The Iowa Board of Behavioral Science Examiners evaluates the qualifications of applicants for licensure and grants licenses to those who qualify, establishes rules and regulations to ensure the integrity and competence of licensed mental health counselors and licensed marital and family therapists and investigates complaints for unprofessional conduct. The Board is the link between the consumer and the licensed Mental Health Counselor and Marital and Family Therapist and, as such, promotes the public health, welfare and safety.

The link to the Association of Marital and Family Therapy Regulatory Boards (AMFTRB) allows readers to stay current on regulatory and national examination issues. Readers can get answers to questions regarding the national licensure examination (including testing periods), policy initiatives, links to resources, and more. The AMFTRB is the association of regulatory bodies responsible for governing marital and family therapists.

We are still looking for friends and colleagues to participate in our "IAMFT Neighborhood" section. My hope is that all of our members will become familiar faces as we read about one another. It will be a fun way to learn about one another professionally, as well as a sharing a bit of our personal lives with familiar and new friends. Please allow us to get to know you!



Job Connections

Employers seeking to hire IAMFT members are invited to post their openings in the IAMFT newsletter for free! Please contact Mike at IAMFTCommunications@yahoo.com to list your position or find out more.

Current Openings:

Thriving private psychotherapy practice (est. 1993) located in a historic and beautiful city has an immediate opening for a licensed mental health professional. Client base already in place for a child specialist or play therapist! Potential earnings approx. \$48,000- 55,000/year. Health insurance provided. Send resume and cover letter to:

Dr. Peg O'Rourke
The O'Rourke Group P.C.
610 N 4th St, Suite 110
Burlington, Iowa 52601
Fax 319-754-9213
Phone 1-800-330-6472

UPCOMING DATES

IAMFT Board of Directors Meeting

November 17, 2006 10:00 A.M.

333 Palmer Building

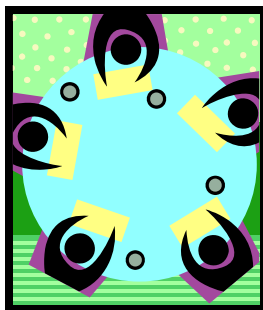
Iowa State University, Ames, IA

Ethics Committee Meeting

February 23, 2007 1:30 P.M.

Methodist Church, Newton, IA





IAMFT Board of Directors for 2006

IAMFT Board of Directors—2006

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