



# The Iowa Marital & Family Therapist

A Bulletin of the Iowa Association for Marriage and Family Therapy

## Letter from the Incoming President

by Jim Anastasi

Welcome to 2008. Hopefully all enjoyed a joyous and peaceful holiday season.

Many may not be aware that Wayne Clark has resigned from his duties both as president of the IAMFT and as pastor of UMC in Iowa Falls to accept a position at the Louisville Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky. A sincere thank you goes to Wayne for his dedication to the profession of marriage and family therapy and to the IAMFT. As president-elect, the IAMFT board approved my taking over the position early to fill the vacancy.

Currently we have many issues that will require the attention and involvement of all of us. We are working with our lobbyist, Emily Piper, to organize support for a mental health parity bill. We have the support of many legislators currently and will need you to help educate all of our legislators in the next several weeks to provide mental health services to those in need and for us to be assured of payment. The proposed bill, which will be e-mailed to you very soon, will essentially state that payors must recognize all mental health professionals licensed in the state of Iowa. It seems obviously simple and yet there may be much opposition. We are collaborating with the Iowa Association of Mental Health Counselors (IAMHC) and with the Iowa Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) in order to better serve Iowans needing mental health services.

Other goals I encourage our association to work toward accomplishing in the next year include:

1. Continued efforts with the IAMCHC & Iowa NASW to work for interests that benefit all of us as professionals and for the good of all Iowans.
2. Retain a masters/doctoral level marriage and family therapy training program in Iowa.
3. Retain and gain membership and enthusiasm for our association and profession.
4. Find ways of attracting young professionals to our specialty in order to provide service throughout the state of Iowa.
5. Balance the priorities of enhancing our membership while monitoring our professional standards.
6. Educate the public and health professionals about our specialty as mental health providers who work from a systems perspective and that we work with individuals as well as families.
7. Work toward the inclusion of marriage and family therapists as providers in the many self-insured companies across Iowa.
8. Continue to provide quality CEUs at our annual conferences and to emphasize the importance of ethics in all that we do.

(Continued on page 4)



Volume 42, Number 1  
February 2008

### Inside this issue:

Letter from Incoming President	1
Note from Comm. Chair Upcoming Dates	2
Presidential Report Student Spotlight	3
Student Spotlight	4
IAMFT Legislative Update	5
IAMFT Action Request	6
Good Stuff Ethics Corner From the Treasurer Job Connections Board of Directors	7

## The Iowa Marital & Family Therapist

### COMMUNICATION CHAIR:

Michael P McClain, Ph.D., LMFT  
Central Iowa Therapy Associates, Inc.  
6310 Prairie Ridge Rd.  
Ames, IA 50014  
515-291-8889

IAMFTCommunications@yahoo.com

### DESIGN & LAYOUT:

Lori Keppler - Lori's PC Possibilities  
lorispc@alpinecom.net

*The Iowa Marital & Family Therapist* is a newsletter of the Iowa Association for Marriage and Family Therapy. IAMFT is a division of the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy, 112 South Alfred Street, Alexandria, VA 22314; Phone: (703) 838-9808; Fax: (703) 838-9805. Subscription to *The Iowa Marital & Family Therapist* is included with IAMFT membership. Subscription for non-members is available through the editor. *The Iowa Marital & Family Therapist* is published three times a year in February, June, and October. Deadline for submissions and/or advertisements is the 15th of the month prior to publication.

Display advertising must be submitted camera-ready (unless exclusively text. In that case it must be typed and double-spaced exactly as it is to be shown). Submissions should be sent to: [IAMFTCommunications@yahoo.com](mailto:IAMFTCommunications@yahoo.com). There is no charge for advertising, and all advertising is limited to a maximum of one-quarter page in size. Only one advertisement per submitter per issue is permitted. The communications chair reserves the right to reject, abridge, or modify any advertising or other submitted materials as deemed appropriate. Opinions expressed by the editorial staff of the Iowa Marital & Family Therapist in the form of articles published, advertisements, and letters to the editor do not necessarily reflect the views of AAMFT, IAMFT, officers and board of director members, or IAMFT membership.

## Note from Communication Chair

by Michael P McClain, PH D., LMFT

I am pleased to present the February 2008 edition of our online newsletter. In this edition you will see our current president's farewell column and our president-elect's inaugural column. We wish Wayne well in his new endeavors and thank him for his guidance and vision, and we welcome Jim to his new position as president of IAMFT. We are fortunate to have an individual of Jim's integrity and foresight guiding our association.

We were so pleased with the turnout of our members and marriage and family therapy students on January 22, 2008 at the state capital to continue to expand the recognition of marriage and family therapists as qualified mental health providers. We thank all those who were able to attend, along with the mental health counselors who also joined us. If you were not able to be in Des Moines with us that day, please do not forget to contact your state representatives and encourage them to recognize marriage and family therapists in any and all upcoming legislation. The upcoming legislation that specifies who can or cannot be qualified providers for mental health services will not only impact our profession, but the ability to carry out our important work with clients. It will only be through our collective activism that we can assure our clients our continued services.

As always, we will be calling on our members to advance the work of our discipline and our association. We know we can count our members to recognize the importance of becoming involved and shaping our world for the better. We know we can count you.

## UPCOMING DATES

**IAMFT Board of Directors Meeting**  
333 Palmer Building  
Iowa State University, Ames, IA  
March 14, 2008  
10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

**Ethics Committee Meeting**  
Office of Keith Schrag  
233 S. Walnut Ave, Suite B, Ames, IA 50010  
515/232-3482 (c. 515-231-1557)  
February 29, 2008  
1:00-3:30 p.m.



# Presidential Report

by Wayne Clark, Ph. D.

Dear Friends:

I never thought that this would be my last column as president of the Iowa Association for Marriage and Family Therapy. It truly has been a blessing (for colleagues who don't believe in blessings, a privilege) to serve you; however, as president, I have done very little. Our division has moved forward on the shoulders and efforts of legislative advocates such as Neal Sheeley and Jim Anastasi; conference organizer Chris Secrist; our secretary, Peg O'Rourke; student representatives, Mary Green and Sonja Stutzman; treasurer, Megan Murphy; our ethics chair, Peg O'Rourke, and committee members Keith Schrag, Mary Sue Green, Audrey Schoenthal, Francine Ybarra-Rojas and Janette Miller; Mike McClain, our communications chair; and all the other wonderful individuals who make sure our marriage and family therapy training program is in sync with COAMFTE standards; our volunteers; and countless past, present, and future members who recognize:

1. There is more to being a marriage and family therapist than simply obtaining a license;
2. Competence and scope of practice in the field is a life-learning and integrating process;
3. Quality of learning cannot be measured simply by grades, test scores, books or articles published;
4. In spite of what insurance companies say or are willing to pay, marriage and family therapy is still as much of an art as it is a science. If we lose the creative dimension of our practice, we lose the healing quality of the soul of our being.

Our division is very fortunate to have Jim Anastasi as our president-elect of IAMFT. Jim will finish my term and then start his own term as president. Thank you very much for this wonderful opportunity to work with all of you and such a skilled and dedicated board of directors!

Peace be with you.

Sincerely,

Wayne Clark, Ph.D.

## Student Spotlight - Kevin Zimmerman



When I was living in Moscow, Russia, in 2001, I had a dream... literally. I dreamed that I was studying family therapy at a university – I even remember what the buildings looked like. I had already graduated from the University of Arizona with a double major in journalism and Russian. Several months after my dream, I found myself at Brigham Young University in Utah, studying not family therapy, but linguistics! It was in the linguistics program that I met my wife, Roseli, who was born in Brazil. With a master's degree in linguistics under my belt, and more importantly, a new family, I made the decision to go back to plan A and pursue a career as a therapist. As a new master's student at Iowa State University's MFT program, I've done my best to keep family life my priority while meeting the demands of graduate work. It's not always easy, but thankfully I have a

supportive wife who takes terrific care of our two boys, Joshua and Ethan.

When I'm not studying or helping out at home, I enjoy cooking, photography, creating videos, and listening to NPR. My photographs and videos are mostly of the kids. Although I'm still pursuing my dream of becoming a licensed therapist in private practice, I'm living my other dream of having a family of my own.



# Letter from the Incoming President

by Jim Anastasi

*(Continued from page 1)*

As you know, positive change does not happen alone--we need the energy of all of you. It was through the efforts of a large number of us that we have been able to work with Blue Cross/Blue Shield. It will be with the involvement of many that we will be able to get the parity bill passed and retain an MFT program in Iowa, as well as other worthwhile endeavors. Your support is essential.

Further information will be coming via e-mail in the next weeks. Please be responsive. Any suggestions, ideas, or concerns can be e-mailed to me at [acservices1010@qwest.net](mailto:acservices1010@qwest.net), or call at 641-423-4180.

Thank you in advance for your support of our profession and our association.

Sincerely, Jim Anastasi

## Student Spotlight - Sonja Stutzam



My name is Sonja Stutzman and I am currently a first year graduate student in the Marriage and Family Therapy program at Iowa State University. During my undergraduate studies at Iowa State I was involved with the Delta Delta Delta sorority holding the position of the Vice President of Administration. I also participated in Dance Marathon, Blood Drive, Human Science Council, and volunteered with Youth and Shelter Services. I graduated from Iowa State in December of 2006 with a B.S. in Child, Adult, and Family Services. I began my journey at Iowa State in 2003 knowing that I wanted to help others, but originally thought that would be through the power of medicine. After working as an undergraduate research and office assistant for Dr. Mary Jane Brotherson I realized that I wanted to help others through the power of therapy. I began my internship at Beloit Residential Treatment Facility for children in my senior year. I learned that I wanted to work specifically with families in an individualized setting. I also began applying for graduate schools at this time with my heart set on the Marriage

and Family Therapy program at Iowa State. Mary Sue Green has been an amazing mentor to me and assisted me in the transition from undergraduate to graduate school. After learning that I was accepted I was also promoted to the caseworker position at Beloit and I am currently working with pre-adolescent males. I have been working with these boys for ten months and enjoy my work very much. I recently took the position of the committee head for the Family Engagement Committee, which provides trainings to social workers, foster care providers, families, and community members across the state.

I grew up in the small southeast Iowa town of Kalona and have come to enjoy and am blessed with a blended family consisting of three stepbrothers, one biological brother, a step father and a step mother as well as two biological parents. My family and I enjoy traveling. Last spring I traveled to Europe with my mother, and our family is looking forward to a trip to Australia this summer. I also enjoy skiing, snowboarding, camping, hiking, running, watching movies, cooking and spending time with friends.

My future goals include finishing my masters degree at Iowa State and continuing on to earn my doctoral degree in Human Development and Family Studies. I would like to be able to teach as well as work in a clinical setting. I would also like to have a family which includes becoming a foster parent to children in need. After recently being elected as the student representative for the Iowa Association of Marriage and Family Therapy I am very excited to become involved with the organization at a state level. My research interests include looking at patterns in intergenerational relationships in couples and families, the effectiveness of pre-marital counseling programs and marital enrichment programs, prevention programs for couples in distress, and predictors in marital satisfaction. I am currently working with Dr. Jennifer Margrett on my thesis.

# IAMFT Legislative Update

January 25, 2008

## IAMFT ON THE HILL

What a great turnout of LMFTs for the legislative day on the Hill. Thanks also to the representatives from the mental health counselors association who also joined us. Your visit helped to reinforce the importance of expanding insurance coverage to include all mental health providers.

## UPDATE ON PARITY

The approach to parity that we are taking in conjunction with a coalition of other groups is service parity. The bills we are working on will require insurance plans to provide mental health and substance abuse coverage. Provider parity, which is the other approach, is seen as less politically viable, does not have the support of the other mental health groups and is less likely to become law.

When talking with your legislators, it is important to remember the distinction between service parity and provider parity. We are looking to ensure that insurance policies cover mental health. We are **not** seeking legislation that requires insurance policies to cover LMFTs. The end goal is the same but the service parity approach is seen as having a better chance.

On an added note, there was some concern that Iowa code does not specifically include LMFTs in the definition of a mental health provider. The administrative rule (passed by IA Dept of Human Services to implement the law) specifically includes LMFTs. Thus, any service parity bill will cover your profession.

## MANDATE COMMISSION PROPOSED

As we work toward parity, the insurance industry is working to convince legislators that mandate issues are best handled by a Commission. While we have not seen the specific proposal, the basic concept is that a Commission would be appointed to review any insurance mandate and determine whether it was necessary based on current research, availability of providers, and cost to the consumer.

The Commission idea is a way to deflect resolving coverage issues within the insurance industry in Iowa. We are leaning toward opposition of this proposal because it does little to get us to parity and could become a very political process that provides even more power to the insurance companies. However, until the bill is introduced and we have seen the actual language, we are just expressing concern.

## BILLS OF INTEREST

HF 2033	Provides mental health parity for veterans	Introduced 1-15-08 by Zirkelbach. Referred to Veteran Affairs
HF 769	Provides mental health parity for children, state employees and employees of businesses with at least 50 employees	4-28-07 referred to House Human Resources 1-14-08 referred to subcommittee Smith, Wessel-Kroschell, Roberts
HSB 564	Provides mental health parity for children only	1-23-08 introduced by House Human Resources Referred to subcommittee Wessel-Kroschell, Abdul-Samad, Soderberg

For information on committee meetings and legislators, please refer to the General Assembly website at [www.legis.state.ia.us](http://www.legis.state.ia.us)

### **PREPARED BY:**

Emily Piper, IAMFT Legislative Consultant

[EMILY80@MCHSI.COM](mailto:EMILY80@MCHSI.COM)

515-202-7772



# IAMFT Action Request

## **Background**

In 2008, the Legislature will consider major health care legislation to require all Iowans to have health insurance coverage. As part of this effort, IAMFT is working with a coalition of other providers to secure parity in insurance reimbursement for mental health care services. Recent meetings with Senate leadership on the health care debate assures us that they are in agreement that this is important but we did not receive a formal commitment that this will be part of any health insurance package passed in 2008.

The health care bill is still in the drafting stages. Its first stop in both the House and the Senate will be the Human Resources Committees. From there, it will proceed to the Commerce Committees (jurisdiction over insurance issues). Its final stop will be the Ways and Means Committees (jurisdiction over tax and fee issues).

We have had preliminary discussions with the chairmen of the House and Senate Human Resources Committees about inclusion of a fair practice standard or parity for mental health care providers. The response was positive but we need more pressure to ensure this will occur in 2008.

## **Action Needed**

PLEASE CONTACT YOUR SENATOR AND REPRESENTATIVE, especially those who are members of the House and Senate Human Resources Committee. A list of those key members is provided with this action request. The following link will help you to find your legislator and contact information: <http://www.legis.state.ia.us/FindLeg/>

A personal contact is best. Phone numbers are available on the General Assembly web site. To email your legislator, use the following format: [firstname.lastname@legis.state.ia.us](mailto:firstname.lastname@legis.state.ia.us).

## **Key Talking Points**

- Enactment of any legislation to require health insurance coverage for all Iowans must include a provision that all licensed mental health providers are treated equally for insurance reimbursement.
- Mental health parity will make mental health services and treatment more affordable, thereby increasing access for all Iowans.
- All major mental health providers support a provision to provide parity for insurance coverage.

For further information please contact IAMFT legislative consultant Emily Piper at 515-202-7772 or [emily80@mchsi.com](mailto:emily80@mchsi.com).

## **Senate Human Resources Committee**

Amanda Ragan, chair (D)  
Jerry Behn (R)  
Nancy Boettger (R)  
Joe Bolkcom (D)  
Bill Dotzler (D)  
Jack Hatch (D)  
David Johnson (R)  
Keith Kreiman (D)  
Dave Mulder (R)  
Becky Schmitz (D)  
Jim Seymour (R)  
Herman Quirnbach (D)  
Frank Wood (D)

## **House Human Resources Committee**

Mark Smith, Chair (D)  
Ako Abdul-Samad (D)  
Polly Granzow (R)  
Ro Foege (D)  
Wayne Ford (D)  
Greg Forristall (R)  
Pat Grassley (R)  
Dave Heaton (R)  
Lisa Heddens (D)  
Bruce Hunter (D)  
David Jacoby (D)  
Mary Mascher (D)  
Linda Miller (R)  
Tyler Olson (D)  
Eric Palmer (D)  
Janet Petersen (D)  
Rod Roberts (R)  
Chuck Soderberg (R)  
Walt Tomenga (R)  
Linda Upmeyer (R)  
Beth Wessel-Kroeschell (D)

## From the Treasurer

Happy New Year to you all! In this new year, why don't you make a pledge to support your profession by making a donation to IAMFT? Your check is always welcome! Please make it out to IAMFT and send it to Megan Murphy, IAMFT, 4380 Palmer Bldg., Ames, IA 50011-4380. Remember, no amount is too small, and all donations are greatly needed and much



## Job Connections

The Iowa City VA Health Care System is seeking a full-time Counseling Psychologist or Marriage and Family Therapist for the Mental Health Service Line. The Psychologist or Marriage and Family Therapist will provide psychological services to veterans enrolled in the PTSD Clinical Team (PCT) and the general psychology clinic. Incumbent will be responsible for providing family therapy, marital therapy, group therapy, and individual therapy to combat veterans and their families, which involvement encompasses both Psychiatry and Psychology services, through a full range of mental health assessment and intervention services. Doctorate required. American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy clinical member status and Iowa license as a Marriage and Family Therapist preferred. Qualified applicants are encouraged to apply online at [www.USAJOBS.gov](http://www.USAJOBS.gov) or <http://www.vacareers.va.gov/>

Human Resources  
VA Medical Center  
601 Hwy 6 W  
Iowa City, IA 52246  
(319) 338-0581 ext. 97720  
FAX: (319) 887-4977

## IAMFT Board of Directors—2008

President	Jim Anastasi, M.S. acservices1010@qwest.net	Membership	Kathy Anastasi, M.S. acservices1010@qwest.net
President Elect	Jim Anastasi, M.S. acservices1010@qwest.net	Communications	Mike McClain, Ph.D. IAMFTcommunications@yahoo.com 515-291-8889
Past President	Wayne Clark, Ph.D. suespruce@aol.com	Conference	Christine Secrist, Ph.D. csecristme@aol.com 515-465-5739
Treasurer	Megan Murphy, Ph.D. mjmurphy@iastate.edu 515-294-2745	Elections	Sarah Gellhaus Thomas, M.S. dsthomas@mchsi.com
Secretary	Peg O'Rourke, Ph.D. Peg@lisco.com	Student Representative	Sonja Stutzman,

## Ethics Corner

The IAMFT Ethics Committee will meet in Ames on February 29, 2008. The meeting will be held at the office of Keith Schrag at 233 South Walnut from 1-3:30 pm.

Directions: From I-35 take the Highway 30 West exit. Go to the Elwood Drive exit, then north to South 4<sup>th</sup>. Turn right, go past Hy-Vee and turn into the parking lot before the traffic light. It is a flat roofed brown building called Walnut center.

The committee is working on the ethics workshop for the IAMFT Conference in April. The workshop will focus on professional wills and record custodianship and retention after death, retirement or disability.

There is much to learn about professional wills and what has to happen for clients after the death of their therapist. Some states are passing laws addressing this so we should all be more aware.

As always, we encourage everyone to come to an ethics meeting or join the ethics committee. Our meetings are lively and enlightening.

Send any ethics discussion questions or topics to me at [peg@lisco.com](mailto:peg@lisco.com). We cannot give you an official answer but we can give some feedback. We get some of our workshop ideas from these questions.

Peg O'Rourke, Chair

## Good Stuff

Please register for our 2008 annual conference at IAMFT.com and spend time with Dr. Ken Hardy, our keynote speaker.

