



**ASSOCIATION OF FAMILY
AND CONCILIATION COURTS**

Improving the lives of children and families
through the resolution of family conflict



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Executive Director's End of Year Message

Peter Salem

Happy Holidays from AFCC (and get off my lawn!)

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AFCC 56th Annual Conference



*The Future of Family Justice:
International Innovations*
May 29-June 1, 2019
Westin Harbour Castle Hotel
Toronto, Ontario, Canada

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AFCC 56th Annual Conference

The Future of Family Justice: International Innovations
May 29-June 1, 2019, Westin Harbour Castle
Toronto, Ontario, Canada

The AFCC 56th Annual Conference [program brochure](#) is now available online! Start making your plans to attend. **Look for online registration to open in early January.** Printed copies of the brochure will be mailed to AFCC members and colleagues. The scholarship application is available now on the [AFCC website](#).

Program Preview

AFCC is honored to host Justice Claire L'Heureux-Dubé (Ret.) in conversation with former AFCC President Justice Emile Kruzick to open AFCC's 56th Annual Conference. Justice Claire L'Heureux-Dubé, was the second woman appointed to Supreme Court of Canada, serving from 1987 to 2002. She was the first woman appointed as a judge to the Quebec Superior Court and the Quebec Court of Appeal, During her time on Canada's top court, she earned a reputation as a steadfast feminist and supporter of minority rights. Because roughly 40 percent of the 254 judgements that she wrote were dissents, she became known as the court's "great dissenter." [Watch here, as Justice L'Heureux-Dube talks with law students in 2013.](#)

Hotel Reservations

Make your reservations today! The Westin Harbour Castle Hotel is offering a special rate to AFCC attendees of \$239 CAD per night for single occupancy, \$259 CAD per night for double occupancy (approximately \$179/194 USD). **Rooms frequently sell out before the room block is released, we encourage you to make your reservation early!** Make your reservation by calling 1-888-627-8559 and request the AFCC special rate or [reserve online](#).

Thank you to our Diamond and Platinum Sponsors. To see a complete list of sponsors, [click here](#).

AFCC Chapter Conferences

Arizona Chapter Annual Conference

January 25-27, 2019
Sedona, Arizona

California Chapter Annual Conference

February 22-24, 2019
Westin South Coast Plaza
Costa Mesa, California

Alberta Chapter Annual Conference

March 14, 2019
Hilton Garden Inn - Calgary
Downtown
Calgary, Alberta, Canada

Texas Chapter Annual Conference

March 29-30, 2019
Hyatt Place
The Woodlands, Texas

Colorado Chapter Annual Conference

April 26, 2019
Denver, Colorado

Australia Chapter Annual Conference

August 15-17, 2019
International Convention
Centre ICC Sydney
Sydney, Australia



New AFCC Guidelines for Use of Social Science Approved

The AFCC Board of Directors approved new *Guidelines for the Use of Social Science Research in Family Law* at its November 8, 2018 meeting in Denver, CO. The *Guidelines* were developed by an interdisciplinary and international task force appointed by Dr. Marsha Kline Pruett in 2016. The *Guidelines* are intended to provide family justice practitioners with guidance, parameters, and boundaries supporting the responsible use of research in family law. They are not intended to be mandatory practice. Serving with Dr. Pruett were: Hon. William C. Fee, Chair; Stacey Platt, JD, Reporter; Milfred “Bud” Dale, JD, PhD; Kristin Doeberl, JD; Amy Holtzworth-Munroe, PhD; Janet Johnston, PhD; Gabriela Misca, PhD; Lorie Nachlis, JD.; Sol Rappaport, PhD; Michael Saini, PhD; Liana Shelby, PsyD; Hon. R. James Williams; Theresa Williams, MS; Jeffrey Wittmann, PhD; and Peter Salem, MA, Executive Director of AFCC. To view a copy of the *Guidelines*, [click here](#).

Award Nominations

AFCC awards acknowledge many important contributions made by individuals and organizations to enhance the lives of children and families involved in family courts. Your nominations help recognize these accomplishments.

Nominations for the following awards, to be presented at the AFCC Annual Conference in Toronto, will be accepted online through March 11, 2019:

- John E. VanDuzer Distinguished Service Award recognizes outstanding contributions and/or achievements by AFCC members;
- Stanley Cohen Research Award, sponsored by the Oregon Family Institute, recognizes outstanding research and/or research achievements in the field of family and divorce; and
- Irwin Cantor Innovative Program Award recognizes innovation in court-connected or court-related programs created by AFCC members.

[Submit a nomination online, see past recipients, learn more about the awards and criteria.](#)

Board of Directors Nominations

The AFCC Nominating Committee is seeking nominations for individuals to serve on the AFCC Board of Directors. Recommended individuals must be AFCC members and have an interest in and knowledge of AFCC and its work. Nominations must be received by January 31, 2019, in order to be considered by the committee prior to the election at the

AFCC 56th Annual Conference in Toronto. The term is three years, beginning July 1, 2019, and concluding June 30, 2022. If you or a member you know is interested, please send the first and last name, contact information, resume, and a letter of intent to the AFCC Nominating Committee via email to afcc@afccnet.org.

AFCC Annual Appeal and Scholarship Fund

Please consider helping your colleagues attend AFCC conferences by making a donation to the AFCC Scholarship Fund. AFCC is offering 40 scholarships for the 56th Annual Conference, May 29-June 1, 2019, in Toronto. AFCC scholarship recipients increase our diversity by bringing professionals from different backgrounds, representing the many disciplines encompassed by who we are as an organization. **Will you contribute to allow a hard-working professional attend an AFCC conference? Thank you to those who have already donated!**

[Donate Today](#)



AFCC Webinar Corner

Highlights of 2018 in Family Court Research:
FCR and More
Robert E. Emery, PhD
January 9, 2019, 1:00-2:00pm Eastern time
USA

[Registration is now open](#)

AFCC members may access the recording for free, along with all other previous webinars through the [Member Center](#) of the AFCC website. Not a member? Click here to [join today!](#)

March Training Programs

Register now for AFCC's March training programs, in collaboration with Loyola University Chicago School of Law Civitas ChildLaw Center. Each program is eligible for up to 12 hours of continuing education.

Advanced Training in Personality Disorders in Legal Disputes: Understanding, Managing, Treating, and Setting Limits

William A. Eddy, LCSW, Esq.

March 4-5, 2019

Parenting Coordination: Fundamentals, Concepts, and Interventions in Parenting Coordination

Debra K. Carter, PhD

March 6-7, 2019

[More Information](#)

Where in the World is AFCC?

#AFCCHats #whereintheworldisAFCC?



Robert Simon living it up on the Big Island



Justice Philip Clay
on top of Huckleberry Hill overlooking Lake
Muskoka in Ontario, Canada

#AFCCHats are everywhere! Follow along on [Facebook](#) to see the submissions. Want to join in? Show your AFCC pride by taking a picture with your AFCC hat in your hometown, while your out on vacation, or at work. Email the photo with the location to [Corinne Bennett](#) and we will feature it on the [AFCC Facebook page](#). To sweeten the deal, an award for the best picture will be presented at the annual conference in Toronto!

Chapter News

Congratulations to the **Missouri Chapter** for winning the AFCC fall Chapter Challenge and \$2500 prize! Missouri grew by 32 members, a whopping 37.65 percent increase, between July 1 and November 30, 2018—and they continue to steadily grow.

The **Massachusetts Chapter** hosted a Member Mingle on December 5. Each member was asked to bring one unwrapped gift for a child in DCF custody and one guest who might be interested in learning more about the MAAFCC. They had close to 30 guests in attendance representing the board, membership, and E2M. The gifts donated were submitted to the DCF and Wonderfund for distribution to the children in need.



President Pat Brady, Tony Pelusi, and Immediate Past President Donna Feinberg.



Steve Shapes, Sol Levin, Harry Somers



President Pat Brady and Membership Chairperson Steve Burns with the gifts

AFCC eNEWS

The AFCC eNEWS is the monthly e-newsletter of the Association of Family and Conciliation Courts. The eNEWS provides up-to-date information for professionals including practice tips, case law and research updates, international news and the latest initiatives in family law and conflict resolution. The AFCC eNEWS is free and you do not need to be a member of AFCC to subscribe. [Subscribe here](#). AFCC members are free to share eNEWS content.

EDITOR:
[Leslye Hunter](#)

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eNEWS

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Message from the Executive Director

Peter Salem

Happy Holidays from AFCC (and get off my lawn!)

I'm not sure exactly when I became an old white guy, but one day I looked in the mirror and there I was. I probably should have seen it coming: thinning hair, aching joints, extra pounds, and that blood pressure medication. Even worse, my softball team moved to the "senior" division. I had to quit because games are played on Wednesday mornings when I am at work.

The thing is, I didn't used to think that being an old white guy was necessarily a bad thing. For me, it evokes memories of the neighbor, sitting in a lawn chair, who yelled at us kids to ride our bikes slower and be careful where we threw that ball, and who told stories about the neighborhood in the good old days. As a youth I also did not fully appreciate that there is a distinction between old white guys and grumpy old white men. Today, it seems that those differences are profound, as articulated [here](#) by Washington Post Opinion writer Helaine Olen:

The United States is a country dominated by grumpy old white men. Instead of yelling at kids to get off their lawn or to turn down the music, they yell at women, immigrants, foreign leaders, and anyone else who wants a place at the table. The motivation: to keep the world as it was, when white American men were on top, and everyone else was just grateful for any consideration at all.

Today, the grumpy old white man seems to sit apart from just about everyone else in the community, although Olen notes that women, such as Rosanne Barr, can also be grumpy old white men. Younger people might also fit into the grumpy old white men category, e.g., many of the torch bearing marchers in Charlottesville. So being a grumpy old white man is apparently not the exclusive province of old white guys. Nonetheless, the point is well taken that even though they may not be men, or old, these are the people who typically lead our institutions, frequently offer their thoughts and prayers, and yearn for a return to "better" days, which sows deep divisions in our society.

So, what does any of this have to do with AFCC? Well, sadly, the culture of attack often associated with grumpy old white men, the “my way or the highway” approach, and the unwillingness to accept a different point of view, seems to be a part of the family justice community and by extension AFCC. There is anti-Semitic tripe posted about AFCC on the internet, and Twitter and Facebook campaigns that disparage our very existence. Of far greater importance, recent homicide arrests in Ohio, apparently related to a custody dispute, and the murder of family law professionals in Arizona last spring, make it clear that threats should never be taken idly.

It is good news that nobody in our AFCC world (not even us old white guys) seems interested in a return to days gone by, when domestic violence was a family secret, fathers visited their children every other weekend, and litigation was the dispute resolution option of choice. That said, if we are truly interested in moving forward, we must insist on collaborative ways of doing so. The use of “alternative facts” or selective sharing of research to support uncompromising political agendas undermines our collective integrity. More importantly, it taints what we offer to the families and children who depend on thoughtful, measured guidance.

So, after all of this, here (finally!) is my holiday message. This work is hard—really hard work—and we are all in it together: public and private service providers, researchers, administrators, consultants, families, and especially children. AFCC will continue to serve as a big tent and provide opportunities for many different voices to be heard. If we do our job well, you will probably not agree with everything that you hear. I ask that you listen anyway.

We have just completed the program for AFCC’s 56th Annual Conference in Toronto next May. The conference will include presenters who: (1) favor a statutory equal parenting time presumption; (2) conducted research that found claims of parental alienation are more seriously considered than claims of abuse in court; (3) discuss reforms to Canada’s Divorce Act; and, (4) contemplate the retirement of terms such as “high conflict” and “parental alienation.” There will be many other sessions (more than 100 in all) that promote opportunities for listening, learning and constructive dialogue.

I hope you will join us in Toronto. I am even more hopeful that in 2019 every one of the 5,300+ members of the AFCC community will help to tone down the rhetoric; that we can appreciate the multiple perspectives that are part and parcel of an interdisciplinary and international association; and, that we can work together in a manner consistent with AFCC mission, vision, and values.

My wish for all of you is peace, health, and happiness in the year to come. And, please, do try to say off my lawn.

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