



FOUNDED IN 1963

# AFCC NEWS

ASSOCIATION OF FAMILY AND CONCILIATION COURTS

Volume 28, Number 3

Summer 2009



## Stacking the Odds in Favor of Children

Make plans now to attend AFCC's Regional Training Conference, *Interventions for Family Conflict: Stacking the Odds in Favor of Children*, November 5-7, 2009. The conference will be held at the Peppermill Resort Spa Casino in Reno, Nevada.

This three day training conference is comprised of professional tracks for judges, lawyers, mediators, parenting coordinators and custody evaluators, with opportunities for continuing education and ethics programs for both legal and mental health professionals. Each track has a full-day pre-conference institute and two days of three-hour workshops designed to meet the training needs of the specific discipline, presented within the AFCC multi-disciplinary model.

The institutes include *Children in Court*, designed for legal professionals to address the challenging issues related to children's involvement in the family court processes; *Challenging the Culture of Conflict*, an advanced institute for parenting coordinators addressing strategies and interventions; *Conducting Brief Assessments*, designed for custody evaluators who are facing increasing caseloads and decreasing resources; and *Advanced Mediation Techniques: Cognitive Behavioral Problem Solving and the Art of the Question*, for mediators exploring how well-phrased questions can help lead to the resolution of seemingly intractable conflicts. The plenary session, presented by Marsha Kline Pruett, Ph.D., M.S.L., *Children, Courts and Conflict: Current Research and Applications for Practice* will examine a landmark evaluation of the Family Intake Assessment Screen developed to help Connecticut Court Services to identify services

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**ASSOCIATION OF FAMILY  
AND CONCILIATION COURTS**

AFCC is an interdisciplinary and international association of professionals dedicated to the resolution of family conflict.

**Mission**

To improve the lives of children and families through the resolution of family conflict.

**Vision**

A justice system in which all professionals work collaboratively through education, support and access to services to achieve the best possible outcome for children and families.

**Values**

- Collaboration and respect among professions and disciplines
- Learning through inquiry, discussion and debate
- Innovation in addressing the needs of families and children in conflict
- Empowering families to resolve conflict and make decisions about their future

*Views expressed in the AFCC News are those of individual contributors and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of AFCC.*

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## AFCC News

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## President's Message

I am humbled and honoured to be the 47th president of AFCC, the fifth from Canada and the third from my province of Ontario. In this role I consider myself a trustee of our membership. As such, I am inspired by the confidence you have placed in me. My dedication to AFCC is renewed by your trust and I assume this position with a keen commitment to you, the women and men from all disciplines.

I cannot help but reflect on the words of Dr. Martin Luther King, who on accepting the Nobel Prize for Peace, said, "I accept this in the spirit of a curator of some precious heirloom which he holds in trust for its true owners." AFCC is to me such a unique heirloom. As your President, I am mindful of my role and duties as your representative and spokesperson.

The membership of AFCC is such that most of our members are leaders in their own field and profession. As

*My goal over the next twelve months shall be to meet as many of you as possible, hopefully in person.*

I assume my role as President, I cannot help but reflect on what makes a good leader. Leadership requires a certain level of intellect, but not necessarily great genius. You need a certain level of social skills, but not necessarily those of a great salesperson. However, you do need a compulsion to operate at two levels: to be a doer and a thinker.

Leadership requires passion, commitment, and integrity. In my experience, the most important underlying factor in leadership is a search for a match between what is guided by the heart

and then by what the job requires. Someone once told me that leaders are "people who leave their footprints in their areas of passion." Footprints are easy to leave. The powerful part of that phrase is in the second part. I am passionate about AFCC, its unique interdisciplinary nature and the valuable legacy AFCC has established in the 47 years of its existence.

The term of president is a one year period for a very good reason. It is revolving so that the President is truly representative of our membership and so that the level of passion for AFCC is renewed each year. I am mindful of the fine example and footprints of the women and men who have served as presidents before me.

This has been a difficult year for our economies everywhere in the world. I thank our outgoing President, Robin Deutsch, who has been outstanding in her service to AFCC this past year. While being AFCC President is personally rewarding, it does not come without a price. Robin took

the time from her family and her busy practice to serve. I thank her for the year of committed service and her accomplishments and footprint as our President.

The New Orleans Annual Conference was a great success. With almost 900 registrants, the attendance exceeded our expectations. Our plenaries and workshops were of the highest calibre and I heard nothing but favourable comments about the presentations and offerings. I thank everyone for their participation and dedication in making the AFCC Annual Conference such a good experience.

The forthcoming year promises to be an exciting one for our Association. Our Regional Conference this year will be in Reno, Nevada, November 5-7, 2009. The program will focus on children as we explore how skill development, relevant research and theory can be incorporated into practice. As we look forward to May 2010, our Annual Conference in Denver, Colorado will center on alienation and high-conflict families with a special edition of the *Family Court Review* dedicated to that subject.

As more and more lawyers are retaining the services of mental health professionals as consultants to help their clients prepare for a custody evaluation or assessment or to help them prepare for trial, a Child Custody Consultation Task Force has been established. I was delighted when our former Presidents Dr. Robin Deutsch and Hon. William Fee accepted to serve as co-chairs.

With the assistance of the best staff at our offices in Madison, Wisconsin, and the new Board that took office July 1, 2009, I am rolling up my sleeves for the work that lies ahead. Our committees have been appointed, the Task Force is in place and we begin forging ahead. I look forward to your ideas, comments and points of view. I also look forward to working with you in the forthcoming year.

My goal over the next twelve months shall be to meet as many of you as possible, hopefully in person.

My personal regards,



Hon. Emile R. Kruzick



**Hon. Emile Kruzick**  
AFCC President  
Brampton, ON, Canada

## MEMBER PROFILE

# Hon. Emile R. Kruzick

### **What does your current position entail?**

I am a Justice of the Superior Court in Ontario, Canada; Judge in the Central West Region of our Province and the Administrative Judge in Orangeville. I hear civil, criminal and family cases. Given that I was a family law lawyer before my appointment, family law is my area of choice and where I am most comfortable.

### **How did you become interested in the field of separation and divorce?**

I studied law at Dalhousie Law School in Halifax, Nova Scotia. There I enrolled in an elective course on Family Law and the rest is history. Professor Murray Fraser was passionate about the subject of family law which he taught. He was most encouraging of me as young student. That was it. I sought out and researched where I could best fulfill my new found passion. I discovered and articulated with the first boutique family law firms in Canada, MacDonald and Ferrier, in Toronto, Ontario. Four years thereafter, and while still in my twenties, they asked me to become a partner. Because family law was an evolving field in the early 70's, it was an exciting time to enter the practice area.

### **What advice would you give to someone entering the field now?**

When I entered family law I had wonderful role models and mentors in my partners James MacDonald, Q.C. and the Hon. Justice Lee Ferrier, now also a member of my court. I would therefore encourage someone entering the field to seek out a good role model and mentor.

Family Law is not the most lucrative field of law. Given that it is a personal service area, while the financial rewards may not be as great there as in other areas of the law, there can be no greater satisfaction than knowing that you have helped someone during one of the most difficult periods of life.

### **What are the greatest challenges (or biggest changes) you see in the field now?**

At both the public and private level, the greatest challenges for the field at this point in time are economic. Rather than enhancing resources and improving our court system, most in North America are suffering cutbacks. Notwithstanding population growth in many of our large urban areas the system is being asked to do more with less. In the past forty years our society has experienced major changes. We need a system that is accessible, affordable and effective. We need access to justice to protect the rights of children and families.

In the private area, access to affordable services is out of reach for the average person. Legal Aid and Pro Bono services are difficult to secure. The challenge for someone entering the field is to provide good and affordable service.

### **What would you like to see happen in the field 10 years from now?**

Continuing with that line of reasoning, I would like to see a Court and a system of dispute resolution that is more accessible, more affordable and more focused on problem solving. My vision is for a more holistic court where front-end family court services are readily available. To this end I would like to see conflict resolution at the earliest possible stage in a case. There is great benefit to early information and education. I would therefore envision a fully resourced Court that encourages and provides the parties with the best possible forum to resolve their dispute.

### **What aspect of your work do you enjoy the most?**

The greatest job satisfaction is enabling and empowering individuals to resolve their own problems. Doing so ensures the longevity of the resolution or the ability of the parties to modify their agreement as circumstances change.

### **How did you first learn about AFCC? When was that?**

My former law partner and mentor Jim MacDonald, a progressive thinker, encouraged me to join AFCC in 1976. My wife Josie and I attended our first family law conference in Tucson, Arizona, both as delegates. She registered as an educator and I as a family law lawyer. The rest is history. Just goes to show that if you hang around long enough, you can become president of AFCC.

### **What do you like most about AFCC?**

The membership of AFCC is one of the most inspiring groups of professionals I have met. The interdisciplinary nature of AFCC makes it an organization like no other. Uniquely, AFCC brings together professionals from all around the globe. They are the most talented and accomplished in their fields. I like the fact that they are dedicated to improving the lives of children and family through conflict resolution. The progressive thinking of AFCC continues to be inspiring and encouraging.

### **What is your proudest personal achievement?**

I count myself to be one of the most fortunate of people. While it may sound like a cliché, my family, my wife Josie and our daughter, Nicole, have to be number one. I was blessed to be raised in a hard-working first generation immigrant family, where my parents put their children and family first. My mother always worked outside the home and both of my parents often held more than one job. While I can never repay my parents for their many sacrifices, it gives me some satisfaction to know that in some small way, their hope and vision have been fulfilled. In my professional life I have been blessed with awards and recognitions. However, again for fear of being

*continued on page 11*

# Evidence-Based Practice as a Framework for Mental Health Practitioners within the Family Law Context

By **Michael Saini, Ph.D.**

Assistant Professor  
Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work  
University of Toronto, Canada

## EBP as a Framework

It was not too long ago that Drs. Richard Gelles, Janet Johnston, Joan B. Kelly and Kyle Pruett addressed the politics of research in their 2005 plenary session entitled *The Use, Abuse and Misuse of Social Science Research* at the AFCC's 42nd Annual Conference in Seattle, Washington. During this seminal discourse on the role, benefits and limitations of social science evidence on "truth-seeking" and "decision-making," the presenters eloquently reminded the audience of the importance of being diligent, transparent and judicious when considering the best available evidence in family law matters. Evidence-based practice is a framework that responds to calls for increased precision and accountability of evidence relevant to children and families. EBP is defined as "the conscientious, explicit and judicious use of current evidence in making decisions about the care of individual [clients] patients" (Sackett, Rosenberg, Gray, Haynes & Richardson, 1996, p.71). EBP requires a commitment from researchers, legal professionals, policy makers and practitioners to explicitly integrate practice wisdom and client preferences with empirical evidence using transparent and systematic procedures for knowledge creation and exchange.

Mental health practitioners contribute to family law matters by providing counseling, mediation, coordination, advice to clients, evaluations of custody and access, dispositions, expert reports, and expert testimony, to name a few. These provisions of service are generally considered beneficial, at least in part, because of the assumption that practitioners possess the clinical wisdom and knowledge to identify and deliver evidence-informed assessments and interventions supported by rigorous scientific research. It may be a surprise to some, however, that mental health practitioners are not always current on the best available evidence and many do not practice the principles of EBP. Although there is no study that has considered the research fluency of mental health practitioners working within the courts, studies in other practice areas have shown that practitioners do not consistently use research to inform decision-making in clinical practice (Gambrill & Gibbs, 2002, Gibbs, 2003; Rosen, 1994).

## EBP and Daubert

Based on various case law and legislations, mental health practitioners have a legal mandate to practice EBP within the family law context. In the 1993 U.S. Supreme Court decision, *Daubert v. Merrell Dow Pharmaceutical, Inc.*, three key provisions were provided to determine the validity and admissibility of scientific evidence: 1) expert

testimony must have a scientific basis; 2) the scientific knowledge must assist the trier of fact; and 3) the reasoning and methodology underlying the testimony must stand as scientifically valid when applied to the facts at issue. Like EBP's emphasis on the "best available evidence," Daubert recognizes the various forms of evidence but challenges mental health practitioners to determine the most appropriate and valid scientific knowledge to guide decision making. The onus is on the practitioner to scrutinize the information in a systematic, transparent, judicious and ethical manner so that it can be appropriately adjudicated.

## Promoting EBP

The critical question concerning EBP is not whether social science should be considered in family law matters but how to make this connection more deliberate. Focusing on the principles of EBP strengthens the focus of working on behalf of children and families because it urges the field to develop standards of care based on the best available evidence. The EBP framework helps to make decisions based on judicious scrutiny of the evidence, to minimize risk of bias, to support practices based on established scientific methodologies, to discard ineffective or harmful practices, and to help distinguish valid evidence from pseudoscience or "junk science."

## Future Directions of EBP

It is logical, ethical and beneficial to integrate EBP principles into the family law context. EBP involves adopting a mindset for lifelong learning, which includes asking relevant and applicable client-related questions, becoming efficient at locating evidence, building competency to critically assess the merits of evidence based on methodological standards, synthesizing data to make sense of the findings and any contradictory results, and taking appropriate action based on the evidence (Gibbs, 2003). As a critical consumer of evidence, the obligation is on each professional to build competency and fluency of various research designs to guide practice.

Within an EBP framework, several steps can be taken to build competency, including:

- Become immersed in the issues relevant to children and families involved in the family law context by learning about the state of knowledge relevant to key areas of research, such as alienation, domestic violence, high conflict, parenting plans, overnight visitations, relocation, etc.
- Actively participate in organizations and associations that embrace the integration of practice wisdom, client views and social science in the creation and dissemination of knowledge for the field.

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# Top Things to Do and See in Reno

## Nevada Museum of Art

Founded in 1931, the museum is the oldest cultural institution in the state of Nevada. The museum moved to its current building, designed by Will Bruder, in 2003. Over the conference dates, exhibitions will include "Blink: George Legrady," an abstract digital animation exhibit involving matrices of human eyes; and "Art and Infrastructure: Patricia Johanson and the Petaluma Wetlands Park," where art, ecology, landscape and functional use meet. And don't miss "Rembrandt: The Embrace of Darkness and Light," opening Nov. 7. [www.nevadaart.org](http://www.nevadaart.org)

## Lake Tahoe

Less than 30 miles from Reno, take the time to visit this beautiful fresh water lake. The winter offers great skiing opportunities and the views are spectacular year round. There are opportunities for water sports, scuba diving, boating and beach activities into the fall. There is no shortage of on-land outdoor activities either, with numerous hiking trails and bike trails. Many of the towns on the lake offer dining, shopping and gambling opportunities as well. [www.visitinglaketahoe.com](http://www.visitinglaketahoe.com)

## National Automobile Museum

With over 224 vehicles on display, this museum contains one of the greatest car collections anywhere. All beautifully restored, displayed on replica streets from the 1930's, 40's and 50's. Collections include Bill Harrah's (Harrah's Casinos) "Jerrari" which he used to drive from Reno to Lake Tahoe in the winter. A Jerrari is his custom 1977 Jeep Wagoneer with a Ferrari engine. [www.automuseum.org](http://www.automuseum.org)



## Fleischman Planetarium and Science Center at the University of Nevada

Family Friendly! There are generally four or five movies to choose from, most are about 45 minutes long starting at the top of each hour. The complex also has a museum with changing hands-on displays and a gift shop, as well as a free public observatory and the "Hall of the Solar System" exhibit. [www.planetarium.unr.edu](http://www.planetarium.unr.edu)

## Truckee River Walk

This river flows from Lake Tahoe to Pyramid Lake, and right through downtown Reno, the place where thousands of divorcees have thrown their wedding rings into the flowing waters. Birds of all kinds, including Canadian geese, hawks and kingfishers can be seen foraging for food. Also check out the shopping, dining and nightlife throughout the Riverwalk District. [www.renriver.org](http://www.renriver.org)

## Lake Ridge Golf Course

Designed by Robert Trent Jones, this course features a par 3 island and is considered one of Reno's best. The layout offers breathtaking views of Reno and the surrounding mountains. Located just 4-1/2 miles from downtown, it's also one of Reno's most accessible courses. [www.lakeridgegolf.com](http://www.lakeridgegolf.com)



## Circus Circus Casino

Not just a casino...circus acts from around the world perform daily from 11:15am-midnight. You can take a stroll through the Midway of Fun, which contains an exciting array of carnival style games. The building reflects a European circus theme reminiscent of the early 1900s. [www.circusreno.com](http://www.circusreno.com)

## Reno Arch

The famous lighted arch was built in 1926 to celebrate the completion of the Transcontinental Highway through Reno. In 1929 the city held a contest to give the city a motto; hence Reno became known as "The Biggest Little City in the World." Three different arches have stood in this location, the last erected in 1987. The arch that was built in 1964 is now by the National Automobile Museum. This landmark is one of the most photographed structures in the world. Located at Virginia Street and Commercial Row.

## Reno Training Conference

*Continued from page 1*

that best meet families' needs. Three-hour workshops will explore ways to reduce family conflict; work with children and self-represented litigants; ethical considerations for family lawyers, parenting coordinators, custody evaluation consultants and mediators; defining standards of practice in child custody evaluations, PC and family law in cyberspace and on social networks; domestic abuse and mediation; and more.

Please view the entire program at [www.afccnet.org](http://www.afccnet.org) and take advantage of the special AFCC room rate of just \$99 per night for a single or double room at the Peppermill. Reno has a lot to offer, including the Riverwalk district's mix of shops, boutiques and restaurants, and is within an hour's drive of 15 ski resorts, 50 golf courses, Lake Tahoe and the state capital Carson City.

# AFCC Annual Awards Presented

AFCC members were honored for their accomplishments at the AFCC 46th Annual Conference Awards Luncheon, May 28, 2009 in New Orleans, LA.

## John E. VanDuzer Distinguished Service Award

**Dr. Phil Bushard**, Reno, Nevada, was honored with the John E. VanDuzer Distinguished Service Award, which recognizes outstanding contributions and achievements by members of AFCC.

Dr. Bushard is a longtime AFCC member and served with distinction as AFCC Treasurer from 1992-1995 and AFCC President from 1999-2000. He has authored several books for AFCC: *Guidelines for Establishing Court-Connected Mediation, Evaluation and Conciliation Services* (1993) and *Resource Guide for Custody Evaluators – A Handbook for Parenting Evaluations* (1995); served on numerous AFCC Task Forces and Committees, and is co-chair of the current AFCC Brief Focused Assessment Task Force. He may be best known by membership for his favorite role: host in the AFCC Hospitality Suite. When he is not volunteering with AFCC, he serves as the Founding Director of the Family Mediation Program in Washoe County, Nevada.

## Stanley Cohen Distinguished Research Award

**Dr. Judith Wallerstein**, Belvedere, California, was awarded the Stanley Cohen Distinguished Research Award, which was presented with a \$400 check. Dr. Wallerstein is best known for her books, *The Unexpected Legacy of Divorce: The 25 Year Landmark Study* and *Surviving the Breakup: How Children and Parents Cope With Divorce*, co-authored with Joan B. Kelly. Dr. Wallerstein was among the first to voice the unpopular opinion that children of divorce might not emerge unscathed.

## Irwin Cantor Innovative Program Award

**UpToParents.org**, created by Charlie and Barb Asher, South Bend, Indiana, was presented with the Irwin Cantor Innovative Program Award. The Web-based program provides a personalized and interactive opportunity for separating and divorcing parents to learn more about their children's needs and to unite around meeting those needs.

## President's Award

**Dr. Janet R. Johnston**, San Jose, California, was presented the AFCC President's Award by Dr. Robin Deutsch for her exemplary service to AFCC. For three decades, Dr. Johnston has specialized in counseling, mediation and research with high-conflict, litigating divorcing couples and their children with special attention to domestic violence,

child abduction and alienated children. She has written more than 60 papers, co-authored two books (*Impasses of Divorce* and *In the Name of the Child*), two treatment manuals and a book of therapeutic stories for children. She is a frequent presenter and trainer for AFCC and is the Associate Editor for AFCC's interdisciplinary journal, *Family Court Review*. Dr. Johnston has been the recipient of many prestigious honors including the Joseph Drown Award for outstanding services to children and the John Haynes Distinguished Mediator Award from the Academy of Family Mediators. She is the only person to have received all possible individual awards from AFCC: the Distinguished Service Award (1996), the Stanley Cohn Distinguished Research Award (2000), and this year's President's Award (2009) and Meyer Elkin Award (2009).

## Meyer Elkin Award

**Dr. Peter G. Jaffe**, London, Ontario, **Dr. Janet R. Johnston**, San Jose, California, **Dr. Claire V. Crooks**, London, Ontario and **Prof. Nicholas Bala**, Kingston, Ontario, were honored with the Meyer Elkin Award for the most outstanding article in the *Family Court Review* for 2008. Their article, "Custody Disputes Involving Allegations of Domestic Violence: Toward a Differentiated Approach to Parenting Plans," was published in July 2008.

## 2009 Ambassadors

AFCC Ambassador ribbons were presented to members who routinely go above and beyond in reaching out to prospective members and to those who contribute their time and expertise. Ambassador ribbons are presented to the AFCC President as well as to members who do not serve in an official leadership position. The 2009 Ambassador ribbons were presented to: **Marilou Giovannucci**, Wethersfield, CT; **Sherrie Kibler-Sanchez**, Van Nuys, CA; **Paul Landry**, New Iberia, LA; **Karen Largent**, Anchorage, AK; **Bernie Mayer**, Kingsville, ON, Canada; and **Leslie Todd**, Baton Rouge, LA.

## Free Plenary Session Audio Online

AFCC's 46th Annual Conference audio provider, Digital Conference Providers, Inc., is offering online access to audio of the plenary sessions from the conference for free download to AFCC members. Access the audio by logging into the Member Center on the AFCC Web site and clicking "AFCC Conference Audio." If you were unable to attend or missed a workshop at the conference, all sessions can be purchased individually or as a complete set online at [www.dcpvidersonline.com/afcc/](http://www.dcpvidersonline.com/afcc/).

# AFCC Gives Back to New Orleans

## AFCC New Orleans Outreach Scholarships

AFCC awarded ten New Orleans Outreach Scholarships to the 46th Annual Conference in addition to the other 28 conference scholarships. AFCC coordinated with local organizations, including the Louisiana State Bar, Family Mediation Council of Louisiana and Collaborative Practice Group of Southeastern Louisiana to identify professionals in the New Orleans area whose practices and lives were affected by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

Ted Wegener, a new AFCC member and attorney specializing in family law from Slidell, Louisiana said:

*It was exciting to be able to attend the conference as a scholarship recipient. After almost 40 years of practice and as a board certified family law specialist in Louisiana (certified by the Louisiana Board of Legal Specialization) and a Fellow of the AAML, you get to think you know a lot about family law practice but then when you attend one of these conferences, especially with the international flavor, you realize that there are so many different approaches to tackling the thorny issues that we have to deal with in family law all the time. I thoroughly enjoyed the experience and became a member of AFCC on the second day of the Conference. I look forward to working on the establishment of a Louisiana Chapter and working with AFCC in the future.*

Thank you again to all of the members who have contributed to AFCC's Scholarship Fund. It is because of your generosity that AFCC is able to offer scholarships like these. If you would like to donate to the Scholarship Fund, please contact the AFCC office or donate online at [www.afccnet.org/about/resource\\_committee.asp](http://www.afccnet.org/about/resource_committee.asp).

## AFCC Volunteer Activity With Common Ground Relief

This year, AFCC conference attendees and their families had the opportunity to spend the Saturday afternoon following the conference volunteering with a New Orleans grassroots nonprofit called Common Ground Relief. Common Ground Relief offers both immediate assistance to residents affected by the hurricanes and long term support in rebuilding their communities.

Volunteers departed the Sheraton on a chartered bus that took them down roads less traveled rather than opting for the main thoroughfares.

Nearing Common Ground headquarters in the Lower Ninth Ward, they were able to see the levee along the Industrial Canal whose two major breaches leveled the Lower Ninth Ward.

The AFCC group (approximately 55 volunteers) was quickly divided into smaller groups for projects at different locations. The jobs included wiring, painting a home, clear-

ing out an elderly woman's home, tearing down a temporary home that had blown down, helping a paraplegic man clear his yard, and taking down some very tall weeds so relocated residents who have not returned can avoid fines.

Here is what a few of the volunteers had to say about the experience.

*We began our day with a tour of the famed lower 9th ward, dismayed that all the national publicity had brought so little to its recuperation efforts. Having toured New Orleans for a week, it seemed shocking that the lower 9th had a greater resemblance to the alligator swamp we visited than the charming French Quarter just a mile away. Our project for the day was to paint a newly constructed duplex. We discarded our personal inhibitions with other volunteers, chatted and shared our personal lives and stories.*



Group at Common Ground Head Quarters. Volunteers listen in the hot sun to Thom Pepper's orientation. Photo by Edith Croxen.

*"We felt right at home painting the house; we have been fixing our home in Tucson," said 10-year-old Kristie, the youngest volunteer that day. We were also able to meet with the next-door-neighbors, whose home was bordered by three blocks of empty lots, where homes were once stacked one alongside the next. "It was humbling to watch how residents were living day to day and wanting to share stories of loss, despair and also hope," 14-year-old Katherine remembers.*

*Being able to partake in rebuilding, talking to locals, and comparing the New Orleans meant for tourists and the New Orleans hidden behind the levees has leveled our understanding and support for the cause of Common Ground Relief. This*



The Thams: Kim, Katherine, Sue, Kristie, Ken. Photo by unknown, courtesy of Sue Tham.

*experience has allowed us to see how Common Ground rebuilds, restores and revitalizes the community affected by Hurricane Katrina.*

- Sue Tham is an AFCC member and social worker in Tucson, AZ and her family, Ken, Kim, Katherine and Kristie all participated in the volunteer day. Essay by Kim and Sue Tham.

*To be honest, at first I was skeptical that we could be of much help in such a short period of time. With fifty volunteers, it seemed a logistical hurdle to put us all to work. However, Common Ground quickly split us into small work groups; mine was assigned to help clear out an elderly woman's home. For me, it was remarkable to see how much work was left to be done, so long after Katrina. This woman's lower floor was down to the studs, and the upstairs was uninhabitable. Our group quickly teamed up to remove the last of her belongings, down a particularly narrow set of stairs. The woman seemed very appreciative, and she shared her story of loss and pain, as well as her hope in rebuilding. It was a touching experience.*

- Cory Mathews is an AFCC member and mediator in Clackamas County, Oregon.

*Volunteering was an opportunity to connect to real people and lend a helping hand, if only for a few hours. Too often what is out of sight is out of mind. Taking these few hours helped me finally understand what really happened during Hurricane Katrina, and more importantly allowed me to connect with other people. We helped a woman and her family move furniture in her home to make*

*room for the contractor to finally come in and fix it. These individual connections are so special, and I am grateful to AFCC for creating this opportunity for me. Thank you!!*

- Rebecca Stahl is an AFCC member and attorney in Phoenix, AZ.

The recovery effort continues and when talking to volunteers and residents it seems unquestionable that the Lower Ninth Ward will be rebuilt, perhaps in some ways better than before, with homes designed to withstand hurricanes and flooding, sustainable, energy efficient designs and an even stronger sense of community born from the ground up cultivated by those who survived this disaster. If you would like more information, please visit [www.commongroundrelief.org](http://www.commongroundrelief.org).

### **AFCC Donation to the Metropolitan Center for Women and Children (Metro)**

A donation was made to the Metropolitan Center for Women and Children (Metro) by AFCC in honor of the five largest donors to AFCC's Resource Development Fund.

Since 1986, Metro has offered services to residents of the Greater New Orleans area, including a 24-hour crisis line for emergency counseling and assistance, counseling for women who are or have experienced domestic violence or sexual assault, safe temporary shelter, legal information and advocacy, and referrals to the appropriate community resources based on the individual's needs.

If you would like more information, please visit [www.metrobatteredwomen.com](http://www.metrobatteredwomen.com).



Connie Beck, Rebecca Stahl, and Grace Hawkins, all from the Arizona Chapter. Photo by Edith Croxen.

## RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

### Scholarship Fund

AFCC's Resource Development Committee wishes to thank AFCC members who contributed to this year's Annual Appeal. Thanks to generous member support the fundraising goal was met and exceeded, raising over \$23,000 to support AFCC's scholarship and outreach programs. This support will enable the committee to increase the number of scholarships and scholarships with stipends awarded for the 2009-10 fiscal year.

AFCC has awarded over 100 scholarships since the program began in 2001-02. A record 42 scholarships were awarded in 2008-09 (four to the Eighth International Symposium and Congress in Albuquerque, New Mexico

and 38 to the 46th Annual Conference in New Orleans, Louisiana). These include ten New Orleans Outreach Scholarships that were awarded to professionals affected by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. This year AFCC received 125 scholarship applications.

The Resource Development Committee also would like to thank Hon. Arline Rotman (ret.) for her years of service as the Chair of the Committee. Judge Rotman is leaving the AFCC Committee to further enjoy her retirement. The Committee welcomes incoming Chair, Mary Ferriter. Ms. Ferriter is a past president of AFCC and is looking forward to the continued success of the scholarship program.

### AFCC Chapter News

#### Colorado

Congratulations to David Rolfe, Parker, Colorado, on becoming the new President of the AFCC Colorado Chapter! David is a founding member of the AFCC Colorado Chapter and has practiced as a Domestic Relations attorney since 1989. He is also trained as a mediator and parenting coordinator.

#### Louisiana

AFCC's 46th Annual Conference in New Orleans was the ideal site for the Louisiana Chapter launch event. The group is seeking approval from the AFCC Board for a provisional Chapter. Forty-five Louisiana AFCC members met on May 28th to celebrate their progress and review the timeline for future goals. The Coordinating Committee was introduced, and four committees were formed to execute the tasks involved in becoming a chapter.

#### Massachusetts

The AFCC Massachusetts Chapter held its annual conference, *Our Melting Pot: Practical Implications of Cultural Differences in Juvenile and Family Court*, with keynote speaker Sujata Warriar, Ph.D. As a follow up to the successful conference, roundtable discussions on "Cultural Issues in the Probate and Family Court" were held in April and June in Hampshire and Norfolk Counties.

The MA Chapter thanks departing board members Bill Levine, Kathy Townsend and Ruth Whitney for their years of services to the board. Members of the Chapter are busy contributing to the field as 13 MA Chapter Members presented (and had a great time) at AFCC's 46th Annual Conference in New Orleans. Member Hon. Linda Fidnick will be a keynote speaker at the 5th World Congress on

Family Law and Children's Rights, which is taking place in Halifax, Nova Scotia August 23-26, 2009, and MA Chapter President Beth Crawford spoke about AFCC at a recent Rhode Island Mediators Association monthly breakfast.

#### Ontario

The Ontario Chapter of AFCC held a dinner for law students in March 2009 to encourage them to consider child protection law. The inaugural Annual General Meeting (AGM)/Conference was held on April 3, 2009. A little over a month later, a tribute conference and dinner was held for Professor Nick Bala at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario. Many members of the Chapter went to New Orleans for the Annual AFCC Conference where they cruised the Mississippi on the Steamship Natchez as a group. The AFCC Ontario Web site is now online and the summer newsletter went out in the beginning of June. A Parenting Capacity Assessors forum was held June 12 in Toronto, Ontario. A number of other subcommittees have also been formed, including a Public Information Forums Working Group and an Awards subcommittee.

#### Texas

The Texas Chapter of AFCC will hold its 2009 annual conference on October 23-24, 2009 at South Texas College of Law in Houston. Not only is the Chapter partnering with the law school again this year, but the conference will also be held in conjunction with the Annual Conference for the Texas Office of the Attorney General's Access and Visitation Program. The conference committee decided that it was time to revisit the issue of Unmarried Parents, also known as "The Fragile Family." Therefore, this year's conference theme will be *Interventions for Family Conflict with Unmarried Parents: What are the Policy, Legal, and Societal Implications?* There will be a full two-day curriculum, which promises to be eye-opening, informative and enjoyable.

## Evidence-Based Practice

*Continued from page 5*

- Become critical consumers of the various forms of evidence that guide decision-making within the context of family law.
- Participate in training workshops to develop a basic fluency of research methodologies and statistical procedures to make sense of findings and contradictory results.
- Participate in the creation, production and dissemination of evidence-based guidelines and standards of practice based on comprehensive, systematic and relevant syntheses of the scientific evidence.
- Be transparent about areas of expertise and how this knowledge has been developed. Likewise, declare all limitations of knowledge and expertise.
- As new client issues surface, follow an EBP process to identify the best available evidence by searching and appraising evidence conscientiously and judiciously.
- Clearly articulate any gaps in research and limitations of existing evidence.
- Consider the cultural context, values, and unique individual experiences of children. Do not assume generalizability, but instead assess for the applicability of research findings.

- Clearly articulate the grounds for any conclusion in the absence of social sciences evidence. It is common and ethical to base opinions on practice wisdom and client preferences, but this should be clearly articulated.

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## Hon. Emile R. Kruzick

*Continued from page 4*

clichéd, I have to say my proudest achievement is the simple satisfaction that I get from knowing that in my daily work I have made a positive difference in the life of another.

### **What do you enjoy doing in your free time?**

Let me tell you about one of my outside interests. Before entering the University I was encouraged by my high school art teacher to apply for a scholarship to the school of fine art. At that time in my life, I did not see the broader potential of a career in the arts. Rather than choosing the bohemian artist's life, I chose to pursue a professional career. With some regret for not pursuing the artistic avenue, I started studying part-time at the Ontario College of Art and Design doing a half credit here, a credit there, and so on. I now have accumulated academic

credits and am a year short of a Bachelor Degree in Fine Art.

All media of art fascinate me. However my greatest successes have been in print making where the muses of the press, paper and inks take over. It is an area that requires technical skill as well as a precise knowledge of the technique. Without the presses and time printmaking requires, I now work in watercolor. It is a medium where the results are immediate. It is readily portable. All I need are my three tubes of primary colours, one brush, and paper and voilà, I become an artist.

### **Tell us something about yourself that your AFCC colleagues don't know or answer a question that you wish I had asked.**

I have had a number of exhibitions and sales of my work. All and any money I have ever made from the sale of my artwork has been donated. That gives me great pleasure.

# Child Custody Consultation Task Force Formed

AFCC President Emile Kruzick has appointed a Child Custody Consultation Task Force with the charge of defining the various roles of the consultant and establishing ethical guidelines of practice. The Task Force is co-chaired by Robin Deutsch, Ph.D. and Hon. William Fee, with Andrew Schepard, J.D. as the reporter. The Child Custody Consul-

tation Task Force Members are: Jay Flens, Psy.D., ABPP; Dianna Gould-Saltman, J.D.; S. Margaret Lee, Ph.D. ; Renee Lehr, JD, Ph.D.; David Martindale, Ph.D., ABPP; Martha McCarthy, LL.B.; David Medoff, Ph.D.; Christopher Melcher, J.D.; Pamela Ortiz, JD; Hon. Deborah Paulseth; Carlton Stansbury, JD; and Jeffrey Wittmann, Ph.D.

## Eleventh Annual Silent Auction

AFCC's Eleventh Annual Silent Auction at the 46th Annual Conference in New Orleans, Louisiana, raised over \$10,000 to support special projects and initiatives.

The auction featured many unique items, including vacation getaways to Hawaii, San Francisco and Cape Cod. Other popular items included an original watercolor by AFCC President Hon. Emile Kruzick, a Cal Ripken Jr. autographed lithograph and batting helmet, beautiful jewelry pieces, and many gift cards and vouchers to popular retailers, hotels and restaurants.

Proceeds from the auction will go toward special projects and initiatives to support children and families

struggling with separation and divorce. This year the funds raised will go toward the Domestic Violence and Family Courts Project, Brief Focused Assessments Task Force and Court-Involved Therapist Task Force.

AFCC would also like to thank the following volunteers for their work in making this year's silent auction a success: Dick Altman, Annette Burns, Andrea Clark, Mary Ferriter, Linda Fieldstone, Hon. Emile Kruzick, Jake Jacobson, Michele MacFarlane, Hon. Denise McColley, David Medoff, and emcee Hon. John Harper. A very special thanks to all of those who contributed items to this year's event.

### Individuals:

Dick Altman  
Nicholas Bala  
Rachel Birnbaum  
Peter Boshier  
Harvey Brownstone  
Joanna Bunker Rohrbaugh  
Phil Bushard  
Linda Cavallerro  
Andrea Clark  
Christine Coates  
Robin Deutsch  
Jeff Dunham  
Bill Eddy  
Cori Erickson  
Bill and Amy Fee  
Mary Ferriter  
Barbara Fidler  
Linda Fidnick  
Linda Fieldstone  
Gregory Firestone  
Larry Fong  
Jonathan Gould  
Dianna Gould-Saltman  
Leslye Hunter  
Jelena James  
Randi Johnson  
Janet Johnston  
Katherine Kavassalis

Emile Kruzick  
Kathryn Kuehnle  
Andrew Lamden  
Julie Macfarlane  
Michele MacFarlane  
David Martindale  
Lisa Matthews  
Bernie Mayer  
Denise McColley  
Deborah Moskovitch  
Woody Mosten  
Graham Mullane  
Gail Pesses  
Eileen Pruett  
Sarah Ramsey  
Joy Risse  
Peter Salem  
Steve Salem  
Andy and Deb Schepard  
Bob Smith  
Phil Stahl  
Hugh and Judy Starnes  
Leslie Todd  
Nancy Ver Steegh  
Jim Williams

### Organizations

AFCC California Chapter  
AFCC Colorado Chapter

AFCC Florida Chapter  
AFCC Massachusetts Chapter  
AFCC Missouri Chapter  
AFCC New Jersey Chapter  
AFCC New York Chapter  
AFCC Texas Chapter  
AirTran  
American Girl  
American Italian Renaissance Foundation  
Association for Conflict Resolution  
Audubon Nature Institute  
Café Du Monde  
Cal Ripken Sr. Foundation  
Cheesecake Bistro  
Complete Equity Markets, Inc.  
Destination Halifax  
Gray Line Tours  
Green Bay Packers  
Green Mountain Coffee Roasters  
Hilton Bonnet Creek  
Hyatt Regency Cambridge  
IACP  
J.M. Craig Press  
Mediate.com

Milwaukee Brewers Baseball Club  
Navajo Jewelry and Crafts  
New Orleans Museum of Art  
New Orleans Paddlewheels  
New Orleans Steamboat Company  
Norwich Bookstore  
Nottoway Historic Inn  
Peppermill Resort  
Perlis, Inc.  
Roundy's Supermarkets, Inc.  
Sheraton New Orleans  
Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide, Inc.  
The Guilford Press  
The Historic New Orleans Collection  
The National World War II Museum  
The Ogdon Museum of Southern Art  
Think Ink & Design  
Wegner CPA's & Consultants  
Westin Bayshore Vancouver  
Wiley-Blackwell

# AFCC Board of Directors for 2009-2010

AFCC is pleased to welcome Hon. R. John Harper, London, Ontario, Grace M. Hawkins, Tucson, Arizona and Matthew Sullivan, Palo Alto, California, to the Board of Directors with terms beginning July 1, 2009. A special thanks to Robin Deutsch for her leadership and commitment to AFCC while serving as President.

## Special Thanks

AFCC thanks Hon William C. Fee from Angola, Indiana, Cori Erickson from Sheridan, Wyoming and Hon. Hugh E. Starnes (ret.) from Fort Myers, Florida, who have completed their service on the Board of Directors. AFCC thanks them for their outstanding service and contribution to the association.

## President

Hon. Emile R. Kruzick  
Brampton, ON, Canada

## President Elect

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Windsor, CO

## Vice President

Linda B. Fieldstone, M.Ed.  
Miami, FL

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Arnold T. Shienvold, Ph.D.  
Harrisburg, PA

## Treasurer

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Boston, MA

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Nancy Ver Steegh, J.D., M.S.W.  
St. Paul, MN

Congratulations to our esteemed colleague

ROBIN M. DEUTSCH, Ph.D.

On her year as AFCC President

&

Congratulations to the new President,

HONORABLE EMILE KRUZICK

From the Staff of the Children & the Law Program  
Massachusetts General Hospital, Department of Psychiatry

[www.childforensic.com](http://www.childforensic.com)

## AFCC Member News

**Steven R. Cohen**, AFCC member from Southampton, Pennsylvania, has been elected the President of the Pennsylvania Psychological Association (PPA) from June 2009 until June 2010. PPA is the second largest State Psychological Association.

**Kiilu Davis**, AFCC member from Scottsdale, Arizona, was honored as Family Law Advocate of the Year by the Volunteer Lawyers Program, Family Lawyers Assistance Project (F.L.A.P.). The Volunteer Lawyers Program is a civil law project of Community Legal Services and the Maricopa County Bar Association.

**Frances Fontana**, AFCC member from Littleton, Colorado, was honored by the Metro Volunteer Lawyers' Board of Directors for having gone beyond the call of duty offering pro bono legal assistance.

*Do you have news you would like to share? Please send information to Leslye Hunter, editor, AFCC NEWS, at [editor@afccnet.org](mailto:editor@afccnet.org).*

## AFCC Members Write On

**Allan Barsky**, AFCC member from Lauderdale by the Sea, Florida, has written: *Ethics and Values in Social Work: An Integrated Approach for a Comprehensive Curriculum*. This textbook, published by Oxford University Press, provides a strategic framework for managing ethical issues that not only includes guidance for making rational ethical choices, but also guidance for managing emotional issues and conflicting values as social workers and related professionals work through challenging ethical dilemmas (including chapters specifically related to family work, child welfare and protection, criminal and juvenile justice, and end-of-life decision making).

**Alan Freed**, AFCC member from St. Louis, Missouri, and his colleague Alisse Camazine have just released *Divorce in Missouri: The Ultimate Guide to a Show-Me State Divorce*. Published by Acorn House, this layman's guide includes helpful information on parenting, division of property, child support, maintenance, pensions, taxes and a host of other issues of concern to people in Missouri going through a divorce. It also contains information about mediation and collaborative law, grandparents' rights, paternity and how to select an attorney.

**Michael Green**, AFCC member from Newtown, New South Wales, Australia and his co-author Jill Burrett have written *Shared Parenting: Raising Your Child Cooperatively After Separation*. Published by Ten Speed Press, the book explains how to accomplish a more balanced approach to parenting after separation and divorce, and also discusses the many benefits of an equal parenting partnership. It contains weekly routines and tips on how to plan cooperatively, communicate effectively and create a healthy new environment where children can thrive with the loving support of both parents.

**Peg Libby**, AFCC member from Portland, Maine and Executive Director of Kids First Center of Portland announces their new book *Kids First: What Kids Want Grown-ups to Know about Separation and Divorce*. Published by Tower Publishing, this book presents actual kids' experiences in their own words, as well as positive suggestions and advice for parents and professionals.

**Richard S. Vacca**, AFCC member from Midlothian, Virginia, lead author along with his co-author William C. Boshier, Jr., has written a Seventh Edition of their book: *Law and Education: Contemporary Issues and Court Decisions*. Published by the Law School Division of LexisNexis, the book offers a comprehensive treatment of issues involving public education and is used by both law school classes and university graduate level programs in educational leadership.

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# CALL FOR PRESENTERS

## AFCC 47th Annual Conference

# DENVER

June 2-5, 2010  
Sheraton Denver

## TRAVERSING THE TRAIL OF ALIENATION: Rocky Relationships, Mountains of Emotion, Mile High Conflict

Alienation and high conflict present some of the most insurmountable challenges for professionals who work with separating and divorcing families. Join AFCC for a look at innovations and interventions for addressing our most difficult work.

All proposals must be submitted using the online form at [www.afccnet.org](http://www.afccnet.org) and are due no later than **OCTOBER 5, 2009**. You may pick one of the topics listed below or submit a proposal on any idea related to the conference theme.

Domestic Violence

Parenting Coordination

Social Science Research

Innovative ADR Techniques

Family Court Services

Mediation

Cultural Competence

Child Custody Evaluation

Negotiation Skills

Collaborative Law

Advanced Practice Skills

Family Law Practice

Judicial Skills and Interventions

Child Welfare Dispute Resolution

Financial Issues

Pro Se Litigants

Representing Children

Case Management

PLEASE NOTE: IF YOU DO NOT RECEIVE AN EMAIL CONFIRMING RECEIPT OF YOUR PROPOSAL WITHIN ONE WEEK OF SUBMISSION, CONTACT AFCC BY TELEPHONE AT (608) 664-3750.

AFCC is accepting proposals for *ninety-minute workshop sessions*. To submit a workshop proposal at [www.afccnet.org](http://www.afccnet.org), please include the following information: (1) an abstract of 250 words or less describing your proposed workshop; (2) a workshop title and an 80-100 word "program ready" abstract for the conference brochure; (3) a one-page outline of your proposed workshop; (4) three learning objectives that will be addressed by your proposed workshop; (5) complete contact information for all proposed presenters; (6) resumes for all proposed presenters; (7) the name of the person who will be coordinating your workshop; and (8) contact information for two professional references.

*Maximum of four presenters per workshop. Please note that the deadline for proposals is October 5, 2009. AFCC is unable to guarantee consideration of incomplete proposals or those submitted after the deadline.* AFCC offers a reduced registration rate for conference presenters but is unable to reimburse for travel and related expenses. All proposals must be submitted via [www.afccnet.org](http://www.afccnet.org). Please direct any questions to (608) 664-3750 or [afcc3@afccnet.org](mailto:afcc3@afccnet.org).



## Association of Family and Conciliation Courts

# Upcoming AFCC Conferences and Trainings

### AFCC Conferences

#### AFCC Regional Training Conference

November 5-7, 2009  
Peppermill Resort  
Reno, Nevada

#### AFCC 47th Annual Conference

June 2-5, 2010  
Sheraton Denver  
Denver, Colorado

#### AFCC Ninth Symposium on Child Custody Evaluations

October 28-30, 2010  
Hyatt Regency Cambridge  
Cambridge/Boston, Massachusetts

#### AFCC 48th Annual Conference

June 1-4, 2011  
Hilton Orlando Bonnet Creek Resort  
Orlando, Florida

### AFCC Training Programs

#### Attachment, Alienation and Access: Advanced Interventions for Parenting Coordinators

*Arnold T. Shienvold, Ph.D.*  
September 30-October 1, 2009  
Kansas City, Missouri

#### Parenting Coordination: Helping High Conflict Parents Resolve Disputes

*Joan B. Kelly, Ph.D.*  
December 7-8, 2009  
Baltimore, Maryland

#### Advanced Issues in Child Custody: The Child's Perspective

*Mindy Mitnick, M.Ed.*  
December 9-10, 2009  
Baltimore, Maryland

### AFCC Chapter Conferences

#### Texas Chapter Conference

October 23-24, 2009  
South Texas College of Law  
Houston, Texas

#### Arizona Chapter Annual Conference

February 5-7, 2010  
Hilton Sedona Resort and Spa  
Sedona, Arizona

#### California Chapter Annual Conference

February 12-14, 2010  
Sheraton Delfina Hotel  
Santa Monica, California

#### Missouri Chapter Annual Conference

March 11-12, 2010  
Sheraton St. Louis  
St. Louis, Missouri