



# THE GROUP WORKER

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ASSOCIATION FOR SPECIALISTS IN GROUP WORK

## President's Message

Donald E. Ward



Because our new contract with our journal publisher, Taylor and Francis, schedules printing and mailing our newsletter with three of the four annual journal issues, there is no longer an early fall newsletter this year in which I would begin by welcoming you all to a new ASGW and academic year of the excitement of applying group work to a variety of populations in a variety of settings. Even though I hope that you are all well into your fall routines and reconnecting with continuing groups and embarking on new group ventures in your work, I will welcome you anyway and extend my deep appreciation for your interest in and dedication to helping people through group work and membership in ASGW.

*"...you will find us a very inclusive and welcoming organization..."*

Our ASGW Executive Board meeting in Kansas City at the beginning of September was another wonderful example of how skilled group workers who care about the members of our organization work together to continue to find ways to provide

useful services to counselors and counselor educators involved in group work. Past President Lenoir Gillam, President-Elect Michael Garrett, Secretary Trey Fitch, Treasurer Carmen Salazar, Governing Council Representative Carolyn Thomas, Process Observer Becky Schumacher, Newsletter Editor Amy Nitza, and Coordinator of Marketing, Media, Membership, and Professional Development Janice DeLucia-Waack represent many years of experience, enthusiasm, and energy that was applied to the interests of ASGW and its members. Some exciting projects are in progress or will begin soon that will benefit our work with groups.

Please know that our organization is strong in membership, productivity, and fiscally. Our core of committed members has remained at around 875 members for two years, and our finances are in very sound shape due to excellent oversight of our investment

funds by Becky Schumacher, past treasurer, and continued work by our current treasurer, Carmen Salazar. Our productivity is reflected in our outstanding journal, edited by Sheri Bauman and her expert and diligent editorial board as well as in the handbooks and DVDs we produce, which you can purchase from the ACA bookstore at [counseling.org](http://counseling.org). Of course, the many meetings, events, and award luncheon we host at the annual ACA Conferences are also generally quite meaningful and satisfying to those who attend.

Most especially this year, I would like to emphasize our biennial ASGW Group Work Conference in New Orleans right after Mardi Gras, February 18 – 21, 2010. Our theme for this conference is "The Art and Science of Groups," and Jonathan Orr and his committee have planned an outstanding program in a wonderful setting of southern hospitality, excellent dining and music, and networking, learning, and extending our skills for working in groups. Please see more complete information about the conference in this newsletter and register now and plan to join us for what I am certain will be a stimulating and revitalizing professional and personal experience!

I also invite you to watch for opportunities to purchase forthcoming state-of-the-art materials, consider participating on ASGW committees, and the ACA Conference in Pittsburgh in March. During my almost 30 years of ASGW membership, I have always found our organization to be extraordinarily inviting and inclusive of those wishing to share our interest in group work. I invite you to continue to benefit actively from your membership and consider beginning or continuing to participate even more in ASGW and its activities. If you have not done so already, you will find us a very inclusive and welcoming organization, always looking for ways to involve our members in the activities and governance of our division.

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# A Message from the President-Elect

**Michael T. Garrett**

Siyo (hello)! I offer you a warm Cherokee greeting, and thank you for welcoming me to our community of group workers as President-Elect, and as a colleague and fellow group worker who has a passion for what we do in groups! I am proud to stand alongside you, as I always have been, working to advance the deep value of our professional expertise as it relates to clinical work, research, training, and theory. Coming from a tribal background as Eastern Band of Cherokee, working in groups has always felt more natural to me, as it may to you, as a part of being conscious of what it means to come from and be of something bigger than yourself—community, clan, family, and all the many groups of which we are a part. These are also qualities that best represent ASGW in my experience. In fact, our mission statement says: “The Association for Specialists in Group Work is a division of... counseling professionals who are interested in and specialize in group work, we value the creation of community; service to our members, their clients, and the profession; and leadership as a process to facilitate the growth and development of individuals and groups.” That is a powerful statement that says a lot about who we are and what we value in our work, and in ourselves.

I joined ASGW over 17 years ago, as a young, bright-eyed counselor-in-training from the reservation who was looking for a professional home, one that embraced a sense of what true healing means as well as where and how it moves, and have never felt more of a sense of tribal experience with any other association than I have with ours. I hope you have felt that too in some way or another, and help others to feel it as well through your presence, actions, experience, talents, and many gifts. I trust that you represent our group well, and will continue to let us know how the group can best represent you too.

When I think about what makes groups work, I am forced to think about what makes different types of groups work, not just therapeutic groups. For example, what makes family work? What makes



community work? And what does make groups work? The answer is always simple: People make groups work. And it's the ability and desire of good people coming together around a common vision to contribute to one another and to the world around them. In the spirit of this basic truth, thank you for being a part of our tribe, our nation, our special organization, and extending yourself through the work you do in groups and as part of the association. Part of what we do in tribe/nation/community is to come together and meet one another where we stand again and again.

With that said, please plan to attend our upcoming Association for Specialists in Group Work 2010 National Convention focused around “The Art and Science of Group Work,” to be held February 18-21, 2010 at the Doubletree Hotel, New Orleans, LA. It is an essential opportunity for us to once again come together as members of our professional “tribe/nation” and share time, experience, and the essence of what makes groups work. In addition, currently under discussion is ASGW’s participation and co-sponsoring of the proposal 2010 Multicultural-Social Justice Leadership Development Academy at the 2010 American Counseling Association’s Annual Conference in Pittsburgh, PA with a focus on “Fostering Multicultural-Social Justice Leadership Development and Unity through Collective Vision in the Counseling Profession.” This would involve, among other activities, a workshop sponsored and conducted by ASGW focusing on, “Implementing multicultural-social justice group leadership strategies to enhance one’s professional effectiveness.” Please stay tuned for more development in that arena and others.

In closing, I want to say “sgi” (thank you) again. I look forward to seeing you soon, and meeting you, if I haven’t already. Take good care, and thank you for the work you do.

# Association Opportunities

## Call for New Products

ASGW is committed to the development of new products that will aid group workers, such as books and dvds. If you have an idea for a new product, please contact Dr. Janice DeLucia-Waack, [jdelucia@buffalo.edu](mailto:jdelucia@buffalo.edu), for guidelines on how to submit a proposal. Proposals are due January 15th, 2010. Check out our website for the books and dvds already available from ASGW.

## Call for Applications: Editor of The Group Worker

ASGW is currently seeking applications for the position of Editor of The Group Worker. The new editor will be appointed for a three-year term running from July 1, 2010 through June 30, 2013.

The editor is responsible for coordinating all aspects of publication of the newsletter, and also serves as a non-voting member of the ASGW Executive Board.

For more information about the position please contact Amy Nitza at [nitzaa@ipfw.edu](mailto:nitzaa@ipfw.edu) or at (260) 481-6453.

To apply, please send a letter of interest and current CV by January 15, 2010 to:

Dr. Janice L. DeLucia-Waack  
409 Baldy Hall  
University of Buffalo, SUNY  
Buffalo, NY 14260  
[jdelucia@buffalo.edu](mailto:jdelucia@buffalo.edu)

## Balancing the Goals of a Master's Level Group Lab: Instructor Experiences & Reflections

Submitted by Michelle Gimenez Hinkle  
Doctoral Candidate, Kent State University



When I look over my education as a Master's student in counseling, the course that stands out the most to me is Group Counseling Process and Techniques. I took this class in my first semester, and I still have vivid recollections of the experience. My class was part didactic, in which I learned the process and techniques of group counseling, and part experiential, in which my classmates and I participated in a working personal growth group. Not only did I witness the group process unfold before me while learning techniques that could only be effectively applied to groups of people, but I also learned more about myself. For me, the experiential portion of this class spurred emotional awareness and growth that has helped me become the counselor that I am today.

Five years later as a doctoral intern, I found myself with the opportunity to teach an experiential group lab that students

participated in while simultaneously enrolled in a group counseling theory and techniques class. The departmental syllabus that I inherited summarized the goals for the students as: 1) practice the group counseling skills that they learn in the group counseling lecture, and 2) participate in an experiential group in order to promote personal growth and awareness. At first glance these goals seemed simple. However, as the semester wore on, I found that balancing each goal effectively was more difficult than I anticipated. The experience I had as the facilitator of this group, and specifically in balancing the two goals for the students, was full of challenges and rewards that have helped me reflect further on my role as a teacher and a counselor.

### Goal #1: Students as Group Leaders

The first goal of the experiential group counseling lab is for the students to practice the skills they are learning in the didactic portion of the class, as well as to see the concepts of group theory and process occur. In order to keep the two portions of the course separate and avoid dual relationships, my role as the lab instructor was isolated from the lecture class. This posed challenges for me because in addition to not knowing what content was taught each week, I was unable to determine if my students were grasping the concepts of group process as reflected in their assignments and exams. I wanted to make sure that the students were encouraged to utilize the skills they were learning and were provided with appropriate feedback and demonstration of skills. As the semester progressed I implemented a few strategies to ease my comfort with this challenge.

To start, I obtained the lecture class syllabus from the course instructor in order to keep up with the topics that were being presented in class. By knowing what theories, concepts, and techniques they were covering, I was able to reacquaint myself with the information and challenge the students by asking them specific questions regarding their leadership and how it relates to the topics of the week.

To allow time for feedback and the opportunity for students to ask questions, I asked the class to leave a short amount of time at the end of each group. In the first few weeks of the semester, I led this discussion by offering my own comments to the leader of the group and then inviting the other students to offer some as well. As the semester evolved however, I passed on this responsibility to the group members by encouraging them to offer feedback to the leaders based on what they learned in their lecture. I saw this serve at least two purposes for the group members. First, the group leader for the day heard feedback directly from their peers who experienced their leadership, which appeared to be more meaningful. Second, the group members had the opportunity to practice their own knowledge of group leadership skills by evaluating others and coming up with original feedback.

As the weeks went by group members appeared to be comfortable with this process, as evidenced by openly sharing their compliments and critiques with one another and allowing themselves to be influenced by one another. We also began to direct our attention to the group process as a whole. Members began to reflect and comment on how the group was progressing in relation to group theory, and how their process reflected the stages of groups, levels of trust, and disclosure.

Another way I attempted to facilitate the students' goals of practicing skills and identifying as a group leaders was to use a reflection journal. The departmental syllabus had a journal incorporated into the group process class. Each week the students would email me, as the instructor, a short reflection of their experience in group that week. Halfway through the semester, I challenged them with a different, two-journal assignment. The first was to choose one person in the group to write a letter to, telling that person what their strengths are in leading a group and how they see this person developing as a group counselor. The second journal assignment was to imagine themselves 10 years in the future working in their ideal setting and running counseling groups, and to write a letter to their present selves from the perspective of their future selves. My aim was for them to write about the skills they are utilizing in the future, and how they perceive themselves as seasoned group counselors. After completing these journal entries, the students offered positive feedback and appeared to enjoy the reflective work.

Overall, fostering the students' growth and practice as a group counselor became easier as the semester progressed. I noted that the students became more comfortable in offering feedback to one another that would help them to develop more skills and reflect on their emerging identity as group counselors. In addition, promoting reflection on how they saw each other, and themselves, as group counselors appeared to be a helpful activity to break up the monotony of providing immediate comments to one another in regards to their skills and group leadership style.

## **Goal #2: Promoting Student Growth and Awareness**

The second goal for the experiential group lab was to promote the students' personal growth and awareness. This goal sounds vast and somewhat undefined. What does it mean or look like for students to increase their personal growth and awareness? Various challenges were presented with this particular goal for students.

One challenge for me as the group instructor was to not expect this "growth" to occur too soon. I found myself making comments in the group that I thought would further this process of growth, as well as expecting the students to share parts of themselves sooner than they would have liked. Sometimes I caught myself wanting the students to make larger connections with what was happening in the group to other aspects of their lives or hoping that the students would be more open to expressing some of their emotions and concerns during the group process. When these things didn't happen, I began to put more pressure on myself to facilitate a better counseling experience or help the group leader for that particular session to push the group members into a deeper therapeutic conversation. When my definition of "member growth and awareness" didn't seem to be occurring, I found myself feeling frustrated.

About halfway through the semester however, all of the aforementioned pressure I was putting on myself, and the group, stopped. One evening, the students were engaging in their group process and suddenly their conversation shifted to wanting to get deeper into the experience of the group. They began to define this as individual members opening up more, connecting with one another on a deeper level, and finding ways to utilize their group conversations with their out-of-group lives. The students began to discuss how they could do this, why they felt they wanted to experience this growth, and most importantly how they knew they were ready for this to occur. That was the moment when I realized that up until then, they weren't ready for the second goal of the class. That day, I learned that I had been pushing them without considering the very transitions and stages of group work. I was expecting them to be at the working stage too prematurely.

This experience was a teachable moment, in that I expressed to them what I had been experiencing. The group then discussed how important it is, as group leaders, that we recognize the stages of the group and allow the group to occur naturally without putting our own agenda on to the members. I noticed that when I stopped trying to get the group to work towards personal growth and awareness, they naturally progressed toward deeper experiences. After that group, in which they defined how they would get deeper into their group process, the students reported that they felt they were gaining personal growth from the group.

A second challenge that I found when attempting to facilitate the goal of students' personal awareness was trying to help the students move beyond reflecting about the group process and their group counseling leadership to reflecting about themselves as group members. As previously mentioned, each week the students were required to submit a journal entry, by email, describing their reflections of group for that week. More often than not, their journal entries were consistently about group process, skills,

and techniques, while the expectation was that they would also be writing from a personal perspective as a group member. No matter how many times I challenged them to focus some of their reflections on themselves, I continually read entries that were focused on intellect in regards to group counseling.

Toward the end of the semester I surprised the students by telling them that they didn't have to submit a journal entry for that week. Instead, I told them that they were to consider how they wanted to engage in their personal self-reflection. I told them to brainstorm how they could get the most from their journal, or if the journals weren't helpful for their self-reflection, to identify other ways that they could get this need met. The next week, to my surprise this time, students shared that they wanted to continue the journals. Each member was in agreement. Instead of writing a journal entry that was unstructured, they wanted to answer a specific question each week. From that week on, without my help or influence, the group decided together what their journal topic for the week would be. Some examples included: "How did the group experience this week impact our relationships?" and "If an outsider was watching our group, what would they notice about us?"

From that day on, the journal entries I read were meaningful and full of personal insights and awareness. From this experience, I learned how important it was for the group members to create their own ways to engage in self-reflection. By creating space for them

to construct how they could best utilize the assignment of journal writing, I allowed the students to shape their own experiences of personal growth. Again, I had to step out of the way to let the group process occur naturally, without my influence.

Throughout the semester, I faced some challenges in balancing the group lab goals that the counselor education program had for their students. Learning the skills necessary to effectively run a group, while simultaneously experiencing a personal growth group can be a difficult yet, I believe, rewarding experience for students. As the facilitator of this group process, I learned from my students how important it is to allow the group process to occur naturally. Although it may be easy to remember this as a counselor, it was hard for me to remember it as an instructor. I increased my own awareness of how important it is for group members to receive feedback from one another, even on their skills as leaders. I was also reminded that group members, and students, must create their own meaning in their experiences for professional and personal reflection. In striving to balance the two goals for the course, I realized that the balance came naturally once I stopped trying so hard for the objectives to be reached. My semester as a group lab instructor for master's students was irreplaceable, and I hope that I can utilize what I learned in my future as a counselor educator. I am grateful for my experience and especially to the students in my group class.

## ASGW Events at ACA in Pittsburgh



Also check out the...

### Multicultural-Social Justice Leadership Development Academy

a free pre-conference event to be held Friday March 19

ASGW Executive Board Meeting	Thursday	March 18
ASGW Executive Board Meeting	Friday	March 19
ASGW Professional Development	Saturday	March 20
ASGW Luncheon	Saturday	March 20
ASGW 2008-2009 / 2009-2010 Leadership & Committee Meeting	Saturday	March 20
ASGW Journal for Specialists in Group Work	Saturday	March 20
ASGW General Business Meeting	Saturday	March 20
ASGW, ACC, ACES, Joint Reception	Saturday	March 20
ASGW Branch Presidents and Graduate Students Brunch	Sunday	March 21
ASGW Fellows Symposium	Sunday	March 21
ASGW Fellows Committee Meeting	Sunday	March 21
ASGW "Welcoming Graduate Students and New Professionals" Reception	Sunday	March 21

*Please note that the Ancillary schedule is still subject to change. A final schedule will be available in January*

## Association News

### A Message from the ASGW Representative to the ACA Governing Council

Submitted by M. Carolyn Thomas

The next ACA Governing Council meeting is November 5-7, 2009 in Alexandria, VA, so I do not have news for this issue of the newsletter, which will have gone to press before the meeting. I am enjoying representing ASGW on the Governing Council and pledge to do my best for our division. I appreciate the opportunity to serve in this capacity, and will keep you posted.

### Human Rights and Diversity Committee

Submitted by Anneliese Singh

The ASGW Human Rights and Diversity Committee is excited to welcome returning and new members for its activities for 2009-2010. If you are a group worker interested in diversity, multicultural, and social justice issues, please join us! Below are some activities we are currently working on (we also invite you to bring us your new ideas!):

- Compiling a list of diversity and multicultural resources.
- Writing articles for the ASGW Newsletter and Counseling Today.
- Identifying key human rights and social justice issues pertinent to group workers.
- Developing social justice competencies for group workers (e.g., difficult dialogues or courageous conversations).
- Presenting, writing, and publishing on social justice issues in group work.

Please email the committee facilitator, Anneliese Singh, at [asingh@uga.edu](mailto:asingh@uga.edu) if you are interested in participating in this committee's work! We meet monthly on conference calls and work on diversity and social justice projects between meetings.

### Branch News

Submitted by M. Carolyn Thomas

Several state ASGW branches are providing professional development opportunities for their members. Alabama ASGW co-sponsored a drive-in workshop with ALAAOC on "Motivational Interviewing". Jacques Austin [daylja@bellsouth.net](mailto:daylja@bellsouth.net), ALASGW President, has also been visiting graduate counseling programs throughout the state encouraging students to join the branch and become active in group work. Debra Burbach [burbachd@gmail.com](mailto:burbachd@gmail.com), Georgia ASGW President, and Liz Conroy [conroyliz@gmail.com](mailto:conroyliz@gmail.com), North Carolina ASGW President are both planning drive-in workshops for their members.

Efforts are also being made to reactivate state branches. Tina Livingston [tmlivingston@stcloudstate.edu](mailto:tmlivingston@stcloudstate.edu), is working on the Minnesota ASGW branch. Other state branches receiving attention include Mississippi, Louisiana, Tennessee, Kentucky, North and South Dakota, and South Carolina. Group workers in those states or in any state without an ASGW branch or an active branch who want to activate or form a branch should contact the ASGW Branch Co-Chairs, M. Carolyn Thomas [mthomas@aum.edu](mailto:mthomas@aum.edu), or Jeri Crowell [crowellj@fvsu.edu](mailto:crowellj@fvsu.edu), for information and support.

### News from the Journal for Specialists in Group Work

Submitted by Sheri Bauman

The Journal for Specialists in Group Work is seeking high quality articles for consideration for publication in the journal. Research, Practice, Training, Reflections, are all welcome. Manuscripts should be submitted via the journal's web portal at <http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/usgw>.

Applications for positions on the editorial board are welcome. Please send a letter of interest, stating your interest and qualifications, and a current CV. We are also interested in proposals for special issues. Contact the editor, Sheri Bauman at [sherib@u.arizona.edu](mailto:sherib@u.arizona.edu) if you would like to submit a proposal.

Look for two special issues in June and September 2010 on Groups for Social Justice. Guest editors are Carmen Salazar and Anneliese Singh.

# Group Work

## Practice Ideas

### Youth Can't Wait!: Establishing LGBTQQA Youth Groups in School and Community Settings

Anneliese A. Singh, Ph.D., LPC and Jesse McNulty, M.Ed.

*Anneliese A. Singh, Ph.D., LPC is an Assistant Professor at The University of Georgia. Dr. Singh is the immediate Past-President of ALGBTIC, and a founding member of the Georgia Safe Schools Coalition ([www.georgiasafeschools.org](http://www.georgiasafeschools.org)) with LGBT Youth. Dr. Singh's research currently focuses on the reduction of LGBTQ bullying in middle school settings using an empowerment group model.*



*Jesse McNulty, M.Ed., is a public school teacher by day and an artful activist by night. Mr. McNulty is a 10-year volunteer at YouthPride (a nonprofit serving LGBTQ youth in Atlanta) where he facilitates a youth group called "TransandFriends" that serves transgender youth and their allies. Mr. McNulty is a founding member of Georgia Safe Schools Coalition and has been recognized for his community activism and service.*

When group workers endeavor to construct group modalities that are affirming of LGBTQQA (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, ally) youth identities, they become social change agents that challenge the structural and systemic oppressions of heterosexism and transprejudice. This practice article discusses how group workers may step into the role of being a social justice change agent with regard to LGBTQQA youth in a way that is relevant and meaningful in meeting the needs of this cultural group. Initially, we define some important terms group workers should understand with regard to this group. A discussion of various types of groups that can be implemented in school and community settings follows, along with a list of resources for LGBTQQA youth in groups.

#### Important Terms Related to LGBTQQA Youth

When using the term "LGBTQQA youth", group workers should also be mindful of what we call queerly-situated youth. Queerly-situated youth may have close family members and/or guardians that are LGBTQQA. Group workers in both school and community settings should be mindful that there are queerly-situated youth that often suffer consequences similar to those of LGBTQQA youth, such as school bullying and violence and other negative stressors. Other important terms to understand with LGBTQQA youth are: heterosexism, transprejudice, and sexism. Heterosexism is the pervasive system of oppression enforcing heterosexuality as the "norm" for sexual orientation (Russell & McGuire, 2008). Group workers may be used to hearing the term "homophobia" in relation to LGBTQQA issues. However, because the word homophobia literally refers to an "irrational fear" of LGBTQQA people, the term does not truly capture the active discrimination and prejudice this group experiences in society (Logan, 1996). For group workers,

heterosexism manifests itself through group workers' assumptions that all group members are heterosexual or that sexual orientation is an identity that should not be "highlighted" or explored within group settings involving youth. Group workers facilitating LGBTQQA youth groups should also be aware of the differences between sexual orientation and gender identity. Sexual orientation is defined as the attractions and affections people have for those who have the same (or perceived to be the same) sex. Gender identity is one's sense of "male-ness" or "female-ness" regardless of assigned sex at birth, and this identity may or may not be outwardly asserted (Singh, Boyd, & Whitman, in press).

Transprejudice is both the active and indirect means of discrimination and oppression of people who identify as transgender (ALGBTIC, 2009). Transprejudice appears within group facilitation when group workers make assumptions about transgender people and/or attempt to refer transgender people to a group where they can "meet with their kind". Heterosexism and transprejudice are systemic oppressions that are closely linked to sexism. Sexism entails the enforcement of rigid gender norms of what it means to be a "woman" or a "man" and limits the natural and wide variety of gender expression and identity of individuals (Cannon & Singh, 2010). For a more expansive list of terms that are least restrictive in their definitions for LGBTQQA youth, please see Lambda Legal's (2008) *Bending the mold: An action kit for transgender youth*.

Because of these intersecting oppressions, when group workers design, implement, and evaluate group modalities with LGBTQQA youth, a critical first step entails the group worker taking a self-inventory of one's biases and assumptions related to these oppressions (Singh, in press). Exploring these assumptions early on will assist

group workers in identifying (not whether) but how these biases will “show up” in their group facilitation. This self-inventory should expand beyond exploring LGBTQQA assumptions, but also other areas of privilege (e.g., racial/ethnic, socioeconomic, etc) as many of these identities intersect in the lives of LGBTQQA youth.

## Group Modalities with LGBTQQA Youth

Once a group worker conducts the aforementioned self-inventory of biases and assumptions about LGBTQQA youth, there are many modalities of group practice they can select that can be particularly relevant. Group workers in school settings can think about three models of groups in this area: (1) support groups for LGBTQQA youth, (2) psychoeducational groups designed to reduce LGBTQQA bias, and (3) Gay-Straight Alliances (GSAs). Counselors working in community settings may also establish or volunteer with a LGBTQQA support group. We describe these group modalities in further detail below.

### *Counseling groups for LGBTQQA youth.* An initial challenge school counselors

may experience in wanting to begin this type of group may be uncertainty as to how the group will be received by non-LGBTQQA youth, parents, and other school personnel. It is important at this stage for school counselors to be mindful that this fear is the outcome of systemic heterosexist thinking – which serves to limit important group interventions that could actually help LGBTQQA youth. An action step school counselors may take is to ensure that sexual orientation and gender identity are listed as protected identities in the school non-discrimination policy. School counselors may also work collaboratively with other school counselors in their district and other queer and transgender community-based organizations to ensure there are protections for LGBTQQA youth and families at the district level, in addition to being able to share resources in supporting these youth.

Once some initial resource sharing is established and school counselors determine that protections in the school non-discrimination policy are in place, they can approach their administrators to share why it is important to have such a counseling group accessible in their school. However, it is also critical that if sexual orientation and gender identity are not included in the school’s non-discrimination policy that school counselors do not stop their efforts to create supportive groups for these youth. Research suggests that LGBTQQA youth are at higher risk for school drop-out, bullying, suicide, self-injury, depression, anxiety, and other stressors (Russell & McGuire, 2008), and school administration may not be aware of these negative consequences. School counselors may also hear that “we don’t have gay kids in our school” or “these kids aren’t mature enough to know they are gay” as a part of resistance to these groups. School counselors can respond by saying, “This is an issue of accessibility to resources that need to be in place throughout the school year for when these youth are identified or self-disclose, especially since schools have been shown to be hostile environments for LGBTQQA youth”. School counselors can also cite the American School Counselors Association National Model (ASCA,

2005), Association for Specialists in Group Work Best Practice Guidelines (ASGW, 2007), and the American Counseling Association Advocacy Competencies (Lewis, Arnold, House, & Toporek, 2003) as best practice documents guiding their group work and their advocacy on behalf of LGBTQQA youth issues.

School counselors can use their pre-planning time at the beginning of the school year to design a counseling group for LGBTQQA youth. A first step may be identifying the best time and day for such a group to meet. School counselors should also find a creative name for the group, inviting LGBTQQA youth to participate in forming the group’s name. School counselors can use word-of-mouth to invite potential group members, in addition to putting out calls for the group during the morning announcements, posters, teacher-referrals, and self-

referrals. School counselors should have LGBTQQA-affirmative symbols, books, brochures, and other resources (such as a rainbow or “Safe Space” sticker – see GLSEN’s website in Resource List) so LGBTQQA youth “see” that the office is visibly welcoming to them. School counselors can use their group skills to facilitate discussions of topics

youth would like to explore, group agreements, and other parameters of the group that are important to them. A foremost concern that should be included at the beginning and end of each group is the importance and limits of group confidentiality. For these groups to be successful, it important to ensure the group is an open-ended one with ongoing membership where members can join or leave at any time. The consistency of time, day, places, and structure for the group (e.g., group check-in’s, group agreements, ongoing verbal and paper evaluation of the group) is important for school counselors to maintain its accessibility to all youth who are interested in attending (Singh & Ziomek-Daigle, 2009). These types of groups are most developmentally appropriate at the high school level. If the group grows larger than anticipated, school counselors should consider assisting the group in forming a Gay-Straight Alliance (see GSA description below), and identify suitable and affirmative teachers to sponsor the GSA.

### *Psychoeducational groups designed to reduce LGBTQQA bias.*

Psychoeducational groups (also referred to as classroom guidance) are a common group modality for school counselors (Gladding, 2008) and are especially appropriate to address the overall school environment in terms of attitudes, behaviors, and expectations of treatment for LGBTQQA youth. School counselors can plan a group presentation on what bullying and harassment of LGBTQQA youth “looks like” and why these prejudices and related behaviors are unacceptable in school settings. School counselors should be direct in engaging students in these groups to articulate the anti-LGBTQQA epithets commonly used (e.g., “that’s so gay”, “fag”, “dyke”, “no homo”). Research indicates that all students, regardless of their perceived sexual orientation and gender identity, can be targeted with these types of epithets. School counselors can use multi-media resources (see Resource List), such as GLSEN’s ThinkB4YouSpeak public service announcements. These are 2-3 minutes, humorous videos that may

## LGBTQQA Youth Resource List

Colage	<a href="http://www.colage.com">www.colage.com</a>
Family Equality Council	<a href="http://www.familyequality.org">www.familyequality.org</a>
Georgia Safe Schools Coalition	<a href="http://www.georgiasafeschools.org">www.georgiasafeschools.org</a>
Gay, Lesbian, Straight Education Network	<a href="http://www.glsen.org">www.glsen.org</a>
Human Rights Campaign	<a href="http://www.hrc.org">www.hrc.org</a>
National Center for Transgender Equality	<a href="http://www.ncte.org">www.ncte.org</a>
National Gay and Lesbian Task Force	<a href="http://www.nglft.org">www.nglft.org</a>
Parents, Friends, & Family of Lesbians & Gays	<a href="http://www.pflag.org">www.pflag.org</a>
YouthPride	<a href="http://www.youthpride.org">www.youthpride.org</a>

be used as icebreakers to engage students in understanding that “gay does not equal stupid” and the serious implications and consequences of equating being LGBTQQA with dehumanizing negativity. School counselors can have a “No Name Calling” pledge banner that students create in these psychoeducational groups that they may sign and hang in high-traffic areas of the school. Other students and school personnel can then be invited to sign the banner during the morning announcements in order to work towards a more positive school-wide climate for LGBTQQA youth.

**Sponsoring Gay-Straight Alliances (GSAs).** GSAs are student-led school clubs that are social or activist-oriented – or a mixture of both. GSAs typically work on various events throughout the school year to raise school awareness about LGBTQQA issues. Some examples may be organizing an event for “Coming Out Day” (October 11) or recognizing the “Day of Silence” (April). School counselors should first understand what the state law is on sponsoring student clubs before offering to sponsor a GSA (Singh, in press). Regardless of whether state law allows school counselors to sponsor student clubs, school counselors may actively offer their group facilitation skills to support the members, student leaders, and sponsoring teacher of the GSA in establishing effective school programming. For instance, a school counselor may meet with a GSA after school and assist them with structure and planning for group meetings and special GSA events. Because school counselors have an understanding of both students’ needs and administrators’ needs, they can also facilitate communication in a group setting between GSAs and administration. This ability to serve as a liaison using their group facilitation skills may be especially critical when there has been a heterosexist incident, misunderstanding, or other need to “get on the same page” within the school. Helpful resources for beginning GSAs are listed on the Gay, Lesbian, Straight Education Network’s website (see Resource List).

**LGBTQQA youth support groups in community settings.** The traditional definition of a support group is one that is peer-led without a formally trained group worker (Gladding, 2008). LGBTQQA youth groups in community settings are commonly called support groups, yet these groups tend to have formal group facilitation by an adult trained in group facilitation. These groups may also be called “discussion forums” with an emphasis on youth empowerment and leadership. These groups may be specialized to meet the needs of specific identity groupings under the umbrella of “LGBTQQA”. For instance, one group may be designed to serve people who identify as GBQQ boys, while another group may be planned specifically to meet the needs of LBQQ girls. Other important support groups may focus on transgender youth and youth of color (see YouthPride in Resource List for examples). Similar guidelines in terms of group confidentiality, structure, use of group agreements, and selection of topics apply in community settings as previously discussed in school settings. Group workers in community settings may have more latitude in making referrals for “wrap-around” service, including (but not limited to) HIV/AIDS testing, STD testing, individual and family counseling, and housing needs (especially if the youth has been threatened within or displaced from their home). Therefore, group workers should have a thorough knowledge of the community resources available to LGBTQQA youth. These groups also offer the same flexibility in terms of being an open-ended group with ongoing member enrollment. However, these groups also may exclude those who identify as allies and/ or are queerly-situated youth. For queerly-

situated youth, a good online resource is Colage (see Resource List) that details online and offline supports for those with LGBTQQA loved ones.

## Social Justice and Group Work with LGBTQQA Youth

As the groups described above demonstrate, establishing LGBTQQA youth groups translates to actively engaging in social justice change. There are numerous group skills necessary for working with LGBTQQA youth appropriately. Unlike many other modalities of group, it is not only necessary to ensure a positive group experience for members, but group workers often will have to engage in advocacy to be able to serve this population as well. In addition, group workers engaging with LGBTQQA youth must continuously monitor and assess for the intersection of LGBTQQA identities with other oppressions. For instance, youth in special education, youth of color, English Language Learner students, youth living with disabilities, and immigrant youth are all students who may be represented in LGBTQQA settings. There are many challenges to doing these types of groups; however, there are numerous rewards for both youth and group workers alike. We encourage every group worker to consider how to individually engage in social justice advocacy and change through establishing affirmative group environments where LGBTQQA youth may empower themselves and thrive.

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# ASGW Research Grants: Call for Proposals 2009-2010

**Purpose:** The purpose for this call for proposals is to fund studies that increase understanding of group leadership, group membership, group processes, or training in group work. Research may address any of the four group work types (task, psychoeducational, counseling, or therapy).

**Amount of Funding:** ASGW has allocated \$2000 to the Research Committee to support deserving group work research. Distribution will be determined by the Research Committee based on number and quality of proposals submitted. Typically the committee has identified 2-3 recipients.

**Who May Apply:** The funds are available to both professional and student members of ASGW. Student researchers are especially encouraged to apply.

**Proposal Format:** Proposals must adhere to the following:

- Proposal must be typed in 12 point font, double spaced, and have one-inch margins.
- The proposal may be a maximum of 5 pages including a brief budget.
- References may be added in addition to the 5 page limit.
- Submitted documents must be in Microsoft Word. No other formats will be accepted.
- Submit one blind copy of the proposal and one copy of the proposal with author identification as two separate attachments to Deborah Rubel, ASGW Research Committee Chair at [deborah.rubel@oregonstate.edu](mailto:deborah.rubel@oregonstate.edu). Please include the phrase 'ASGW Research Grant' in your email subject line.

**Note:** In a desire to support researchers, the research grant committee is providing two options for submitting grant proposals:

Feedback Option – Deadline October 30, 2009: For applicants wishing

to receive constructive feedback on their grant proposals before the final determination deadline, evaluators will provide written, developmental feedback on proposals submitted by October 30, 2009. Feedback will be sent to researchers by November 27, 2009 and will include all recommendations submitted by the committee and a summary letter from the committee chair.

**Regular Option – Deadline for submission January 8, 2010:** All proposals, either original or revisions, will be included in the final determination of awards if received by January 8, 2010. Recipients will be notified during or directly after the ASGW Conference, which is February 18-21, 2010.

## Recommended Proposal Outline:

Rationale  
Methodology  
Ethical considerations  
Budget  
Plan for Dissemination  
References

**Evaluation Criteria:** Research proposals will be evaluated by a panel of reviewers using the following criteria:

- a. Qualifications of the Researcher
- b. Quality of the Proposed Research
- c. Financial Need
- d. Plan for Dissemination

**Deadline(s) for Submission:** The deadline for final determination of grant awards is January 8, 2010. Submissions received by October 30, 2009 are eligible to receive written feedback from the ASGW Research Committee.

Grants will be awarded during or immediately after the ASGW Conference, February 18-21 in New Orleans.

Requests for further information should be directed to: Deborah Rubel, ASGW Research Committee, [deborah.rubel@oregonstate.edu](mailto:deborah.rubel@oregonstate.edu)

## Invitation for Applicants: ASGW Peg Carroll Scholarship

The ASGW Awards Committee invites applicants for the \$2,000 scholarship given annually to honor Marguerite "Peg" Carroll, former ASGW President and pioneer in group work. The purpose of the award is to support the study of group work and further the understanding of group dynamics. Any student interested in the field of group work is eligible for consideration by the ASGW Awards Committee.

Applicants are requested to respond to the following questions:

1. There are many types of group experiences such as: therapeutic and/or counseling, decision making, task oriented, psychoanalysis, quality circles, classroom meetings, etc. What area interests you the most and why?
2. Where would you obtain training in your area of interest? Be specific in respect to trainers, institutions, workshop sponsors, etc. In addition, describe your intended degree program, if it applies.
3. In what setting(s) and with what population do you hope to use your expertise?
4. How do you plan to assess if you and your groups are making progress? Have you had any experience with these evaluation tools? Explain fully.

5. List the types of groups in which you have participated. Describe their duration and the positive and negative aspects of each experience and your role (participant, leader, intern, etc.).
6. Describe your participation in professional organizations related to group work.

The application should have a cover sheet with name, address, home and work phone numbers, e-mail address, social security number, and the names and contact information of those writing letters of recommendation.

Letters of recommendation should be solicited from THREE professionals in the field who are familiar with the applicant's work. These letters may be from supervisors, mentors, major professors, or other individuals who are knowledgeable about the applicant's work with groups. These letters should be forwarded directly from the recommendation source to the address listed below and must be received by January 31, 2010. Recommendation letters should address topics such as group counseling skills of the applicant, evidence of ethical behavior, and evidence of professional commitment and potential.

Electronic submissions are preferred and may be submitted via email (attachment) to: [kelly.mcdonnell@wmich.edu](mailto:kelly.mcdonnell@wmich.edu). Submissions via regular mail should include three (3) typed and double spaced copies of the application to: Kelly McDonnell, Ph.D., Western Michigan University, Department of Counselor Education and Counseling Psychology, 3102 Sangren Hall, Kalamazoo, MI 49008. **Applications must be received by January 31, 2010.** The scholarship recipient will be announced at the ASGW Luncheon at the ACA Conference in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Recipients must be (or become) members of ASGW.

## Nominations Sought for Group Work Practice Award

The ASGW Awards Committee is seeking nominations for the Group Work Practice Award. The purpose of this award is to recognize an outstanding practitioner in group work. Recognition may be for any area of group work covered by the ASGW Professional Standards and nominees must be members of ASGW.

A nomination letter and two supporting letters should address the following points:

1. Scope of practice of nominee to include:
  - a. Type of group work
  - b. Client population served
  - c. Practice setting
2. Innovations in group work practice by the nominee.
3. How nominee has disseminated group work skills through workshops, conference presentations, supervision, and/or training.
4. Evidence of nominee's significant contribution to group work practice.

**Nominations and supporting letters must be received by January 31, 2010** and should be sent to Lorraine J. Guth, Ph.D., Indiana University of Pennsylvania, Department of Counseling, 206 Stouffer Hall, Indiana, PA 15705. Materials may also be sent by e-mail to [lguth@iup.edu](mailto:lguth@iup.edu). The award recipient will be announced at the ASGW Luncheon at the ACA Conference in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

## Nominate Your State Branch for the ASGW 2009 State Branch Award

Tell the ASGW members about the important things that have been accomplished in your state branch the last year. We want to hear about your workshops, publications, membership services and all your special activities.

**What:** Tell us what your branch has been doing this past year. Feel free to submit supporting material. ASGW wants to recognize your branch for your contributions.

**When:** Send your letter of nomination and supporting materials by February 5th, 2010.

**Where:** The branch award is given at the ASGW luncheon at the ACA Convention.

**Who:** Please include in your nomination materials the name and contact information of the person who will accept the award at the ASGW luncheon.

**How:** M. Carolyn Thomas and Jerri Crowell, the ASGW State Branch Co-Chairs, will select the award recipient.

**Submit materials to:**

M. Carolyn Thomas  
9360 Vaughn Road  
Pike Road, AL 36064  
[mthomas@aum.edu](mailto:mthomas@aum.edu)  
334/244-3437

## Call for Nominees: Eminent Career Award and Professional Advancement Award

The ASGW Awards Committee is seeking nominations for the Eminent Career Award and for the Professional Advancement Award. Nominations in either category should address the nominee's outstanding activities and contributions to the field of group work. Additional letters speaking to the nomination would be welcome. Letters should identify which award is being sought.

**Eminent Career Award:** This highest award is intended to recognize major contributions made to the field of group work by an ASGW/ACA member. Credentials and letters of recommendation for the nominee should convey the national and/or international influence the individual has had on group work over a period of time.

**Professional Advancement Award:** This award is made to recognize the outstanding activities of an individual who has helped advance the field of group work through any one of the following: research, development of a new technique or theory, public relations, legislative activities, or group work practice.

**Nominations and supporting letters must be received by January 31, 2010** and should be sent to Lorraine J. Guth, Ph.D., Indiana University of Pennsylvania, Department of Counseling, 206 Stouffer Hall, Indiana, PA 15705. Nominations may also be sent by e-mail to [lguth@iup.edu](mailto:lguth@iup.edu). The award recipients will be announced at the ASGW Luncheon at the ACA Conference in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

## Barbara Gazda Scholarship Applicants Sought

Two \$200 scholarships are available to support students and/or new professionals to attend the ASGW National Conference, February 18-21, 2010 in New Orleans, LA.

Applicants must submit a 300-500 word written statement that:

1. Confirms ASGW membership;
2. Identifies the university and degree program in which the applicant is currently enrolled or from which the applicant recently graduated;
3. Includes a statement of the applicant's interest and experience in group work, including ways in which the applicant is likely to benefit professionally from attending the conference.

Applicants should also provide the following information: name, mailing address, e-mail address, contact number(s), and social security number.

Electronic submissions are preferred and may be submitted via e-mail (attachment) to: [kelly.mcdonnell@wmich.edu](mailto:kelly.mcdonnell@wmich.edu). Submissions via regular mail should include three (3) typed and double spaced copies of the application to: Kelly McDonnell, Ph.D., Western Michigan University, Department of Counselor Education and Counseling Psychology, 3102 Sangren Hall, Kalamazoo, MI 49008. **Applications must be received by December 4, 2009.**

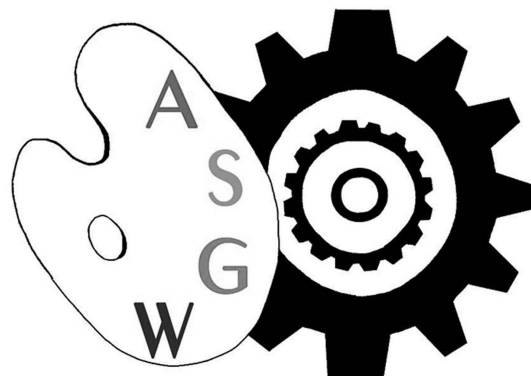
Questions may be directed to Kelly McDonnell at [kelly.mcdonnell@wmich.edu](mailto:kelly.mcdonnell@wmich.edu) or 269-387-5107. Information about the scholarships and conference can be found on the Association for Specialists in Group Work website at [www.asgw.org](http://www.asgw.org)

# ASSOCIATION FOR SPECIALISTS IN GROUP WORK 2010 NATIONAL CONVENTION

The Art and Science of Group Work - February 18-21, 2010 - Doubletree Hotel, New Orleans, LA

Come pass a good time with us down in New Orleans for the 2010 ASGW conference! In the city famous for combining ingredients to create the some of the best cuisine in the world we will be celebrating two ingredients essential to group work – the art and science of groups. Come for the conference and stay for the City!

*Certifications for Continuing Education will be available.*



## Opening Session:

An opening session featuring Dr. Michael Garrett and Dr. Edil Torres Rivera will officially open the conference on Friday morning. They will help us create a space that encourages connection and creative exchange of ideas throughout our conference.



## ASGW Recognition Luncheon:

Supporting the conference theme of Art and Science in

Groups, the keynote address will be presented by Dr. Rex Stockton during the ASGW Recognition Luncheon on Friday afternoon. Dr. Stockton has embodied the successful blending of the art and science in group work throughout his career. His contributions to group research have been recognized widely and he is the recipient of the American Counseling Association's Extended Research Award and the Association for Specialists in Group Work Eminent Career Award.

## ASGW Day of Service:

The focus of the 2010 ASGW Day of Service is sustainable community building.

Through the 2010 ASGW Day of Service, members will have the chance to partner with their peers from New Orleans to directly assist in the reconstruction efforts. Together, partners will design groups that can be implemented in community and school settings to meet the specific needs of New Orleans citizens.

**Hotel Information:** The Doubletree Hotel New Orleans on Canal Street overlooks the Mississippi River and the city's major business and entertainment districts.

For hotel reservations, contact the New Orleans Doubletree Hotel directly at 1-800-HILTONS. Our group is the 2010 ASGW National Conference. Reservations must be made by January 17, 2010; Conference room rates are \$149 for a single or double room. Based on availability, you may have this room rate from February 14 – 23 (so come early for Mardi Gras on Tuesday, Feb 15, and stay late!) Note that there is a 13% tax and a \$2 occupancy charge for each night.

<b>Thursday, February 18</b>	8:30 am – 5:00 pm 1:00 pm – 5:00 pm 1:00 pm – 5:00 pm	<b>ASGW Day of Service</b> Emerging Leaders Workshop Research Fellow Workshop
<b>Friday, February 19</b>	8:30 am – 10:00 am 10:30 am – 12:00 pm 12:00 pm – 1:30 pm 1:30 pm – 5:00 pm	<b>Opening Session</b> 1.5-hour Workshops ASGW Recognition Luncheon 1.5 or 3-hour Workshops
<b>Saturday, February 20</b>	8:30 am – 12:00 pm 12:00 pm – 1:30 pm 1:30 pm – 5:00 pm 5:00 pm – 7:30 pm 9:00 pm – 11:00 pm	1.5 or 3-hour Workshops Break for Lunch 1.5 or 3-hour Workshops Poster Sessions Special Event: Laissez les bons temps rouler!
<b>Sunday, February 21</b>	8:30 am – 10:00 am 10:00 am – 12:00 pm	1.5-hour Workshops Closing Session: New Orleans Second Line
<b>At All Times</b>	<b>Connecting • Networking • Community • Exhibits • Fun!</b>	

## REGISTRATION INFORMATION AVAILABLE NOW AT [WWW.ASGW.ORG](http://WWW.ASGW.ORG)

## The Group Worker

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