



Welcome

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# Action Council Newsletter

FEBRUARY 2019 CONFERENCE EDITION

## From the Editor

ERNEST SHAW, LMSW



Welcome to the 2019 Cross-Cultural Conference and we are glad that you have chosen to review the conference edition of our newsletter. 2018 was a very significant year because we celebrated the 40th

anniversary of the Cross-Cultural Conference. Last year we focused on the history of The Action Council and the conference. We highlighted many of the people who gave birth to both and sustained them for four decades. We will present a summary of last year's conference, however, I will say without question that the opportunity to meet the families of Dr. Macy and Dr. Corbitt at last years conference were highlights for me because the contributions of Dr. Macy and Dr. Corbitt would not have been possible without the support of their families.

The primary goal of this organization is to promote cultural competency through the various educational events that we sponsor and present throughout the year. This edition of the newsletter will provide our readers some of the highlights of the past year, thank those individuals and organizations who continue to contribute to our success and extend an invitation to everyone to join us for future events. I would also like to ask all of our members to contribute to the content of the newsletter by submitting print-ready news items and photographs to me at Ernestshaw2001@yahoo.com. We know that you are doing great things out there that we all need to know about. Please remember that the opinions expressed in this publication are the opinions of the writers and do not necessarily reflect the policies of our organizations. We welcome corrections, opposing opinions, and constructive criticism.

## THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



James Starnes, Action Council President

On behalf of The Action Council Board of Directors, welcome to the forty-first annual Cross-Cultural Conference. We are excited to establish relationships with first-time attendees and continue to nurture relationships with returning attendees. We are grateful for our exhibitors, vendors and all donors who are so vital to the success of the conference.

The conference theme, "Forging Solutions Out of Challenges," while simple,

speaks volumes about where we are as a society. A challenge is simply a caterpillar waiting for an equipped resource to convert it into a butterfly solution, and allow it to soar. James Weldon Johnson, in "The Creation," described what would have to be the first challenge and the first solution. "I'm lonely. I'll make me a world."

It is often said that this nation has never faced more serious challenges. While I offer no opinion on the veracity of this claim, I am totally convinced that the mission of the Action Council is one hundred per-cent as vital as the day it was written. The number of poor, disenfranchised, unhealthy, hated and misunderstood people are not in decline.

There is good news to tell. Because the dream of Dr. Otis A. Corbitt lives on, challenges are not ignored. Because this great visionary not only cared, but acted, and mentored, challenges have no resting place. I am happy to report that Action Council members and Cross-Cultural Conference attendees for forty-one years have demonstrated their steadfast dedication to positive changes in the delivery of human services. Through this conference, best practice models continue to illuminate the path toward successful solutions. Singer, songwriter, Usher said "Success is about dedication. You may not be where you want to be or do what you want to do when you're on the journey, but you've got to be willing to have vision and foresight that leads you to an incredible end."

If we continue to attract caring and committed people, not even the sky will limit us.

# The 2018 Conference: How Did We Do?

Planning is underway for next year’s conference. However, we should take one last look at last year’s conference. The 40th Annual Cross-Cultural Conference was held from February 15-18, 2018. The theme for the conference was: “Leading Change: A Cross-Cultural Perspective on Diversity and Inclusion.”

This conference was designed for persons working with diverse cultural groups including but not limited to social workers, nurses, professional counselors, psychologists, physicians, attorneys, law enforcement, policymakers, educators, members of the clergy, criminal justice professionals, as well as other interested personnel.

The goal of the conference was to provide participants with the knowledge, skills and networking opportunities to enhance the delivery and effectiveness of services in their respective professions.

The overall conference evaluation revealed the following: The Educational Value of Conference was 3.96, based on a 4.0 scale. The Extent Workshops for this year’s conference were as advertised was rated at 3.88. Sixty respondents consisting of 33 Action Council members and 27 nonmembers completed the overall conference evaluation. All 60 indicated that

their personal goals and objectives were met during the conference. One person said that their personal goals and objectives were partially met.

Overall Conference Evaluation						
	Excellent 4	Good 3	Fair 2	Poor 1		
<u>4.0 Scale</u>						
				<u>2016</u>	<u>2017</u>	<u>2018</u>
Educational Value of Conference				3.68	3.94	3.96
Overall Quality of General Sessions				3.59	3.86	3.88
Overall Quality of Concurrent Sessions				3.76	3.92	3.91
Overall Quality of						
Roundtable Discussions				3.46	3.76	3.82
Extent Workshops were as advertised				<u>3.72</u>	<u>3.86</u>	<u>3.88</u>
Average:				3.64	3.87	3.89

We appreciate the many comments made regarding the quality of the presentations made by the many talented speakers. There were a few negative comments. However, most were of the technical nature relating to the poor quality of audio-visual equipment, inconsiderate behavior of participants and poor quality of the conference venue. Nevertheless, an examination of the hundreds of evaluation forms turned in by the attendees were almost universal in their conclusions regarding the high quality of the educational experience provided by the conference. We commend Nadine Livingston and all of the members of the planning committee for their hard work and we sincerely thank everyone for their many contributions.

## Welcome Dr. Lawson!

Thommi Odom Lawson, Ph.D. was elected to the Board of Directors of the Action Council. We welcome her to the board. She has been a major contributor to our effort during the past several years. Her presentations have been interesting and informative and her work with students has enhanced our effort to attract young people to our organization.

Dr. Lawson serves as the chair of Student Day for the Cross-Cultural Conference. She is also a national board-certified counselor and author of the newly released book *Grace Space: Understanding and Implementing Work/Life Harmony*. If you are interested in volunteering to help support Student Day, please contact Dr. Lawson at [thomasinalawson@webster.edu](mailto:thomasinalawson@webster.edu) or 843-497-3677. *Grace Space: Understanding and Implementing Work/Life Harmony* can be purchased at [www.drthommi.com](http://www.drthommi.com).







# Temporary Sacrifices and Long-Term Successes

*Thommi Odom Lawson, Ph.D., LPC, NCC*

**Thommi Lawson, Ph.D.**

Graduate students in the helping professions are tasked with juggling multiple priorities such as coursework,

group work, and internships. Many are nontraditional students. Nontraditional students have multiple life roles such as parent, caregiver to a parent(s), employee or employer, spouse, or volunteer.

You can successfully pursue a graduate degree without it consuming you. Will there be sacrifices? YES! But the sacrifice is temporary, and the success lasts forever.

Here are three essential ways to find harmony while juggling multiple priorities:

## 1. Pursue Excellence, Not Perfection.

Of course, we want to do and be our best in everything we do. However, aiming for perfection can cause you to get in your own way, and research also shows that it can cause psychological distress. Adaptive perfectionism is healthy. This occurs when you set high goals while retaining the ability to be satisfied with your performance regardless of the outcome. The opposite, maladaptive perfectionism, occurs when you set inflexible standards and are unable to take pleasure in your performance because of anxiety about your capability. Striving for excellence not only allows you to leave your creative stamp but also frees you from the pressure of perfectionism so you can appreciate the process.

## 2. Cue the Cheerleaders

Graduate school can be isolating at times, especially at the start-up stage when much of the focus is on establishing and creating your brand. As you progress, self-doubt may creep in, and you may start questioning your purpose and impact. Instead of going down a trail of negativity, call on your cheerleaders! Your cheerleaders believe in you AND your dream. They know your favorite foods and songs and are ready to show up and hype you up at a

moment's notice. Let go of the thought that you are a bother. Your cheerleaders want a reason to pull out their glitter pom-poms. Let them!

## 3. Self-Care Is Not Selfish

As a graduate student, full-time employment, and parenthood, you may feel compelled to work 24/7. The to-do list seems never to end. But grinding 24/7 without making space for self-care will lead to burnout and resentment. Self-care is essential and non-negotiable. Start viewing self-care as an investment in yourself and your business. The time away most likely will result in clarity and renewed energy. Set your intention and schedule self-care as you would an important meeting with a potential investor. Do not attach a hefty price tag to self-care. Spa days are great but start by choosing simple activities that refuel and do not require money or a set time. Taking a ten-minute walk, reading a few pages of a book, meditating, and coloring are a few examples.

Thommi Odom Lawson, Ph.D., LPC, NCC, ACS is the chair of Student Day for the Cross-Cultural Conference and a core faculty member at Webster University – Myrtle Beach. In 2017, Dr. Lawson was nominated for the Kemper Excellence in Teaching Award at Webster University. In 2016, she was awarded the Outstanding Professional Contribution to Knowledge Award by the Georgia College Counseling Association. She has published and presented in the areas of multicultural counseling, career counseling, and online counseling and supervision.

Dr. Lawson earned her doctorate in Counselor Education and Supervision at Mercer University – Atlanta and is a Licensed Professional Counselor and a National Board Certified Counselor in the state of Georgia, North Carolina, and South Carolina. She maintains a private practice in Columbia, SC where she focuses on career counseling addressing the blurred lines, between career success, interpersonal relationships, and home life. Learn more about Dr. Lawson at [www.linkedin.com/in/thommiodomlawson](http://www.linkedin.com/in/thommiodomlawson).

# Tearing Down Walls *By Ernest Shaw, LMSW, editor*

There were two deaths on the state and national level in 2018 that an organization such as ours should take note of. President George Herbert Walker Bush died just months after his wife Barbara. One of the highlights of President Bush's administration was his signing of The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in 1990. The ADA was modeled after the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin and the ADA guaranteed people with disabilities the same opportunities to pursue the American Dream as everyone else. At the signing, President Bush proclaimed "Let the shameful wall of exclusion finally come down." The goal of agencies such as SCDMH and ours is to ensure that the walls of exclusion are not rebuilt.



The second death of note was that of Liz Patterson, a former U.S. congresswoman from South Carolina. Ironically, Gladys Elizabeth Johnston Patterson, a Columbia College graduate was the daughter of former Governor Olin D. Johnston who served from 1935–1939 and 1943–1945. In the 1930s national figures such as Margaret Sanger who founded what is now Planned Parenthood and her financial backer, Clarence Gamble, heir to the Procter and Gamble fortune promoted birth control and eugenics.

The chief proponent of eugenics in our state was Benjamin Whitten, the superintendent of the State School for the Feeble-minded for nearly half a century until he retired in 1965. Thirty years earlier, freshmen state senator Strom Thurmond and the Medical Affairs Committee pushed through a law which allowed officials of state institutions to order surgical sterilization on people diagnosed with certain conditions. South Carolina's "Sexual Sterilization" bill was signed into law

by Gov. Olin D. Johnston in 1935. By the mid-1960s, several hundred of our citizens had been sterilized without their consent. Institutionalized women, the poor and minorities were most often subjected to this practice. This is a personal issue for me because there are rumors in my family that my young grandmother was sterilized shortly after giving birth to my mother, her only child. Her treatment occurred prior to enactment of this law but I must accept the realization that my existence or lack thereof was totally dependent upon whether my grandmother was sterilized before or after my mother's birth.

Ironically, Governor Johnson's own son, Olin D. Johnston Jr., was born with Down Syndrome the year after the "Sexual Sterilization" bill became law and spent time at the former State Training School for the Feeble-Minded later named Whitten Center. Although the practice of forced sterilization went out of vogue by 1963, the law remained on the books. His sister Elizabeth worked to have the law removed from the books.

In February of 1986 South Carolina's Sexual Sterilization law was repealed by the legislature, effective February 20, 1986. Elizabeth Johnston Patterson was elected to the US Congress in 1986 by narrowly defeating a man whose father had once run against her father for the Senate. Although several women had represented South Carolina in Congress, Elizabeth Patterson was the first to win in a general election rather than special elections to finish the terms of husbands who had died in office. Elizabeth Patterson served three terms in Congress and no woman has served in Congress from our state since her departure.

In 2003, Governor Jim Hodges issued a public apology for the forced sterilizations that took place in our state. Elizabeth Johnston Patterson, daughter of the man who signed the bill into law said at the time "It's part of our history," she said. "It shows we've made progress." Dave Almeida, head of the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill of South Carolina, said that Governor Hodges' apology was "a very important gesture," but he also said that much work remained to be done to get rid of the stigma associated with mental illness. Elizabeth Johnston Patterson died at her home in Spartanburg on November 10, 2018, just twenty days before the death of President Bush.

# John H. Magill Retires, Mark Binkley Appointed Interim Director at SCDMH



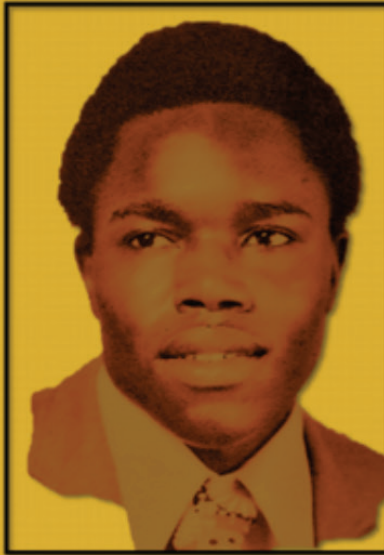
The SC Department of Mental Health announced the retirement of Director John H. Magill effective January 11, 2019, Director Magill began working at the Department of Mental Health in the late 1960s. He has led the agency since 2006 and he has been a supporter of our efforts. He and countless employees of his agency have been at the forefront of our effort. Founding President Dr. Corbitt and every president who followed him worked at the SC Department of Mental Health for major portions of their careers. Mr. Magill was the Opening speaker at the 2018 conference. We thank him for his support and wish him well in his next endeavor.

The search for a permanent director is underway. In the meantime, Mark W. Binkley, JD, has been named to serve as interim director. Binkley served as the agency's General Counsel for 16 years and is currently Deputy Director overseeing the Division of Administrative Services. Mr. Binkley is no stranger to our organization either. He has been a frequent presenter at so many of our events and he is a former member of the Board of Directors of the Action Council. We thank Mr. Binkley for his support and wish him and his agency well as they continue to care for the mentally ill population of our state.



On our 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary, The Action Council for Cross Cultural Mental Health and Human Services Congratulate the WCT Class of 1968 on its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

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I am proud to be a member of the Greatest Class and a member of the Board of Directors of the Action Council for Cross Cultural Mental Health and Human Services. [Actioncouncilmentalhealth.org](http://Actioncouncilmentalhealth.org)



Reprinted from the souvenir booklet of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration of the Williamsburg County Training Class of 1968 on July 6, 2018

## So long Cousin Gloria!



Gloria Ann McLaughlin, a member of our family completed her course on Sunday, June 3, 2018. Gloria began life in the Corridor of Shame. She was educated in Sumter County and Voorhees College. She received a Master's Degree in Social Work from the University of South Carolina and used her skills to treat clients entrusted to the care of SC Department of Social Services, SC Department of Mental Health and William Jennings Bryan Dorn Veteran Administration Hospital. Gloria was called "a committed and exceptional worker." She was an active member of First Baptist Church in Sumter. Gloria was a caring member of her family and her entire community.

President Starnes noted "Gloria was a faithful Cross Cultural Conference attendee. She was an active participant in any session she attended." Gloria's obituary listed Josephine Jupiter, a fellow Action Council member as a "sister-friend."

# BECOME A MEMBER TODAY!

## Membership Application

Please complete the following membership form, detach and mail with dues to:

MEMBERSHIP CHAIRPERSON, ACCMHS  
P.O. BOX 1695 • COLUMBIA, SC 29202

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Membership expires \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Tel. \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Company \_\_\_\_\_

*All dues and contributions are tax deductible.*

Professional disciplines:

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Professional Organizations:

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Identify Cross Cultural Issues of concern to you:

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Are you willing to serve on an Action Council Committee?

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How did you find out about Action Council?

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## Membership Fees

Dues	Type Membership	Check One
\$15	Senior Citizen (age 65+)	<input type="checkbox"/>
\$10	Student	<input type="checkbox"/>
\$20	Individual	<input type="checkbox"/>
\$50	Organization	<input type="checkbox"/>
\$35	Family (2 or more)	<input type="checkbox"/>
\$20	Board Member	<input type="checkbox"/>

Additional Name(s)

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**Action Council For Cross Cultural  
Mental Health and Human Services**

**P.O. Box 1695  
Columbia, SC 29202**

# 2020 Call for Proposals

The Action Council for Cross Cultural Mental Health and Human Services invites you to submit a proposal for the 2020 annual Cross Cultural Conference.

Submit a conference proposal by email to: [crossculture.action@gmail.com](mailto:crossculture.action@gmail.com).

**Proposals are due by 11:59pm April 30, 2019. Share Your Knowledge, Innovative Solutions, and Strategies with colleagues and students.**

## Suggested Interdisciplinary themes (but not limited to):

- Technology and outreach
- Evidence Based Practices and Programs
- Substance misuse and addictive behaviors
- Pharmacology
- Trauma
- Veterans
- Child welfare
- Crime and criminal justice
- Health disparities
- Poverty and social policy
- Sexual orientation
- Domestic violence and sexual assault
- Aging services
- Ethics
- Spirituality
- An array of clinical issues

## Calling All Students!

### STUDENT POSTER SESSION

*Entries are due December 2019*

For more details on our 2020 Cross Cultural Conference and the proposal entry process visit our website at [www.crossculturalactioncouncil.org](http://www.crossculturalactioncouncil.org).