



IN THIS ISSUE



- Welcome New Members
- The 2015 Conference: How Did We Do?

Action Council Newsletter

FEBRUARY 2016 CONFERENCE EDITION

From the Editor ERNEST SHAW, LMSW



Welcome to the 38th Annual Cross Cultural Conference. I consider it an honor and a privilege to have been asked to serve as editor of the Action Council newsletter. This is a responsibility for which I have had no previous experience. However, I believe that we can

produce a quality newsletter, if we all contribute to its success. You can contribute by sending your stories, news and achievements to share with our readers. It is also my goal to constantly improve the quality of our publication and I welcome any constructive criticism that will aid in that process. We hope that you find this edition interesting and informative. All opinions expressed in our newsletter are the opinion of the writer and do not necessarily reflect the position of the Action Council.

Dear Editor Sharon Spivey, LISW-CP, BCPCC



I worked with Dr. Corbitt on the Action Council for 10 years from 1983 to 1993. Most of our work was planning and working the Conference each year. During that time our focus was primarily on race relations between blacks, whites and SC

Indian tribes. Frankly not sure how to classify my role; I did a little bit of everything depending on needs at the time – planning, contacting speakers or group leaders, sponsors, registration and setup – all around gofer. It was a privilege to work with Dr. Corbitt. I first worked with him right after starting with Mental Health in early 70's when I supervised graduate students in Social Work from USC and Dr. Corbitt was the field supervisor. It's good to know the Council continues his legacy.

Editor's note: Sharon retired from the SC Department of Mental Health after 28 years. For the past ten years she and her husband, an ordained minister have provided Christian focused Marriage and Family Counseling in Greenville.

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



James Starnes, Action Council President

On behalf of the Board of Directors, to all first time attendees, we extend a special welcome. We understand that all attendees receive information on a variety of trainings. We are pleased that you selected this conference. We are also grateful for the presenters, moderators, and other volunteers who make the conference successful.

As I review the conference program, I am convinced that the planning committee has once again covered relevant topics, and identified highly qualified presenters. If you have suggestions for topics or presenters for future trainings, please let us know. The Action Council will have several trainings in 2016. Please ensure that we have current contact information so we can forward the details when available. Also, please let us know if you are interested in assisting with marketing, resource development, or in other areas.

Many attendees are with us every year. They or members of the Board of Directors can answer any questions you may have. We will do all we can to make this a mountain top experience for all.

Revised Evaluation Form for 2016

It is always our goal to improve the quality of our educational offerings and we greatly value the opinion and constructive criticism of each person attending our conference. We also appreciate the contributions of the great speakers who share their expertise with each year. Therefore, we have made some changes to the evaluation form for this year. We believe that these changes will enable attendees to more accurately assess the quality of educational presentations. Thank you for your assistance in improving what we do.

Thank You, The Long Range Planning Committee



Mary L. Green

Otis Corbitt: Agent for Change

Mary L. Green, MSW, LMSW

Otis Corbitt was one of those people that just show up in your life and you wonder sometimes later, just how did that happen? I remember meeting Otis sometimes around 1975 as he was working on his dissertation from Columbia University. As fate would have it, around 1978, he and I happened to begin working together for South Carolina Department of Mental Health, Division of Community Services. Otis was a Regional Director for the Upstate. There were just a few Black Professionals employed by the department at that time. Otis, as most of us know, took his job very seriously and I am certain that his dedication led to his selection as the person to lead SCDMH's efforts to tackle this important, but challenging issue. With

his infectious smile, he met with his superiors to discuss ways to put more Black professionals to work "in the vineyard."

I can remember meeting in his office to not only increase the number of Black employees employed with DMH, but also to set up a vehicle for networking among those who were employed, primarily with the aid of his uncle Floster Ellison. As I now look back on this process, it was akin to Harriet Tubman's

Underground Railroad. Otis would hear of someone who had been fortunate enough to have attained a graduate degree in Social Work and refer them to Mr. Ellison, who was Director of Social Work at Crafts Farrow State Hospital. Qualified applicants had to listen to an epistle on the need for professionalism. They were then hired, if they were still interested.

Following many meetings in Otis' office the decision was made to have a conference that would focus on Cross Cultural issues within the Department of Mental Health and at the same time serve as a forum for Black professionals to be able to network. He was fortunate to have developed positive relationships with many White professionals such as Joe James and Sharon Spivey to name a few. These professionals of 'goodwill' would be instrumental in the development of the first conference. This conference was held at the Thunderbird Inn in Greenville, South Carolina. It was a huge success and the decision was made to make it an annual event.

This conference has evolved into what it is today because of Otis Corbitt's tireless spirit, dogged determination and willingness to persevere despite all odds. The month of February is dubbed Black History Month giving well deserved credit to Carter G. Woodson. However, in the annals of history I believe Otis Corbitt's name should be added to those instrumental in impacting change in the lives of people of African Descent, if not throughout the country but most certainly South Carolina. Otis Corbitt, I salute you, and will forever be in your debt.



Otis Corbitt

Welcome New Board Members



John Connery graduated from Charleston Southern University in 1967 with a B.S. in psychology. He graduated from Fairleigh-Dickinson University in Madison NJ with a MS in clinical psychology and became the director of the Berkeley County Mental Health Clinic. John is currently employed by the South Carolina Youth Advocate Program which is a not for profit organization serving at risk children across the state in a variety of programs

ranging from therapeutic foster care to traditional outpatient mental health services. John is married to Hilda White M.D. who is a psychiatrist practicing in Columbia. John Connery is no stranger to the Action Council and we look forward to his contributions.



Shirley McClerkin-Motley has been a member of the faculty at Coker College in Hartsville, SC since 2000. She is currently an Associate Professor of Social Work, the department chair for the social work program and Assistant Coordinator for the Child Welfare Consortium Program. She graduated Magna Cum Laude from Benedict College with a B.S. Degree in Social Work and a Certification in Child Protective Services. Shirley attended the Advanced Standing Program as a University of South Carolina Minority Fellow and earned a Master's Degree in Social Work. She is currently a Doctoral Candidate in the College of Social Work. We welcome Dr. McCerkin-Motley to the Board of Directors of the Action Council for Cross Cultural Mental Health and Human Services.



Johnese M. Bostic is the Health Equity and Disparities Consultant with the Office of Minority Health at SCDHEC. She works tirelessly to assess the effectiveness of current efforts in engaging minority populations to improve health outcomes, eliminate health disparities, and improve health equity. Johnese earned a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Behavioral Science from Columbia College. She has more than eight years of experience working with diverse

populations, faith based organizations and other community groups. She is a member of the Public Health Education and Health Promotion section of the American Public Health Association and the President of the South Carolina Public Health Association, an affiliate of the Southern Health Association. We welcome Johnese to the Board of Directors of the Action Council for Cross Cultural Mental Health and Human Services.



Ana Isabel Gallego is the Program Director, Alliance for a Healthier South Carolina and Responsible for planning, implementing, and evaluating activities associated with the Alliance. Ana earned a BS, Economics and International Business from Universidad ICESI in Cali, Colombia, graduating Summa Cum Laude. She also earned a MPH, Health Services Policy and Management from the University of South Carolina. Ana received the Michael Doyle Jarrett Award which is given to a MPH student demonstrating a commitment to public health and a high potential for leadership. We welcome Ana to the Board of Directors of the Action Council for Cross Cultural Mental Health and Human Services.

To Laugh About our Differences

Ernest Shaw, LMSW

With a degree of regularity, the headlines of the newspaper are the all-too-familiar accounts of two or more lives being ruined. Violence strikes again as one young man snuff out the life of another. One is buried and the other will eventually land in prison. Our state has been near the top of the violent crime rate for more than a century. Some of our neighborhoods are so dangerous that a young man's chance of survival was better in the army in Iraq or Afghanistan than his own community. More than 16,000 Americans were murdered in 2010 according to the Centers For Disease Control. Murders, particularly in the South, are generally carried out by someone close to the victim. Experts will tell you that the violent crime rate is actually going down but it does not seem so. We are less endowed with civility as minor disagreements escalate into fatal confrontations. I recall the good old days when a fight did not necessarily mean a killing.

My dearest childhood friends Sammie and Willie Gamble lived across the field from us. The brothers and I spent most of our time together in our rural Salters community that was better known as "the Backwoods." I remember fighting them one morning and getting in some good licks before deciding to make a strategic but hasty retreat across the cotton field to our house. A summer shower came up as I ran through the door. The sun soon came out, all was well and I was back at their house by the end of the day and we played as if nothing had happened. I attended Sunday school at Oak Grove Baptist Church with Calvin Staggers and his sister Margie. Calvin, Willie, Sammie and I were working in the tobacco field of Mr. Emiel Baker during the 1960s when Sammie and Willie decided to fight Calvin to settle an argument about something so unimportant that I cannot recall the details now. They asked me to help them but I tried to discourage them. Later at the tobacco barn, I went to the scene of the "fight" but it was all but over and Mrs. Ethel Gamble the aunt of Sammie and Willie had to use a yard rake to get Calvin off her nephews.

We never talked about what happened at that tobacco barn that day. Sammie and Willie moved across the Santee River to Berkeley County during our middle adolescent years. Calvin, his siblings and I ended up in New Haven, Connecticut after high school and I believe that we all lived peaceful lives. I know that my only brush

with the law occurred during the early 1970s when I was charged with Disturbing the Peace after breaking up a fight involving two of my female relatives and another woman. I had to explain my role in that affair to a judge twice in court before charges against me was dropped.

During the summer of 1990 a familiar looking man approached me at Mt. Zion Baptist Church in Greeleyville. He called me by name but I could not even guess who he was. After I made several unsuccessful attempts to identify him, he smiled, said that he would let me figure out who he was rather than tell me and walked away to talk with others. Embarrassed, I quickly left the church and spent the next several months trying to figure out who the man was.

In January of 1991, my sister called from Greeleyville to tell me that Willie had died. I went to his funeral at Union Baptist Church in Salters, and it was not until I saw him lying so peaceful in the coffin that I realized that I had met him six months earlier. I will always regret that I did not will myself to remember who he was six months earlier when he was still alive.

In Berkeley County Sammie became a minister, and soon an elder. He outlived his brother by sixteen years and shortly after he died on January 26, 2007 I got another call from back home. I drove my wife and children to Berkeley County to witness my childhood friend being laid to rest on a cold February day and to speak a few words of comfort to the grieving mother of my childhood friends. I lived in New Haven, Connecticut for five years and I ran into Calvin's sister Margie several times but more than forty years passed before I saw Calvin again. Calvin Staggers came down from New Haven, Connecticut during the summer of 2009 and we had our first opportunity to talk about old times after many years. We laughed about several things, but he laughed the hardest about the "fight" from so long ago. I wish that our young people could have the same opportunity to laugh about their differences so long after the event.

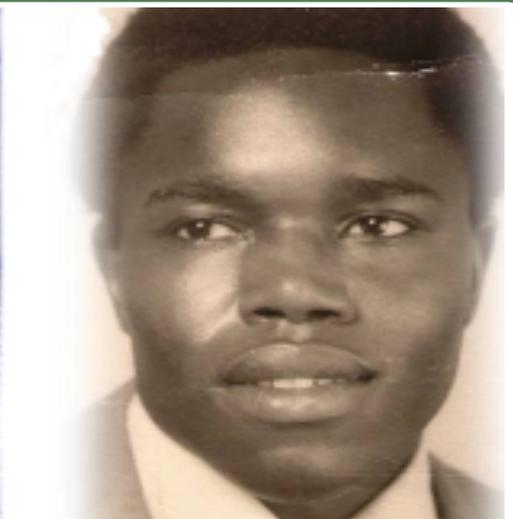
Note: I visited the Kingstree News office in Kingstree, SC and dropped off this story which was published as the guest editorial in its August 5, 2014 edition. After leaving Kingstree, I visited my mother in Salters, SC and she asked me if I had heard that Calvin had just died in New Haven.



Sammie Gamble



Willie James Gamble



Ernest

The 2015 Conference: *How Did We Do?*

The 37th Annual Action Council Cross Cultural Conference was held at the Landmark Resort Hotel in Myrtle Beach, SC, from February 19 to February 22, 2015. The theme for this year's conference was: "Building Communities of Hope and Resiliency: A System of Care Approach." The conference goals were to provide participants and attendees with the knowledge, skills and networking opportunities that will enhance the delivery and effectiveness of services in their respective professions.

The conference objectives were to expose participants and attendees to the most current policies, best practices and contemporary theories in the practice of behavioral services.

Attendees were provided the following opportunities:

- Explore the rights of minors, parents and providers in the therapeutic process.
- Discuss age of majority, access to records, consent, custody and divorce, allegations of abuse and neglect, and what must be disclosed versus what is discretion.
- Expose participants and attendees to the concept of mobilizing and reconfiguring existing resources to enhance the well-being of children and families.
- Provide attendees in the Licensure workshops for Professional Counselor, Professional Counselor Supervisor knowledge of basic test structure, core competency knowledge and theory related to subject area as well as a test taking technique that will enhance probability of receiving a successful score on the appropriate examination.

Participants were asked to evaluate each presentation by rating it as excellent, good, fair or poor with numerical values ranging from 4 to 1 assigned to the ratings. A review of those evaluations revealed the following: The Educational Value of Conference was 3.78, The Extent Workshops were as advertised was rated at 3.609. The overall quality of the conference was rated at 3.682 compared to last year's 3.9. The findings of this evaluation were presented to the Board of Directors of the Action Council at its March 18, 2015 meeting, and are being published here to inform our members, conference attendees, and other interested parties.



Rev. James B. Blasingame

Two preconference workshops were held the first day. Gina N. Duncan, M.D. of the Medical College of Georgia and Georgia Regents University presented "Guiding Through the Valley: When to Refer to a Mental Health Professional" and Linda Collins of the Georgetown, SC Family Justice Center presented "Domestic Violence 101." One person evaluating Dr. Duncan's presentation wrote "information shared was relevant. Should have been reinforced by having some printed information to walk away with." Ms. Collins was described as "Very organized," and that she "explained everything well."



Jeanne F. Cook

The Grace Brooks Palmer Convocation followed the preconference workshops. Rev. James B. Blasingame, Pastor, Mt. Zion Missionary Baptist Church, Sumter, SC and President of the Baptist Education and Missionary Convention of South Carolina.

The Opening Plenary Session was presented by Jeanne F. Cook, Med, MSW, PhD, LISW-CP, the Director of the Masters of Social Work Program at Johnson C. Smith University of Charlotte, NC. One attendee wrote that Dr. Cook "had a wealth of knowledge that was presented in a delightful manner."



Melanie Matney

Dr. Cook joined Melanie Matney, B.S, MA, Executive Director of Access Health Care at the SC Hospital Association in a Plenary Panel discussion chaired by Daniel Craft. "Speakers were relevant, engaging and resourceful." wrote one person.

Attorney Mark Binkley, Deputy Director of the Division of Administrative Services at the SC Department of Mental Health presented "Gun Laws and Persons with Mental Illness." "Information was interesting and clearly presented," according to one participant.



Mark Binkley

The President's Luncheon speaker was Judge Ola Lewis, Senior Resident Superior Court Judge for Brunswick County, NC. Her presentation was described as "Very positive and uplifting. Beautiful spirit and wonderful for our system. Need more like her!" "Excellent luncheon speakers two years in a row!" noted another reviewer.

Beverly Baliko, PhD, RN, and Mary Boyd, PhD, RN, both Associate Professors at the University of South Carolina College of Nursing presented "Assessing and Responding to Intimate Partner Violence (IPV)." Their presentation was described as "Very informative" and "Would have liked to address males as victims as well."



Judge Ola Lewis

Tammy Beshers of the Appleseed Legal Justice Center addressed "Immigrant Issues in South Carolina." "Complicated issue-did well on presentation," noted one participant. Retired social worker Ernest Shaw, LMSW presented "When Crime Continue to Cost: The Case for Re-entry and Reform" and one attendee wrote "Great researched information. Very well delivered. Need to write a book." Another person wrote "Wonderful presentation-Must be repeated-Only slight update to allow for changes in time. Especially good visually."



Tamara Lynn Klein

Tamara Lynn Klein, PhD. Mental Health Treatment Coordinator at the Federal Bureau of Prisons in Aurora, Colorado presented "Learning to Work More Effectively with Offenders with Mental Illness." She presented this workshop three times and her presentations were described as "Very inspirational and informative." However, another person wrote "she is from another state could have gotten information about SC prison system."



Vanessa Spearman

Patricia S. Motes, PhD and a Research Professor, Gina N. Duncan, MD, Psychiatrist along with Tracey Richardson, MA, Ph.D and Joe James, ACSW, both with SC Department of Mental Health presented interactive summaries of the day's offerings. This session was moderated by Marjorie Hammock, MSW, LISW. One participant noted "Excellent job summarizing workshops that we missed." And another person added that Tracey Richardson had done an excellent job.

Vanessa Spearman, MD an Assistant Professor of Medicine, Psychiatry and Health Behavior and General Internal Medicine at Georgia Regents University spoke about "Health Disparities." One of the participants wrote "Dr. Spearman stepped in for the originally scheduled presenter, and I admit she did an excellent job. She was able to engage the audience effectively."



Richard Frierson

Richard L. Frierson, MD and Vice Chair for Education at the Department of Neuropsychiatry and Behavioral Science at the University of South Carolina School of Medicine presented "Persons With Mental illness as perceived by the legal System." Dr. Frierson received perfect scores and one person wrote that his presentation "Should be repeated next year to reach more participants."

Otis Cosby, MD, MBA, MSPH an Occupational and Environmental Medicine Consultant presented "Overview of Worker's Health and Addressing the needs of an Aging Workforce." His presentation was described as "Excellent."

Kertrina Graham, LMSW, Assistant Professor of Social Work at Limestone College in Gaffney, SC presented "Assessing the Impact of Social Policy on Poverty." One participant wrote "I appreciate the fact that the presenter's statistics were up to date."

Jennifer D. Pender, M.D., M.H.P. of William S. Hall Psychiatric Institute in Columbia, SC joined Eric R. Williams, M.D. of the Department of Neuropsychiatric and Behavioral Science at the University of South Carolina School of Medicine in Columbia, SC to present "Managing Stress for the Attending." "One of the best I attended. Would have liked to have handouts," wrote one participant.

Leslie Wilson, MA, NCACII formerly of Lexington Richland Alcohol and Drug Abuse Council presented "The Language of Recovery." "I have been attending this conference for several years. This is the BEST session I have attended," noted a participant.

Laura Spears, Transition Coordinator at SC Vocational Rehabilitation Department and Leah Cardoni of the University of South Carolina School of Medicine Center for Disability Resources presented "Using Teaming to Improve Secondary Transition Programming at the local Level." "Wonderful information!" wrote one person.

Shirley McClerklin-Motley, Ph.D, Associate Professor of Social Work at Coker College in Hartsville, SC presented "Domestic Child Sex Trafficking." "Exceptional presenter; extremely knowledgeable-a workshop everyone should attend" was the assessment of one participant.

Christina M. Lopez, PhD. of the Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC) School of Nursing and Kristen M. Shealy, Ed.M, CSA, LPC of the National Crime Victims Center at MUSC teamed up to speak on the topic "Psychiatry, Cultural Competency, and the Diverse Latino Population: How Far Have We Progressed?" "Very knowledgeable presenters! Great use of case studies!!" wrote one attendee.



Alex Karydi

Alex Karydi, MA., CSA, CAC of the SC Department of Juvenile Justice spoke about "LGBTQI Youth in the System." One participant wrote "Excellent presentation-Have her back. Information was very relevant!! Especially when you are dealing with kids today! Kids who are LGBT are humans too!"

Ramona Carr, M.C.J. of SC Vocational Rehabilitation Department and Demetrius Henderson, Med, MBA, LPC. Of the SC Department of Mental Health presented "South Carolina Individual Placement and Support Program (IPS)." "One of the best. Should be more than one session to cover all information and allow discussion" noted one participant.

The "Otis A. Corbitt Awards Luncheon" address was delivered by Carl M. Humphries, MSW and Chief Executive Officer of Hopehealth. "Well articulated presenter who emphasized his point via media. Well done. An example of what a plenary session should be. Great presenter" was the way one person described his effort while another person thought that his "reference to H.L. Mencken not appropriate for this group."



Arelis Moore de Peralta

Arelis Moore de Peralta, M.Ed., MHP, MD, Ph.D a Family and Community Studies and Public Health Instructor at Clemson University addressed "Hispanic Immigrant Families' challenges to Access Human Services in South Carolina." "A very interesting presentation that others should have the opportunity to attend," wrote one attendee.



Otis Crosby

Dianne Winchester, MA, LPC, CACI of the Coastal Recovery Center in Myrtle Beach, SC presented “Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing Therapy (EMDR).” “Great presentation,” wrote one person. Sarah Vidrine of Sarah Vidrine Consulting presented “The impact of Childhood Exposure to Violence on Lifelong Health and Well-being.” “Great workshop with strategy and resources to help decrease and stop child abuse,” noted one participant.



Gina N. Duncan

Otis Cosby, MD, MBA, MSPH. FACOEM moderated a “Health Disparity Symposium.” Panelist included E. Vanessa Spearman, MD, Christina M. Lopez, MD, Johnese M. Bostic, Andre Dyer, MD, Frankie White, MD, and Gina N. Duncan, MD. One participant noted “Wonderful to see such a young group of professionals speak on this topic was excellent. Proud to be in the field of health care.” “Very good. Please have them back again” wrote another.

Shirley Furtick, MS`W, LISW-CP/AP, LMFT, Department of Veteran Affairs and Marjorie Brittain Hammock, LISW-CP, MSW, Social Work Consultant presented “Ethical and Clinical Practice.” One person noted “Outstanding. Best of the weekend.”

Phil Bowman, MD, PhD and Director, Pee Dee Mental Health Center (retired) presented “Axis II Disorders: The Great Imposters.” “Brilliant-very interesting presentation. Could use a microphone when he walks around, noted one participant.

The “Closing Brunch Speech” was delivered by Versie J. Bellamy, MN, R.N. The Deputy Director of the Division of Inpatient Services at the SC Department of Mental Health. “Great Speaker!” noted one person and another wrote “Thank you for coming, Director Bellamy.”



Versie Bellamy

Participants were asked to name any speakers from the concurrent and general educational sessions they considered outstanding. Named most frequently were Carl Humphries and Judge Ola Lewis. Others noted were Mark Binkley, Johnese Bostic, Phil Bowman, Vanessa Spearman, Eric Williams Gina Duncan, Alex Karydi, Demetrious Henderson, Ramona Carr and Ernest Shaw. Several attendees said all of the presenters were outstanding.

Participants were asked to suggest speakers for next year’s conference. Those named included President and Mrs. Obama, Entertainer Oprah Winfrey, Dr. Frierson, Carl Humphries, Dr. John Keith, Judge Taft Guiles, any nurse and all members of the Health Disparity Panel.

Thirty-five participants completed a survey at the end of the conference. Twenty of the thirty-five indicated that they were members of the Action Council. All thirty-five addressed the question of whether or not their personal goals and objectives were met during the conference. All thirty-five answered “yes.” Twenty-nine of thirty-five said that they planned to attend the conference next year. No one said that they did not plan to attend while six answered “Maybe.”



Nadine Livingston

The annual conference presented by the Action Council for Mental Health and Human Services is a time-honored tradition for many professionals. While the conference does feature nationally known experts in a variety of fields, workshops conducted by human services professionals, religious leaders and members of our organization also contribute greatly to our educational effort and the whole conference experience. Our entire organization would like to commend, Nadine Livingston and the Planning Committee, President James Starnes and so many others for their hard work in putting this event together. We recognize that our conference would not be the successful event that it is without the support of so many public and private agencies, institutions and companies.

Many human services professionals use contact hours earned at the conference to satisfy their yearly requirements for licensure purposes and we are working to expand the number of disciplines that we can offer continuing education credits to. We believe that we play a major role in providing relevant and affordable educational opportunities to attendees while providing presenters with opportunities to present research findings and accounts of best practice models to professionals with direct care responsibilities.



James Starnes

Finally, it is crucial that we ask attendees of our conference to rate the effectiveness of our offerings and to suggest ways that we might improve our conference. Again, the Educational Value of the Overall Conference was 3.78 and the average rating for several areas measured was 3.682. We greatly appreciate hearing from the people who support our conference by attending each year and we look forward to your attendance next year.



Belinda Langton Honored

Belinda Langton is the Director of Training at the South Carolina Department of Vocational Rehabilitation. Belinda is also a member of the Board of Directors of the Action Council for Cross Cultural Mental Health and Human Services. She is a major contributor to the success of the organization and she was honored with the Otis A. Corbitt Leadership and Community Service Award at the 37th Annual Cross Cultural Conference in Myrtle Beach, SC in February.

“Is a College Education Worth the Money?” Spoiler Alert: *It Sure Is*

Carol Apt, Ph.D., Professor of Sociology, South Carolina State University



A few days ago one of my students asked for my personal opinion about a subject that was causing her some consternation. The question came out of the blue, in the middle of class, and had nothing to do with the topics we were discussing. She said that a friend of hers had recently graduated from college and couldn't find a job that was commensurate with the degree that he had earned.

She was worried that the same fate would befall her and asked me, “Is a college education really worth it?” After assuming, correctly as it turned out, that ‘it’ referred to time, money, and stress, I reminded everyone that as a professor who had been teaching since before there was dirt, I was not exactly objective when it came to education. Then I addressed her question.

I explained that one of the purposes of education is to prepare people to be functional and productive members of society. The institution of family also contributes to this overall goal. In our society and in societies like ours, being a functional and productive person includes the ability to do some kind of work. While there are many reasons to pursue a college education, preparing for a career is probably the main one. Becoming marketable is increasingly vital in today's globalized world, as information and the technology required to share and interpret all that information change rapidly.

College is also an experience that provides opportunities for us to learn about ourselves. In college we learn what we're good at and what we're not good at; we learn how to manage the sometimes competing and conflicting demands on our time and energy – we have two exams and a 10-page paper due on the same day AND we also have to find time to see our friends AND get some much-

needed sleep. We learn how to interact with figures of authority, A.K.A. professors, some of whom we like and some of whom we don't. We learn how to function on a daily basis without a caring adult asking, “Where are you going, when will you be back, how will you get there, why are you going, who are you going with.....?” More than a few of the students who come to college when they are 17 or 18 are away from home for the first time and, understandably, feel more than a little nervous about what they've gotten themselves into. Over the course of four years many students grow and blossom into educated adults who are ready to take their places in an ever-changing world.

On several occasions listeners to my radio show have asked, “Why don't college relationships last?” As a professor, I recognize a teachable moment when I hear it. While some college relationships last a long time, not all do. College is, among other things, a voyage of self-discovery and one of the best ways to learn about ourselves is through our interactions with other people. In college we often meet people from around the country as well as from other countries who may be very different from anyone we've ever known. By forming relationships with different kinds of people we learn about them and about the places and cultures they represent. We also learn what kinds of people we are compatible with and how to interact with individuals who may have very different values, behaviors, and lifestyles. It may seem as though some students change relationships as often as they change clothes, but this voyage of self-discovery can also contain important lessons about how and when to begin a relationship, as well as how and when to end one. Although we're not always consciously aware of it, we might end a relationship when we have learned all we can about ourselves, about the other person, and about relationships in general.

So yes, Gabriel, a college education is definitely worth it.

Condolences For Those We Lost In 2015



Nathaniel Keith Jr.

Mr. Nathaniel Keith, Jr. died in Georgetown, SC on August 26, 2015. Mr. Keith is the father of the Rev. Dr. Juenarrl Keith. Dr. Keith, Presiding Elder of the Mount Pleasant District and the Seventh Episcopal District. Rev. Dr. Keith is also a longtime member of the Action Council and a frequent speaker at our conferences and other educational events.



Anna Belle Dozier Kelly

Mrs. Joe Ann Todd McKnight died on August 25, 2015 at Conway Medical Center in Conway, South Carolina. She was a graduate of the Whittemore High School Class of 1963 and a member of the 1963 Bulldogs championship basketball team. Whittemore High School was the only high school for blacks in Horry County for several decades before the school was closed in 1970 due to integration. Mrs. McKnight was the mother of Steven L. Gaither who is a new member of the Action Council Board of Directors.

Mrs. Anna Belle Dozier Kelly died at seventy-nine on April 23, 2015 in Georgetown. She graduated from Allen University and taught school in Georgetown County for thirty years. Mrs. Kelly became a mental health counselor and earned a Master of Education Degree from SC State University. She served as a member of the Board of Directors of the Waccamaw Center for Mental Health and the Mental Health Commission for the SC Department of Mental Health. Mrs. Kelly was a supporter of the Action Council and President Starnes said “Mrs. Kelly was a soft spoken tower of strength as she went around doing good.”

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