

Minnesota Council on Family Relations---
President's Year End Report
12/6/2013

This year has been hard work for the Board. We continue to see the dwindling of our financial resources and our relatively stable professional membership (48 MCFR, 174 NCFR affiliate) has not translated into an increase in active members. Generous year-end donations will see us through most of 2014.

Attendance was low for the 2012 fall and 2013 spring conferences but the reviews were stellar in response to Dr. Pauline Boss' thoughtful research and therapeutic strategies regarding Ambiguous Loss and to Dr. Amit Sood's overview of his work on how brain functions build as well as thwart resilience. Each keynoter was supported with thoughtful and related breakout sessions. Many thanks to Sue Meyers, Minnelle Tralle, Leanne Sponsel and Raelene Ostberg for their work organizing those conferences. Each conference did bring in professionals new to MCFR's work.

The 2013 fall conference on Promoting Civility saw an uptick in attendance and very positive response from those attending. It could not have happened without the talent and dedication of the planning committee: co-chairs Ted Bowman and Renee Sawyer, Betty Cooke, Beth Gausman and Beth Kleiter. The generosity and expertise of the speakers not only made the day possible but inspired wonderful discussion and new learning for the attendees.

I want to acknowledge the achievements of 3 of our active MCFR members who were recognized at the NCFR conference in San Antonio:

1. Dr. Bill Allen who currently serves on MCFR's Ethical Thinking and Practice Committee has started his term as President Elect of the NCFR.
2. Dr. Betty Cooke, a past president and longtime leader and mentor in Parent and Family Education, was given a Meritorious Service award by NCFR's Affiliate Council's Board.
3. Alisha Hardman, Doctoral candidate at the University of MN and past student section chair, was selected for the President for a Day award at the National Conference.

But the two big stories of the year are yet to come:

First, we needed to plan for a transition from our extraordinary administrative manager Linda Vukelich who has been the center of MCFR communications and services for over a dozen years. We faced the challenge and expense of transitioning from the incredible system of services she provided

Fortunately for us, Linda provided 6 months notice and that allowed to time for thoughtful review and the selection of Tammy Dunrud as our new administrative

manager. Tammy's experience working with the Groves Conference, MN Homeopathic Association and with Linda on various MCFR conferences benefits us as does her prior years of service on the MCFR Board.

Second, The Ethical Thinking and Practice Committee met throughout the year to review the history of its work, develop new presentations and work on a collaborative agreement with NCFR to expand the accessibility of the material and develop a system of support for future projects.

The meetings with Dawn Cassidy and Diane Cushman at NCFR led to a Memorandum of Understanding that establishes a CFLE Ethics Committee which will include 2 MCFR representatives and the opportunity to access NCFR resources for further development of the ETP project.

We now have four Ethical Thinking and Practice presentations: Revised versions of the Part 1 and Part 2 introductory workshops, a Part 1 webinar presentation and a Relevant Application breakout session that can be focused for administrators, for students or for family education professionals.. This year the breakout sessions were presented at MNAFEE and at the NCFR Conference in San Antonio. IF your employer has meeting space and would like to host one of these workshops or if you are planning a conference and would like one of these presentations scheduled please contact Tammy Dunrud at td4mcfr@gmail.com

In conclusion, we started the year at our Board Retreat by reviewing the strengths of our past and looking forward to how each of us could contribute to MCFR's future. We ended the year with another daylong retreat on 11/15 that laid the foundation for us to make some serious decisions about how we define and carry out our mission. Our follow up retreat is scheduled for 1/17. Many thanks to Board Secretary Gail Peavey and her colleague Bob Kazmierski for planning and facilitating these retreats.

Watch MinneNews and Family Forum for opportunities to be involved in the next stage of MCFR's development as new President Beth Gausman leads us through 2014.

Respectfully submitted by Mary Maher, 2013 MCFR President