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Dear Fellow GSCSW Members,

For years I came to GSCSW's Thursday night professional education events, always appreciating the quality of the programming, interesting speakers, and timely topics. Since joining the GSCSW Board and becoming involved, I have witnessed first-hand the amazing work being done by the various committees and I have come to know that GSCSW offers so much more beyond these speakers and presentations.

As President-Elect, I had the opportunity to attend the 2016 national conference held by the Association for Clinical Social Workers, the national organization for clinical social workers. It was an amazing opportunity to get to know other professionals and learn what state organizations are doing in their programming to support their membership. While I already believed that we were providing marvelous events, what was most amazing was realizing just how progressive GSCSW truly is.

Our comprehensive programming provides the opportunity for members to earn more than 25 in-person CEs every year, view professionally filmed CE presentations online and offers free training for low cost supervisors. Members can attend monthly mentorship meetings and semi-annual LMSW salon gatherings and ethics events. Members can stay connected with other professionals through our active social media presence on Twitter and Facebook and our listserv as well as with our community partnerships such as Hillside, Ridgeview, Skyland Trail and KSU. We are in regular contact with the other helping professions organizing bodies including LPCA-GA and GAMFT. Our reputation as an exemplary professional organization is expanding as evidenced by record applications for CE approval and impactful interactions with our Composite Board and legislators. All of these benefits are made possible by our wonderful and dedicated committee and board members. To be selected to serve as the President of such a vibrant, effective, and professional organization is an honor.

As my first year as President of GSCSW has come to pass, I am filled with pride for our organization for what has been accomplished and filled with hope and optimism for what is to come. I am committed to continuing our established quality programming, growing membership and working to meet the needs of clinical social workers throughout Georgia. Last year, during the development of the rules relating to SB319 and the diagnostic training requirements, our organization connected with the Composite Board and became a resource that they turn to for advice. With our new relationship with the Composite Board, we have the opportunity to make a positive impact and advocate for our profession like never before. The Composite Board is currently working to revise many rules that will impact social workers in Georgia and GSCSW is truly in the position to be the voice for clinical social workers and ensure that our voices are heard!

As always, please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions, want to become involved in committee work or have ideas to further improve GSCSW! I am looking forward to seeing everyone at our upcoming events.

It is with great honor that I continue to serve,

Sherri Rawsthorn, LCSW  
President, Georgia Society for Clinical Social Workers

**OUR 2018/2019 BOARD AND CLINICAL PAGE STAFF**

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2018/2019**

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# Committee Reports

## LMSW COMMITTEE

The LMSW committee is looking forward to having a productive 2018. The committee hosted a Salon Event in April during which several guest speakers were able to share rich information on a variety of different treatment modalities. Thank you to the Atlanta Center for Wellness in Sandy Springs for sharing your space with us for this event. We will speak to MSW students at the University of Georgia, Georgia State University, Kennesaw State University, as well as Clark Atlanta University about GSCSW, what to expect when entering the field, and licensure. The LMSW committee is happy to have two new members: Danielle Wray and Donna Parrish to help educate students and plan salons for the upcoming year.

## ETHICS COMMITTEE

The Ethics Committee hosted a “sell-out” dinner and CE event on November 17th titled “Gray Matters: Navigating Ethical Dilemmas in Clinical Practice”. Through small and large group discussion, we looked at what constitutes an ethical dilemma as well as the relationship between ethics, values, morals and laws/policies, and the relationship between professional and personal values in ethical decisions. Participants brought their own ethical questions and dilemmas for rich group discussion. We filled to capacity quickly, but we’ll be back with another event in the Spring, so keep an eye out!

Social workers periodically encounter ethical concerns or questions in the course of our work, across the career span. Sometimes we are faced with situations where two or more ethical principles are in conflict and whatever decision we make, something will be compromised. That can be a lonely and disturbing place to be, but you don’t have to sit there alone. Consultation can be a key element of ethical decision-making. Your Ethics Committee continues to welcome and research ethical inquiries from GSCSW members: submit your questions to [ethics@gscsw.org](mailto:ethics@gscsw.org) and we’ll explore the relevant ethical, regulatory, and legal guidelines and implications and formulate an opinion.

The Ethics Committee recently welcomed Corinne Warrener, LMSW, and Michelle Nelson, LCSW, BCD to our ranks. We’d love to add a couple more folks, so if exploring ethical dilemmas and concepts sounds interesting to you, please consider joining us. We have looked at several interesting dilemmas over the past year and are always reminded what a gray area it is to navigate – and how important it is to consult with others, both to expand our perspectives and to gain support.

## MEMBERSHIP

The membership committee encourages engagement in continuing education, mentorship, advocacy, and professional networking among new and existing GSCSW members. The committee assists with continuing education by providing refreshments for events and ensuring that credit for CEUs is documented for those who attend. Additionally, this committee communicates with universities and organizations outside of the metro area on the benefits GSCSW membership. Membership volunteers are available to answer questions about registration and involvement at professional events.

## LOW COST SUPERVISION

Are you ready to give back? Please consider becoming a low-cost supervisor with GSCSW. We receive steady requests from new social workers from in around the metropolitan Atlanta area from a variety of backgrounds seeking supervision. When we get these requests, new social workers are referred to our low-cost supervision page and are encouraged to look for low-cost supervisors who are in their area and whose work aligns with theirs. We have ongoing requests from clinical social workers to be supervisors, but we’d love to see more of you serve in this role. For those of you who may be seeking supervision, please do refer to the low-cost supervision page to learn more. If you have questions please feel free to reach out to the committee chairperson directly.

## MENTORSHIP

The Mentorship Committee is currently evaluating the results from our Mentorship Survey. Thanks to so many members for responding. We are excited about new possibilities for our membership to mentor and receive mentorship! Our monthly 1st Thursday mentorship group continues to meet - feel free to join us! Along with the LMSW committee, we hosted a very successful “Jobs Panel” discussion in April at Hillside Hospital.

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

### PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

The Professional Education Committee wants to thank each and every one of you who presented for one of our lectures, workshops, panels, and symposiums. It is your expertise, your generosity of spirit, your courage, and your willingness to take time away from your personal and professional schedules, that make Professional Education what it is. We exist because of you. We educate because of you. We connect with others because of you. Thank you all so very much!

The 2017 year started out with much excitement as former President, Stacie Fitzgerald, LCSW, collaborated with and galvanized board members to upload our video-taped workshops on GSCSW's website. Thank you, Stacie! We appreciate all you have done, and are so pleased to offer online workshops for those who have not been able to attend our Thursday evening workshops. We want to formally thank Dan Lax for his professional video-taping. Because of this, we are hopeful that members outside of the metro-Atlanta area will find it easier to stay connected with our clinical community.

During our Spring Symposium of 2017, Professional Education collaborated with Kennesaw State University for the first time. We were fortunate to have Dr. Lisa Diamond not only present on Sexual Fluidity Across the Lifespan, but also speak on behalf of those under-represented, a core Social Work value. We appreciate the insight she shared with us and the voice she gave to many.

Our next Panel Discussion: Inner Life of a Therapist, will take place on March 1, 2018. The topic will involve sharing therapists' experiences when confronted with clients who concurrently present with the same or similar life journey. Come learn from the wisdom of brave, generous, and seasoned therapists!

We were thrilled that Georgia's very own Dr. Becky Beaton presented at our annual Spring Symposium, in collaboration with Kennesaw State University, on May 11th, 2018! She presented on "Sex, Lies, and Telemental Health", meeting our Ethics CEU licensure requirements for the current cycle.

Meredith de Saint-Albin, LCSW, and I, Jacey J. Yunker, LCSW, ACTP, have continued to enjoy our experiences as Professional Education Committee Co-Chairs. We are deeply grateful for the wonderful opportunities this committee experience has afforded us and for the contributions of our committee members; Diane Sitowski, LCSW, Brenda Romanchik, LCSW, ACSW, and Natasha Vayner, LMSW. Some of these wonderful experiences have included collaborating with: other committee members and board members, current and past presenters, Hillside Hospital, Ridgeview Hospital, and Kennesaw State University. Thank you to Social Media and Membership for playing a critical part in supporting our presentations. It has been a pleasure and an honor to work with so many outstanding individuals!

### SOCIAL MEDIA / PUBLIC RELATIONS

The Social Media Committee and PR Committee have been active this quarter! We continue to encompass all things related to public relations, marketing and social media.

Our most important activity has been to disseminate the accurate and timely info gathered about the recent rule change. We are deeply grateful to our president, Sherri, and others who are attending Board meetings in Macon and bringing back real-time info for our members.

We are now offering online video CEU offerings. There are videos and quizzes up on our website! We have a professional videographer, and he is taping the CEU events and providing assistance with edit and upload to be available on the website. Many thanks to Professional Ed Committee for their tireless efforts at getting the quiz content prepared as well as working on getting the legally appropriate releases for presenters, we couldn't move this process forward without their help! Ongoing thanks and gratitude to Trisha, for supporting this process and helping get the content we develop online.

We have been publicizing GSCW events including the Ethics Salons and Spring CEU offerings and these gatherings continue to be well attended and highly valued by members.

Facebook continues to be an active site with regular contributions from members. Membership totals 358 members and more requesting entrance regularly. The GSCSW listserv also continues to be a valuable resource for our community to share knowledge and seek resources from one another.

Our website content is in the process of being updated and Committee is working with Trisha to increase regularity of updates to keep content more current.

# Committee Reports

## LEGISLATIVE

GSCSW hosted the 2017 Annual Legislative Town Hall in October at Skyland Trail. The Honorable Senator Renee Unterman and Political Consultant, Legislative Aide, and Pundit, Todd Rehm were our special guests. They shared information on the Georgia General Assembly's legislative Process, the GA State Budget, sex trafficking, children's behavioral health, the need for services in rural areas of Georgia, the opioid crisis and how we can be advocates and change agents. They advised that the best way to engage legislators is to have a concise "elevator speech" when you have the opportunity to engage in conversation. Be prepared to discuss more info if they ask – educate and offer solutions – let them know we are a valuable resource. Research legislators before you approach them (review their voting records, campaign donations, social media, legislative email newsletters), attend public legislative meetings, watch legislative bills, and ask questions. Other ways to become involved with advocacy are to seek out specific advocacy organizations or offering to work on a campaign. Each legislator's administrative assistant is registered as a lobbyist, so we can also ask for their assistance. Since the session runs from Jan-April, the best time to engage legislators for starting legislation is April to December, so plan time to engage legislators before the session begins. The best time to try to stop legislature is from December to January. You may find your legislator by going to: [https://openstates.org/find\\_your\\_legislator](https://openstates.org/find_your_legislator)

You may review information on your Senators and Representative by visiting: [www.senate.ga.gov/senators/en-US/SenateMembersList.aspx](http://www.senate.ga.gov/senators/en-US/SenateMembersList.aspx) or at: [www.house.ga.gov/Representatives/en-US/HouseMembersList.aspx](http://www.house.ga.gov/Representatives/en-US/HouseMembersList.aspx). Keep in mind that it's best to keep politics out of mental health issues and to be respectful of your legislators, so that we may build a collaborative relationship rather than burn bridges.

You may follow specific legislation by going to: Georgia General Assembly's website: <http://www.legis.ga.gov>

- 1) Enter in the type of bill at the top left "HB, for House Bill," or "SB," for Senate Bill."
- 2) Enter the number of the bill in the blank space, and
- 3) Click "search" to obtain the full text.

A big thank you to our committee members Julie Justus and Elaine Kovacs, as well as our President Sherri Rawsthorn, LCSW, who all helped with arranging and setting up the Annual Town Hall event. Finally, a special thanks to Dawn Collinge, LPC, the Skyland Trail Education Outreach Coordinator who stayed late to assist with this after-hours program.

Currently GSCSW has made no financial commitment to secure a legislative lobbyist. Our Committee is discussing new ideas for disseminating information in a different way this year. After connecting with the National Association on Mental Illness Executive (NAMI)-GA's Director, Kim Jones, we report positive news on mental health advocacy for our organization. We are potentially pursuing a collaborative relationship with NAMI-GA, the GA Chapter of the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP), Mental Health America (MHA) – GA Chapter, and the Behavioral Health Service Coalition (BHSC), who are working together for mental health legislative issues in Georgia. We are currently participating on legislative related conference calls with these organizations, and are now receiving mental health related legislative information. Our Committee will also continue to work toward a collaborative relationship with NASW-GA again in 2018. Finally, GSCSW was invited by NAMI-GA to be a host partner in the Gubernatorial candidate forums for Governor and Insurance commissioner in April.

This year, the GSCSW Legislative Committee welcomes two new committee members, Julie Justus, LMSW and Donna Parrish, MSW, PhD, who bring new ideas and enthusiasm to our committee. We would like to thank former committee members, Antwan Aiken, LCSW and Elaine Kovacs, LMSW, who served on the committee for two and ½ years and 1 year, respectively. Thank you for your invaluable service to our committee!

As always, the GSCSW Legislative Committee encourages involvement in the legislative process and/or in joining the Legislative Committee. Please feel free to email us with any legislative interests you'd like us to follow, questions, and concerns. Thank you again for your interest and support of the legislative issues and changes that are so important to our profession and our clients!

## THANK YOU!

Thank you to all the committee members who are rolling off the board this year. You have been wonderful to work with.

Thank you to the following board members for all of their contributions to GSCSW - Liza Gellersteadt, Jean Rowe, Emily Giatinna, Robin Kirkpatrick, Katy Miles, and Meredith de saint Albin.

## END OF THE YEAR PARTY!

*Please come and mix and mingle with your fellow social workers...*

# GSCSW's End of Year Party

*Where: Candler Park area (address provided in Evite)*

*WHEN: Friday, June 8<sup>th</sup>*

*TIME: 6-8PM*

