President’s Message  
By Linda Fieldstone, MEd, Miami, Florida  

We all seem to follow in the footsteps of others who have paved the way before us...our parents, siblings, teachers, people we have had the pleasure of working with, people we admire, people who inspire us and touch us in ways they do not realize.  
Read more  

Executive Director’s Message  
Getting it Right: Controversies, Conversations and Perspectives in Family Law  
By Peter Salem  

"Here’s to the crazy ones, the misfits, the rebels, the troublemakers, the round pegs in the square holes...the ones who see things differently—they’re not fond of rules....You can quote them, disagree with them, glorify or vilify them, but the only thing you can’t do is ignore them because they change things...they push the human race forward, and while some may see them as the crazy ones, we see genius, because the ones who are crazy enough to think that they can change the world, are the ones who do.”  
Read more  

Proposals for Poster Presentations at the Annual Conference  
AFCC is accepting proposals for posters to be exhibited during the annual conference. Poster presenters will have the opportunity to discuss their work with participants between scheduled workshop sessions. The
deadline to submit a poster proposal is March 15, 2012. 
Topic suggestions and submission guidelines
Submit a Poster Proposal

Application for Annual Conference
Scholarships Now Available

The application for a scholarship to the AFCC 49th Annual Conference, June 6–9, 2012, at the Hyatt Regency Chicago is now available. Scholarships include conference registration fees; pre-conference institute registration fees; a ticket to the welcome reception and entertainment; awards luncheon; annual banquet; AFCC hospitality suite; and a certificate of attendance. A limited number of scholarships will include a travel stipend of $1,000. Preference for the scholarships with stipends will be given to applicants with higher travel costs, international applicants and those who demonstrate financial need. The application deadline is March 1, 2012.

Apply for a Scholarship
Guidelines and Criteria

Scholarship Fund Update

Thank you to the members who have already donated to the Scholarship Fund. The last months of 2011 brought many generous contributions to this valuable program. Unfortunately, however, we are not on a pace to meet our goal. In the face of continued economic uncertainty, many repeat donors are unable to contribute as generously as they have in the past; some not at all. We ask that you donate what you can; any amount will help bring us closer to our goal.

The Scholarship Fund assists individuals who would otherwise be unable to attend AFCC conferences with scholarships to cover the cost of conference registration and also a limited number of stipends to assist with travel and lodging costs. These scholarships make a lasting difference in the lives of the recipients.

Donate online, send a check to AFCC at 6525 Grand Teton Plaza, Madison, WI, 53719, or call the AFCC office at (608) 664-3750.

Ask the Experts

Top Ten Tips for Handling Child Custody Cases Involving Domestic Violence
By Loretta Frederick, JD and Gabrielle Davis, JD

Recent research confirms what many experienced practitioners know: intimate partner violence can have serious effects on children who are directly exposed to the violence or who are living with parents who use violence and coercive controls to manage family relationships.

Read more

Free Membership

Donna Wowk, LLB, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, has won a
free one year AFCC membership by providing AFCC with her email address. All AFCC members with an email address in the AFCC membership database were included in the annual drawing. Congratulations, Donna!

**AFCC Dollars**

Did you know that every time someone joins AFCC for the first time and lists your name as the referral source on the membership application, you get 10 AFCC Dollars? AFCC Dollars are a thank you—for helping promote AFCC by referring friends and colleagues—and can be used toward membership dues, publications or registration fees. This year AFCC gave away over 2,500 AFCC Dollars, and would like to thank the top promoters in 2011: Barbara Fidler, Linda Fieldstone, Karen Irvin, Lorraine Martin, Leslie Shear, Judy Sherwood, Arnie Shienvold, Betsy Thomas and Leslie Todd.

**AFCC Thanks Sponsors of the 49th Annual Conference**

Special thanks to the confirmed sponsors of the upcoming AFCC 49th Annual Conference in Chicago. If you are considering a sponsorship, there is still time to add your organization’s name to this great list of conference sponsors. Sponsorships at the Gold, Silver and Local levels are available. For more details on the benefits of each, please see the Exhibits and Advertising page on the AFCC website or contact AFCC Program Coordinator Erin Sommerfeld via email or call (608) 664-3750.

**AFCC conference sponsors**

**Chicago Trainings**

Join AFCC and Loyola University Chicago School of Law’s Civitas ChildLaw Center in Chicago this March for two two-day training programs dealing with personality-disordered parents and working effectively with parents and children post separation. Managing Personality-Disordered Parents, presented by William A. Eddy, MSA, JD held March 5-6, and Advanced Parenting Coordination Practice: Working More Effectively with Parents and Children, presented by Joan B. Kelly, PhD held March 7-8. Both trainings will be held at Loyola University’s Philip H. Corboy Law Center in Chicago.

Register Online

**Nominate a Colleague for an AFCC Award**

The AFCC Awards Committee is seeking nominations for the John E. VanDuzer Distinguished Service Award, Stanley Cohen Research Award and Irwin Cantor Innovative Program Award, to be presented at the AFCC 49th Annual Conference in Chicago, June 6-9, 2012. Nominations must be received or postmarked on or before March 15, 2012. Do you know a friend, colleague or program that deserves extra recognition this year? Surprise them with a nomination!
Award criteria and submission instructions

Call for Proposals

AFCC is accepting proposals for 90 minute workshop sessions to be presented at the 10th Symposium on Child Custody Evaluations, held November 1-3, 2012 at the Arizona Grand Resort in Phoenix. The deadline to submit a proposal is May 13, 2012; proposals must be submitted using the online form.

In Memorium

Ellen Pence (1948-2012) was a scholar and a social activist. She co-founded the Duluth Domestic Abuse Intervention Project (DAIP), an inter-agency collaboration model used in all 50 states in the US and in more than 17 countries.

Conferences of Interest

Boulder Interdisciplinary Committee on Child Custody
February 3, 2012
Beginning with the End in Mind: An Interdisciplinary Look at Families’ Actual Needs During Divorce
Arvada Center
Arvada, Colorado
More information

6th World Congress on Family Law and Children’s Rights
March 17-20, 2013
Building Bridges From Principle to Reality
Sydney Convention and Exhibition Centre
Sydney, Australia
Call for Papers submission deadline March 1, 2012
More information

MDIC and COAFCC
Understanding and Managaing High Conflict Personalities
February 24, 2012
University of Denver Sturm College of Law
Denver, CO
More information

Member News

Kathryn Kuehnle, Indian Shores, Florida and Leslie Drozd, Newport Beach, California have edited a new book, Parenting Plan Evaluations: Applied Research for the Family Court, published by Oxford University Press. Many of the contributing authors are AFCC members.
Read more

Barbara Landau, North York, Ontario, Canada, was awarded the 2011 McGowan Award of Excellence in Dispute Resolution by the ADR Institute of Canada. She
was recognized for her work as co-chair of the inter-organizational committee that recently spearheaded reforms of family law in Ontario.

**Family Law in the News**

**Frozen Moment of Judicial Compassion**  
*By Valerie Mutton, Courtesy of The Lawyers Weekly*

Justice Harvey Brownstone presides at a suburban Toronto building in which 6,000 family court cases are open at any given moment. It is the busiest such setting in the country. But when he senses someone appearing before him has difficulty reading, he doesn’t mind taking a moment, slowing things down and carefully guiding the proceedings to make certain everyone grasps what’s going on.  
*Read more*

**How to Lose Child Custody**  
*By Jacqueline Harounian, Courtesy of Huffington Post*

As a matrimonial law attorney who regularly represents mothers and fathers in contested divorce trials, I have very some straightforward advice for parents going through divorce, and who are contemplating a custody action. More than ever, I am counseling mothers on how to not lose custody of their children.  
*Read more*