



June 2024
VOL. 19 No. 6

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Incoming Executive Director Message

Bryan Altman



Hello AFCC world! Today marks Peter Salem's last day as our Executive Director before he sets off into retirement with his wife Iris on the shores of Lake Michigan. So much has been said about the incredible work he fostered throughout his long tenure, but I'd be

remiss not to thank him one last time for his exceptional leadership. Along with all of you, I will work to honor his legacy in the years ahead.

If you joined us in Boston, you know it was my first week on the job, officially the start of three transition weeks leading to today. My journey with AFCC began over 20 years ago at the 2004 41st Annual Conference in San Antonio. I've been a member, exhibitor, sponsor, speaker, partner, and played the role of impromptu tech support more than a few times. In my two decades with OurFamilyWizard I worked with countless family law organizations around the world. As you know, AFCC stands alone for the depth of our content and the nature of our community. As we experienced in Boston, it is that community that enables us as thought leaders and practitioners to be accessible to each other across disciplines and hierarchies and for AFCC to hold space for the hard conversations that set us apart.

As I enter this new role in the AFCC community I am eager to learn from and get to know all of you. Thank you

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for the warm welcome and the opportunity to join such a distinguished and dedicated team. With your vision and dedication, we will pave the path forward. I look forward to our journey ahead.

AFCC 61st Annual Conference Wrap-Up

Coping with Transition: Individual, Family and Beyond

Sheraton Boston Hotel, Boston, Massachusetts
June 5-8, 2024

Thank you to the 980+ attendees that joined AFCC in Boston, MA for our 61st Annual Conference. The conference was a smashing success and was our largest conference since our 2018 conference in Washington, DC. We thank everyone for attending and thank you for your patience in dealing with a hotel that was under construction.

Watch the Keynote Address

The 61st Annual Conference kicked off with a keynote address and conversation by Tina Madison White who shared her personal journey of navigating a gender transition, exploring the impact on individuals, their families, and their communities. Tina emphasized that while the process can be challenging for everyone involved, it ultimately leads to a better outcome when we support each other in bringing our authentic selves into the world. You can watch the keynote address [here](#). Thank you Tina for sharing your personal experience.

Exhibitor and Sponsors

Thank you to the many [sponsor and exhibitors](#) especially [OurFamilyWizard](#) and [Soberlink](#). Without your support, we would not be able to keep the conference registration as affordable as possible for everyone.

AFCC Scholarships

Thank you to the many individuals that have donated to the [AFCC scholarship fund](#). Your contributions allowed AFCC to provide scholarships for more than 40 up-and-coming professionals. We hope that each recipient had an enriching learning experience and are able to advance AFCC's mission in their local community. If you would like to contribute to the AFCC scholarship fund, you can do so [here](#).

AFCC Awards

AFCC presented awards at the conference, honoring contributions to AFCC and the family law field. Here are the recipients of this year's awards:

- [John E. VanDuzer Distinguished Service Award](#)
- Dick Altman
- [Stanley Cohen Distinguished Research Award](#) -
Allan Edward Barsky
- [Irwin Cantor Innovative Program Award](#) -
Family Centered Child Support Program

Loyola University Chicago -
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Family Court Review

AFCC Chapter Conferences

AFCC Minnesota Annual Conference

July 25, 2024

Minneapolis, MN

AFCC Florida Annual Conference

September 11-13, 2024

Save the Date

AFCC Wisconsin Fall Educational Event

September 19, 2024

Delafield, WI

AFCC Maryland Annual Conference

October 23, 2024

Save the date

AFCC Texas Annual Conference

January 23-25, 2025

Austin, TX

- **Meyer Elkin Essay Award** - Marsha Kline Pruett, Janet R. Johnston, Michael Saini, Matthew Sullivan, and Peter Salem
- **Tim Salius President's Award** - William Bernet and Peter Jaffe
- **Special Commendation for 25 Years of Service** - Dawn Holmes, AFCC Director of Operations

AFCC Banquet

At this year's annual banquet, retiring Executive Director Peter Salem passed the torch to incoming Executive Director Bryan Altman. Peter was given many thanks and expressions of appreciation during the ceremony along with a gentle roast from AFCC Program Director, Ann Ordway.

Social Media Photo Album

Check out our 61st Annual Conference photo album on our [Facebook page](#). If you would like your photo included in the album, please reach out to **AFCC Communication Coordinator, Patrick Sommer**.

AFCC Indiana Annual Conference

October 25, 2024
Save the date

AFCC Ontario Annual Conference

October 25, 2024
Toronto, ON

AFCC Arizona Annual Conference

January 24-26, 2025
Sedona, AZ

AFCC California Annual Conference

February 7-9, 2025
Costa Mesa, CA

Webinar Corner

"Toxic," Traumatized, or Neurodivergent? Setting Appropriate Boundaries Without Writing Anyone Off

Dan Berstein, MHS

July 9, 2024

1:00pm – 2:00pm Eastern Time (US/Canada)

Registration will close on July 8, 2024, at 9:00am Eastern Time US/Canada .

It is important to never write anyone off for seeming different or difficult, as this could even be regarded as discrimination under the ADA. Instead, craft effective, appropriate, and accessible communication boundaries that address challenging behaviors like monopolization of time or offensive comments. Participants will receive tools for equitable trauma-informed practices and accessibility for work with court-involved families and sometimes also colleagues.

Dan Berstein, MHS is a mediator living with bipolar disorder and the founder of MH Mediate, a company that uses conflict resolution best practices to promote empowering mental health communication and prevent mental illness discrimination. His book, *Mental Health, and Conflicts*, was published by the American Bar Association in 2022 and he launched [BiasResistantCourts.org](#), a free trauma-informed and bias-resistant resource platform for court connected professionals, in 2023 in collaboration with the CUNY Dispute Resolution Center and with funding from the AAA-ICDR Foundation.



Registration

Members: \$15
Non-Members: \$50

Certificate of Attendance

Members: \$15
Non-members: \$20

[Register Now!](#)

Affirming & Supporting LGBTQIA+ Youth & Families: From the Basics to Advanced Family Court Concerns

Part 1: July 17, 2024

Lindsey Sank Davis, PhD, Jack Burke, MA, and Gavin Meade, MA
4:00pm-6:00pm Eastern Time (US & Canada)

Part 2: October 23, 2024

Lindsey Sank Davis, PhD, McKenzie Sheridan, MA, and Jesse Frieder, MEd
4:00pm-6:00pm Eastern Time (US & Canada)

Registration will close on July 16/October 22, at 9:00am Eastern Time US/Canada .

This program aims to guide mental health and family court practitioners to better understand and work effectively to address the psychological, social, and legal challenges experienced by LGBTQIA+ children, youth, and families. The 2-part webinar series will increase in complexity, introducing attendees from the fields of psychology, social work, law, and public policy to the ever-evolving language of LGBTQIA+ identities, the prevalence of physical and mental health concerns in this population, the intersections of LGBTQIA+ identities with other marginalized identities, the recent legal battles over the rights of LGBTQIA+ individuals and families, the complexities of social and medical gender-affirmation processes, and the application of these ideas to parenting plan evaluations.

The first webinar will review terminology pertaining to sexual orientation and gender identity and describe research on mental health concerns and stressors affecting LGBTQIA+ individuals. The presenters will introduce forms of gender-affirming care, guidelines for accessing gender-affirming medical care, and research regarding the impact of gender-affirming interventions. The presentation will include recommendations for creating an LGBTQIA+-affirming clinical or legal practice.

The second webinar will discuss legal issues that affect LGBTQIA+ children, youth, and families. The presenters will review recent developments in LGBTQIA+ family law, including legislation affecting transgender youth. The presentation will include recommendations for family court practitioners, with a focus on parenting plan evaluators.

Lindsey Sank Davis, PhD (she/her) is an Assistant Professor in the Clinical Psychology Doctoral Program at William James College where she is a faculty member in the Forensic Psychology and LGBTQIA+ Mental Health Concentrations. Dr. Davis is also an instructor at Harvard University, where she teaches forensic psychology and social justice courses. She received her Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology from the Graduate Center of the City University of New York, her M.A. in Forensic Psychology from John Jay College of Criminal Justice, She is a licensed clinical forensic psychologist and parenting plan evaluator in private practice in Massachusetts and New York. She has published numerous peer-reviewed journal articles and book chapters on microaggressions and discrimination and has presented on these topics at many conferences.



Jack Burke, MA (he/him) is a doctoral student in Clinical Psychology at William James College in Newton, MA. He recently completed a year as a Child and Adolescent Mental Health Initiative Fellowship funded by Boston Children's Collaboration for Community Health.



Gavin Meade, MA (he/him) is a doctoral student in Clinical Psychology at William James College in Newton, MA, where he is a Child and Adolescent Mental Health Initiative (CAMHI) Fellow.



McKenzie Sheridan, MA (she/her) is a doctoral student at William James College in Newton, MA. She was a recent recipient of a position in the competitive Behavioral Health Workforce Education and Training program funded by the Health Services and Resources Administration.



Jesse Frieder, MEd (he/him) is a doctoral student in Clinical Psychology at William James College in Newton, MA, and has a Master's of Education in Curriculum and Teaching from Boston University.



AFCC's DE&I webinars are free to attend, but you need to register in advance to receive the link to join the webinar.

[Register Now!](#)

More Upcoming Webinars!

The entire webinar schedule for the rest of 2024 has been released! See below for a comprehensive list of upcoming webinars:

Economic Wellbeing of Mothers in Shared Placement: A Cross-National Perspective

Mari Haapanen & Trisha Chanda
August 14, 2024

Co-Parent Coaching: Inspiring Transformation for Families

Amy Armstrong, MSW
September 11, 2024

Understanding Conflicted Family Systems through a Developmental Lens: How Do I Refuel?

Benjamin Garber, PhD
October 9, 2024

Ethical Decision-making in the Face of Competing Guidelines

Arnold Shienvold, PhD
November 20, 2024

Cutting to the Chase Competently: Brief Focused Custody Assessment

Ken Perlmutter, PhD & Christy Bradshaw Schmidt, MA, LPC
December 12, 2024

AFCC 16th Symposium on Child Custody

Shaping the Future: Screening and Assessing for Safety and Wellbeing of Parent-Child Relationships
November 14-16, 2024

Save the Date!

Save the date for AFCC's 16th Symposium on Child Custody in Columbus, Ohio this fall. The brochure and workshop details will be published around mid-to-late-summer so stay tuned.

Sign Up to Exhibit at this Conference

The AFCC 16th Symposium is an excellent opportunity to introduce your products and services to the interdisciplinary community of professionals that attends AFCC conferences. Approximately 350-450 judges, custody evaluators, mediators, lawyers, and other family court professionals are expected to attend. See the [exhibitor prospectus](#) for more details and contact AFCC's **Abby Rebholz** at arebholz@afccnet.org or at 608-664-3750 to sign up or if you have any questions.

AFCC Board of Directors 2024-2025

On July 1st, 2024, AFCC President Stacey Platt will pass the torch to AFCC President-Elect Michael Saini, who will serve as AFCC President through June 2025. Leaving the AFCC Board of Directors will be former AFCC President Larry Fong and Daniel Pickar.

AFCC will be welcoming two new AFCC Board members: Terry Singh, a psychologist from Alberta, Canada and Hon. Liberty Aldrich (Ret.), Executive Director at The Children's Law Center in New York. Both, while newcomers to the Board are not strangers to AFCC. They have been long-term contributors to AFCC as presenters at AFCC conferences, webinars, and trainings.

For a complete list of board of directors see [here](#).

Chapter News - Chapter Challenge

Every year, AFCC holds a membership competition among its local chapters. Two winners are recognized annually: one for the highest number of new members and another for the largest percentage increase in membership. This year's winners are the [Utah Chapter](#) for the greatest number of new members and the [New Jersey Chapter](#) for the largest overall percentage increase in membership. Congratulations to these outstanding chapters!

AFCC would also like to take this opportunity to thank all chapter leadership. Most of the chapters are run entirely through the efforts of volunteers working in their free time to spread the reach of AFCC throughout their local communities. We could not be nearly as successful without your contributions.

AFCC eNEWS

The *AFCC eNEWS* is the monthly e-newsletter of the Association of Family and Conciliation Courts. The *eNEWS* provides up-to-date information for professionals including practice tips, international news, and the latest initiatives in family law and conflict resolution. The *AFCC eNEWS* is provided at no charge to you; anyone can [subscribe](#).

AFCC members are free to share eNEWS content.

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