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AFCC Board Approves Guidelines for Parenting Plan Evaluations

The AFCC Board of Directors approved the *Guidelines for Parenting Plan Evaluations in Family Law Cases* at its May 11, 2022 meeting in Chicago.

The *Guidelines* were developed over two and a half years, by a task force led by chair Arnold T. Shienvold, PhD, and reporter Kathleen McNamara. The task force also included Brian Burke, LLB; Frank Davis, PhD; April Harris-Britt, PhD; Andrea Jones, MSW, RSW; Mary Lund, PhD; David Martindale, PhD, ABPP; Aaron Robb, PhD; Leslie Ellen Shear, JD; Maureen Sheeran, BJ; Hon. Herman Walker, Jr. and Jeffrey Wittmann, PhD.

Task force members considered substantial input, including results of an AFCC member survey, public forums at AFCC conferences in Pittsburgh and Cincinnati, and more than 500 comments submitted in response to a public posting of draft *Guidelines*. The *Guidelines* will be posted soon on the [AFCC website](#). Thanks to all of the task force members and others who provided input to the process.

Join AFCC in Las Vegas for the 15th Symposium on Child Custody!

Thank you to the sponsors of the 59th Annual Conference!

Diamond Sponsors



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From a Full House to Parenting Apart

November 10-12, 2022

Planet Hollywood Resort and Casino
Las Vegas, Nevada



ADR Notable

Mediation Management Made Easy.

Mark your calendars for the AFCC 15th Symposium on Child Custody now! Stay tuned for the brochure and other information.

Book Your Hotel Room

Reserve your room for the AFCC 15th Symposium on Child Custody Evaluations! Planet Hollywood Resort & Casino is now accepting reservations at the rate of \$179/night for single/double occupancy (including the resort fee). **Place your reservation now!**



Online Parenting Programs

Exhibitor Prospectus

Exhibitors at AFCC conferences enjoy the opportunity to reach hundreds of professionals dedicated to the resolution of family conflict. Your business could benefit, too! **Read the prospectus** and contact **Patrick Sommer** to sign up now.

AFCC 59th Annual Conference in Review

Nearly 700 attendees from across North America and around the world gathered in Chicago for the **AFCC 59th Annual Conference**. Attendees remarked how grateful they were to see each other in person again after two years of meeting virtually. The conference was a successful reminder of how much we can accomplish when we work together and learn from each other. We hope to see many attendees return for the **AFCC 15th Symposium on Child Custody** in Las Vegas in November!

15th Symposium on Child Custody
Las Vegas, Nevada
November 10-12, 2022



Save the date!

AFCC Awards

AFCC awards acknowledge the many important contributions made by individuals and organizations to enhance the lives of children and families involved in family courts.

The following awards were presented at the AFCC 59th Annual Conference in Chicago on Thursday, May 11th:

John E. VanDuzer Distinguished Service Award: Judge Susan Snow (Ret.)

Stanley Cohen Distinguished Research Award: Amy Applegate

Irwin Cantor Innovative Program Award: Family Court Kingdom Quest

The Tim Salius President's Award: Leslie Todd

A Special Commendation: Robin M. Deutsch

The Meyer Elkin Essay Award: Karen Oehme, Kelly O'Rourke, and Lyndi Bradley

To learn more about the recipients and view pictures, [click here](#).

Sponsors and Exhibitors

Thank you to our conference sponsors! Their support helps keep our registration costs

low and allows us to focus on creating the best experience for attendees.

Diamond Sponsors

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Silver Sponsors

[Amicable Divorce Network](#) | [Tony Pelusi and Associates](#) | [William James College](#)

Exhibitors and Collaborating Organizations also lent their support to the conference. Visit the [exhibitor page](#) of the conference portal to learn more about them. Thank you all!

Exhibitors

[The Center for Achieving Balance/PB Associates](#) | [dtour.life](#) | [Family Law Software](#) | [Family Transitions - PTW](#), [eNew Beginnings Program](#) | [Lori A. Bonnevier, MSW, LSW #1 bestselling author](#) | [Overcoming Barriers](#) | [PharmChem, Inc.](#) | [Rainbows for All Children](#) | [Redefining Normal](#) | [Settify](#) | [Supervised Visitation Network](#) | [Teresa Harlow – Author](#) | [Speaker](#) | [Coach](#) | [USDTL](#)

Collaborating Organizations

[Academy of Professional Family Mediators](#) | [American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers](#) | [American Bar Association, Section of Dispute Resolution](#) | [American Bar Association, Section of Family Law](#) | [Association for Conflict Resolution](#) | [The International Academy of Collaborative Professionals](#) | [The National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges](#)

Additional Thank-Yous!

No great undertaking is accomplished alone, and the AFCC 59th Annual Conference is no exception. There are so many individuals and organizations that helped make the conference a success. Thank you!

- **The AFCC Conference Committee:** Hon. Denise McColley (Co-chair); Leslie Drozd, PhD (Co-chair); Justice Tom Altobelli; Hon. Joan Armstrong' Larry Braunstein, JD; Kelly Browe Olson, JD, LLM; Milfred "Bud" Dale, PhD, JD; Hon. Linda Fidnick; Kathleen McNamara, PhD; Michael Saini, PhD
- **Volunteers (Shepherds):** Thank you to the volunteers who helped the registration process, session, and conference run smoothly: Chioma Ajoku, Laura Bradford, Marianne Cottingham, Kian Downes, Chris Jones, Amanjot Kaur Gill, Kimberly Kent, Patricia O'Malley, Jill Rychtik, Olivia Scucci, Wendi Stern, Debbi Wellman, Todd Wetsel, and Tianmei Zhu.
- **Auction donors:** In lieu of the Silent Auction, AFCC held a live auction of a few items, donated by Matthew Sullivan and Sherry Cassedy, Robert Simon, the Westin Bonaventure Los Angeles, and the Sheraton Boston Hotel.
- **Host Chapter:** Thank you to members of the Illinois chapter of AFCC for their warm welcome and to dine around leaders for coordinating the Taste of Chicago on Thursday night of the conference.
- **Hospitality Suite Hosts:** Hon. Denise McColley, Mike McColley, and Larry Swall, JD, hosted the hospitality suite, which helped many attendees unwind at the end of a long day.

How to Access Handouts

To download handouts, [follow the steps shown here](#). Contact the AFCC office at 608-664-3750 with any questions.

AFCC Board of Directors News

AFCC is pleased to welcome two new members to the Board of Directors, effective July 1, 2022.

Jennifer Joseph, JD, Saint Paul, MN, is an attorney in private practice; however, her practice focuses solely on providing Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) and other neutral services in family law matters. Ms. Joseph specializes in helping parents resolve custody, parenting, and co-parenting disputes through her work as a mediator, parenting coordinator, parenting coach, custody evaluator, and early neutral evaluator. She is a former President of the Minnesota AFCC Chapter and is also the current Vice President on the Board of Directors for Overcoming Barriers, a non-profit organization dedicated to working with professionals to develop systemic solutions for families experiencing parent-child contact problems.



Hon. Kevin Duffan, Virginia Beach, VA, a graduate of James Madison University and the William & Mary School of Law, is currently a presiding judge on the 2nd Judicial Circuit of Virginia. He previously served as a judge on the Virginia Beach Juvenile & Domestic Relations Court. Prior to his appointment to the bench, Judge Duffan was a partner at a civil practice based in Virginia Beach where he handled complex civil litigation. Judge Duffan was the President-Elect of the Virginia Beach Bar Association and also served as the legal analyst for the ABC News affiliate in the Hampton Roads metro area. Judge Duffan has also served as a panelist, lecturer, or keynote speaker in over 25 seminars across the country.



The AFCC Executive Committee has been elected by the Board of Directors for 2022-23, as follows:

President: Hon. Linda Fidnick, Northampton, MA

President Elect: Stacey Platt, JD, Chicago, IL

Vice President: Michael Saini, PhD, MSW, Toronto, ON

Secretary: Hon. Dolores Bomrad (Ret.), Hartford, WI

Treasurer: Kathleen McNamara, PhD, Boulder, CO

Past President: Mindy Mitnick, EdM, MA, Edina, MN

A special thanks to departing members of the Board for their service:

Teresa Williams, MSc, London, UK

Hon. Gerri Wong, Chatham, ON

Congratulations and thank you to all AFCC board members!

AFCC Webinar Corner

Mark Your Calendars!

The monthly webinar calendar has been updated through June 2023! To learn more and plan your attendance, visit the [Monthly Webinars page](#) of the AFCC website. We hope to see you at many AFCC webinars over the next year!

Resist and Refuse Cases: Making the Case to the Court

Larry Braunstein, JD

June 21, 2022 | 1:00-2:00pm Eastern Time US/Canada
Registration closes on June 20, 2022, at 9:00am Eastern Time US/Canada.

Custody cases are particularly challenging as family court professionals' endeavor to separate fact from allegation; evidence from innuendo, in the quest for the best interests of the children involved. Through this webinar, participants will learn more about the complex aspects of refuse/resist dynamics – and how to develop strategies to present to the court to best meet the needs of the families embroiled in litigation.



Registration

Members: \$15

Non-Members: \$50

Certificate of Attendance

Members: \$15

Non-Members: \$20

Continuing education credit may be available for lawyers, judges, psychologists, social workers, counselors, and other professionals. [Learn more.](#)

[Register today!](#)

Integrating Diversity Considerations with the New Guidelines in Parenting Time Evaluations

April Harris Britt, PhD and Andrea Jones, MSW, RSW

July 7, 2022 | 4:00-6:00pm Eastern Time US/Canada

Registration closes on July 6, 2022, at 9:00am Eastern Time US/Canada.

An initiative of the AFCC Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee, **this presentation is free but you must register to attend.** A certificate of attendance is included.

[Register now!](#)

Vaccine Hesitancy in Family Law Matters

Kate Allan, PhD

July 13, 2022 | 1:00-2:00pm Eastern Time US/Canada

Registration closes on July 12, 2022, at 9:00am Eastern Time US/Canada.

[Register now!](#)

Chapter News

Chapter Challenge Winners

Congratulations are in order to the AFCC **Utah and Louisiana chapters for winning this year's AFCC Chapter Challenge!** Utah welcomed 38 new members since last summer and Louisiana increased their membership roster by over 45%!

Congratulations to the Utah Chapter!

The AFCC Board of Directors voted to approve the Utah provisional chapter for full chapter status. For more information, visit the [Utah chapter's website.](#)

Member News

Cynthia Lischick, AFCC member in Clarksburg, New Jersey and president of the New Jersey chapter of AFCC, has received the Phil Sobel Award, named for a founding

board member of AFCC-NJ who was a pioneer in collaborative family law. Cynthia is a Licensed Professional Counselor with a focus in the field of trauma mental health, domestic violence-battering-coercive control, rape/sexual trauma, and child welfare related issues over the past three decades. Her career pathways included work as a forensic psychologist, a published author, and curriculum/program developer, as well as an educator and adjunct professor in psychology, sociology, and criminal justice. Congratulations, Cynthia!



Karen Rosenthal, AFCC member in New York, New York and member of the AFCC Chapter Committee, has been named a founding partner in the new firm, Bikel Rosenthal & Schanfield LLP. Karen has practiced matrimonial law for more than 30 years. Her practice includes litigating/settling high-net-worth equitable distribution, contentious custody battles, spousal and child support, pre- and post-nuptial agreements, and separation agreements. She has been certified as an Attorney for the Child since 2005 and is consistently appointed by New York County judges and chosen by her peers to represent children in custody fights. Congratulations, Karen!



Maggie Trahan Simar, AFCC member in Saint Martinville, Louisiana and President-Elect of the Louisiana chapter of AFCC, has received the Outstanding Hearing Officer Award from the Louisiana Child Support Enforcement Agency for her commitment to serving the best interests of children served by the Child Support Enforcement Program. She is the Family Court Hearing Officer for the 16th Judicial District Court in St. Martinville. Maggie serves on the Board of Directors for the Louisiana Bar Foundation. She is also an active Editorial Board member on the Louisiana Bar Journal and a House of Delegates member for the 16th Judicial District. Congratulations, Maggie!



Do you have a notable achievement to share? Email [Patrick Sommer](#) with your story and a professional head shot or book image (PNG preferred), if you have one, to be featured in next month's Member News!

Staff News

Gina Wentling, AFCC Communications Coordinator since July 2019, will join her husband in early retirement beginning June 3, 2022. She intends to continue to perform as a freelance French horn player in local orchestras, wind bands, musical theater productions, and chamber ensembles. During her time with AFCC, Gina has written and managed email communications, including the eNEWS, and social media engagement. She has also worked with conference sponsors and exhibitors, hosted many AFCC webinars, managed the PC Network, worked with the Scholarship Committee, and assisted in other

capacities. Congratulations on your retirement, Gina!



Patrick Sommer, AFCC Program Assistant, has been promoted to Communications Coordinator. A familiar voice to many AFCC members, Patrick joined AFCC in 2016 and has been primarily responsible for customer service. If you have called the AFCC office, you have most likely spoken to Patrick. He has also assisted with membership records, renewals, and new member applications. Patrick has a BS in Health Sciences from Bradley University and furthered his education in Computer Science at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He will begin his new work duties, managing communications and hosting AFCC monthly webinars, among other tasks, on June 6, 2022. Congratulations, Patrick!



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. [Subscribe here.](#)

AFCC members are free to share eNEWS content.

EDITOR:

[Ann Ordway, JD, PhD](#)

ASSOCIATE EDITOR:

[Gina Wentling](#)



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AFCC Awards

AFCC awards acknowledge the many important contributions made by individuals and organizations to enhance the lives of children and families involved in family courts.

The following awards were presented at the AFCC 59th Annual Conference in Chicago on Thursday, May 11th:



John E. VanDuzer Distinguished Service Award, which recognizes outstanding contributions and/or achievements by AFCC members, was presented to Hon. Susan Snow (Ret.).



Stanley Cohen Distinguished Research Award, sponsored by the Oregon Family Institute, recognizes outstanding research and/or research achievements in the field of family and divorce. The 2022 recipient of the award is Amy Applegate.

The Meyer Elkin Essay Award is presented to the authors of the article judged as the best of those published in “Family Court Review” for each volume, as selected by the journal’s editorial staff. The 2022 recipients are Karen Oehme, Kelly O’Rourke, and Lyndi Bradley (not present at the conference).

Irwin Cantor Innovative Program Award recognizes innovation in court-connected or court-related programs created by AFCC members. This year, the award was presented to Family Court Kingdom Quest and accepted by Hon. Bruce Cohen.



The Tim Salius President's Award is presented annually to an AFCC member who has provided exemplary service to the association, as chosen by the AFCC president (currently, Mindy Mitnick). The 2022 recipient is Leslie Todd.

A Special Commendation was awarded to Robin M. Deutsch "in recognition of exceptional leadership of AFCC's continuing education program." Robin serves as the chair of the AFCC Continuing Education Committee and created significant continuing education opportunities during the pandemic.



Congratulations to all 2022 award winners!