



May 2021 | Spring Edition

Florida Counseling Association

GUIDELINES NEWSLETTER

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Florida Counseling Association

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President's Address

Letitia Browne-James, Ph.D., LMHC-S, NCC



Dear FCA Members,

Spring is my favorite time of year with all the bright colors, nice weather, and newness that comes along with it. It is a time of reflecting and transitioning into new phases in our lives. For example, some people engage in spring cleaning, de-cluttering, and redecorating during this season. In the spirit of newness and transitions, I am writing my final President's article in FCA's newsletter with a great sense of gratitude, pride, and humility. Thank you for electing me as your FCA President-Elect, which ultimately led to me serving as your FCA President for two years. In my first Presidential message listed on FCA's website, I shared four goals I created for my Presidency. Below I have shared these and how we met them.

(a) "Supporting and further developing FCA by increasing membership and membership involvement to serve the counselors and people in Florida." I am happy to report that during my Presidency, which started in the 2019-2020 Fiscal year, we increased FCA membership by 22% as of May 2020, and I hope this trend continues! This surpassed my initial goal to increase membership by 10%! Lots of teamwork went into membership recruitment and retention efforts!

(b) "Supporting and mentoring new and seasoned leaders." We recruited new leaders and retained, supported, and mentored returning leaders serving within FCA. We provided opportunities for leadership mentorship and support in group and one-on-one settings. We also had a full leadership team most of the time at the FCA level, and most Divisions maintained full Boards.

(c) "Engaging in advocacy efforts within our profession and for those we serve." We worked collaboratively with ACA and other organizations to advocate for positive changes within our profession. For example, one of our current advocacy efforts is to have Florida join the Counseling Compact. The ACA started and funded the Counseling Compact, and the goal is to have it signed into law in at least ten states. If this occurs, counselors licensed in these states can legally practice in them with their current license (s) and will not need to get additional licenses in those states. Georgia and Maryland joined the Counseling Compact this year, and it was signed into their state law through their advocacy efforts. Several other states, including Florida, are working on getting the Counseling Compact signed into our state's law, but it will take time since we are in the early stages of the process. We are working closely with Dominique Marsalek, Government Affairs Specialist at ACA and FCA's Public Policy Committee, to accomplish this. Counseling Compact Bills are currently pending in the Nebraska and Tennessee Legislature and will move forward next session. It was successfully introduced in North Carolina recently with robust support. You can find out more about the Counseling Compact here.

President's Address

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We also engaged in the most recent Legislative session regarding SB 1568 to uphold counseling accreditation processes in Florida, and the Bill successfully died. We are now better positioned to continue further advocacy efforts with ACA and CACREP before the Bill is re-introduced next session. We also successfully held Hill Days to advocate for the profession, including allowing school counselors to uphold ethical standards surrounding confidentiality with LGBTQIA students.

(d) "Strengthening multicultural and ethical competencies in our work." This fiscal year, I organized a team of FCA members to develop a multicultural and social justice panel-style webinar series as a part of my Presidential Initiative. Next, I invited each division to join the initiative to be a part of webinars related to their divisions' population(s). These webinars have been very successful and drew the attention of colleagues from other states who attended or volunteered to serve as webinar panelists. Further, the webinars increased FCA's revenues since we charged non-FCA members a nominal fee (which included CE credit) to attend each webinar. We also endorsed many of ACA's public stances on stopping the hateful and inhumane treatment of people from underserved and marginalized communities.

So, although this has been a difficult past two years because of the unexpected twists and turns with the pandemic and other local national and international stressors and tragedies, we did well meeting and exceeding the goals set for FCA. I am grateful for each FCA Member, Leader, the Current Presidents' Council, Past Presidents' Council, and our outstanding Office Manager, Vickie, for helping us be successful in meeting and exceeding our goals.

Courtney Martensen, FCA's President-Elect, steps into the Presidency on July 1, 2021, to continue building on Past FCA Presidents' legacies to help move the Association forward. She will continue our efforts to support the counselors of Florida as we help those we serve. Until the transition occurs, I will continue to do all I can to support and make FCA better during my Presidency.

If you are interested in learning how you can get more involved with FCA, please contact me at drlbjfca@gmail.com to discuss available leadership opportunities or get involved in other ways.

With Sincere Gratitude,

Letitia Browne-James, Ph.D., LMHC-S, NCC

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Guidelines Newsletter

Salutations Fellow FCA Members!

As we prepare to move into the next fiscal year and I begin my transition as the President of the Florida Counseling Association, I will continue to build and nurture relationships with fellow leaders and humbly serve professional counselors in the state of Florida. I hold honesty, integrity, and morality above all else and believe that investing in others is the way forward—sustaining and thriving as we create meaningful changes in the counseling profession to promote diversity, inclusion, and respect.

From a young age, I learned the value in diversity. My mother often had candid conversations with me about race and racism. She said that I would meet people who looked different from me, had a different range of abilities, or spoke and thought differently than I did. She also said that these differences “make the world go round” and I learned that it was important to not only notice the differences in others, but to welcome them and respect them.

Along with my exposure and openness to the many differences among people, my interest in the arts and creativity was also piqued at an early age. My mother taught me about differences, not just in people, but also in colors— not just blue, green, pink, and purple, but the wider spectrum that encompasses hues such as teal, aqua, fuchsia, and violet. She encouraged me to notice these differences and to appreciate them. As an artist, utilizing this full spectrum enriches my paintings and offers viewers an opportunity to experience a more dynamic piece.

Not everyone has the privilege to grow up with a caregiver who teaches them to value others’ differences. I am profoundly grateful that the messages I received as a young child were those of kindness, respect, and compassion for other people.



These lessons helped me cultivate kindness and compassion in my heart from a young age and continue to guide me on my journey as a counselor.

Colors give beauty and intrigue to the world and differences among people make the world that much more intriguing and beautiful.

Colorfully,
Courtney N. Martensen, MS, LMHC, NCC
FCA President-Elect 2020-2021

President-Elect's Letter to FCA
Courtney Martensen, M.S., LMHC, NCC

Misgendering: How to Respond If It Occurs

By: John Super

There is an increasing awareness and visibility of transgender people in counselor education classes, supervision and counseling (Macnamara et al., 2017; Parks et al., 2016). Gender identification for those identifying as gender fluid moves beyond the binary of male and female to exist on a spectrum (Knutson et al., 2019). Yet socially, some are struggling to adapt their language beyond the binary pronouns (e.g., she/her/hers and he/him/his) influenced by cisgender privilege to include gender neutral chosen pronouns (e.g., they/them/theirs, ze/zir/zer).

Misgendering is referring to a person not using the form of gender reference that the person expects or prefers (Simpson & Dewaele, 2019) or not using the name chosen by the individual (Norris & Welch, 2020; Parks et al., 2016). Misgendering can create a rupture in the relationship between the counselor and the client, the educator and the students or the supervisor and the supervisees often creating psychological and emotional distress for the transgender person (McLemore, 2018). As a result of experiencing marginalization, using correct and chosen pronouns becomes more essential when speaking to someone who is gender fluid. All people, and more importantly transgender people, want to be recognized for who they are and pronouns are important in validating their identity (Parks et al., 2016).

When we speak, we construct our language around using gender pronouns (Simpson & Dewaele, 2019). This coupled with the prevalence of binary pronouns leads to often unintentional mistakes in sessions, classrooms or supervision (Knutson et al., 2019). These mistakes can occur in front of students, supervisees or clients and are often public language missteps. A rupture provides an opportunity to address and discuss the mistake to both heal the relationship and educate all those involved (Knutson et al., 2019).

Misgendering: How to Respond if it Occurs

By: John Super

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As counselors we are familiar with addressing mistakes in knowledge and skills to encourage growth. However how to address misgendering can be less clear. Attending to it when it happens is important (Knutson et al., 2019). If misgendering occurs it is recommended the professional pauses and apologizes for using the wrong pronoun or name (Knutson et al., 2019). If using the incorrect pronoun was unintentional, the person making the mistake should engage in self-compassion and then address the topic and the moment can be used to explore the thoughts and feelings of the person misgendered. The person who misgenders should explore their own thoughts and maybe biases with a colleague or supervisor and avoid relying on the transgender person to educate them on the value of using the appropriate gender language.

It is hopeful to think that misgendering would not occur. And, as humans we make mistakes. When those mistakes happen in our professional lives and we misgender someone who relies on us to help or teach them, the mistake can be profound. Understanding how to respond and what to do if this occurs can make a tremendous difference.

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Technology Committee Announcement



**TECHNOLOGY
COMMITTEE
CHAIR**

Emily Flositz

MA



DGreetings, FCA members! How's your Spring going?

The FCA Technology Committee has been hard at work to put together resources and tips on how to run a successful Zoom session for your upcoming webinar! Are you hosting or participating an upcoming virtual event, training, or webinar? Check out our newly created Zoom Guidelines webpage to prepare before, during, and after the event. This page includes:

- 1) Tips for hosting a smooth virtual session through Zoom
- 2) How hosts and participants can prepare before the event
- 3) What to do the day of your event for hosts and participants
- 4) What FCA/Division leaders need to do after their event
- 5) Suggested participant etiquette and preparation strategies

You'll find Zoom Playlists available for Hosts as well as Participants with videos on how to start the session, adjust mic/audio controls, manage the chatroom, screen share, and so much more. For FCA/Division hosts of upcoming virtual events, be sure to check out the FCA How to Zoom resource guide for a thorough review of zoom control functions. If you're planning a webinar, be sure to submit your request on our Members Forms page.

And by the way.... Do you consider yourself tech-savvy? Are you creative and innovative? Do you enjoy web design or editing media? If you answered yes to any of these questions, then you belong on the FCA Technology Committee!

Technology Committee Announcement

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As a member of the technology committee, you could play a huge supportive role to FCA by:

- 1) Updating the FCA website and/or included webpages
- 2) Managing the FCA YouTube Playlist of past recorded webinars/trainings
- 3) Assist with managing Zoom technology for upcoming FCA events
- 4) Explore and identify new technologies to keep FCA going strong and efficient

Some of the projects we are working on this year include:

- 1) Exploring a possible redesign of the FCA Logo
- 2) Updating the Resources and Referrals page
- 3) Managing the Job Board for FCA members
- 4) Providing technical support for FCA Zoom webinars and events
- 5) Editing and uploading recorded webinars into the FCA YouTube playlist, included in the FCA Recording Library webpage

If you're interested in supporting all or some of these projects, please contact Emily Flositz, the Technology Committee Chair, at fcatechnologychair@gmail.com.



Providing an Inclusive Counseling Environment

By: Kimberly Allison, M.S., LMHC, NCC

As counseling professionals, we are tasked with providing a compassionate and collaborative environment to meet each client's individual needs (Nielson, 2018). No matter what age, those needs can range from a need to feel heard, to learning tools to better cope and/or manage intense feelings. Meeting our client's needs can best be accomplished when placing a strong emphasis on being respectful of each client's unique culture and background. Only when we engage in a culturally sensitive practice, we can provide an inclusive environment for our clients.

Counselors are ethically obligated to acquire an awareness and sensitivity to cultural differences (Corey, 2013). According to the American Counseling Association (ACA) code of Ethics (2014), counselors must consider cultural implications within their scope of practice. Cultural sensitivity should be utilized when providing informed consent, explaining confidentiality, selecting and using assessments. Multicultural competence is taught by counselor educators to ensure that counselors in training are able to "gain awareness, knowledge, and skills in the competencies of multicultural practice" (ACA, 2014, p.15).

Engaging in cultural sensitivity enables the counselor to better meet the individual needs of their clients. This enables us to provide a personalized collaborative experience. As counselors we view clients through a multicultural lens, cultural differences are made visible and the uniqueness of each client is embraced. The multitudes of differences that can exist in many different aspects of our client's lives include some of the following: race, gender, socioeconomic status, religious preferences, ethnicity, cognitive abilities, sexual orientation, and physicality (Nielsen, 2018).

Providing an Inclusive Counseling Environment

By: Kimberly Allison, M.S., LMHC, NCC

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The concept of cultural sensitivity is simply respecting others' ways of being, their differences. One does not have to be an expert to engage in cultural sensitivity, we must only focus on maintaining an open and respectful approach when engaging with our clients (Nichols, 2014). Embracing a multicultural perspective requires practicing attunement, being empathetic, and providing meaningful responsiveness to the needs and feelings of others (Hardy & Laszloffy, 1995). This approach will enable the counselor to facilitate healing for the client and provide a safe space for that healing to occur.

The counseling profession does not provide a one-size-fits-all approach. Counselors have an ethical duty to view their clients from a multicultural perspective. Using the multicultural lens, counselors are afforded the ability to offer the best and most appropriate therapy experiences for our clients. As counselors, engaging in curiosity and openness regarding our client's uniqueness opens up a multitude of possibilities for not only the client but also the counselors themselves.

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THANK YOU!!



We wish to thank all of those who have submitted their presentations for review for this year's 2021 virtual Convention. We are excited to offer a variety of educational sessions to our participants. Stayed tuned for future updates!

- From The Convention
Committee

Networking Opportunity

6th Annual Behavioral Health Conference: The Power of Prevention - Virtual Edition

United Way of Broward County's Commission on Behavioral Health & Drug Prevention, in collaboration with Broward Behavioral Health Coalition, has announced that it will be hosting the 6th Annual Behavioral Health Conference: The Power of Prevention – Virtual Edition on Tuesday, June 8 and Wednesday, June 9, 2021.

Captain Lee Rosbach, star of Bravo TV's *Below Deck* and a vocal proponent of substance use prevention, since his youngest son died of an overdose after battling addiction, will serve as the featured keynote speaker during the virtual event on Wednesday, June 9.

Captain Lee has spent his time, since his son's passing, advocating for substance use prevention and treatment in Broward County. In addition, Award-winning journalist, Neki Mohan, will serve as emcee for the virtual conference.

During the event, renowned Psychologists, Professors and Prevention Specialists will discuss Mental Health/Substance Abuse topics and will provide crucial continuing education for behavioral health professionals.

With mental health being such a critical issue facing so many, both before the COVID-19 pandemic and now, the Behavioral Health Conference will focus on the promotion of community awareness and support of behavioral health and substance use prevention.

The virtual event will also include a panel discussion about suicide prevention.

Images from the Behavioral Health Conference in past years can be downloaded here:
<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/l5v5c5kylvntvr6/AACuyzLxxZOrCmzfxPOVMnF1a?dl=0>

Networking Opportunity

6th Annual Behavioral Health Conference: The Power of Prevention- Virtual Edition

Additional details for the Conference are listed below. Interviews are available upon request with United Way of Broward County executives, conference speakers and panelists.

The Behavioral Health Conference will kick-off on Tuesday, June 8 from 9 a.m. – 11 a.m. with an in-person drive-through welcome at Signature Grand (6900 State Road 84, Davie, FL 33317) where registrants can pick-up a boxed lunch and conference materials (all materials will also be available on-line as well). The live conference broadcast via a virtual platform will begin at 12 noon on June 8 and will provide a two-day forum for participants to learn, network and discuss issues related to research, policy and practice. Information provided at this event will allow participants to expand professional knowledge; provide quality continuing education to fellow behavioral health professionals; and promote community awareness of behavioral health and substance abuse prevention.

Conference Tracks will include: Mental Health Promotion, Professional Development, Special Topics & Initiatives, and Trauma-Informed Preventions and Interventions. Participants can also earn CEU credits.

For more information or to register for the Behavioral Health Conference, please visit UnitedWayBroward.org/BHC2021.





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Newsletter Submissions

As an FCA Member, you are welcomed and encouraged to submit an article, announcement, and/or professional celebration in the newsletter.

Please contact Dominique Battle, FCA Secretary at fcasecretary1@gmail.com for more information regarding submissions.

If submitting articles, please submit articles for the FCA Guidelines Newsletter to fcaguidelines@gmail.com