

# AFTA's 46th Annual Meeting

## *Supporting Couples, Families, and Communities to Live and Love Fully Across the Circle of Life – with a Planet in Crisis*

### **Presenter Bios:**

**Laleh Aflatooni, PsyD**, is a licensed marriage and family therapist, currently serving as a Visiting Assistant Professor at the California School of Professional Psychology at Alliant International University in Irvine, CA, within the Marriage and Family Therapy program. Dr. Aflatooni offers a diverse array of courses, including Law and Ethics, Introduction to Psychopathology, Advanced MFT Theories, Chemical Dependency, as well as Individual and Family Life Cycle studies.

**Kavitha Anandalingam, MD**, is a child/adolescent psychiatry fellow at New York Presbyterian Hospital (Columbia/Cornell). She completed adult psychiatry residency at NYU/Bellevue Hospital and graduated from Harvard Medical School. Her interests include working with young people and families from underserved populations, especially those from immigrant and refugee communities.

**Anna Asaturyan** is a doctoral student in the Couple and Family Therapy program at the Irvine campus.

**Alon Aviram, PhD**, serves as both a researcher and lecturer at The Paul Baerwald School of Social Work and Social Welfare, at The Hebrew University of Jerusalem. With a focus on online couples therapy, his PhD dissertation, titled "Couples Therapy in The Virtual Arena," explored the dynamics and perceptions of both therapists and couples within this novel therapeutic context. Boasting over 15 years of clinical experience, Alon is adept in systemic psychotherapy, specializing in online therapy for individuals and couples. His research primarily investigates the interplay between therapy, social work, and the integration of technology in these fields.

**Jane Bardavid, LCSW**, was director of CAPE, a NY State Licensed mental health clinic for the elderly, sited at the Samuel Field YM & YWHA in Little Neck, Queens for 32 years. She developed the agency from a small, local community-based clinic to one that now provides over 9,000 mental health visits a year. In addition to its service functions, CAPE is the only clinic in Queens that provides psychiatric treatment by a psychiatrist, clinical social worker, and geriatric nurse for those who are homebound due to physical or emotional frailty. CAPE also has 12 satellite clinics in Northeast, Central and Southeast Queens.

Jane is a graduate of Columbia University School of Social Work, The Minuchin Center for the Family, and the Long Island Institute for Eriksonian Hypnosis. She has taught Family Therapy at Adelphi University School of Social Work and has supervised graduates of the Family Therapy Training programs at Hunter School of Social Work and Ackerman Institute for the Family. She has a private practice in Great Neck.

**Saliha Bava, PhD**, is Professor of Marriage and Family Therapy at Mercy University, NY. She is AFTA's 2023 Distinguished Contribution to Family Therapy Award recipient. She is a co-founder and council member of the International Certificate Program in Collaborative-Dialogic Practices and faculty at HGI. She serves on the advisory board of Taos Institute and their Diploma Program and is the Director of Research at the International Trauma Studies Program. At the Relational Play Lab, her consultancy and inquiry focuses

on uncertainty, engaging emergence, play/improvisation, and relational practices for inclusion. She co-authored “The Relational Book for Parenting” and “The Relational Workplace.” For 20+ years, she has consulted, designed, and implemented play-based and dialogic processes with organizational, community, family, learning, and research systems. Originally from India, she lives in NYC and you can follow/connect with her on X (formerly Twitter) @ThinkPlay.

**Corky (Carol) Becker, PhD**, is in private practice offering supervision, training, consultation. She taught at the Family Institute of Cambridge for 25 years and directed the Intensive Program in Systemic Therapy. She was a founding member of the Public Conversations Project, whose mission was to apply family therapy approaches to work with divisive public issues. Corky's practice and teaching focus on high conflict couples and families. She teaches and supervises family therapy at Cambridge Health Alliance, teaches in the Intensive Program in Family Therapy at Therapy Training Boston and directs the Masters Series in Couple Therapy. Previously, she held leadership positions at AFTA; she was a founding member of The Kosovar Family Professional Education Collaborative, 2000- 2006. For 25 years she consulted to the Project on Negotiation at Harvard Law School. She co-developed a multi-year family therapy training program in China from 2019 to 2023.

**Kristen Benson, Ph.D., LMFT**, is an Associate Professor and Program Director of the Marriage and Family Therapy at Virginia Tech. Her research, clinical, and teaching centers on social justice and inclusion, with a focus on providing ethical and inclusive therapy to Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer (LGBTQ+) people and relationships. She has published and presented her research nationally and internationally. Dr. Benson is a clinical fellow of the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy and a member of the National Council on Family Relations.

**Lauren K. Birks, PhD., RSW, RMFT** (she/her) is a practicing systemic therapist and registered social worker who is actively interested in exploring the ways in which our lived experience informs the human experience of relating with others. Lauren’s private practice therapeutic work focuses on opening relational space through which individuals, couples and families can explore their interpersonal patterns and move towards a preferred way of relating and living. Lauren has a PhD in Public Health (2012) that explored how women make decisions about accessing healthcare for themselves and their families in resource poor and remote settings, has a Masters in Health Administration (2006), is a practicing RSW/MSW (2020) and is a RMFT with the Canadian Association for Couple and Family Therapy. She is also an alumnus of the Calgary Family Therapy Centre. Lauren also sits on the Alberta provincial Research Ethics Board for cancer research and is an academic/research consultant.

**Pauline Boss, PhD.**, Professor Emeritus at the University of Minnesota is a Fellow in the American Psychological Association and the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy and a former president of the National Council on Family Relations. She practiced family therapy for over 40 years. With her groundbreaking work in research and practice, Dr. Boss coined the term *ambiguous loss* in the 1970s and since then, developed and tested the theory of ambiguous loss, a guide for working with families of the missing, physically, or psychologically. She summarized this research and clinical work in her widely acclaimed book *Ambiguous Loss: Learning to Live with Unresolved Grief* (Harvard University Press, 2000). In addition to over 100 peer reviewed academic articles and chapters, her other books include *Loss, Trauma, and Resilience: Therapeutic Work with Ambiguous Loss* (W. W. Norton, 2006) and *Loving Someone Who Has Dementia: How to Find Hope While Coping with Stress and Grief* (Jossey-Bass, 2011). Her most recent book is *The Myth of Closure: Ambiguous Loss in a Time of Pandemic and Change* (W. W. Norton, 2022). Her work is known around

the world wherever ambiguous losses occur, and her books have been translated 23 times into various languages. As of 2022, Dr. Boss was granted Emeritus status as a longtime family therapist, and, as of 2023, Emeritus status in the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy. For more information about Dr. Boss, her writings, and the ambiguous loss online training program, see [www.ambiguousloss.com](http://www.ambiguousloss.com).

**Elizabeth Brenner, LICSW, MSW**, is the Director of Therapy Training Boston as well as the primary instructor for the Intensive Program in Family Systems Therapy at TTB. She is the co-chair of the Mindfulness and Family Therapy Interest Group for the American Family Therapy Academy. Liz provides ongoing consultation to the child and adolescent inpatient units at Cambridge Health Alliance as a Supervisor in the Couple and Family Therapy Program and a teaching associate for Harvard Medical School. In her office in Watertown, MA she provides individual, couple and family therapy to adolescents and adults.

**Deborah Buttitta, PsyD, LMFT**, is an Assistant Professor in the MFT program at California State University Northridge (CSUN), her teaching and research center on LGBTQIA+ identity and sociopolitical impact.

**Tom Carlson, PhD, LMFT**, is a professor and branch director of the CFT Program- San Diego Campus at Alliant International University.

**Nakisha Castillo, DMFT**, heritage is a blend of Jamaican and Filipino roots. As an educator and licensed Marriage and Family Therapist, she holds the position of Associate Professor of Psychology and serves as the Clinical Director in the School of Arts and Sciences at University of Massachusetts Global. She is also a clinical fellow at American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT) and an AAMFT Approved Supervisor candidate. With over a decade of experience in the mental health field, Dr. Castillo has dedicated her career to supporting underserved and unserved families, particularly within the homeless population. A seasoned professional, Dr. Castillo has not only contributed as a published author and co-author but has also been a sought-after speaker at both domestic and international conferences, webinars, and workshops. Beyond her professional endeavors, she is deeply committed to mentoring youth and young adults, guiding them through the pathways to their personal and professional aspirations. Dr. Castillo's passion extends to educating individuals on strategies to alleviate suffering and foster hope. Her multifaceted contributions reflect a holistic approach to both academic and community engagement.

**Jennifer Cates, PhD, LMFT, LPC**, is a Professor at Regis University in the Marriage and Family Therapy program. She has been teaching, supervising, and engaging in scholarship as a full-time faculty member since 2006. Additionally, she has been practicing as a marriage and family therapist since 2002. She has published and presented on topics including white racial identity development, effective methods for integrating cultural context into the therapeutic process, social justice interventions, and supervision and training process and outcomes. An emphasis on cultural context and social justice is integrated into her teaching, supervision, and scholarship. In addition to her academic pursuits, Dr. Cates maintains a small private practice and provides supervision toward licensure, as well as mentorship in pursuit of AAMFT Approved Supervisor certification.

**Hao-Min Chen, PhD**, currently works as an Associate Professor and Program Coordinator in a Marriage and Family Therapy master's program. She is a licensed MFT and an AAMFT Approved Supervisor. Her research and clinical interests include diversity and family therapy; families from diverse backgrounds; the influence of contexts on the well-being of Asian/Asian American families and older populations; culturally sensitive interventions; and CFT education and training. She has published several articles and presented at many national and international conferences regarding these issues. Through the diverse training and serving

experiences she has had in the past years, she has acquired skills to deal with differences, has learned to value cross-cultural knowledge, and understand the importance of humility. Moreover, these experiences have instilled in her a greater appreciation for the beauty of diversity.

**Jessica ChenFeng, PhD, LMFT**, is an associate professor of marriage and family therapy at Fuller Theological Seminary. She has been a practicing MFT for almost 20 years and consults with academic, healthcare and church organizations to improve the well-being of people within their communities. Her research and clinical work center around social contextual intersections of race, gender, generation, trauma, and spirituality. She resides in Upland, California with her spouse, and two young children. Whenever she gets the chance, she loves reconnecting with her love for analogue: paper planners and stationery, baking, and sewing.

**Rochelle Clarke, PhD**, in Marriage and Family Therapy, MS in Marriage and Family Therapy, Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist, Medical Family Therapist (over a decade working with complex trauma including palliative and end-of-life care). AAMFT-approved supervisor, currently teaching at the undergraduate, masters, and doctoral levels in a COAMFTE-accredited program.

**Iman Dadras, PhD**, is an Assistant Professor for the Couple and Family Therapy program at Alliant International University. Over past 5 years, he has worked with immigrant families and refugees. His main research interests are the impact of acculturation on immigrant families, and social justice family therapy, and critical epistemology of the self of the therapist.

**Manijeh Daneshpour, PhD**, is a Distinguished Professor in the Couple and Family Therapy program at Alliant International University. She has been in the field of CFT as a scholar and clinician.

**Rachel Dash, MSW, LICSW**, is Assistant Professor Emeritus at West Virginia University Department of Behavioral Medicine and Psychiatry, Charleston Division, where she co- founded its training program on health and healthcare disparities and cultural humility. She continues to supervise, consult, and train professionals in respectful, collaborative therapy with individuals and families impacted by interpersonal trauma and dissociation and has a small private practice. She has served as secretary of the AFTA board and as co- chair of the AFTA Family Policy Committee.

**Cristina Diaz Gonzalez, PhD**, is an alumna from the doctoral program in the Couple and Family Therapy at Alliant International University. She is a Spanish-speaking Latina Associate Marriage and Family therapist currently working with a diverse and multicultural population.

**Melanie Domenech Rodriguez, PhD, ABPP**, work addresses health disparities through scholarship, teaching/training, and mentorship. Her scholarship on cultural adaptations of evidence-based interventions addresses health disparities in access, acceptability, and effectiveness of treatment for ethnic and culturally diverse people. The work on cultural adaptations spans the gamut from specific trials, to advances in theory development, to meta-analytic examination of impacts of cultural adaptations on treatment effectiveness. Dr. Domenech Rodríguez has improved accessibility to training in evidence-based interventions for providers working with ethnic and culturally diverse clients. Her courses in multiculturalism and diversity prepare psychologists entering the workforce from the undergraduate or graduate level to attend to diversity and equity in their professional pursuits. Her approach to teaching/training is systematic and evidence based. Dr. Domenech Rodríguez has advanced an agenda to reduce health disparities through leadership. Specifically, she is past chair of the Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Participants in Research (2012-

2023), is a past president of the National Latinx Psychological Association (2016), and a past president of Psi Chi, the International Honor Society in Psychology (2019-2020). Currently, she is editor of *Family Process*.

**LaTonya Dulaney LMFT, LAC**, EMDR Consultant and SOMB Full Provider is an Adjunct Professor at Regis University, an EMDR Consultant and owns a small private practice in Colorado Springs. LaTonya has had the opportunity to work with Clinicians as an AAMFT Approved Supervisor as well as providing supervision for clinicians as they earn their CACs and LACs and was a Clinical Supervisor of the Diversion program for the 18th Judicial District. LaTonya specializes in working with clients who have substance use issues as well as adolescents who have committed sexual offenses and their families as they attempt to heal from the trauma. In this work LaTonya has been able to integrate systems work ranging from the individual and family to the larger macro systems that include legislation, jail, church and the clients' experiences of racism, sexism and other injustices that have been woven into their life's journey.

**Caitlin Edwards** (they/them) is a postdoctoral fellow at Colorado State University researching depression and diabetes prevention. They are a certified emotionally focused therapist as well as a AAMFT supervisor candidate. Their previous research has focused on the cultural adaptation of Emotionally Focused Therapy for LGBTQ + romantic relationships.

**Sally Eisen Miller, PhD.**, is a charter member of AFTA who works with a diverse population of racial, ethnic, sexual, and religious identities. Her private practice is inclusive and focuses on the person rather than the symptom from a systemic framework. Dr. Miller understands that regardless of who she is seeing, all are part of a family system influenced by generations of the past. Her post graduate training with Dr. Murray Bowen, pioneer in the field of the family, influences how she thinks and how she practices. She has worked with homeless women as Director of the Women's Home, transforming the place from a transient to a home of rehabilitation. Among her other experiences are working at the Houston VA Hospital and working as Director of Counseling in the US Army Drug & Alcohol Program, Giessen, Germany. At DePelchin Children's Center, Dr. Miller worked in the foster care & adoption programs. She was on the faculty of Baylor College of Medicine, Child & Adolescent Psychiatry Clinic, Texas Children's Hospital. She also served as Director of Professional Services, Jewish Family Service. Besides a private practice, Dr. Miller supervises and teaches social work and MFT students and interns. She conducts workshops and consults with organizations. She has served on several professional and community boards and committees where she is or has been chair or president, including Houston Association of Marriage & Family Therapy, Holocaust Museum Houston & the Czech Center Museum Houston.

**Christie Eppler, PhD, LMFT**, is an Associate Professor and Psychology Assistant Clinical Director in the School of Arts and Science in the Psychology program at University of Massachusetts Global. Dr. Eppler is committed to engaging her students in developing the knowledge and skills needed to provide therapeutic services to the clients they serve. Dr. Eppler's clinical experience includes treating individuals, couples, and families via telehealth. Her current research focus is on social location and clinical supervision. She has presented at national and international conferences.

**Diane Estrada, PhD**, is an Associate Professor Emerita at University of Colorado Denver where she taught for 22 out of her 30 years in higher education. She has authored several manuscripts in peer reviewed journals. Her research focus has centered on diversity and social justice in clinical training, clinical supervision, and institutional policy. She is currently in private practice where in addition to providing therapy services to individuals, couples, and families, she provides clinical supervision for MFTCs and supervision mentoring for up-and-coming supervisors. Diane is a AAMFT clinical fellow and approved

supervisor. Diane is a former member of AFTA's Board of Directors, and a former chair of the elections committee.

**May Fianna, LMFT**, (she/her) is an intersex, homoflexible, polyamorous woman and witch. May started her career as a sexual consent educator and researcher. After graduating with her masters in Marriage and Family at the top of her class, she founded Fianna Family Therapy: a private practice and consulting firm dedicated to serving LGBTQ people and their families. Since its founding, May's practice has provided advocacy, consulting, and education for transgender people in schools, medical clinics, mental health clinics, and workplaces. Her therapy, advocacy, and education draws from systemic, post-modern, post-structural, feminist, and multicultural theoretical frameworks. May was dubbed "the transition doula of Connecticut" for her distinctive multidisciplinary approach to trans care. Recently, May co-founded a wraparound gender clinic for trans youth where she supervises and trains clinicians in trans care across both medical and mental health disciplines. May is also a psychedelic assisted psychotherapist.

**Benjamin T. Finlayson, PhD, MFTC**, is an Assistant Professor of Marriage and Family Therapy at Regis University. Dr. Finlayson is an AAMFT Approved Supervisor and currently sees clients recovering from traumatic brain and/or spinal cord injury. He earned his Ph.D. from Texas Tech University in Couple, Marriage, and Family Therapy. Dr. Finlayson uses his identity as a queer professional to ground his writing and advocacy. His research centers on queer experiences, including suicidal ideation and family cohesion; solution focused brief therapy, and medical family therapy. His work has been published and presented in national and international spaces.

**Peter Fraenkel, PhD**, is Associate Professor of Psychology at City College of New York; former faculty at the Ackerman Institute for the Family and NYU Medical Center; and is in private practice in New York City. He has published and lectured on a wide range of topics, including temporal issues in couples, integrative approaches to couple and family therapy, couple distress prevention, couple and family coping with the COVID-19 pandemic, last chance couple therapy, a family-based approach to incest, collaborative methods in community-based family program development, narrative therapy-based multiple family group interventions for families in homeless shelters, training in intersectionality sensitivity, and qualitative research. He is the co-author of *The Relational Trauma of Incest: A Family-Based Approach to Treatment* (Guilford), *Sync Your Relationship, Save Your Marriage: Four Steps to Getting Back on Track* (Palgrave-Macmillan), and of the forthcoming book *Last Chance Couple Therapy: Bringing Relationships Back from the Brink* (Norton). Dr. Fraenkel lectures and conducts therapist trainings internationally. He received the American Family Therapy Academy's 2012 award for Innovative Contribution to Family Therapy, and with Marcia Sheinberg and Fiona True, AFTA's 2004 award for Distinguished Contribution to Family Therapy Theory and Practice. He is a former Vice President and current Board Member of AFTA, and a reviewer for several family therapy journals.

**Larry Freeman, MD**, is a practicing psychiatrist with a small private practice who has been a member of AFTA for over three decades. He has presented at many conferences with his organizing focus throughout being on integration of different practices and points of view in order to come up with innovative theoretical models and novel clinical interventions.

**Rashmi Gangamma, PhD**, aims to increase access to culturally responsive, family systems, & trauma-informed mental health services for resettled refugee populations. Using academic-community collaborations, she develops clinical training and research opportunities for graduate students while simultaneously co-locating family therapy services in existing local agencies that serve resettled refugee

communities. Dr. Gangamma has also extensively studied clinical applications of Contextual Therapy Theory, a family systems approach centering experiences of justice in relationships. Her work advocates for an intentional inclusion of systemic factors of justice in family systems practice, theory development, and research. Her practice and scholarship reflect her diverse professional training in disciplines of Social Work and Family Therapy, and personal experiences as a queer-identified immigrant from South India.

**Shawn V. Giammattei, PhD**, is a clinical family psychologist in private practice in Northern CA and the incoming Associate Director of Mental Health for the UCSF Beniof Children's Hospital Child and Adolescent Gender Center. He is the founder & CEO of the Gender Health Training Institute, the TransFamily Alliance, and Quest Family Therapy. He specializes in family therapy with couples, families, and individuals across the lifespan, with a particular focus on transgender, non-binary, and gender-expansive youth and their families. He is a GEI SOC8 certified Mentor for the World Professional Association for Transgender Health and is on faculty for their Global Education Institute. He is also a trans-health researcher, author, international speaker, and professor teaching graduate and post-graduate courses in LGBTQ psychology and family systems. He is an advisory member of Mind the Gap, a group dedicated to gender affirming care for trans youth and their families, a past officer and board member of AFTA, past president and treasurer of Association of Family Therapists of Northern California, and the author of several articles and book chapters on gender, sexuality, and family work.

**Tatiana Glebova, PhD**, Professor is a core faculty at COAMFTE-accredited Couple and Family Therapy program (Alliant International University), AAMFT Approved Supervisor, Licensed Marriage & Family Therapist (CA). She published and presented at state, national, and international conferences on various family therapy topics including contextual therapy and transgenerational and sociocultural trauma.

**Nathan Hardy, PhD, LMFT**, is an Associate Professor in the Department of Human Development and Family Science at Oklahoma State University where he serves as the Program Director of the COAMFTE accredited MFT program. Dr. Hardy also serves as the Chair of the Family Therapy section at the National Council on Family Relations. He received his M.S. and Ph.D. in MFT at Kansas State University and served as a postdoctoral clinical-research fellow at The Family Institute at Northwestern University. He is a licensed marital and family therapist (LMFT) and both a Clinical Fellow and Approved Supervisor of AAMFT. He teaches courses on family diversity, couple therapy, and clinical practicum. His scholarship closely examines services provided to couples including relationship education curriculum and couple therapy models. He has published numerous peer-reviewed journal articles and has been funded by professional organization grants (e.g., the Mental Research Institute).

**DeAnna Harris-McKoy, PhD**, is a licensed marriage and family therapist, AAMFT approved supervisor, professor, researcher, and social justice advocate. She is currently an associate professor and Specialization in Marriage and Family Therapy program director at Northern Illinois University. She has over 10 years of clinical experience with diverse populations and disorders in a variety of clinical settings. Her research focuses on adolescents, Black mental health, and social justice in the field of Marriage and Family Therapy. She has delivered presentations at local, regional, national, and international conferences. Dr. Harris-McKoy has been actively involved in her local and professional communities by serving on multiple boards and in various leadership positions.

**Katie Heiden-Rootes, PhD**, is a family scientist and mental health professional specializing in the advancement of training and research on health and healing with the LGBTQIA+ community and their families. She is an associate professor in the department of Family and Community Medicine in the School of

Medicine and has a dual appointment as an Assistant Vice President in the Division of Diversity and Innovative Community Engagement at Saint Louis University. Her scholarship is funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Missouri Foundation for Health, and Association of Schools Advancing Health Professions. Dr. Heiden-Rootes founded and supervises in the [Queer & Trans Wellness Clinic @ SLU](#) in the Center for Counseling and Family Therapy, a community-facing and accessible resource for mental health services. In her academic home, she teaches courses and lectures on human sexuality and gender, cultural humility, and qualitative research. Her work today is marked by the celebration of difference, engaging in difficult dialogue, and becoming comfortable in discomfort.

**Racine R. Henry, Ph.D., LMFT**, has been practicing psychotherapy since 2008 and currently holds a license in Marriage and Family Therapy in New York. Dr. Henry holds a dual Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology and Sociology/Social Psychology from Lehigh University, a Master of Science in Marriage and Family Therapy from Valdosta State University and a PhD. in Couple and Family Therapy from Drexel University. Dr. Henry has done academic presentations at national and international conferences of several professional organizations along with publications in peer-reviewed journals, textbooks, and popular media literature. Dr. Henry is a Clinical Fellow and Approved Supervisor with the American Association of Marriage & Family Therapy as well as a Core Faculty member of The Family Institute at Northwestern University. Additionally, Dr. Henry is the founder of Sankofa Marriage & Family Therapy, PLLC and the creator of the A Palate For Love ® series.

**Alexander Hsieh, PhD**, is a core faculty member for Alliant International University's CSPP Couple and Family Therapy program in Sacramento. He received his B.S. at The University of Texas at Austin, his M.S. at Abilene Christian University, and Ph.D. at Brigham Young University. He has experience with conducting adolescent research from a strength-based perspective. He works regularly with a local justice department in program evaluations for juvenile delinquent youth programs. He publishes regularly on diversity, inclusion, and multiculturalism. He has conducted empirical research on cultural identity, cultural competence and humility, adolescent depression, and shame. Additionally, he conducts research on inclusion in academics, minority issues, and Asian-American families and couples in therapy. He is a licensed MFT and works clinically with interracial couples, Asian-American families, and adolescents.

**Jacqueline Hudak, PhD, LMFT**, is a Couple & Family Therapist with over 35 years of clinical, teaching, and supervisory experience. She is currently an Assistant Clinical Professor of Psychiatry at The Perelman School of Medicine at The University of PA, where she trains 4th year psychiatry residents in Couple & Family Therapy.

**Flynn Johnson** is a recent graduate of The Family Institute at Northwestern University with a Master of Science degree in Marriage and Family Therapy. She completed her practicum internship at an intensive-outpatient facility doing group, individual, and family therapy with adolescents struggling with comorbid mental health and substance use disorders. She graduated from Grinnell College in 2021 as a student-athlete majoring in psychology. She lives in Chicago, Illinois with her partner and their two guinea pigs.

**Sara Jordan, PhD**, is a Professor of Marriage and Family Therapy and the Program Director of UNLV's Couple and Family Therapy Program. In her scholarship, Dr. Jordan focuses on applying Solution-Focused Brief Therapy (SFBT) to marginalized groups, such as the LGBTQ community.

**Mariana Juras, PhD**, is a Brazilian-native clinical psychologist with an emphasis in Couple and Family Psychology. She is currently an Assistant Professor in the Psy.D. Clinical Psychology Doctoral Program at



Florida Institute of Technology, in Melbourne, Florida. Dr. Juras's research interests are broad, and her scholarly agenda includes family and culture matters in clinical and forensic psychology. She is also particularly interested in mixed-method research and believes that integrating quantitative and qualitative data is particularly important to inform best practices in psychology, with participant/client-centered orientation. Her previous and current studies have particularly focused on topics of divorce, remarriage, domestic violence, parenting interventions, and multicultural differences. Before immigrating to the USA, Dr. Juras worked for several years in the Family Courts in Brazil, where she provided psychological services, supervised interns, and conducted research projects in this applied area. She also has several years of experience in teaching clinical applied courses for undergraduate and graduate students in many universities in Brazil and the United States.

**Umme Kawser, MS**, (she/her) is a dedicated Bengali scholar, who has navigated the academic realm, focusing on human relational dynamics, earning a BS and MS in Psychology from the University of Dhaka. Umme is pursuing a Ph.D. in Family Social Science at the University of Minnesota, specializing in Couple and Family Therapy. Umme's research interests lie in the intricate dynamics of couples & relationships, the cultural facets of psychotherapy, and the adaptation of martial first responders in Bangladesh. With a passion for Emotionally Focused Couples Therapy, Umme aims to illuminate the challenges within intimate partnerships and devise effective interventions. Her work is deeply rooted in her Bengali heritage, infusing cultural insight into my academic and clinical endeavors. She is committed to enriching the lives of couples and families through her research and leaving a lasting impact on family therapy.

**Vaida Kazlauskaitė, PhD**, is an assistant professor in the Couple and Family Therapy program in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Health at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Her research focuses on Medical Family Therapy; exploring how families cope when they are diagnosed with a chronic or terminal illness. In particular, aiming to understand how medical and mental health providers can engage all members of the family in communication about the illness. In addition, Dr. Kazlauskaitė's research explores the needs of family systems while adjusting their lifestyles to cope with an ill family member. The objective is to provide training modules for medical and mental health providers in these foci. Dr. Kazlauskaitė is published in several peer-reviewed journals that are centered around this research area.

**Lana Kim (she/her), PhD, LMFT** is an Associate Professor and Director of the Marriage, Couple, and Family Therapy Program at Lewis & Clark College in Portland, Oregon. She is also a licensed marriage and family therapist and an AAMFT approved clinical supervisor at the Lewis & Clark Community Counseling Center. In her clinical work, she draws from narrative approaches and socio-emotional relationship therapy (SERT), and she is interested in the ways in which power, culture, and larger social contexts shape lived experience, relationships, problems, and the process of change in therapy. Her research interests include second generation Asian-American families, parent-child relationships, couple relationships, and culturally responsive MFT practices. Born in Canada and raised in a Korean immigrant household, she currently resides in Portland, Oregon, with her husband and two daughters.

**Carmen Knudson-Martin, PhD, LMFT**, is Professor Emerita of the Marital, Couple, and Family Therapy Program at Lewis & Clark College, Portland OR, USA and a founder of Socio-Emotional Relationship Therapy. Carmen has published over 100 articles and book chapters on the influence of the larger sociocultural context in couple and family relationships and the political and ethical implications of therapist actions on marital equality, relational development, and couple therapy. Her most recent book, *A Step-by-Step Guide to Socio-Emotional Relationship: A Socially Responsible Approach to Clinical Practice*, was released this

year. Carmen is serves of the board of the American Family Therapy Academy and was the 2017 recipient of the AFTA Distinguished Contribution to Family Therapy Theory and Practice.

**Judith Landau, MD, DPM, LMFT, CFLE, CIP, CAI, CRS,** Founder and President of Linking Human Systems, LLC and LINC Foundation is a child, family, and community neuropsychiatrist. Former professor of psychiatry and family medicine at the University of Rochester, she has devoted her career to developing Evidence-Based, Best Practice collaborative family and community resilience models. Former faculty member of Psychiatry at the University of Pennsylvania and Senior Consultant to the International Trauma Studies Program at NYU and Columbia, Dr. Landau draws upon 50+ years of research and experience aimed at facilitating long-term healing for individuals, families, and communities dealing with chronic, relapsing behavioral, mental, and physical health issues and addiction. ([www.linkinghumansystems.com](http://www.linkinghumansystems.com)). Dr. Landau enjoys overcoming challenging patient, family, business, forensic and community issues, and unraveling complex systems. Her passion is overcoming racial injustice and improving the living situations of disadvantaged communities. She served as the primary consultant to the Judiciary in South Africa on issues of domestic violence and, working as a District Surgeon, was responsible for all inner city, prison and police forensic issues and violence. As a child, growing up before and during the oppression and violence of Apartheid, she was enveloped in the closeness of her community of family and non-blood family and experienced the protective nature of relational resilience. This became the heart of her life's mission: helping people realize their inherent resilience and the importance of connectedness to family, culture, and spirituality as protection from trauma. Based on her relational resilience research, Dr. Landau with University of Rochester faculty, developed the Evidence-Based, Best-Practice Transitional Family Therapy (TFT), the first integrative model of family therapy. Evidence-Based interventions at individual, family, and community level based on TFT include LINC Community Resilience, ARISE Comprehensive Care with Invitational Intervention, a method for engaging and treating addicted individuals and their families, and LIFE, applied to reducing intimate partner violence, STDs/HIV/AIDS, and addiction in inner city and minority women. She took early retirement to apply these methods in the "real world." She has conducted numerous country and state-wide community interventions, executive and business interventions, and a few thousand individual and family interventions.

**John J. Lawless, Ph.D., MPH** is a Professor in the School of Social Science and Public Affairs at SUNY Empire State University. He is the Program Coordinator for the Public Health program. He has presented and moderated multiple presentations on social justice, cultural sensitivity, and supervision. Dr. Lawless' career has spanned over 25 years of practice working with couples, families, and communities using a systems theory lens. He brings a wealth of experience serving on organizational boards (American Family Therapy Academy, Family Process Institute, International Family Therapy Association) focusing on furthering the field of family therapy. Currently, his focus has been working with the International Family Therapy Association (IFTA) and has been the Program Chair for IFTA's World Congress for the past seven years. In addition, he is a founding member of the International Accreditation Commission for Systemic Therapy Education (IACSTE). Dr. Lawless is married and the proud parent of three sons. He lives in Central New York and enjoys skiing, playing guitar, and hiking (a member of the ADK 46er club).

**Sara Lee, PhD,** is the Assistant Professor of Psychology and Assistant Clinical Director in the School of Arts and Science in the Psychology program at the University of Massachusetts Global, Online campus. Dr. Lee is a licensed Marriage and Family Therapist in California. She has been serving the community as a therapist, clinical supervisor, and trainer/consultant in the greater Los Angeles area. Dr. Lee is a clinical fellow at American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT) and an AAMFT Approved Supervisor. Dr. Lee has taught the Masters and Doctoral programs in an adjunct capacity at different MFT programs.

**Larry Levner, MSW**, began his career as a community organizer at Henry Street Settlement in New York City and has been a family therapist since 1976. He worked in community mental health and was a supervisor and executive director at the Family Therapy Practice Center of Washington, DC, for 23 years. Larry has been an AFTA member since 2001 and has served on the board of directors and as co-chair of the Social Justice Committee. He is concerned with social context and social justice as they apply to his therapy and consultation practice.

**Roxana Llerena-Quinn, PhD**, is Senior Attending Psychologist in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at Boston Children's Hospital, and Assistant Professor of Psychology in the Department of Psychiatry, Harvard Medical School (HMS). Her clinical, teaching, writing and research interests are in the area of immigration, Latino mental health, cross-cultural care and prevention. Her interest in the contextual aspects of health and in addressing health disparities led to the development of a 14-week course offered to HMS faculty and medical students to address unconscious bias. Her advocacy and community service efforts aim to increase equitable access to resources for cultural and linguistic minorities. She mentors first generation, college-bound students, through the Seeds of Hope Program. An AFTA member since 1998, she has served the organization in many capacities.

**Linda Longo-Lockspeiser, LCSW**, is the eldest child of a large Italian working-class family from Brooklyn, NY-- her first internship in family systems theory. She is a wife, mother/stepmother to 5 adult children and grandmother of two. She has worked as a licensed clinical social worker, integrative psychotherapist, spiritual director, clinical supervisor, consultant, and teacher/trainer. Her specialty is working with couples and families from a social justice perspective using a multi-generational lens in private practice. She has worked in the Catholic school system, substance abuse prevention and intervention, community mental health, and sex offender recovery. She has served on the Board of the American Family Therapy Academy in a number of leadership capacities. Presently she is part of AFTA's Leadership Team. Her first publication is a chapter entitled, "Meaning Making through Family Constellation Work" for the Springer Series on Engaging with Spirituality in Family Therapy: Meeting in Sacred Space. Her professional passion is exploring how Constellation thinking can expand possibilities for healing in our clinical work and beyond.

**Alyssa Maples, PhD**, is an Assistant Professor in the Couple and Family Therapy Program at Purdue University Northwest. She obtained her doctorate at the University of Minnesota in family social science with an emphasis in couple and family therapy. Dr. Maples' research on college students, flourishing, mental health challenges, engagement and community is informed by positive psychology and systems theory. Flourishing is a psychological wellness concept encompassing relationships, self-esteem, purpose, and positive ideas around the future. Given her background as an academic adviser and instructor, she came to research with experience and understanding of how certain parts of a predominantly white institution function and tend to be oppressive for populations that are historically under-represented on campuses (e.g., students of color, first-generation college students, and students with disabilities). These realizations and experiences led her to make changes through research and to strongly encourage colleges to be more inclusive and to provide opportunities for safety, community, mental health, and flourishing. In addition, Dr. Maples maintains a clinical load where she works primarily with individuals and couples working through addiction and trauma.

**Howard Markman, PhD**, is a Distinguished University Professor of Psychology at the University of Denver and Co-director of the Center for Marital and Family Studies. He is a Fellow of the American Psychological Association Division of Family Psychology and the Association of Cognitive and Behavioral

Therapy. His awards include the Distinguished Contributions to Family Therapy Research Award from American Association to Family Therapy. Dr. Markman is the developer of the internationally known evidence-based couples relationship education program, PREP (The Prevention and Relationship Education Program). He is one of the leading researchers in the areas of couples, marriage, divorce-prevention, couples relationship education and therapy in the world. He has written over 100 books and scientific articles in the couples and family field including the bestselling couples' relationship education book, *Fighting FOR Your Marriage* (Wiley/Jossey-Bass, 2010). He has had grants from NIMH, NSF and NICHD since 1980 to support his research at the University of Denver. He also has practice in couples therapy and gives workshops for couples and he is the Director of the University of Denver's Couples Clinic.

**Doneila McIntosh, M.Div., M.A.**, is currently a third-year doctoral student at the University of Minnesota in Family Social Science with an emphasis in Marriage and Family Therapy. Doneila has a Master of Divinity (M.Div.) in Theological Studies and a Master of Arts in Counseling Psychology (M.A.). She is a psychotherapist at the African American Child Wellness Institute (AACWI) in Minneapolis. Prior to becoming a psychotherapist, she worked as a chaplain for nearly 10 years. A systemic interventionist, Doneila primarily works with couples and families. She specializes in compassionate grief therapy helping clients navigate the intersections of trauma, grief, and loss. She utilizes the African-Centered Wellness Model© to work with clients and is also trained in a variety of modalities including Mindfulness Stress Reduction (MBSR) and Mindfulness Self-Compassion (MSC). Doneila's research aligns with her previous work as a chaplain where she explores the intersections of disenfranchised grief among African American families, particularly in the aftermath of violent death.

**Bobbi J. Miller, PhD, LMFT**, is a professor at Regis University in the MFT program. She has had the pleasure of training and supervising C/MFTs since 2007. She has published and presented nationally and locally on working with interracial families and relational attunement across differences in experiences of privilege and marginalization. Her scholarship also focuses on effective training and the integration of self of the therapist and experiential approaches into ethical decision making. In addition to her academic work, Dr. Miller maintains a small private practice where she works primarily with transracially adoptive families, mixed culture couples and families, and post graduate supervisees.

**Shyrea Minton, EdD, LPCC**, is an Associate Professor and coordinator of the M.S. in Counseling program at CSUN. Her teaching centers critical interrogation of systems and her research explores multicultural counseling competency of counselors-in-training and Black students in P-12 education.

**Grant Morales, MA, MFT**, (he/him) is a first year PhD student at Drexel University studying Couple and Family therapy. He is originally from Southern California, with research experience in studying health behaviors in couples, LGBTQ+ gender-based violence and healing outcomes, and aging. Grant's clinical work includes an intersectional and anti-racist perspective, while considering attachment-based emotional practices and relational ethics. Some of his primary clinical and research interests are healing experiences of queer individuals and relationships, community resilience, relational wounds, and trauma and relevant life events.

**Martha L. Morgan Gobert, PhD**, is an Associate Professor and Psychology Assistant Clinical Director in the School of Arts and Science in the Psychology program at University of Massachusetts Global. Dr. Morgan is a clinical fellow at American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT) and an AAMFT Approved Supervisor. She is committed to engaging her students in developing the knowledge and skills needed to provide therapeutic services to the clients they serve. Dr. Morgan Gobert's clinical experience

includes treating individuals, couples, and families via telehealth. Her current research focus is on social location and clinical supervision. She has presented her work at national and international conferences.

**Melani Natneil, PhD**, holds the position of Assistant Professor of Psychology and serves as the Assistant Clinical Director at the University of Massachusetts Global, Online campus. She is also a clinical fellow at American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT) and an AAMFT Approved Supervisor. With a decade of experience as a licensed Marriage and Family Therapist, she specializes in trauma-informed therapeutic modalities, focusing particularly on intergenerational and interracial trauma. Her expertise extends to diverse concepts, and she approaches her work from a holistic perspective. Dr. Natneil's research publications and presentations delve into the Self-of-therapist, exploring the impact of clinicians' social location, sexual orientation, gender, ethnicity, race, religious beliefs, spirituality, and cultural upbringing on therapeutic alliance and outcomes. Having held various roles in administration, clinical practice, and academia, Dr. Natneil is deeply committed to advocacy. She actively engages in matters related to justice, equity, and inclusion, demonstrating a passionate dedication to fostering positive change within the Office of Equity and Inclusion.

**Rajeswari (Raji) Natrajan-Tyagi, PhD, LMFT**, is Professor and branch director in the Couple and Family Therapy Program at Alliant International University, California. She received her Ph.D. in Marriage and Family Therapy from Purdue University in 2004. She teaches at both the master's and the doctoral level. Her research interests are in the areas of cultural competency in psychotherapy, immigration and acculturation, bicultural parenting, family therapy training and supervision, qualitative research and training the self-of-the-therapist. In her private practice, she specializes in working with couples, children, and the South Asian population.

**Erin Janae Newell** (she/they) is a current student at Lewis and Clark College in Portland, Oregon, completing her masters in Marriage, Couple and Family Therapy with a specialization in sexuality counseling. Erin is passionate about working with individuals, couples, and families, particularly those who hold identities within BIPOC, queer, transgender, and gender nonconforming communities. She is currently completing her internship at Sakura Counseling, a small group practice that specializes in providing counseling services to low income, BIPOC, LGBTQIA+ and disabled communities within and around the Portland area. For the past year, Erin has been working as a research assistant to Dr. Wonyoung L. Cho, PhD, LMFT, completing literature reviews for research relating to the expansion of resources for Asian American populations. Erin hopes to continue her education in research following the completion of her graduate program in 2025.

**Anh-Khoi Nguyen Le, MA**, is a doctoral candidate, adjunct instructor, and research assistant in the Department of Marriage and Family Therapy at Syracuse University (New York). He received two MAs in Clinical Psychology and Marriage and Family Therapy. He taught master's students and junior therapists family therapy theories and interventions, human sexuality, and stress management. He has been a psychotherapist in Vietnam and the U.S. for ten years. Anh-Khoi works with marginalized populations, including male sex workers, sexual and gender minorities (SGM), and victims of abuse and violence. His interventions are centered on promoting trustworthiness and fairness in interpersonal relationships as well as healing from traumas. In terms of research, his interests are focused on marginalization, stress, and interpersonal well-being among SGM individuals and couples. His new study will compare mechanisms of compassion on the effect of dyadic stress on relationship quality in heterosexual, cisgender couples, and same-gender couples.

**Sanni Paljakka, MSc**, is a co-director of the Calgary Narrative Collective. Sanni and Tom are co-editors of the Journal of Contemporary Narrative Therapy.

**Lori Pantalea, PhD**, in Marriage and Family Therapy, MS in Mental Health Counseling, MS in Criminal Justice, Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist, Licensed Mental Health Counselor, Certified Addictions Professional, Certified Telehealth Practitioner, AAMFT approved supervisor, currently teaching at the undergraduate, masters, and doctoral levels in a COAMFTE-accredited program.

**Patricia Papernow, EdD**, integrates over four decades of clinical practice with current research to teach all over the U.S. and the world about best practices for meeting stepfamily challenges. Patricia has published dozens of articles and many book chapters. She has authored the leading books in the field: *Surviving and Thriving in Stepfamily Relationships: What Works and What Doesn't*, and, with Karen Bonnell, *The Stepfamily Handbook: From Dating to Getting Serious to Forming a "Blended Family."* She is one of the first to talk, write, and teach about the often-intense challenges often faced by "grey recouplers" and later-life stepfamilies. Patricia is the recipient of the award for Distinguished Contribution to Family Psychology from the American Psychological Association and a 2023 recipient of AFTA's award for Distinguished Contribution to Theory and Practice of Family Therapy.

**Betty Pristera MSS, LCSW, LMFT**, has been in private practice in Chapel Hill, North Carolina for over 50 years. Prior to that, she was on the faculty of the Duke University School of Medicine, Department of Psychiatry where she taught marriage and family therapy. A charter member of AFTA, Betty has served on program and finance committees and has chaired interest groups in marriage and family therapy, divorce, ethics, and spirituality. She co-led the Women's Institute for three years and has chaired the efforts to commemorate the lives of deceased members of AFTA. Throughout her career, Betty has provided supervision, consultation, training, organizational development, and therapy with medical, legal and psychotherapy practices as well as with spiritual retreat centers and communities throughout the U.S. She is especially interested in what it means to live a life of service. She has worked extensively with clergy and with later life issues. The eldest child of a large, immigrant, Southern Italian family, Betty is also a musician and a competitive ballroom dancer.

**Rikki Patton, PhD, IMFT-S**, is a Research Professor and Program Director in the Couple and Family Therapy PhD program at Drexel University. Her scholarship has focused on the systemic understanding and intervention of substance use disorders across the lifespan, with a recent focus on older adulthood. She is also clinically active, working with client systems who are navigating substance use and recovery processes using a contextual lens to guide her practice. Dr. Patton has experience presenting via multiple modalities at national and international conferences and enjoys the opportunity to engage with fellow MFTs through education and collaboration.

**Sameera Qureshi, MS OTR**, is an Occupational Therapist who has spent her career working at the intersections of Islam, mental health, and sexual health. Her work has spanned across school systems and non-profit organizations within Canada and the United States, both in direct service and leadership positions. Four years ago, she founded Sexual Health for Muslims, to center Islamic traditions of the soul for sexual and mental health therapy, education, and training services. She is passionate about the application of Islamic Psychology to her work since the soul and its spiritual development is the worldview of Muslims. Sameera is the co-author of a few book chapters, and is currently working on her own book, to be published in 2025. She is also a Board member of the American Journal of Sexuality Education.

**Chelynn Randolph, PhD, LMFT**, is a licensed marriage and family therapist located in Denver, CO. She is currently a clinical assistant professor at the University of Colorado Denver but received her education in MFT from Appalachian State University (masters) and Florida State University (doctorate). As a therapist, she specializes in working with adults who are struggling with anxiety, depression, or stress.

**Mudita Rastogi, PhD, LMFT**, is the Department Chair for the Master's Program in Marriage and Family Therapy, a Clinical Professor of Psychology at Northwestern University's Psychology Department, and holds the McCormick Tribune Foundation Chair in Marriage and Family Therapy. Dr. Rastogi obtained her PhD in Marriage and Family Therapy from Texas Tech University. She is a Clinical Fellow and AAMFT Approved Supervisor. An educator for over two decades, she has taught, supervised, and mentored graduate students in couple and family therapy and psychology. Her scholarly interests within the field of systemic family therapy include global mental health, DEI, multicultural and gender issues, intersectionality, South Asian families, immigrant families, parenting, and child-free couples. She is Co-Investigator for an NIH-funded grant at Northwestern University, that examines health outcomes for South Asian mothers and daughters.

**Sky Redhawk**, Tribal Member, Apache and Lakota Nations, Indigenous Flute Player, and Storyteller.

**Laura Roberto-Forman, PsyD**, served for many years as full professor in psychiatry and behavioral sciences at Eastern Virginia Medical School. She is a Fellow of the APA Division 43 (Family). She is the author of *Transgenerational Family Therapies* (Guilford, 1992), as well as articles, educational videos, reviews, and book chapters in the areas of transgenerational systems theory and therapy, women in families, and eating disorders. She is also a couples and family therapist in Norfolk, Virginia. Dr. Forman is a current Board member and past Secretary of AFTA, as well as past chair of the Awards and Publications committees, and has sat on AFTA committees including Human Rights, Ethics, CEDC, and others. She served as Editor in Chief of the AFTA Monograph. She has also served on the editorial boards for *Journal of Feminist Family Therapy* (for which she also served as book review editor) and the *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*, and an ad hoc reviewer for *Family Process*. Special interests include multigenerational family therapy, human rights, reproductive rights and women's health; relational ethics; and training and supervision.

**Jelisaveta Sanja Rolovic, PhD**, is a clinical psychologist and family therapist in private practice in New York City. As the past Professor/Adjunct of Family Therapy at Teachers College /Columbia University, Clinical Faculty at NYU School of Medicine as well as the Visiting Scholar at University of Belgrade and an Ackerman Institute Alumna, she has taught courses and presented nationally and internationally on family therapy, immigration, sexual abuse, and war trauma. Born and raised in Belgrade/Yugoslavia, she uses her experiences as an immigrant to assist war affected populations that have endured torture, trauma, and dislocation. In 2015 Sanja was awarded a UNICEF grant to address issues of child sexual abuse in her homeland, Serbia. In 2017 and 2018 the UNICEF grant was extended to parallel work in Montenegro and in 2020 in Bosnia/ Republika Srpska.

**Natalie Rothman, PhD** in Marriage and Family Therapy, MS in Mental Health Counseling, MS in Criminal Justice, Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist, Licensed Mental Health Counselor, Certified Addictions Professional, Certified Telehealth Practitioner, AAMFT approved supervisor, currently teaching at the undergraduate, masters, and doctoral levels in a COAMFTE-accredited program.

**Garrett Rutz** is a Ph.D. student in the CFT Program at Alliant International University.

**Allen K. Sabey, PhD, LMFT**, is a Clinical Assistant Professor at Northwestern University and a core faculty member in the Master of Science in Marriage & Family Therapy program. He completed his M.S. degree in Marriage and Family Therapy and his Ph.D. in Human Development and Family Studies at Auburn University. He also completed a postdoctoral clinical research fellowship at The Family Institute at Northwestern University. Dr. Sabey maintains an active clinical practice working primarily with couples and families and an empirical research lab (Emotional Availability & Responsiveness Lab) aimed at understanding how and why family members provide care and support for one another, especially in times of distress. The primary goal of his clinical work and program of research is to increase emotional availability and responsiveness within families. He has presented at national and international conferences and has published on the nature of family relationships in numerous academic journals.

**Laurel Salmon, LMFT**, became the executive director of CANDLE in September of 2021. She is a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist and has dedicated her career to community mental health, victim advocacy and case management for youth, adults, and families. She is committed to helping to create better support throughout the community for youth and their families. She has a strong background in socially just mental health treatment, domestic violence, as well as training and education. Her primary area of focus in her career has been integrating strategies for understanding oppression dynamics into clinical work and clinical supervision. She is especially interested in the various ways that racism, sexism, hetero-sexism, and religious oppression impact therapeutic work. Laurel is a current board member and committee chair for the American Family Therapy Academy and the recipient of AFTA's Early Career Award in 2018. She is committed to expanding the presence of Marriage and Family therapists in New York State and exploring how systemic thinking can improve support services. She received her BS in Psychology and her MS in Marriage and Family Therapy from Mercy College where she is a former adjunct professor. She is the former Sr Director of Therapeutic and Support Services at Center for Safety & Change, Program Director of the Courtland Avenue clinic as well as a counselor and instructor in the Domestic violence program for men at VCS.

**Betsy Scott** is a postdoctoral clinical fellow with The Family Institute. She is a Ph.D. candidate in Marriage and Family Therapy with Eastern University and currently teaches the undergraduate and graduate course, Pastoral Care and Counseling, at Olivet Nazarene University (ONU). She is passionate about attachment-based research with couples and families. She has had experience in qualitative ethnographic research and in quantitative research for her dissertation, which is focused on the unexplored correlative relationships between personal histories of complex trauma and burnout and current self-reported PTSD symptoms among clergy.

**Gita Seshadri, PhD, LMFT**, is an Associate Professor in the Couple and Family Therapy program at Alliant International University, Sacramento. She has been in the field of CFT as a scholar and clinician.

**Monica Sesma-Vazquez, PhD, RSW, RMFT** (she/ella), is a social worker and family therapist with a social constructionist orientation. She is an Assistant Professor and the Academic Coordinator of the Post-Masters in Couple and Family Therapy Program at the Faculty of Social Work, University of Calgary, she plays a pivotal role in shaping the next generation of therapists in Canada. She works as a family therapist and supervisor at the Calgary Family Therapy Centre where she is also the Research Coordinator. Her commitment to advancing the field of family therapy extends to her role as a Board Member of the Canadian Association for Couple and Family Therapy and the Family Process Institute. Monica's research interests focus on children and families, as well as the systemic challenges faced by immigrants, refugees, and newcomers, particularly affecting their mental health and well-being.



**Fazilah Shariff, MSW, RSW, MHA** (she/her) is a family therapist specializing in child and adolescent mental health. She currently works in private practice and is an alumnus of the Calgary Family Therapy Centre's training program. Fazilah has a Master of Social Work (2011), Master of Health Administration (2020), and Post-Master Certificates in Couple and Family Therapy. She is a Registered Social Worker and member of the Canadian Association for Marriage and Family Therapy. Fazilah also sits on several Board of Directors for large healthcare and social service organizations.

**Shruti Singh Poulsen, PhD**, is an Associate Professor in the Couple and Family Therapy program at Alliant International University. She earned her doctoral degree in Marriage and Family Therapy from Purdue University. She has been in the field of CFT for over 27 years, as a clinician (part-time and full-time), and as an academic and scholar (adjunct and core full-time faculty). Her publications and scholarly work include topics on diversity, cross-cultural responsiveness in therapy, supervision, and teaching, interracial relationships, the impact of immigration on families, and couple therapy.

**Karen Skerrett, Ph.D.**, is a licensed clinical psychologist and registered nurse with over 40 years of experience as a clinician, academic, and author who specializes in strength-based approaches to healing and change across the lifecycle. She is a former faculty member at the Family Institute/Center for Applied Psychological Studies at Northwestern and the Chicago Center for Family Health. She is the author of *Growing Married*, co-author of *Positive Couple Therapy*, co-editor of *Couple Resilience*, and author of the memoir *Tell Me Again How I Know You?* as well as numerous book chapters and professional articles.

**Annemarie Sohn** is a first-year doctoral student at Syracuse University in the Department of Marriage and Family Therapy (MFT). In pursuing her PhD, Annemarie actively engages in research, teaching, and leadership roles, aiming to foster healing and growth within her clients and communities. She is a Marriage & Family therapist with a Master's degree in MFT and a Certificate of Advanced Study in Child Therapy. Currently, Annemarie practices trauma-informed, systemic therapy with a focus on supporting neurodiverse, sexual, gender, and racial minority populations. She is also involved in several research projects that explore systemic, LGBTQ+, and neurodivergence issues with clinical implications.

**Soyoul Song, MA**, is a 3rd-year doctoral student in the Department of Family Social Science at the University of Minnesota. She earned her M.A. in Marriage and Family Therapy from the Saint Mary's University of Minnesota and her B.A. in Psychology from the University of Minnesota. Her research focuses on family relationships and mental health in Asian immigrant families and international student families in higher education. After completing her doctorate, Soyoul plans to pursue a career in academia.

**Peter Steinglass, MD**, is President Emeritus of the Ackerman Institute for the Family in New York City, and Clinical Professor of Psychiatry at Weill/Cornell University Medical College. Prior to coming to Ackerman, he was Director of the Center for Family Research and Professor of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at the George Washington University School of Medicine. Dr. Steinglass' work has included extensive programmatic research into medical and psychiatric illness as it affects families, and studies of family adaptation to traumatic stress. He has served as Editor of the journal, *Family Process*, as well as on numerous editorial boards. His publications include multiple journal articles and book chapters about family issues, as well as his landmark book, *The Alcoholic Family*. Dr. Steinglass has served as a consultant to the Psychiatry Department here at MSKCC since 1990 during which time he has collaborated with Dr. Jamie Ostroff on a series of studies applying his multiple family discussion group protocol to various populations of cancer patients and their families, and more recently to the Family Therapy program directed by Dr. Talia Zaider.

**Caron Starobin, LCSW-C**, is the founder, owner and clinical director of Starobin Counseling, where she is grateful to have a wonderful team of therapists who are neuro-affirming, relationally focused, trauma-informed and have specialized training in areas like Family Systems, Parent-Child Interaction Therapy, play therapy, Supportive Parenting for Anxious Childhood Emotions, Exposure and Response Prevention, trauma therapies, contextual family therapy, narrative therapy, and Relational Life Therapy. They also have ongoing intensive neuro-affirming and relationally focused in-house training at Starobin Counseling. Caron presents and teaches on autism-related clinical issues as well as parenting and family issues in various venues throughout the Washington metropolitan area. Caron has advanced certification in Relational Life Therapy, trained in family systems work with the post-graduate program at the Bowen Center for the Study of the Family and is also SPACE trained and a PEERS-Certified provider.

**Dana Stone, PhD, LMFT**, is an Associate Professor of MFT at CSUN. Her teaching and research focus on deepening understanding of multiraciality and expanding multiculturally sensitive and socially just teaching and learning experiences.

**Joanna S Stratton, PhD**, has taught at Regis in the Department of Counseling and Family Therapy since 2007 and treated patients and provided supervision in a residency led integrated health clinic during that time. She has a passion for training providers and mental health clinicians to collaborate in order to best treat the physical, mental, spiritual, and relational health of all people. She believes that whole person health can be acknowledged in a dynamic way in the integrated healthcare setting. Access to high quality integrated care can have a positive and powerful impact on the lives of patients. In the role of a faculty member in the DCFT, Joanna facilitates learning that encourages students to conceptualize and treat clients from a biopsychosocial, systemic, and strengths-based perspective. She has built interprofessional curriculum with faculty across Departments and professions to train students to learn about, with, and from one another.

**Irene Su** is a doctoral student in the Couple and Family Therapy Program at Alliant International University. She is a first generation Chinese American Associate Marriage and Family Therapist working in a community mental health setting.

**Tom “YiLe” Su, PhD, LMFT**, moved from China to the U.S. in 2012 for higher education and discovered his passion for systemic work. Dr. Su currently works at the University of Colorado Denver Couple and Family Therapy program as their Clinical Assistant Professor. His primary scholarly and clinical interest is the relational wellbeing for intercultural and interracial relationships as well as the wellbeing for the ethnic/racial minorities and sexual/gender minorities. He believes that the quality of life depends on the quality of our relationships. And to build better relationships, we need to study system, context, and narrative. Through his work, he hopes to promote cultural sensitivity and cultural intelligence among intimate relationships, families, and communities.

**Li Ping Su-Kubricht, PhD**, received her Bachelor's degree in International Cultural Studies-Communications at BYU-Hawaii and her Master's and Doctoral degree in Marriage and Family Therapy from Brigham Young University. She is a licensed Marriage and Family Therapist in Utah and Texas and an AAMFT-approved supervisor. She currently works as an Assistant Professor of Family Therapy at the University of Houston-Clear Lake. Her research interests are parent-child and couple relationships in ethnically diverse families, mechanisms of change in couple and family therapy, and the BIPOC clients' experiences in mental health services. She has presented her research findings at national and international conferences and provided counseling services in various settings, including a digital mental health company, university community

clinic, non-profit organization, private practice, and university counseling centers. When she is not at work, she enjoys spending time with her family, running, hiking, and traveling.

**CharlesEtta “Charlee” Sutton, MSW, LCSW**, is a clinical therapist, supervisor, and trainer for Princeton Family Institute. A National Association of Social Work approved clinical supervisor, she is founding faculty of the Multicultural Family Institute. She has served on the faculty of the Center for Family, Community, and Social Justice, Inc., Princeton, supervising clinical teams in Irvington, Patterson and Plainfield and conducting monthly training seminars. She is also faculty of the Turtle Island Project, Phoenix, AZ. As an international trainer, program development specialist, and author her work includes larger systems intervention work which influences prevention, spiritual well-being, and health promotion. She is part of the CTS Group Sutton and Associates, Plainfield, NJ, which offers consultation, training, and clinical services (supervision and therapy). A member of numerous professional organizations, she also serves on the board of the American Family Therapy Academy (AFTA).

**Eman Tadros, PhD, LMFT**, is an Assistant Professor at Syracuse University in the Department of Marriage and Family Therapy. She is a licensed marriage and family therapist, MBTI certified, an AAMFT Approved Supervisor, and a Family TEAM leader. She is the Assistant Editor for the journal *Child: Care, Health and Development*. Her research focuses on incarceration, justice-impacted couples and families, online dating, and culturally responsive care. She has published 120 peer reviewed journal articles and various magazines, blog posts, book chapters, op-eds, and policy briefs.

**Linda Thomas-Batson, PhD**, is a highly experienced clinical social worker with over 30 years of dedicated work with children in various capacities, including foster care, prevention, and support for preschool to high school children. She specializes in working with children diagnosed with ADHD, PTSD, and trauma, with a strong focus on family therapy. She is a clinical therapist for North Shore Child and Family Guidance in Manhasset, New York. Linda's educational journey is a testament to her commitment to social work. She earned a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from Clark University, which provided the foundation for her understanding of human behavior and psychology. She furthered her education with a Master of Social Work (MSW) degree and a post-graduate certificate in family therapy from Hunter College School of Social Work. Linda earned her Doctor of Social Work degree in December 2023 from Tulane University.

**Lucas Volini, DMFT, LMFT**, spent eight years in higher education as an educator and clinical researcher. In the tail end of 2021, he abruptly sold out for the private sector to become a corporate monster. As Vice President of Clinical Quality and Innovation at Ellie Mental Health, his goal is to transform the industry of behavioral healthcare for both providers and their clients. This includes innovating how licensed clinicians experience continued education, optimizing the employment experience of a national workforce through re-engineering the clinical documentation processes, and most importantly, leveraging the power behind a national brand to help insurance companies understand that we're doing behavioral healthcare all wrong, while providing the solution for a system that makes sense. All his professional efforts remain grounded in a powerful, evidence-based bias for systemic/relational practices and ongoing celebration of absurdity. Lucas serves on the Leadership Team for the American Family Therapy Academy and is best friends with Larry Freeman and Roger Lake.

**Froma Walsh, PhD**, is Professor Emerita, Crown School and Dept. of Psychiatry, at the University of Chicago, and Co-Founder/Co-Director, Chicago Center for Family Health. Dr. Walsh is the leading expert on family resilience, with extensive experience in application with complex and traumatic loss. Her research-informed Family Resilience Framework is applied worldwide in research, clinical practice, and community

services. Her collaborative, systemic approach integrates developmental, relational, socio-cultural, and spiritual perspectives. Dr. Walsh, a Clinical Psychologist, received her BA degree (honors in Psychology), University of California, Berkeley; MSW, Smith College; and PhD, Human Development & Behavioral Sciences, University of Chicago. She is Past President, American Family Therapy Academy; Past Editor, *Journal of Marital & Family Therapy*; and has received many awards (AFTA, AAMFT, APA, and others) for her distinguished contributions to family therapy and to the mental health field. She is a valued speaker and consultant internationally. With 120+ scholarly publications, her most recent books are: *Strengthening Family Resilience* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed., 2016); and [Complex and Traumatic Loss: Fostering Healing and Resilience \(2023\)](#).

**Guanyu Wang, M.Ed, M.A., LMHC**, is currently a third-year doctoral student at the University of Minnesota, Family Social Science program with an emphasis in Marriage and Family Therapy. Guanyu earned her Master of Education and Master of Arts degree in Counseling Psychology at the Teachers College, Columbia University. She currently practices at Lyn-Lake Psychotherapy and Wellness in Minneapolis. Guanyu's research delves into the role of Chinese immigrant fathers in children's psychosocial adjustment, with a keen interest in developing culturally sensitive interventions. Guanyu specializes in working with immigrant families, multi-heritage couples, and young adults who are navigating the challenges of early adulthood. Guanyu's approach to therapy is person-centered, relational, trauma-informed, and strength-based. She has received extensive training in Emotion Focused Therapy (EFT), Ackerman relational approach, Relational Psychodynamic, and Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), and often incorporates mindfulness and art therapy techniques into her work.

**Sarah Wayland, PhD**, is the founder of Guiding Exceptional Parents, co-founder of The Behavior Revolution, and co-author of two books on autism. A research scientist by training, and mother of two neurodivergent young men, she applies the neuroscience of behavior along with practical lived experience as she provides neurodiversity-affirmative support, education, and community for parents of neurodivergent children.

**Tabitha Webster, PhD**, (she/her), is an Associate Faculty member and a Branch Director for Alliant International University CFT, working at the online and Sacramento programs. Dr. Webster takes pride in being neurodivergent. Her clinical and research interests revolve around trauma and its several facets. These include neurobiology, neurodiversity, developmental trauma, childhood abuse and neglect, chronic pain; marginalized, oppressed communities and families; effective suicide prevention; and professional/public policy. Dr. Webster's clinical approach is affirming and grounded in experiential therapy and interpersonal neurobiology.

**Hinda Winawer, MSW, LCSW**, has provided psychotherapy to individuals, families, and couples for more than 25 years. Licensed in New Jersey, she is co-founder of Princeton Family Institute and has taught family and couples therapy at Rutgers University's Graduate School of Social Work and for many years at the Ackerman Institute for the Family in New York where she is now faculty emerita. Hinda Winawer has been a psychotherapist, clinical trainer, teacher, and consultant in academic, clinical, healthcare, educational, human services and addictions settings in the United States, Europe, Latin America, and China. Her systemic consultation extends to the workplace where she has conducted staff development retreats in health and mental health settings. Author of various professional articles and book chapters, she was a long-term member of the editorial board of the journal *Family Process*. Professional association membership includes the Collaborative Family Healthcare Association, the American Orthopsychiatric Association, the Association for Women in Psychology, and the National Association of Social Workers. Hinda Winawer is a charter member, former board member and past president of the American Family Therapy Academy (AFTA).

**David Wohlsifer, PhD, LCSW**, is a clinical instructor at the Sandler School of Social Work and psychotherapist and founder of the Boca Raton Center for Psychotherapy. Dr. Wohlsifer is an LCSW (FL, NY, PA, NJ, and WA) and FL certified sex therapist. His areas of clinical practice include Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Couple/Family Therapy, Substance Abuse, EMDR, and Sex Therapy. He has published in the areas of clinical social work education, family and couple therapy, and sex therapy. He is an advisory editor for the family therapy journal *Family Process*. He is a Diplomate of the Academy of Cognitive Therapy, AASECT Certified Sex therapist, Certified EMDR therapist one of the co-chairs of the AFTA Couple therapy interest group. He is also the father of 2 adult children and has 3 grandchildren.

**Justine Wu, M.A.**, is a current doctoral student in the Couple and Family Therapy program at Alliant International University. Over the few past years, she has worked with immigrant students in school-based programs. Her main research interests include understanding the epistemology behind social constructs and how that affects institutions, research, and identity.

**Talia Zaider, PhD**, is an Assistant Attending Psychologist in the Department of Psychiatry & Behavioral Sciences at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center (MSK), Assistant Professor of Psychiatry at Weill Cornell Medical College Department of Psychiatry, and Director of the Family Therapy Clinic at MSK. Her research has focused on identifying and addressing the support needs of caregiving families coping with cancer. Dr. Zaider has been a principal investigator and co-investigator on several funded studies of psychosocial interventions for distressed families coping with early or advanced cancer. She has published in the areas of communication skills training in family-centered care as well as the efficacy and implementation of couple and family-centered psychosocial assessment and intervention in oncology. Dr. Zaider has led the development and implementation of communication skills training modules focused on partnering with families in acute and routine cancer care. Dr. Zaider also leads a multi-disciplinary couple and family therapy clinic housed within the MSK outpatient Counseling Center, which is dedicated to supporting families faced with early or advanced stage cancers.

**Paul Zehr** is a 1<sup>st</sup>-year Master's student in the Couples and Family Therapy program at Kansas State University. He currently conducts research on intimate partner violence under the supervision of Dr. Chelsea Spencer. Paul's future research interests include psychotherapy in rural communities and disparities in access to mental health care. When not conducting research and seeing clients, he enjoys biking, baking, and spending time with his family.

**Jixuan Zhao, LMSW**, is a licensed social worker in New York State and a registered clinical mental health counselor (LMHC) in China. Jixuan earned her Masters degree from the Master of Social Work program at Syracuse University. She is now a PhD student in Marriage and Family Therapy program at Syracuse University. Jixuan was working as a clinician at Behavioral Health Center in United States and at Pecking University Student Counseling Center in China. She has multiple clinical experience working with clients with different age range and culture backgrounds. With her multicultural background and research interests, her expertise includes providing support for gender and sexual minority communities and also for immigrant and refugee communities.