

# ASSOCIATION FOR LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL & TRANSGENDER ISSUES IN COUNSELING



AMERICAN COUNSELING  
ASSOCIATION

*A Division of the American  
Counseling Association*

## Fall 2016 Newsletter

### Fall Greetings from Tonya R. Hammer

Tonya Hammer

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I want to use this opportunity to express my overwhelming gratitude to everyone involved in the ALGBTIC conference in San Antonio. I believe I can say without a doubt that it was an absolute success. We had approximately 250 in attendance, exciting and informative education sessions, at least three countries represented by attendees, and were able to raise approximately two thousand dollars to donate to a local LGBTQ+ youth center. The hotel was gorgeous and the staff were incredible. The opening session by ACA President Dr. Catherine Roland set the tone for the two days, and Dr. Mark Pope brought tears to our eyes as he shared the history of the LGBTQ+ movement and of ALGBTIC. The conference committee and our volunteers were absolutely incredible and I can never find the words to let them know how much all of their hard work and dedication meant to me. The theme for my presidential year is “Empowering

through Unity” and I want to thank all of you for bringing that to life at the conference. As a board we are already talking about the next conference and will be reaching out to membership for input on location. In addition to those plans, we also have some exciting initiatives in the works and hope to be able to share those with you in the upcoming months. So please stay tuned to your newsletter, the Facebook page and the listserv.

Our next opportunity to come together will be at the ACA conference in San Francisco and I hope to see everyone there. We will be doing things a bit different this year. We will not have our regularly scheduled brunch but instead will be presenting our annual awards at the reception on Saturday evening. We hope everyone will join us. Soon you will see emails going out requesting nominations for awards, please take this opportunity to submit nominations of friends, colleagues, peers who you feel go above and beyond in their work and service. I know there are many of you out there deserving of recognition. Let’s shine a light on the work being done.

Once again, I am honored to be serving as your president and was never more honored than at the conference. Thank you again for all of your work and support.

## Empowering Through Unity: Celebrating the ALGBTIC Conference

Dr. Misty M. Ginicola



As I got on the plane in Connecticut to fly out for the ALGBTIC Conference, I have to admit, I was a little trepidatious. The conference was in Texas. It's not that Connecticut is the safest place on the planet, but it is a progressive state, with protective legislation for both affectional orientation and gender orientation. But, Texas. I paused to wonder how a liberal,

two-spirited, bisexual, biracial woman would fare there. As I landed and entered the hotel, that anxiety lowered; I settled in for a good conference.

Before the conference started, I greeted some friends and fellow colleagues that I do not get to see that often. As I settled in for the keynote, the energy and empathy in the air was palpable. We all knew what being here meant: the 2<sup>nd</sup> ever LGBT-themed conference affiliated with ACA and ALGBTIC. This was a place for *us*. For our community. For our people. As Dr. Catherine Roland, an open lesbian and also current ACA president, presented her keynote, she spoke of leadership and its importance for our community. When she asked how many people were masters or doctoral students, a huge number of the audience raised their hand. Tears came into my eyes; there were so many. There was also a significant number of allies; heterosexual, cisgender persons who were there because they supported and fought for us.

My sessions for the day were excellent. I have never been to a conference where every single session was so influential. Every topic and every speaker was impassioned. We all lived and breathed our work. From working with transgender children, to developing advocacy interventions and mentoring programs, my morning was filled with information that I could take back as a counselor educator and LPC and use immediately. I presented as well, along with my colleague, on our affectional identity model that takes into account religion, based upon our large qualitative study. Feeling the reception and engagement in attendees was unmistakable. It was just as exciting to present as it was to attend sessions. The level of acceptance, understanding, and respect in everyone was amazing. I was very excited to attend numerous other presentations on the intersection of religion and LGBTQI+ issues, which reflects how so many of us are trying to live authentically in both our spirituality and our affectional/gender orientation.

From the drag show that night to all of the amazing sessions the next day, the energy just continued to build. At the lunch keynote, Mark Pope, the first openly gay person to serve as ACA President, spoke and shared our history as an organization. Listening to his stories of how the organization emerged during a time where we were considered sick, immoral, and illegal, was heartbreaking and inspiring at the same time. How brave those emerging leaders were! How far we have come! I was crying throughout his talk,

and I was certainly not alone. His hard work, along with all of those other counselors, who took a chance and fought so that we could benefit, was such a blessing. The leadership that they provided with their blood, sweat, and tears, has made the world a bit safer, and the counseling field one of the most affirmative fields for us.

As I attended that afternoon's sessions, I met openly gay and lesbian counselors, transgender and genderqueer persons, other bisexuals, queer people of color, and allies. We all spoke openly about our experiences, our thoughts as counselors, and the world from our view. In return, we all validated and affirmed people's experiences. I heard words that in other contexts are rarely spoken, much less understood. But there we were, connecting and talking, authentically, and without fear. As the day started to come to end, I have to admit, I was feeling like I did not want it to end. I usually duck out early from conferences on the last day; but this conference, I stayed until the very last minute. I wasn't alone – the last session I attended at 4:30 p.m. had almost 20 people in it. In the last session, the presenters spoke about the creation of a moral panic in fighting against equal rights for LGBTQI+ people. The last question that the presenters asked before we left was "What can we do, as counselors, to advocate and address this moral panic?"

As I waited for my taxi to the airport the next morning, I realized I was truly going to miss San Antonio and Texas. I was going to miss the ALGBTIC conference. I was going to miss that magical experience I was blessed to have for those few days. As I sat on my plane coming home, I was again reflecting on how profound that experience was and why I was so sad that it was over. I mean, I'm out and proud. It wasn't like I usually hide who I am and finally was able to be authentic. I've been out for over a decade. I'm an out faculty member in person and on our department website, as well as my private practice website. I'm a leader on our campus for LGBTQI+ issues, my research is on the community, and I'm out to all of my family and friends. It was then that it hit me; it wasn't about being *out*, it was about being *understood, accepted, and affirmed*. I didn't have to explain who I was and what it meant. No one gave me "the look" when I described being bisexual. When someone did ask me what being two-spirited was it was with the utmost respect and validation. And then the whole of my experience came to me in one realization: this was the world I had been fighting for – for me, for my clients, for my children. A world in which our differences were understood, affirmed, validated, and celebrated. What I felt at the ALGBTIC conference was what all people of all backgrounds should be able to feel every day. Tears filled my eyes as I realized that I now had a specific picture of the world that I was fighting for, the one that all LGBTQI+ activists had fought for throughout modern history, the one we saw that can only be achieved through the leadership that Mark Pope and Catherine Roland spoke of within their talks. That future, which is possible, is within our grasp if we continue to walk that same path. That is just one of the many positive things I am arriving home with from the ALGBTIC conference in San Antonio: empowerment, strength, unity, and hope for our collective future.

## **Living Authentically and Resiliently in Community Organization and Identity Politics: Reflections on Opportunities from the ALGBTIC Conference**

Christian D. Chan

The experience of the ALGBTIC Conference is difficult to capture fully with the multifaceted nature of interests and the formative opportunities present for practitioners, supervisors, counselor educators, and leaders. As I speak from my own lens as a Queer Person of Color, I find myself grounded in those experiences and opportunities captured by a beautiful energy shared with members of our community at the ALGBTIC Conference. In my continued passion to embody intersectionality theory on a personal and professional level, each conversation, discussion, and learning opportunity spoke to me in a profound manner, leaving me with the charge and enthusiasm to extend opportunities from the conference and our community to the rest of the profession in service, training, scholarship, and leadership. From the sessions to our keynote speakers, it was clear that our time is now and that our work should never end, given the amount of work we must continue to eradicate problematic social structures in our society. It is an indicator of hope that we can see the products of serving as change agents after searching historically through the journey of our community both in society and in the profession.

I choose this space to reflexively utilize my lens not only to critically engage my positionality, especially in the social positioning derived from privileged and oppressed identities, but also the reflections that become personally meaningful. As our keynote speakers Dr. Catherine Roland and Dr. Mark Pope vividly illustrated, there is an extensive amount of history within our community laced with multiple challenges and barriers along the journey to a matter of hope and resilience. Within those challenges existed a historical situatedness that mirrored sociopolitical issues and problematic social structures within and outside the profession, given that members of the LGBTQ+ community have been subordinated and ostracized for a long period of many years. As a younger member of the community, I realize it is one of the many ways that I carry a privilege with the ability to remain out, open, and proud in more spaces in this era, despite numerous policies and attitudes that still disallow our community to move beyond toleration to

celebration. It is safer for me to be out and proud, as the frequency of safe spaces have increased historically.

On the other hand, this sociohistorical approach offers opportunities to engage marked change and milestones, but it demonstrates the necessary work we must exact on multiple systemic levels. Dr. Roland and Dr. Pope both captured this sentiment—we still have far more work to continue, despite the historical changes that have enhanced safety, protections, and representation for our community. This perspective is especially relevant to initiate change both within the profession and outside of the profession. Through directly engaging the idea, our representation and our voice do matter. Our positioning in leadership within the counseling profession matters. When I envision the impact of identity politics, we speak so much to initiating change on a sociopolitical level, which affects our representation and agenda inside and outside the profession. This reason is why the ALGBTIC Conference holds so much personal meaning for me because it is a space to organize our community to initiate action-oriented solutions. As a result, we can continue to remove barriers for our community and not only adapt, but also thrive. If we wish to revise a history of oppression, we must continue to embody that energy and hope.

My own paradigmatic approach of intersectionality theory helps me deepen the personal meaning of the conference on a personal and professional level. When I visualize the ALGBTIC Conference, it is a moment for us to live authentically and genuinely with our intersections, which hold a special kind of representation within our profession. It serves both as a call to action and a celebration. In this capacity, we can truly find a community and space to simply “be,” especially when we embody the identities under the LGBTQ+ community and our unique intersections with other social identities. My hope is that many years of our profession continue to see the significance of our conference, our division, and our representation because, again, our voices and representation matter.



## Recap of ALGBTIC Conference in San Antonio, TX September 16 and 17, 2016



*Dr. Catherine Roland & Dr. Mark Pope, Past ALGBTIC Presidents and Honorary Speakers*



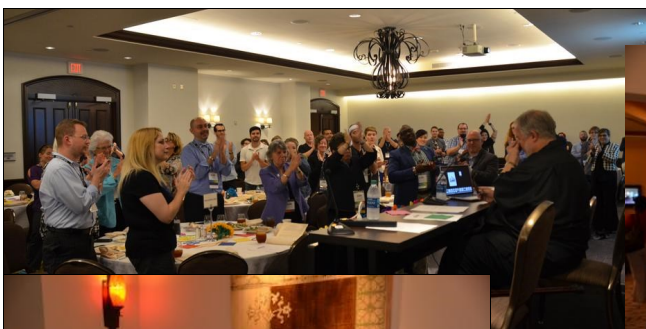
*Charity Drag Show-All Proceeds went to the San Antonio Thrive Center (LGBT Homeless Youth)*



*Joe Norton Award Recipient: Thrive Youth Center, San Antonio, TX*



*Dr. Franco Dispenza receives ALGBTIC Outstanding Research Award*



## Reflections on “Here is how we will boycott injustice and police brutality in America”

Shaun King’s recent article in New York Daily News provides a centralized sketch of the boycott efforts currently underway to “combat police brutality, racial violence and systemic injustice in America.” For those of you who have yet to read it, go read it. Take a break from this newsletter and click the link (<http://www.nydailynews.com/news/national/king-boycott-injustice-police-brutality-article-1.2812999>).

Okay, you’re back? Awesome. What did you think? We understand the act of counseling to be a radical act in the context of oppressive systems and restrictive meta-narratives. However, it is imperative that counselors adhere to a multicultural perspective to uphold the ethical obligation counselors have to clients. As counselors, we witness the impact - mental, physical, and spiritual - these structures have on queer and gender nonconforming clients. Our own ACA Advocacy Competencies (Lewis et al., 2002) and the seminal work of DW Sue, Patricia Arredondo and Roderick McDavis (1992), call upon us to expand our roles. How can these competencies, and our collective needs as ALGBTIC, rise to the challenge of the Injustice Boycott? How can the application of the ACA Advocacy Competencies connect with or depart from the Injustice Boycott?

The response we’ve found? Liberation counseling. Liberation counseling is a therapeutic approach that seeks to help poor and oppressed people through actions that address repressive social and political structures. Liberation counseling, as advanced by Dr. Michael D’Andrea, provides a frame for counselors to work with clients based on a community counseling model. For length’s sake, we’ve included a few excerpts from his work that resonate with us.

- \*Expand the role of the counselor to include the responsibilities of a health educator, life skills trainer, social change agent, social justice advocate

- \*Interrogate assumptions of individualistic, ahistoric, and universalistic helping strategies; Value laden and moral activity
- \*Focus on creating a *beloved community* through fostering change at family, group, network, political spheres

We want to raise liberation counseling as the ethical and compassionate response from professional counselors to the Injustice Boycott. What will this look like in our practice, our advocacy, and relationships? We hope this is just the beginning of a dialogue.

For more information about liberation counseling, check out Michael D’Andrea’s work at [creatingjustice.net](http://creatingjustice.net)

Gideon Litherland MA, LPC, NCC

Secretary, IALGBTIC

[secretary@ialgbtic.org](mailto:secretary@ialgbtic.org)

Jahaaan Abdullah MA, LPC, NCC

Member-at-Large

Illinois Association for LGBT Issues in Counseling

### Sources:

Lewis, J., Arnold, M. S., House, R. & Toporek, R. (2002). *ACA Advocacy Competencies*. Retrieved from <http://www.counseling.org/Publications>

Sue, D. W., Arredondo, P., & McDavis, R. J. (1992). Multicultural competencies and standards: A call to the profession. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, 70, 477– 486.

## State Branch News: Illinois ALGBTIC

I'll come right out and say it: there is a great need for interstate collaboration between divisions of ALGBTIC. I arrived at the conference with the intention to connect with other state organizations to then return to Illinois with a renewed sense of how to execute my volunteer role with greater efficiency, competency, and passion. I found formal space for this connection with other officers lacking.

Michael DeVoll, State Branch Committee Co-Chair of ALGBTIC, hosted an awesome impromptu and flexible meeting at the conference in which attendees were able to articulate their needs, concerns, and hopes. Many of the issues raised were shared and familiar: membership engagement, leadership development, newsletter distribution, and state-based advocacy efforts.

After reflecting about this particular state branch meeting and processing the conference, I continue to not have a sense of how other state organizations are functioning and thriving. Part of the challenge here is the volunteer status of these roles we occupy; the role lends itself to recreation with each person occupant (time commitment, leadership style, accountability, experience). How could we perform our roles more effectively - together?

As state branches of ALGBTIC with consensual charters, we are required to submit annual reports to the ALGBTIC Board. Is there room within ALGBTIC to provide space (meetings) or resources (tech, email templates for membership engagement) to foster such collaboration and thoughtful dialogue between state branch officers?

My hope in writing this for the newsletter is that it can serve as a feeler for fellow officers seeking to connect and share ideas, organizational strategies, and mechanisms of accountability that support the goals of ALGBTIC and meet state-based needs. Let's connect!

Gideon Litherland MA, LPC, NCC

Secretary, Illinois Association for LGBT Issues in Counseling



## ATTENTION GEORGIA ALGBTIC MEMBERS!!!!

The state of Georgia is currently in the pre-planning stages of starting a professional ALGBTIC chapter. Please contact Joshua Littleton at

[Joshua.Littleton@dbhdd.ga.gov](mailto:Joshua.Littleton@dbhdd.ga.gov) for inquiries and interest regarding the start of the chapter.



## HB2: Discrimination Takes a Toll on University Recruitment

Rodney Parks and Jesse Parrish, Elon University

In response to a Charlotte, North Carolina transgender nondiscrimination ordinance, which requires businesses and other public facilities to allow transgender individuals to use the bathroom of their choice, state lawmakers drafted what is now famously known as House Bill 2. The bill overturned the Charlotte ordinance by prohibiting local governments from imposing inclusion-oriented requirements like this one on businesses. The bill also mandates that, in public buildings, transgender individuals must use the bathroom that corresponds to the sex on their birth certificate, even if it is at odds with their identity expression or how they present themselves. Lawmakers argue that HB2 is necessary for the safety and privacy of women and children. The law goes a step further by inhibiting the ability to sue for workplace discrimination, and also limits protections that local governments can extend to their LGBT populations.

While media attention has highlighted the impact of the bill on the private sector, little known are HB2's effects on higher education. Diversity is highly desirable in the college recruitment process, as institutions prize the range of ethnicities, races, and identities that students bring to campus and the classroom. Having a range of diversity enriches the educational experience, making graduates more competitive in the workforce with their ability to understand and appreciate difference. With the advent of HB2, of particular interest in the recruiting process was determining what influence the new bill has on recruitment.

The bill passed on March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2016, which was late enough in the recruitment cycle that a fair number of students had likely already made their college decisions. However, as more and more students delay their college decision to analyze all opportunities given, this new legislation could prove to be a critical factor for those matriculating later. It has since become a volatile political element that institutions must prepare to discuss with students and parents. Following recruitment, a survey was sent to respondents who ultimately elected not to matriculate at a medium sized private institution to determine whether HB2 had an effect on their decision to attend. Of those who responded to the question (640 of 763), 17% said that the law did affect their decision making process (see Table 1).

Table 1

Did HB2 influence your decision?	Deposit-Paid	Withdrawn	No Notification
It was a factor	19	52	38
Not at all	60	227	244
<b>Total percentage</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>13%</b>

UNC system president Margaret Spellings has previously expressed her concerns about HB2 noted,

“You all would be mistaken if you thought we were not concerned about the kind of chill this is having as it relates to the climate, the culture, the goodwill that we attempt to engender on university campuses as it relates to free expression, diversity and ability to recruit students and faculty of all types from all over the world (Stancill, 2016).”

Spellings further explained that she had heard concerns from campuses about their ability to recruit and hold academic conferences in North Carolina noting that, “I think broadly there’s a sense of fear, of anger, questions about what’s next,” she said. “Just a feeling, a question that, is this a state that is unwelcoming to people of all kinds? That particular law suggests that that may be the case. I think that there’s a general anxiety (Stancill, 2016).”

Institutions grappling with similar state laws should prepare to market the positive aspects of the LGBT campus culture to offset fears engendered by HB2 and its ilk. One of the simplest strategies that institutions can employ is the addition of a question on the admission application regarding LGBT affiliation. Questions like, “Do you affiliate with the LGBT

community?” send a message that the institution supports and affirms the identity of LGBT people. Should a campus endeavor to strengthen its stance, the publication of resolutions by the faculty and student government condemning discriminatory state policies such as HB2 further reinforces that the campus embraces diversity related to sexual orientation. These resolutions are even more impactful when combined with a statement of nondiscrimination based on sexual orientation. Additional campus resources such as an LGBTQIA Center, Ally and Safe Zone training opportunities, and LGBTQIA student groups require more substantial investment, but can further reinforce a campus of diversity and engagement.

Beyond administrative policy, faculty members can contribute to a more inclusive culture as well. Curricular and pedagogical developments in the areas of gender- and sexuality-specific courses are now commonplace. Furthermore, faculty support personnel can develop training programs to help faculty integrate LGBTQIA issues into existing courses. In parallel with pedagogical innovation, institutions should also develop a plan to ensure that all faculty are prepared to engage in conversations about LGBTQIA topics and identities, as well as how to address homophobia if it erupts in class. Faculty should also be encouraged to take part in guest lecture programs, whereby faculty may request guest lecturers to their classrooms to discuss gender and LGBTQIA topics to further reinforces an inclusive campus environment.

The third pillar of the campus experience, auxiliary services, can be integrated into an inclusion plan as well. Institutions should endeavor to ensure LGBTQIA identities, topics, concerns and representations of LGBTQIA people are included in housing guidelines, healthcare forms, alumni materials, grievance procedures, and facilities (athletic, locker rooms, universal bathrooms, etc.). The creation of housing policies that allow LGBTQIA-identified students to be matched with LGBTQIA-affirming roommates is critical. Themed housing arrangements and options for transgender students to be housed in accordance with their gender identity/expression further reinforces an institution's stand against discriminatory state policies. Policies that allow residence life live-in professional staff and faculty-in-residence with same-sex partners to live together on

campus also contribute to inclusive signaling to student populations.

It should be noted that inclusion-oriented practices necessarily involve ongoing education. Campuses should seek to invest in regularly offered training modules to address high profile services such as public safety, counseling center staff, student services offices, and the health center. Public safety officers should be annually trained on sexual orientation and gender identity issues as well as anti-LGBTQIA violence. Training should also be provided for counseling center staff, specifically on the process of coming out and additional LGBTQIA topics/concerns. Sensitivity training for health center and student services staff should be encouraged and offered each term.

Considering the enormity of the task of enrolling a diverse and competitive class, laws like HB2 create additional recruiting challenges. Admissions personnel must be knowledgeable about their institution's stance on inclusion and the services it offers to unique populations so as to engage effectively with potential students and address the questions they may have. They must also stay abreast of new laws and policies that might generate concerns among applicants, and work relentlessly to portray the institution as a welcoming environment for LGBTQIA students. With a concerted effort on the part of institutional staff, faculty, and leadership, institutions can mitigate the impact of discriminatory laws and policies like HB2 on the admissions process and improve the overall student experience once they matriculate.



# Important Reminders and Dates

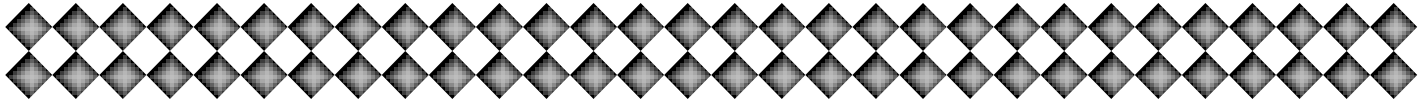
## ACA Conference and Expo

### San Francisco, CA

**March 16 - 19, 2017**

ALGBTIC hopes to see all of our members at ACA Conference and Expo. Below are just some reminders to prepare you for the conference:

- This is more than just a conference, but a show of solidarity for the counseling profession.
- Conference and Expo will take place at the Moscone West Convention Center
- Super Saver Rates are valid through December 15, 2016
- Register at: <https://www.counseling.org/conference/2017-registration>



### **Time to THRIVE**

The 4th annual Time to THRIVE  
Conference will take place  
April 28—April 30, 2017 in  
Washington, DC

This is an annual national conference  
aimed to promote safety, inclusion and  
well-being for LGBTQ youth.

For more information:  
<http://timetothrive.org/>



# The ALGBTIC Newsletter is Welcoming Submissions!

Please review our guidelines for submission. We would love to hear from professional counselors, counseling students, counselor educators, and counselors working in research settings. Contribute your voice to the next ALGBTIC newsletter. Please contact Franco Dispenza, Newsletter Editor at [fdispenza1@gsu.edu](mailto:fdispenza1@gsu.edu) with any questions.

## Guidelines for Newsletter Submissions

All submissions must be electronic, written in Microsoft Word document formats (.doc or .docx) and included as an email attachment.

All submissions must be in 12-pt Times New Roman font with 1" margins.

All submissions must adhere to word limits for article category.

All submissions must include author's name, degree(s), academic or institutional affiliation, telephone number and email address in a cover email.

Any citations must follow APA Style Manual, 6th Edition, and language should be free of bias in accordance with APA's style guidelines.

Any articles not adhering to #1-5 above will be returned to the author for revision before review.

We welcome all submissions that would be of interest to our readership and ALGBTIC members. Information should be current and informative.

Submissions that promote dialogue and opinion are especially encouraged.

## Submission Categories

**New and Noteworthy** – this category is for upcoming social, political or advocacy current events. Events may be local, statewide, or national in scope. Also may include synopses of current news items or media (films, art, music) that may be of interest to our readers. 500 words or less.

**State Chapter News** – this category is for legislative and scope of practice updates from our state chapter leaders, and for any counseling-related or LGBT-affirmative events that the state wants to publicize. For example: rallies, benefit walks, legislative action days, etc. 500 words or less.

**Fresh off the Presses** – this section highlights chapters, books, and articles (peer-reviewed or not) written by ALGBTIC members and student members. Only 3 publications per member will be included in an issue of the newsletter. Full citations, please.

**Practice Matters** – this category is for practicing professional counselors, counseling interns or counseling psychologists to address topics of relevance to practitioners in agency or private practice settings. Examples include multicultural concerns, insurance involvement in client care, DSM-V impact, ethical issues. 1,000 words or less.

**Major Contribution** – this category is for academic articles on the theory or practice of counseling or counselor education. Submissions welcomed from faculty, graduate students, and LGBT scholars and allies. 1,500 words or less.

**Difficult Dialogues** – this category is for controversial topics of interest or discussions between professionals on two sides of an issue. For example, medically assisted hormone blockage for trans-identified children. 1,000 words or less.