



# Iowa Mental Health Counselors Association

## NEWSLETTER

February 2015

Vol 2015 Issue 1

### Upcoming Events & Due Dates:

**IMHCA Annual Conference** Monday, April 13, 2015 & Tuesday, April 14, 2015

Board Meeting: June 20th 9-noon at 225 NW School Street, Ankeny (or via skype)

AMHCA Conference in Philadelphia July 9-11

### Inside This Issue:

President's Column	2
Student's Corner	2
Ethics: Interview with Dr. Meyerle	3
Pet Therapy at the Conference	4
Open IMHCA Board Positions	5
Current Board Members	6

## Bringing Out the Best in Ourselves and Our Clients

By Christy Johnston, LMHC IMHCA Conference Chair

The 8th Annual IMHCA Conference is coming right up April 13-14, 2015 at the Merle Hay Holiday Inn. Our theme this year is "Bringing Out The Best In Ourselves And Our Clients". Our main speaker will be Jeff Zeig, Ph. D, Founder and Director of the Milton Erickson Foundation. Dr. Zeig is currently focusing on identifying how various arts can be used to empower professional practice and will share some of his findings with us during his presentation titled The Self-Developing Clinician on Tuesday, April 14th.

IMHCA is continuing its commitment to providing yearly Ethics training. This year's training will be provided by Dr. Susan Meyerle. Learn more about Dr. Meyerle on pg. 3 of this newsletter. The Ethics presentation will be

on Monday, April 13th.

Also on Monday, the conference will feature a presentation on Play Therapy by Iowa's own Terry Kottman, Ph.D. Dr. Kottman was recently named the Association for Play Therapy's 2014 Lifetime Achievement Award winner. Dr. Kottman is an LMHC located in Cedar Falls, IA, an author, and national and international presenter on topics related to play therapy.

Breakout sessions include Coping with Grief from Traumatic Loss, Commonly Prescribed Psychotropic Medications, A Brief Introduction to Somatic Experiencing, Holistic Management: Treatment of Depression and Anxiety Utilizing a Female Offender Case Study, The Centrality of a Therapist's Courage in the Counseling Hour, and Stop, Breathe, and Believe: A

Practical Tool for Teaching and Practicing Self Compassion.

Be sure to visit with conference exhibitors. Their participation helps IMHCA to be able to provide a great conference. A Pet Therapist and a Massage Therapist will be available for free consultations with conference participants.

The Merle Hay Holiday Inn rooms have been completely updated and remodeled. They are beautiful! Book a room by 4/4/15 to be entered into the drawing to win a free hotel room. Brochures have been sent out and registration is available online at imhca.net so we hope to see lots of you there this year. Every year our goal is for the conference to get bigger and better and I think this year we may reach that goal again.



From the president: We did it! IMHCA has been accepted through NBCC to approve our own CEs. IMHCA is now an ACEP, which means an "approved continuing education provider." IMHCA was happy to approve our own speakers to give you the CEs for our conference in April, instead of going to an outside association. This is just another example of us growing! We are so proud of Iowa LMHCs and the hard work we all do!

## President's Column

By Kristy Johnson, LMHC, IMHCA President

IMHCA had an excellent 2014! I am so happy to look back and see all of the things we accomplished as an association together. We have many exciting things coming up in 2015. It is the year of "Bringing out the best in our clients and ourselves!" This is one area where there always seems to be room for improvement. In our profession we continue to give to so many people it is sometimes hard to focus on what we can improve on for ourselves. Or we know what we need to do; it is just finding the time or energy to do it. Sound familiar? One of the areas that I would challenge you is to ask... what are you doing to help benefit yourself as an LMHC or soon to be LMHC in the state of Iowa? Below I have outlined several ways to get involved.

**FEBRUARY:** Day on the Hill. It is important for our voices to be



Kristy Johnson

heard! Monday, February 23, 2015 was a day set aside to speak to legislators about issues important to our profession and efforts to draft legislation in the 2015 session. This was a day to be heard and an opportunity to share our knowledge. You received an email about this opportunity. If you did or didn't make it, please be sure to read the Legislative Updates regularly sent out via email and make your voice heard by meeting with, writing to, and/or emailing your state representatives.

**APRIL:** Come to your own conference, IMHCA's 8th annual is on April 13 and 14th, 2015. IMHCA is the only organization dedicated exclusively to meeting the professional needs of mental health counselors in Iowa. Why not come out and support your very own profession? We have two amazing days

packed full of 13 CEs on some very important topics. On April 13 you will also hear about IMHCA's year in review at the annual held board meeting at noon.

**JUNE:** Our board meetings are held at 225 NW School Street Ankeny, IA 50023. In June, it will be on June 20th from 9-12pm. Come see what we are all about either in person or connect on skype.

**JULY:** AMHCA's National Conference will be in Philadelphia this year, July 9-11, with the focus on "Transformation in Action." Join IMHCA's President and President-Elect in attending this conference. For more details go to [www.amhca.org](http://www.amhca.org).

**AUGUST:** Our 3rd annual golf tournament will be occurring in August 2015. It will be at Coldwater Golf Links in Ames, IA. Stay tuned for the upcoming

Continued on pg. 4

## Student's Corner

By Racheal Gibbons

A new year has started and what a year it is going to be. Many students are just starting their first semester in their graduate programs on their way to become mental health counselors. To those students, I say welcome! Then there are a few students who are nearing the end of their schooling. To those students, I say good luck! After completing their internship, many students are on their own to finding supervision for licensure and sites to practice their newly developed counseling skills. This is a daunting task. It is through IMHCA that this student is grateful for the hard work that they have invested in all students.

When I first joined IMHCA, I didn't

know that a professional organization could mean so much to me as a student and more importantly, as a future professional. I know words cannot express how much IMHCA has changed me or empowered me to grow as a professional. I didn't know the first thing about lobbying for a cause. The first time I ever went to the Capitol building as an adult was with IMHCA. What an experience. I was able to talk to congressmen and congresswomen about the trials that I would soon face as a future therapist in Iowa. I was able to give my chosen profession a voice to express what will be the best course to ensure that their constituents were given the best access to services. I was able

to talk to them as a student, one who is thousands of dollars in debt trying to make it in this new professional world. I stood by my fellow IMHCA members as they supported me in expressing the views that I'm sure many other students have.

IMHCA has given students a chance to have our voices heard in congress. A few of the areas that IMHCA wants to discuss is how the House and Senate can broaden the definition of who can supervise and employ temporary licensed counselors, provide opportunities for sole proprietors and small group practices to expand their businesses,

Continued on pg. 6

## An Interview with Our Conference Presenter on Ethics: Susan Meyerle, Ph.D.

By Chad Brownfield, LMHC IMHCA Ethics Chair

Today's ethics column features an interview with Dr. Susan Meyerle, PhD, LIMHP, CEAP, CFLE. She is the author of *The Power of Expectations: How to Create the Life You Desire* and founder of *Creating Ethical Boundaries* ([creatingethicalboundaries.com](http://creatingethicalboundaries.com)). Dr. Meyerle is also the speaker on ethics at IMHCA's Annual Conference this April.

**Simple introductory question, what made you interested in counseling?**

Helping people has always appealed to me. My initial desire was to work in medicine although my concern was that with the changes in health care, I would not be able to spend as much time with my patients/clients as I would like. I began to explore the field of counseling and feel so blessed every day that it was a good decision for me!

**What attracted you to ethics and made you want to specialize in this area?**

In 2003, I decided to explore the idea of serving on the Nebraska Board of Mental Health Practice. I thought it sounded interesting and would be a great experience. My desire to learn more about ethics and regulations mushroomed. I became very intrigued about why people engage in unethical behaviors and how they reconcile their actions.

**You are the founder of *Creating Ethical Boundaries (CEB)*, a tutorial program for licensees sanctioned by licensing boards. How did you come up with the idea for this type of program?**

*Creating Ethical Boundaries* originated from a desire to help professionals form a principled practice, grounded in compliance, while providing best practices. The CEB Program is an online tutorial program that provides resources for professionals, and reassurance to referring entities to re-establish public protection after a violation has been determined. *Creating Ethical Boundaries* provides an opportunity for professionals to identify the issues contributing to the ethical violation and to create a preventative plan to promote ethical behavior and continued compliance.

While serving on the licensing board in our state, we identified the need of a resource to help licensees re-establish their professional integrity. The program is based on previous research, including a pilot program which had been conducted.

**How has CEB helped you see ethical dilemmas in a different way or how has it expanded your understanding of ethical issues?**

CEB has helped me understand why good practitioners sometimes make poor choices. CEB has also lead me to learn more about the decision making processes peo-

ple engage in when faced with ethical situations. My team and I have done a great deal of research in exploring common ethical challenges, the strategies people use to resolve those challenges, and how to maintain professional integrity.

**What are some new ethical problems that are coming up that counselors need to be aware of?**

One word, technology. This answer is most likely not a surprise. Each day, it seems we are faced with new opportunities for clients to contact us through various means. Staying abreast of the technologies available and the ethical use of those technologies requires serious consideration.

**What are some of the most important attributes to an ethical counselor and why?**

An ethical counselor needs to be aware of their code of ethics and engage in consistent application of those codes. The daily decisions licensees make impact the "big" decisions that usually gain our attention in some unfavorable way. The thought process behind the big decision is often comprised of less impactful ethical decisions that begins a licensee down the slippery slope. Having conversations with colleagues about clinical practice helps maintain ethical integrity.

**You have a lot of experience with regulatory boards. What is some advice you can give to students coming into the field who want to become licensed?**

Read the regulations and statutes governing licensure in the jurisdiction in which you plan to practice. A person seeking to be licensed needs to read the requirements for licensure and gather the necessary paperwork to produce a complete application. Work with the licensing staff as needed.

**Students and young counselors are an important area to growing the field of counseling. What is the best advice you could give young counselors wanting to make an impact in the field?**

Determine the impact you would like to make and the ethical principles you will follow. Stay focused and committed to your personal professional integrity and recognize that this is a critical foundation to any contribution in the counseling realm.

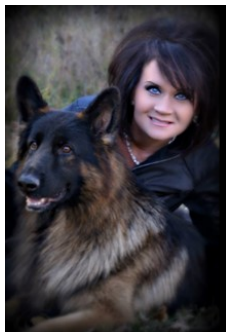
**You seem to have an entrepreneurial spirit in the field of counseling creating CEB, Life Resources,**

**Stay focused and committed to your personal professional integrity and recognize that this is a critical foundation to any contribution in the counseling realm.**

## Pet Therapy Experience Available to IMHCA Conference Attendees

Anna Childs will be bringing pet therapy dogs both days of our conference! The dogs will be available before the speakers and during breaks. Anna will be bringing a variety of dogs throughout the conference.

A little bit about Anna: With over 18 years of experience she owns Adelhorst kennels, raises German shepherds, and trains and supply therapy dogs to offer emotional support. She has obedience training classes (beginners and advanced classes) for all breeds and ages, along with potential for therapy dog training as well. You can find out more about her at [Annchildsk9training.com](http://Annchildsk9training.com).



Anna & Adelhorst

It's well-known (and scientifically proven) that interaction with a gentle, friendly pet has significant benefits.

### Physical Health:

- lowers blood pressure
- improves cardiovascular health
- releases endorphins (oxytocin) that have a calming effect
- diminishes overall physical pain
- the act of petting produces an automatic relaxation response, reducing the amount of medication some folks need

### Mental Health:

- lifts spirits and lessens depression
- decreases feelings of isolation and alienation
- encourages communication
- provides comfort
- increases socialization
- reduces boredom
- lowers anxiety

- helps children overcome speech and emotional disorders
- creates motivation for the client to recover faster
- reduces loneliness

### Reading: (PAWS for Reading)

- helps children focus better
- improves literacy skills
- provides non-stressful, non-judgmental environment
- increases self-confidence, reduces self-consciousness In Physical Therapy
- increases joint movement and improves recovery time
- maintains or increases motor skills
- provides motivation to move more, stretch farther, exercise longer

These benefits are from the website, [PAWSforpeople.org](http://PAWSforpeople.org). Go to this website for more information.

## Ethics Interview

(continued from pg. 3)

and other programs. What are some important resources for counselors who want to understand more of the business side of the field?

Having taught in the College of Business Administration, a course (or two) in small business management including human resources, would be very beneficial. Understanding the business side of counseling doesn't come as naturally for most counselors.

Can you give us an introduction or teaser to your talk at the Iowa Mental Health Counselors Association Conference Annual Conference in April?

We will review current legal cases that have impacted the counseling field on an array of topics including Facebook interactions with clients, confidentiality breaches at the neighborhood bar, and other interesting decisions clinicians made in their practices. Who said ethics had to be dry and boring? Not this time.

**Please look through the open positions on the IMHCA Board and consider volunteering some time toward efforts to build and support your field in the State of Iowa. We would enjoy answering your questions about how much of your time this will take, what you will need to do, etc. Find us at the conference or send us an email (individual email addresses can be found at: [imhca.net/board-members](http://imhca.net/board-members)).**

Sincerely,

**IMHCA Board Members**



## IMHCA 2015 Board Positions Open

By Stacie Papineau, IMHCA Nominations Committee Chair

We are accepting nominations for IMHCA members in good standing. If you would like to be more involved or know someone that would be a perfect fit, please provide a brief write up about yourself (1-2 paragraphs) or the person you are nominating. Experience on a board or the particular position open is not necessary. Please send nominations to [nominations@imhca.net](mailto:nominations@imhca.net) by May 1, 2015.

### Networking and Communications Chair

This is a two year term responsible for managing IMHCA's facebook and LinkedIn pages. This includes posting information of interest relating to IMHCA and monitoring the site's content. The chair will also be responsible for writing the "member of the month" spotlight and posting this monthly to each of the sites. The networking and communication chair will also serve as the liaison between IMHCA and the colleges, universities and other organizations and assist in arranging speakers as needed.

### Conference Committee Chair

The conference committee chair is a two year term responsible for overseeing IMHCA's annual conference in the spring. Chair of this committee will oversee the planning and implementation of securing dates, arranging speakers, organizing conference registration, budgeting expenses and all other related activities. The conference committee chair will manage and work with a supportive conference committee formed to assist with duties.

### Government Relations Co-Chair

The government relations co chairs will work together and be responsible or monitoring the activities of the State and National Legislatures and other appropriate regulatory bodies and for advising and informing IMHCA on all legislative matters pertaining to mental health counselors. Training will be provided, this is a two year position.

If you would like to be more involved or know someone that would be a perfect fit, please submit a nomination to [nominations@imhca.org](mailto:nominations@imhca.org) by May 1, 2015.

### Student Member

This is a two year term for graduate students in the mental health field. The graduate student member will be a liaison between the university and college mental health programs and IMHCA. This member will provide communication and cohesion amongst graduate student programs in Iowa and represent graduate student interests to the board.

Board members will attend either in person or skype quarterly meetings. Members currently serving in these positions would be happy to share their experiences with you, please visit [IMHCA.net](http://IMHCA.net) for contact information. All members are also encouraged and welcome to attend our board meetings in person or via Skype.

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## President's Column (continued from pg. 2)

ing date, and get a team of 4 together! Even better, reserve your spot while you are at the conference, for a fantastic rate!

**OCTOBER:** Our board meetings are held at 225 NW School Street Ankeny, IA 50023. In October, we will meet on October 10th from 9-12pm. Come see what they are all about either in person or connect on skype.

**ALL YEAR LONG:**

**LINKED IN AND FACEBOOK:** Join us on Linked In or like us on facebook "Iowa Mental Health Counselors Association." Our group discusses important topics such as resources for clientele, reaching out to therapists who specialize in

certain areas, where graduate students can get hours, who supervises, and much, much more. Connect here and you can get your name out there to many other professionals. You are welcome to post on our Linked In and Facebook page anytime!

**BOARD POSITIONS:** Board positions are becoming available! This is an amazing opportunity to give back to your profession. Find something that aligns with your interests. And if a board position isn't what you are looking for, you can join a committee or just give your professional input at a meeting or via email.

**SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS:** If you are a professor or student, IMHCA has the ability to come talk with your class. Reach out to us and let us know what your needs are. We can be of help.

**WEBSITE:** Visit our webpage and see all of the exciting things that are occurring at [www.imhca.net](http://www.imhca.net).

**CHALLENGE:** So your challenge in 2015: Pick a few things from the list and get involved!! It would be great to hear from you via email or see you in person. Connect with me at [president@imhca.net](mailto:president@imhca.net). And have a fantastic 2015! Come be part of the change!!



# Iowa Mental Health Counselors Association

The Iowa Mental Health Counselors Association is a chapter of the American Mental Health Counselors Association. IMHCA is the only organization dedicated exclusively to meeting the professional needs of mental health counselors in Iowa. Its sole purpose is to promote the profession of mental health counseling and the needs of our clients.

[www.imhca.net](http://www.imhca.net)

To contact the entire board,  
please e-mail  
[boardmembers@imhca.net](mailto:boardmembers@imhca.net)

President	Kristy Johnson	2013-2015
President-Elect	Don Gilbert	2014-2015
Treasurer	Jim Seward	2014-2016
Secretary	Jessica Romey	2014-2016
Membership Chair	Jessica Volk	2013-2015
Conference Committee Chair	Christy Johnston	2013-2015
Ethics Committee Chair	Chad Brownfield	2013-2015
Government Relations Chair	Kacey Peterson	2013-2015
Member-at-Large	Connie Frank	2014-2016
Member-at-Large	Katie Blair	2014-2016
Fundraising Chair	Amy Mooney	2014-2016
Nominations Committee Chair	Stacie Papineau	2014-2016
Public Relations Chair/ Website Coordinator	Jason Stark	2014-2015
Publications Committee Chair	Carol Hinman	2014-2016
Student Member	Emily Michener	2014-2016
Student Member	Racheal Gibbons	2014-2016

The IMHCA Newsletter, written by and for Iowa Counselors, is published quarterly by the Iowa Mental Health Counselors Association. Advertising rates set for the 2015 year by the IMHCA Board are: ¼ page - \$35.00 for year, \$8.50 for single issue; ½ page - \$70.00 for year, \$20.00 for single issue. Advertisers should submit a prepared advertisement in PDF form to [publications@imhca.net](mailto:publications@imhca.net) and should submit payment by check or money order to: Jim Seward, IMHCA Treasurer; 301 Ave M West, Fort Dodge, Iowa 50501. Members may submit one 1/4 page advertisement per year for free. Advertisements by employers seeking employees should also review the job board on the IMHCA website and consider posting there. All submissions to the IMHCA Newsletter will be reviewed for appropriateness as to the intent of the newsletter.

## Student's Corner (continued from pg. 2)

and reduce the amount of debt for recent graduates. As a student, loan forgiveness is a big must. This will provide incentive for therapists working in mental health provider shortage areas by wiping away portions of their student debt if they work for a specified time period with that population. There is a bill that is currently making its way through the Senate (SSB 1098) and this could be the year that will help students out the most.

Students, I call you out to have your voice heard for our future profession. Loan forgiveness needs to happen. This will allow our state to ensure that we stay in Iowa and provide for our neighbors. By expanding the definition of who can employ us and supervise us after school will be beneficial in continuing to learn and grow as a professional. This will provide graduates with more job opportunities and reimbursement.

IMHCA's annual day on the hill was February 23rd. I call on you to find your State Senators and Representatives at [www.legis.iowa.gov/](http://www.legis.iowa.gov/) legislators and send them an email or letter asking them to support our efforts to join this profession.

It is time for our voices to be heard and change to happen. Come to IMHCA's and be a part of important change for our state. Good luck students!