

# *Interaction*

**ASERVIC**

*Volume X, No. IX*

*Summer, 2009*

## *President's Address Lisa R. Jackson-Cherry*



Lisa R. Jackson-Cherry  
*ASERVIC President*  
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It was great seeing so many of you at the recent ACA Conference in Charlotte, NC and also wonderful to meet so many new friends and members of ASERVIC. I hope you all felt welcome in ASERVIC and that you were able to take advantage and participate in many of the ASERVIC-sponsored events. A very heart-felt 'thank you' to those who volunteered your time to work at the booth or lead meetings, sessions, and services. I hope you had safe travels back home and if you were unable to attend this year's ACA Conference, I look forward to an opportunity to meet in Pittsburgh next year and/or at the ASERVIC Conference.

Some very exciting things occurred during the ACA conference this year. The Summit II group reconvened and has made extensive progress with the three initiatives developed last year after the 1<sup>st</sup> ASERVIC Conference. The initial investigation of an ASERVIC National Registry was presented at the Board meeting and the Board voted to continue to work on the finer details of creating a National Registry. I am sure more details will follow in the upcoming year as so many of you voiced strong support for this initiative.

Second, another meeting convened regarding the Spiritual Competencies and the Board recently voted unanimously, and with much enthusiasm, to approve the new and revised *Competencies for addressing spiritual and religious issues in counseling*. We have included the Competencies in this newsletter (see insert p. 3 & 4). These will be posted on the ASERVIC web-page in the near future. We wanted to share the competencies with our members first! It is our hope that you find these 14 competencies useful in your various counseling practices and personal practices. Led by Craig Cashwell, the competencies are a reflection of the excellent work done by Summit I and expanded by Summit II which is now supported by extensive research of Linda Robertson from the University of Central Florida. Please refer to Craig's newsletter article for an overview of the competencies.

I would like to thank all of those involved in the Summit II initiatives: Mark Young, Richard Watts, Michele Kielty Briggs, Mike Robinson, Grant Hayes, Judy Miranti, Cheri Smith, Chris Faiver, Geri Miller, Scott Young, Sharon Cheston, Bryce Hagedorn, Craig Cashwell, Marsha Wiggins, and Linda Robertson.

*(cont. on page 2)*

**Checkout our  
updated website at  
[www.aservic.org](http://www.aservic.org)!!**

### *Message from the President (cont.)*

In knowing we would not be where we are today without our past, I would like to also thank the work of the members of Summit I which began more than 10 years ago.

Third, plans are currently in progress for the 2<sup>nd</sup> ASERVIC Conference, *Navigating the Spiritual Journey of Life*, located at the Springmaid Beach Retreat and Resort in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, August 1-3, 2010. Springmaid is located away from the hustle and bustle of Myrtle Beach and we hope attendees will bring their families and enjoy some of South Carolina's beautiful weather at the close of summer. The call for proposals will be announced soon and conference information will continue to be updated on the ASERVIC web-site. I really hope you all will be able to make plans to attend the ASERVIC Conference as it looks to be another great conference focusing on research and practical applications of the competencies. A special thank you to the conference co-chairs, Shannon Ray and Carman Gill, who have begun preparations for the conference.

Following the discussion led by Richard Watts (Editor) regarding the cost and marketability of our current Counseling and Values Journal, the Board has approved a transition from a 3 to 2 journal circulation. This change would allow us to keep the same amount of total pages by increasing the look and size of the journal (JCD size rather than our current smaller ASERVIC size) but decrease our overall cost which is one of ASERVIC's most expensive costs. The new format would take effect with the April 2010 issue.

Of course, there are so many less noticeable but essential tasks that are completed each year for ASERVIC and I want to thank all of you for your dedication and commitment to our organization and during my term. Please take time to look at the many individuals who are involved in the numerous committees of ASERVIC. A special thank you to those who have worked so hard on newsletters, awards and membership (Shannon Ray and Carman Gill); the new website (Daniel Gutierrez and Bryce Hagedorn); the Journal of Counseling and Values (Richard Watts); and ASERVIC's fiscal soundness (Jennifer Curry). Many thanks is extended to two graduate students: Stephanie Smerdzinski and Stephanie Dailey. Stephanie Smerdzinski, ASERVIC Graduate Student Representative (Marymount University) assisted with every aspect of my presidential tasks this year and was an essential person in coordinating the events at ACA and our Fall Board meeting. Stephanie Dailey (Argosy University Doctoral Student) has been assisting Carman Gill in the development of each of the newsletters. The Stephanie's (as I have referred to them) coordinated the ASERVIC Booth and prepared and co-led one of the most highly attended Graduate Student Roundtable discussions at ACA in recent years. Look for Stephanie Dailey's article in this newsletter about their student discussion. My heartfelt gratitude is also extended to Michele Briggs, Mike Robinson, and Craig Cashwell (past presidents) and Jen Curry (president elect elect) who offered me more support than they will ever realize over this past year.

In closing, and as I will continue to comment, I am constantly reminded that ASERVIC is not just another organization. Members practice the competencies and mission of ASERVIC, both professionally and personally, which makes working and serving for ASERVIC extremely meaningful and worthwhile. This past year has been a wonderful experience. I am appreciative of the opportunity to serve the members of ASERVIC and to have been blessed with so many friendships along the way. Since there are no farewells, I will end simply with.....

"May the blessings of light be upon you,  
Light without and light within.

And in all your comings and goings."

"...and until we meet again, may God hold you in palm of His hand." (Irish Blessings)

Warmly,

Lisa

## History of ASERVIC Competencies

*Special thanks to the individuals who dedicated their time to Summit II and these revised competencies:*

*Mark Young*

*Richard Watts*

*Michele KIELTY BRIGGS*

*Mike Robinson*

*Grant Hayes*

*Judy Miranti*



*Lisa Jackson-Cherry*

*Cheri Smith*

*Chris Faiver*

*Geri Miller*

*Scott Young*



*Sharon Cheston*

*Bryce Hagedorn*

*Craig Cashwell*

*Marsha Wiggins*

*and*

*Linda Robertson.*

## ***NEW ASERVIC Competencies***

*Craig S. Cashwell*

Included in this issue are the new ASERVIC-endorsed competencies. The ASERVIC Board of Directors tasked The Summit on Spirituality working group with revising the existing competencies and this became a priority for the Summit participants. In a delightful twist of synchronicity, one of the Summit participants, Linda Robertson, was working on a dissertation in which she was conducting a large scale factor analysis of the competencies. Her findings greatly informed the revision process. Thus, the new competencies have a solid empirical foundation that largely affirmed the work of the original Summit on Spirituality.

Based on empirical evidence, the new competencies are organized into six categories. The first two categories, *Culture and Worldview* and *Counselor Self-awareness*, contain competencies related to how a counselor's beliefs, values, attitudes, and assumptions should interface with a client's worldview. These competencies are included first to demonstrate that self-awareness, the person of the counselor, and a championing of diversity are all cornerstones of the ASERVIC approach to integrating spirituality and religion into the counseling process.

The remaining categories are intended to provide counselors with more of the "How" of integrating spirituality and religion without being prescriptive. Consistent with the developmental emphasis of the counseling profession, there is an emphasis on the developmental and ever-evolving nature of the spiritual journey. Further, there is an emphasis on consideration of spiritual and religious issues during the initial conceptualization and planning process. Throughout the counseling process, the competencies stress a constructivist approach to working with client belief systems, emphasizing that counselor-client communication and interventions should be respectful and sensitive of the client's beliefs.

Although these competencies may play out differently in different settings, it is the belief of the Summit working group that these competencies are applicable across counseling settings.

**Association for Spiritual, Ethical, and Religious Values in Counseling**  
**Competencies for addressing Spiritual and Religious Issues in Counseling**

(Revised and Approved, 5/5/2009. Copyright 5/5/09)

**Culture and Worldview**

1. The professional counselor can describe the similarities and differences between spirituality and religion, including the basic beliefs of various spiritual systems, major world religions, agnosticism, and atheism.
2. The professional counselor recognizes that the client's beliefs (or absence of beliefs) about spirituality and/or religion are central to his or her worldview and can influence psychosocial functioning.

**Counselor Self-awareness**

3. The professional counselor actively explores his or her own attitudes, beliefs, and values about spirituality and/or religion.
4. The professional counselor continuously evaluates the influence of his or her own spiritual and/or religious beliefs and values on the client and the counseling process.
5. The professional counselor can identify the limits of his or her understanding of the client's spiritual and/or religious perspective and is acquainted with religious and spiritual resources, including leaders, who can be avenues for consultation and to whom the counselor can refer.

**Human and Spiritual Development**

6. The professional counselor can describe and apply various models of spiritual and/or religious development and their relationship to human development.

**Communication**

7. The professional counselor responds to client communications about spirituality and/or religion with acceptance and sensitivity.
8. The professional counselor uses spiritual and/or religious concepts that are consistent with the client's spiritual and/or religious perspectives and that are acceptable to the client.
9. The professional counselor can recognize spiritual and/or religious themes in client communication and is able to address these with the client when they are therapeutically relevant.

**Assessment**

10. During the intake and assessment processes, the professional counselor strives to understand a client's spiritual and/or religious perspective by gathering information from the client and/or other sources.

**Diagnosis and Treatment**

11. When making a diagnosis, the professional counselor recognizes that the client's spiritual and/or religious perspectives can a) enhance well-being; b) contribute to client problems; and/or c) exacerbate symptoms.
12. The professional counselor sets goals with the client that are consistent with the client's spiritual and/or religious perspectives.
13. The professional counselor is able to a) modify therapeutic techniques to include a client's spiritual and/or religious perspectives, and b) utilize spiritual and/or religious practices as techniques when appropriate and acceptable to a client's viewpoint.
14. The professional counselor can therapeutically apply theory and current research supporting the inclusion of a client's spiritual and/or religious perspectives and practices.

## Awards and Pictures from the ASERVIC Luncheon

The function of the awards committee for 2008-2009 was to facilitate the nominations for the annual awards that included the Lifetime Service Award, Meritorious Award, Humanitarian Award, Biggs-Pine Award, Outgoing Board Members, Outgoing President, and Incoming President.

Per the recommendations of the Executive Board, the second Lifetime Service Award, founded last year in the name of Dr. Judy Miranti, was awarded to Dr. E. H. Mike Robinson III. He accepted award this at the 2009 ACA Convention ASERVIC Luncheon. The Meritorious Service Award was presented to Dr. Michele Kielty Briggs. This award is for an ASERVIC member who has demonstrated significant service to the field of counseling and values in areas related to concerns of a spiritual and/or humanitarian nature.

Additional award winners included Dr. Cheri Smith, recipient of the Humanitarian Award and the Outgoing Board members awards went to Dr. Carman S. Gill, Dr. Ray Wooten and Dr. Marsha Wiggins; the Biggs-Pine Award winners included Dr. Duffy-Wilks and Dr. Juli D'Ann Ratheal. Dr. Michele Kielty Briggs was given the Outgoing President Award and Dr. Elliott Ingersol, the Incoming President Award, a block and gavel, Honoring his previous and upcoming service to the organization.

Certificates of achievement were awarded to Dr. Jennifer Curry, outgoing treasurer and Stephanie Smedzinski, Graduate student representative and secretary.

A special thanks to Dr. Shannon Ray, committee chairperson, and Dr. Jennifer Curry, committee member. The awards committee chair will solicit nomination for the January 2010 awards to be given at the ACA conference in Pittsburgh, PA. Any nominations should be sent to Dr. Shannon Ray at shanray@nova.edu.

A number of proposals were received for the 2009 Research Award. Through a blind review process, three recipients were identified. These awards were presented to J. Yasmine Butler, Dr. Summer Reiner, and Dr. Robert Dobeimer at the ASERVIC luncheon during the ACA Convention. For more information about the research awards including instructions for submitting a proposal, please contact Dr. Tracey Robert at trobert@fairfield.edu.



**Drs. Robinson, Hayes and Faiver enjoy the ASERVIC luncheon.**



**Past and Current ASERVIC Treasurers reunite!**



**Friends catch up over lunch!**

**Mark your calendar for ASERVIC 2010 Second Conference on Spirituality: Navigating the Spirituality Journey of Life, to be held in Myrtle Beach, SC. Watch this newsletter for more information!**



## ASERVIC Executive Committee

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## What does your membership in ASERVIC do for you?

### Current Initiatives

Following the Conference on Spirituality, held at Lake Junaluska, NC, the *Summit II on Spirituality* was lead by Dr. Craig Cashwell and consisted of 10-15 leaders in the field of counseling and spirituality. The goal was to revisit and revise the original nine spirituality competencies with a focus on practical application (see pages 3 & 4 for the new competencies). The Summit II committee not only reviewed the competencies but identified future projects that will enhance the practicing counselors access to methods and interventions when working with spiritual and religious clients.

### Continuing and Future Projects

Following the overwhelming success of the First Conference on Spirituality, the board began planning for the *second conference*, to be held in 2010 in Myrtle Beach, SC. The conference will focus on navigating the spiritual journey of life and the goal will be to provide practical information for counselors as well as meaningful experiential activities. Please look for details to follow in this newsletter and on the ASERVIC website.

ASERVIC is in the process of creating *Bi-Annual Spiritual Journey* opportunities for members who are interested in traveling together to sacred destinations. The first such journey is tentatively scheduled for 2009. Please watch this newsletter and the ASERVIC website for more details to follow.

### How can you get involved?

Volunteers are always welcome! There is need for assistance with conference planning, newsletter column submissions, committee work and service, and of course, ideas and contributions toward any of the continuing and future projects are invaluable. Please contact Dr. Jackson-Cherry for more information on becoming involved in ASERVIC!!!

## ASERVIC Membership: Renewal Information

You can easily renew your ASERVIC membership or become a member by contacting ACA at **1-800-347-6647 x222**

OR

<https://www.counseling.org/Counselors/MemberJoin.aspx>

**If you call, ask for the Membership Department and let them know that you would like to join or renew your ASERVIC membership.**

**ASERVIC is a division of the American Counseling Association**

Also, please visit the ASERVIC website, <http://www.aservic.org/>, to find valuable resources and information! We appreciate your commitment to ASERVIC and to the important work of researching, examining, and including spirituality into our profession. Should you have any other questions regarding your membership, please feel free to contact us,

Carman Gill and Shannon Ray, the ASERVIC Membership Committee Co-Chairs, at [cgill@argosy.edu](mailto:cgill@argosy.edu) or [shanray@nova.edu](mailto:shanray@nova.edu)

## ACA Convention: ASERVIC Graduate Student Roundtable

### Stephanie F. Dailey

On Saturday, March 21 at the 2009 American Counseling Association convention, ASERVIC graduate student members representing four counseling programs (community, school, pastoral and counselor education) gathered to address the question, "Are issues of spirituality and religion being adequately addressed in counseling programs?" The roundtable discussion was co-led by Stephanie Smerdzinski and Stephanie Dailey. A big thank you goes out to Stephanie Smerdzinski, graduate assistant, for assisting with this and many other ASERVIC ACA conference events.

All participants agreed, in the context of their own experience, that counseling programs must make a more concerted effort to incorporate issues of spirituality and religion into training and practice for counselors-to-be. Whereas students did agree that some faculty members do touch upon issues of spirituality and religion, most felt this was an infrequent occurrence. One student emphatically stated, "There should be a spirituality class, no matter what, in every program. Counselors may or may not be spiritual but programs cannot ignore this concept because it might help our clients". Roundtable participants recognized that some programs offer at least one course in religion or spirituality, but many expressed that issues of spirituality and religion should not be isolated in one single class. Students wholeheartedly agreed that they would learn more if, at the very least, spirituality and religion was infused into all coursework. One student reported, "One class doesn't cut it because it doesn't make sense with the rest of our training".

Other students reported that they have clients who address spiritual issues and/or experiences within counseling but that they feel incompetent to "address this 'stuff' because we are not taught how to address it". With this point in mind, students agreed that the key challenge for addressing issues of spirituality and/or religion is not whether to include it but *how* to incorporate it.

*"We need to identify what is stopping spirituality and religion from being incorporated. Once we develop visibility on these issues than we, as students, can move in and change how programs do, or do not, address spirituality."*

Additional themes of the discussion centered around why spirituality was not adequately being addressed and what students could do to actively support inclusion in their programs. In regards to why, students discussed stigma, fear on behalf of school programs of affiliating with a particular viewpoint, lack of communication with schools and students on coursework and relevant research available, and/or disinterest of faculty in advocating for infusion across coursework or including a course in spiritual and/or religious integration. In regards to student advocacy, participants suggested petitioning ACA/ASERVIC to include spirituality and/or religion in our counseling programs. In addition, students felt that establishing a graduate student committee to investigate how multiculturalism became not only infused, but highlighted, in most counselor education programs would also support the cause. Overall, students were excited about the possibility of advocacy and appreciated having a forum for voicing their concerns. On behalf of student membership and participants at the ASERVIC Graduate Student roundtable, a thank you goes out to ASERVIC Executive Leadership for supporting this roundtable and giving a voice to the student member.

### Newsletter Deadlines

*We are always interested in articles or information dealing with Ethics, Spirituality, or Religion in Counseling. Please submit any items you may have to the Interaction Editor by e-mail at [cgill@argosy.edu](mailto:cgill@argosy.edu) by the following deadlines:*

August 15, 2009  
Fall 2009 Issue

November 1st, 2009  
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February 15, 2010  
Spring 2010 Issue

May 15, 2010  
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