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SUMMER 2024 NEWSLETTER

TAMFT'S NEXT CHAPTER

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TAMFT PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

CARLOS PEREZ, PHD, LPC, LMFT

To all TAMFT members:

The Systemic Landscape: After celebrating our 50th conference, I've been thinking about the general direction of TAMFT, from where we have been to where we are going.

Our organization has done some great things in the past several decades. From the time I've been an active member, I've seen the controversy over the DSM, the Sunset lawsuit, becoming an independent organization, BHEC, and so much legislative involvement from our members. From my time as a student to now, I've seen CBT boom, postmodernism had a strong moment, and now we're living in a time of EMDR and trauma therapies. From my point of view, we truly believe in our profession and hold true to our responsibilities as mental health professionals, which is seen in our evolution and successes.

I've also been asking myself about our next chapter. What will the next 50 years look like? The next 25? The next 10? As systemic thinkers, this is an exciting time for us to conceptualize the next phase in our growth as a profession. As marriage and family therapists, we're blessed (or cursed) with the skill of thinking systemically. I don't know about you, but sometimes that's hard for me to turn off. I see the world in terms of interactions, relationships, reciprocity, homeostasis, and feedback loops (insert any other systemic term you like).

If I'm thinking about the next phase of our organization and profession, the possibilities are endless. Systemic advocacy, mental health advocacy, legislative efforts, I think more work can be done with systemic trauma, AI in therapy (I know that's controversial, but if we're thinking of our field systemically, this is a real presence), license portability, I think it'd be neat to see emerging therapy theories that focus on interdisciplinary collaborations, more specializations within our license, innovative training programs, I think there's more work to be done in neuroscience and therapy...

I could go on, but you get the point. Systemically, our possibilities for our next chapter are limitless. I want us all to be excited about where we go next and about how our organization will be shaped by all of us who are dedicated to helping others.

Let me ask you this: what excites you about our future? What is it about our work that gets you out of bed in the morning? What do you love about marriage and family therapy?

Our next chapter is yet to be written. How will you help us write it?

Cheers,

Carlos Perez, PhD, LPC, LMFT
President, 2024 TAMFT Board of Directors



LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

ASHLEY MONTEZ, LMFT-ASSOCIATE, TAMFT ASSOCIATE REPRESENTATIVE

Greetings TAMFT Family!

I hope this message finds you well and enjoying the summer season. We are so grateful to have each of you as partners in our community! After celebrating 50 years of TAMFT existence, we share in your excitement about what's to come as we navigate the ever-evolving systemic landscape of our field. It's heartening to see all the support and dedication to promoting growth and momentum in what makes our specialty as a community unique.

In this edition of our quarterly newsletter, we have several exciting updates and opportunities to share with you. These include committee and legislative updates, upcoming events such as Day at the Dome, new TAMFT merchandise in the Bonfire store, opportunities to earn CEs, and ways to get involved. We are currently seeking motivated volunteers to support various initiatives, committees, and events. Your contribution can make a significant difference as our association propels toward a new chapter themed "The Systemic Landscape."

The future of "The Systemic Landscape" holds exciting and unlimited possibilities! We are eager to embark on this journey with you and to witness the positive impact our collective efforts will have on families across Texas and beyond!

As always, we are here to support you in your practice, professional and educational endeavors. We recognize the diverse needs of our members, from students just beginning to the most experienced professionals. Our goal is to provide resources, support, and opportunities that cater to all stages of your career. Whether you are looking for mentorship, continuing education or ways to give back, we are here for you.

Thank you for your continued commitment to excellence in Marriage and Family Therapy across the Lone Star State!

Happy Reading!

Warm regards,

Ashley Montez, M.S., LMFT Associate

Supervised by James Kelly Barnett, Ph.D., LMFT-S, LPC-S





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JOIN TAMFT TODAY!

By joining TAMFT, you show your commitment to advancing marriage and family therapy in Texas

Other member benefits include:

- Involvement in legislation that directly impacts your career
- Access to Texas-based attorney with free consultations
- 12 free CEUs each year, plus bonus webinars (\$360 VALUE)
- Discounts on conferences, online courses, tuition/services and more
- Networking with like-minded individuals



TAMFT.org/Join-TAMFT

NEW MEMBER BENEFIT!



Palmer CPA is a Modern Outsourced Cloud Accounting & Tax Firm. Our goal is to use our expertise to provide our clients with real-time world-class solutions needed to make smarter, more effective business decisions.

We specialize in providing industry-specific accounting and tax services tailored to support the financial well-being of mental health care professionals such as therapists, psychologists, psychiatrists, and recovery centers.

Now offering **FREE consultations to TAMFT members as well as a **FREE** Accounting Diagnostic Review of your current accounting system/software!**

LEARN MORE



THE ROLE OF AUTHENTICITY IN FAMILY SYSTEMS

Marion Marold Vickerman, MS, LMFT-S

Authenticity, the quality of being genuine and true to oneself, plays a crucial role in the dynamics and health of family systems. Within a family's intimate and interconnected structure, authenticity fosters trust, deeper connections, and a sense of belonging. When family members embrace and practice authenticity, they create an environment where each person feels valued and understood, which is essential for emotional and psychological well-being. As we look ahead to the next chapter for TAMFT, these are some ways to practice authenticity in family systems.



Building Trust and Honest Communication:

At the heart of any strong family system is trust. Authenticity lays the foundation for trust by encouraging honest and open communication. When family members are genuine about their feelings, thoughts, and experiences, they create a culture of transparency. This openness allows for more meaningful interactions and reduces misunderstandings. For example, when parents express their true feelings and vulnerabilities, it sets a precedent for children to do the same, promoting a household where honesty is the norm and everyone feels safe to express themselves.

Enhancing Emotional Connections:

Authentic interactions go beyond surface-level exchanges and tap into the deeper emotional currents that bind family members together. When individuals are true to themselves, they engage more fully and empathetically with others. This depth of connection is particularly important in families, where relationships are often the most intimate and enduring. By being authentic, family members can better support each other through challenges and celebrate successes together, fostering a strong, unified family bond.

Encouraging Individual Growth:

In an authentic family system, each member is encouraged to develop and express their unique identity. This respect for individuality helps family members grow into their true selves without fear of judgment or rejection. When parents support their children's genuine interests and passions rather than imposing their own expectations, they empower them to pursue their true paths. This acceptance and encouragement of authenticity within the family nurture self-confidence and resilience, equipping individuals to navigate the world with a strong sense of self.

Resolving Conflicts Effectively:

Conflicts are inevitable in any family system, but authenticity can transform how these conflicts are addressed and resolved. When family members approach disagreements with honesty and a willingness to understand each other's perspectives, they can find solutions that respect everyone's needs and feelings. Authenticity in conflict resolution promotes a culture of respect and cooperation, reducing long-term resentment and fostering healthier relationships.

Creating a Sense of Belonging:

Ultimately, authenticity in family systems contributes to a profound sense of belonging. When individuals feel they can be themselves without pretension or fear, they experience a deep connection to their family. This sense of belonging is crucial for emotional stability and mental health. It assures each family member that they are an integral part of a supportive and loving community, which is essential for overall well-being.

Conclusion:

In summary, authenticity is a cornerstone of healthy family systems. By fostering trust, deepening emotional connections, encouraging individual growth, resolving conflicts effectively, and creating a sense of belonging, authenticity enriches the family dynamic. Families that prioritize authenticity not only support the development of each member's true self but also build a resilient and cohesive unit capable of withstanding life's challenges together. Embracing authenticity within the family sets the stage for a lifetime of meaningful relationships and personal fulfillment. In a world that often values appearances over substance, authenticity remains a timeless and invaluable virtue in nurturing the bonds that matter most. Here's to looking ahead to the future of TAMFT.

TAMFT NEEDS YOUR VOICE AT THE TEXAS CAPITOL!



JOIN US IN AUSTIN AND BE THE CHANGE OUR COMMUNITY NEEDS!

We're seeking dedicated volunteers to testify on bills supporting our clients and profession. Your testimony can make a real difference in shaping policy in Texas.

Volunteer Today!

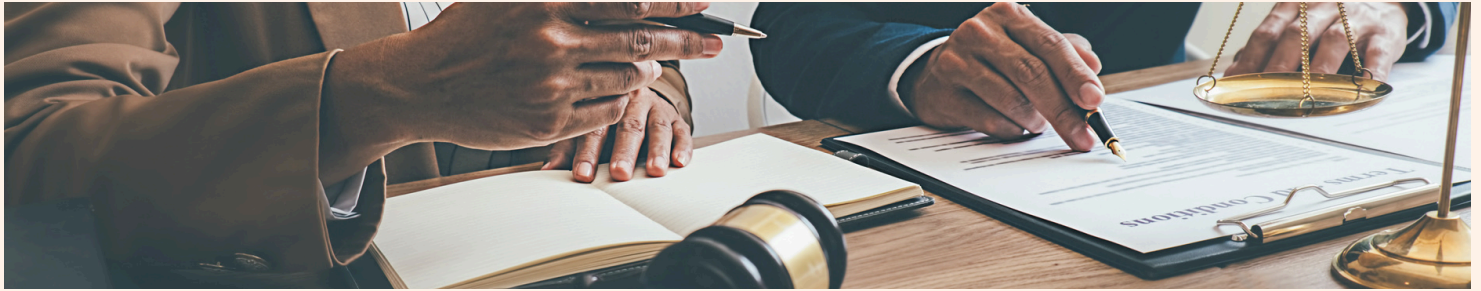


THE NEXT LEGISLATIVE SESSION WILL BE
JANUARY 14, 2025 - JUNE 2, 2025

COMMITTEE UPDATES

LEGISLATIVE & PAC UPDATE

Members: Marion Vickerman, Board Liaison; Tim White, PAC Chairman; Hannah McKinnies; Tara Roper; Sommer Greer; Gabrielle Dean; Kristin Ross; Mercedes Burk; Andrea Beth Jackson (Rep for BHEC standardization only), Wen-Mei Chou, Board Liaison to BHEC; Karen Diliberti, Kristi Phillips; Leila Anderson; Justin Rivas



In my last update on our legislative agenda, I mentioned how acrimonious the previous session was. Unfortunately for our state, this continues to be the case. So, what does this mean for the TAMFT, specifically for us and our licenses?

- This means that the legislative committee and FamilyPAC are taking a wait-and-see approach regarding who we can trust to be supportive in the next session. FamilyPAC will not throw its precious few resources at candidates who may waffle next spring.
- Our legislative efforts have faced enough opposition to reciprocity that we have been unable to get bills through the Senate. That opposition will continue in the next session, but we plan to work on more support.

With this in mind, I'd like to look forward to the next session. If you were at the conference, then you probably recall the majority of the board trying to recruit members to testify at the capitol on behalf of bills that are in our favor. This is still a huge need! Please don't let the idea of testifying overwhelm you. You won't be going in blind! I will ensure that the volunteers are adequately prepped with talking points. Tris Casteñda, our lobbyist, will also be available to help prepare volunteers to testify. It is so essential for us to advocate for our profession.

No one else will.

Knowing precisely when bills would be heard in the House and Senate would be great, but we don't. We often don't have more than a day or two notice; sometimes, it's not more than a few hours. This is incredibly difficult as we typically have regimented schedules and calendars. To overcome this difficulty, we need 60+ members to volunteer to be on-call in Austin on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays from late February through May. This will allow us to respond when needed. During the last legislative session, we did not have this in place and could not respond to the needs in real time. I know this is a big ask. But it is what we need to do to advocate for our profession. Carlos and I have both committed to traveling from Lubbock to Austin for at least one on-call period each. I aim to recruit more heavily around Austin, as those members wouldn't have to travel as far, but every LMFT in the state has my invitation to participate.

Please see the link **[HERE](#)** for sign-up information. If you have any questions, please email me directly at timwhite@dwatherapy.com.

GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE UPDATE

Members: Layla Scott, Chair; Carlos Perez; Jason Martin; Angela Hayes; Joanna Mendez-Pounds, Elections Committee Chair

Following every TAMFT election cycle, there is an adjustment period as new Board Members are onboarded and existing members transition to new roles within the Board of Directors and TAMFT committees. The excitement of the annual conference always yields new volunteers for committees, so this quarter has focused on assigning and reconfiguring committees for greater efficiency in accomplishing their respective initiatives. TAMFT's aim is to create more systemic interactions within and between the committees, and one way we are beginning to do this is to connect the chairs and co-chairs of each committee for increased communication and awareness of tasks that other committees are focused on. Another notable change that you will see is the Membership and Communications committees will be merged to collaborate and find new, more consistent ways of engaging and highlighting TAMFT members on social media and in our newsletters. If you are interested in serving, please go to the following link to complete the committee service form today: <https://www.tamft.org/call-for-volunteers!>

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE UPDATE

Members: Anna Thomison, Chair; Layla Scott, Board Liaison; Mi'cah Ducros; Hannah McKinnies; Raymond Gao; Rae Morris; Misty Schmidt; Denitra Crowder; Zachary Trevino; Ashley Montez



Hello TAMFT Members! We hope the summer has been treating everyone well. The Membership Committee has been hard at work developing new programming and adapting our current initiatives to better meet the needs of our membership body. We completed a virtual summer retreat in July and progressed on both annual projects and new, upcoming programming to target LMFT-Supervisors and LMFT-Associates. We have been creating a prospective membership survey to identify barriers to joining while simultaneously educating about membership benefits and recruiting across all membership categories. We have begun advanced preparations for our student membership drive running from September 9- November 11. Lastly, we have started restructuring the committee, absorbing the former independent Communications Committee as a subcommittee of Membership. We look forward to more communication and interaction with the members, while increasing our collaboration with other committees of TAMFT. Thank you for all the work you all do on a daily basis, and the membership committee is thankful. We look forward to all the great things happening in TAMFT!

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CONFERENCE COMMITTEE UPDATE

Members: *Kelsey Austin, Chair & Board Liaison; Brandon Gardenhire; Adam Jones; Neli Morris; Karen Diliberti; Adam Jones*

The Conference Committee has welcomed its new members and started collaborating on plans for next year's conference. This year's committee includes Kelsey Austin-Wright, Brandon Gardenhire, Adam Jones, Neli Morris, and Karen Diliberti. This well-rounded team is eager to design and organize next year's opportunity to connect systemic therapists from across the state and beyond. The committee has reviewed feedback from the 2024 conference and has some exciting and creative ideas to provide another great experience next year. 2025 is a particularly exciting year with Day at the Dome - the opportunity to visit your Texas senators and representatives at the Texas Capitol with other colleagues and conferencegoers. This very important activity creates a connection with lawmakers to inform them of our support or opposition to bills coming up in the year's legislative session. We can't wait to see our collective plans come to fruition at next year's conference, and we hope to see you all there!

ETHICS AND SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE

Members: *Paula Boros, co-Chair; Angela Hayes, co-Chair; Layla Scott, Board Liaison; Michael Flynn; Aaron Maleare; Jaida Pryor; Felicia Holloway; Caleb Carroll; Ari Peñalosa Mammen; JoAngeli Kasper*

The Ethics and Social Justice Committee (ESJ) has been hard at work the past few months figuring out how to best support TAMFT and our members. We've recently launched an Ethics and Social Justice channel on the TAMFT Member Forum, which can be accessed from your membership page. On the ESJ forum channel, we plan to post quarterly questions and case studies to encourage and support your practice as an ethical and social justice-conscious clinician. You can also post your own questions and receive a response from the committee along with your fellow members. Our first case study has already been posted, so go check it out! We will be holding an ESJ essay competition later this year with the top prize a free conference registration so keep an eye out for that announcement. We are also planning a webinar on the topic of "DEIJ for Organizations" that will be available for all members and we are looking for a sponsor. This is a great advertising opportunity! We love hearing from members so feel free to send us an email at info@tamft.org with C/O ESJ Committee in the subject.

EDUCATION COMMITTEE UPDATE

Members: *Leila Anderson, Chair, Board Liaison; Jose Mata co-Chair; Robyn Flores, Secretary; Alycia DeGraff, Christopher McClung; Michael Argumaniz-Hardin, Federico Mendez; Paul Massingill; Denitra Crowder*

The Education Committee is committed to delivering valuable monthly education to our members for a total of 26 CEUs every two years. Regardless of the need for hours, attending training is a great way to continue education, learn from colleagues, and feel connected to the field.

The Education Committee is working hard to plan webinars through 2024 and into 2025. August's webinar is titled "Harnessing AI for Ethical Marriage and Family Therapy: Ensuring Inclusivity and Trauma-Informed Approaches within Marginalized Communities" by Marshal Maiwald, M.MFT, LMFT-Associate & Savannah Honarbakh, LMFT-Associate. You'll learn practical insights on using AI to support marginalized communities and ensure responsible and inclusive therapeutic practices, enhancing your practice while upholding ethical standards.

Upcoming topics include CPA information in private practice. Look for more details about each webinar in the coming months!

TAMFT IS SEEKING NEW MEMBERS TO JOIN THE MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE AND ITS VARIOUS SUBCOMMITTEES.

YOU WOULD BE A GREAT FIT FOR THIS COMMITTEE IF YOU ARE:

- Passionate about your professional identity as a Marriage and Family Therapist and interested in connecting to other MFTs by building a state-wide, inclusive professional community.
- Desirous of expanding TAMFT's membership base within each membership category.
- Proficient with writing and/or developing social media content to engage our membership body in new and creative ways.

SUBCOMMITTEE	PROJECT DESCRIPTION	APPROXIMATE TIMEFRAME
Recruitment & Retention (3 Members)	Survey development to identify member interests, needs, and barriers to membership and retention.	Ongoing. Surveys are developed annually and issued in Nov-Dec timeframe.
Awards (3 Members)	In partnership with Conference Committee to nominate and select TAMFT members to be recognized as annual award recipients.	Call for Nominations: Nov-Dev Review of nominations: January Ordering of Awards: February
Student Membership Drive (3 Members)	Annual Fall competition amongst Texas universities to recruit graduate students to join TAMFT as student members.	Planning: Summer Communication with universities: August Launch: September-October
Mentorship Program (3 Members)	Launch a program linking experienced LMFTs and LMFT-Supervisors to LMFT-Associates, new(er) fully licensed individuals, and less experienced supervisors for professional growth.	Not yet established. Proposed implementation during Annual Conference.
Communications (3 Members)	Newly adopted subcommittee that develops quarterly themed newsletters and engages the members through marketing tactics.	Quarterly Newsletters: Winter – January Spring – April Summer – July Fall – October Social Media – Ongoing

[LEARN MORE](#)



STUDENT CORNER

TSAMFT BOARD UPDATE

Members: Lizee Love, President; JoAngeli Kasper, President-Elect; Emily Saldivar, Secretary; Justin Rivas, Treasurer; Rae Morris, Social Media Manager; Cheryl Nichols, Outreach Manager; Caleb Carroll, Ethics and Social Justice Chair

TSAMFT hopes you're staying cool this summer! It would be really cool for you to join us for our bi-monthly Peer-to-Peer chats, where we connect over topics relevant to student and associate MFTs. Our next meeting is August 10th, where we'll discuss preventing burnout as we prepare for the fall semester. Want your voice heard as an early career MFT? Come join us or reach out to Lizee Love at thatlizeechick@gmail.com!

Here is what we have coming up for the year.

Saturday, 8/10/24 at 10am: August Peer-to-Peer Support Group

Saturday, 9/21/24 at 10am: TSAMFT Meeting

Saturday, 10/5/24 at 10am: October Peer-to-Peer Support Group

Saturday, 11/16/24 at 10am: TSAMFT Meeting

Saturday, 12/7/24 at 10am: December Peer-to-Peer Support Group, AMFTRB Test Prep Edition!

Mark your calendars to join us virtually!

Lizee



Marriage and Family Therapy National Exam Prep

TAMFT has put together a suite of resources to help students prepare for the national licensure exam, including recordings of our Exam Prep Workshop, a Practice Exam & Answer Explanations, and an MFT Terms Glossary.



SIGN UP TODAY

Grow Your Impact in Others' Lives



It's great to find a job that can help others, and it's even better to advance enough to gain more autonomy and a better salary. Marriage and family therapists answer the call to help families, individuals, and couples, and are needed in today's climate more than ever.

MAMFT | PhD-MFT | DMFT

As a student, you can get industry-relevant experience with practicum, internships, and clinical supervision hours in your local community.

National University is ideal for adult learners, too. Our MFT programs offer:

- Online coursework
- Weekly starts and 1:1 learning
- Scholarship opportunities

NU offers the opportunity to turn students into experienced, culturally sensitive therapists who make a difference in their communities.

Ready to start?

TAMFT members receive a 15% Tuition Reduction on most bachelor's, master's, and doctoral programs.*



Learn More

855-355-6288
nu.edu/tamft2024

**Some exclusions apply. Visit [NU.edu](https://nu.edu) for information on tuition reduction.*



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& SOCIAL SCIENCES**

The Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education (COAMFTE) is the accrediting body for the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT). National University's Master of Arts in Marriage and Family Therapy and Doctor of Philosophy in Marriage and Family Therapy Programs are accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education of the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy. National University's Master of Arts in Marriage and Family Therapy, Doctor of Philosophy in Marriage and Family Therapy, and Doctorate of Marriage and Family Therapy Programs are also accredited by the International Accreditation Commission for Systemic Therapy Education (IACSTE).

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TAMFT OFFERS A
WIDE VARIETY OF
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FOR CEUs.

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HERE.](#)



UPCOMING LIVE WEBINAR:

Harnessing AI for Ethical Marriage and Family Therapy: Ensuring Inclusivity and Trauma-Informed Approaches within Marginalized Communities

1.5 Ethics CEUs



August 23, 2024 | 12-1:30pm CT | Live Via



Marshal Maiwald & Savannah Honarbakht
M.MFT, LMFT Associate LMFT-Associate