

THE QUEST

Presidential Address

To All MCA Members,

I wanted to make sure I introduce myself as your President for the 2019-2020 organizational calendar year. I started my term on July 1st of this year, and it has been an unbelievable journey thus far, especially when you take into consideration what we all just went through with HB 4325. For those of you that I have had the wonderful opportunity to meet I want to thank you for the excellent welcome you all have given me while transitioning to this position. As we move forward together as an organization, I look forward to building a MCA that is reflective of the desires of the talented professionals that encompass it.

I have been a licensed professional counselor since the fall of 2014 and have been fully licensed since the fall of 2016. I currently work as a full-time counselor at Perspectives Counseling Centers in Troy, MI; which is a group practice in the Metro Detroit area with 6 locations. I have worked there for the past 3 years treating adults, teens, and children. I also worked in the juvenile justice arena as well, where I treated cognitively impaired teen boys in a program designed to rehabilitate them from behavioral concerns in their community of origin. I have been involved with MCA since 2015, while serving as Treasurer from 2016-2018, and President-Elect from 2018-2019. I am confident in the fact that as I have gone through these different chapters in my professional life, that I am ready to take on the challenges of my role.

My top priority for MCA is to build an organization that reflects the needs and desires of all of you. I look forward to engaging in conversations with professional counselors in the state regarding what would make MCA a group that they can be proud of. I look forward to showcasing strong legislative efforts in the state and nationally, as well as professional development events that cover a variety of hot topics in the field. I also look forward to continuing to grow our membership exponentially, while creating a strong network of clinicians that can increase their profile amongst their colleagues.

On an every-day basis, I want to make sure I do something that benefits MCA, whether it is by planning a conference, getting paperwork in order, or planning our next newsletter. I want to be able to do as much as I can to build the organization with all the time that I have, so it is important for you to know that I am doing my best to make sure that your investment in us is worth it for you. If you have energy and passion for organization building, do not hesitate to join my team and their efforts. We have areas of opportunity throughout our different committees and initiatives, including though legislative advocacy and professional development. Please encourage others

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to join our organization, and do not hesitate to contact use to communicate your ideas for MCA to continue it's growth. Thank you for your faith in us!

With Regards,

Michael Joy

Michael Joy MA LPC

President-Michigan Counseling Association

PA 96 of 2019 Key Facts

NOTE: PA 96 of 2019 does not represent the entire counseling licensure law. The current law is Part 181 Counseling (Sec. 333.18101 - 333.18117) of the Public Health Code. PA 96 represents parts of that law that has been changed.

- PA 96 of 2019 goes into effect on 1/27/2020.
- There is no need to for prospective or current counselors to earn more credit due to the new law.
- All CACREP accredited counseling graduate programs meet the requirements specified by PAS 96 of 2019.
- Graduates of non-CACREP accredited counseling programs are eligible for licensure, IF the program includes all CACREP coursework requirements, including practicum and internship requirements, as well as coursework and training in the diagnosis and treatment of mental and emotional disorders.
- PA 96 does specify a required amount of credit hours from a CACREP accredited program, or a program that has CACREP equivalent coursework. The only requirements is that a counseling program must be CACREP accredited, or that it is a program that is equivalent to one that is.
- Anyone applying for a license as of 1/27/2019, the date that PA 96 goes into effect, will be required to meet the requirements of the new law.
- If you submitted your LLPC application to LARA under the current law, then those requirements would apply until the new law is in effect.
- PA 96 does not create new requirements for license renewal.
- It is still unknown whether the Board of Counseling will create new requirements for being an LLPC supervisor, based on the new law.
- The law clarifies the fact that licensed counselors can administer any psychological assessments that they are trained to administer.
- The Board of Counseling will investigate their rules for counselors in conjunction with PA 96. Some necessary rule changes can be made, while others will remain the same.
- It is unclear whether those that obtained their LLPC pre-PA 96 will have to cooperate with any new standards that may come into effect with the law changes, including different exam requirements.

The Importance of Professional Advocacy

By: Tracey Galgoci, MA, LPC, NCC

HB 4325 has been signed into law! Look at what LPCs in Michigan were able to accomplish when we worked together! It was truly an amazing process to watch unfold, and historic in the history of the Michigan counseling profession.

I've been practicing in Michigan since 2003. When I graduated I immediately joined MCA and ACA. As a student at CMU, the faculty modeled professional engagement and promoted membership in MCA as a profession and ethical responsibility. It never occurred to me NOT to belong. At that time, MCA had a robust membership. We had annual conferences that combined networking, education, professional development and lots of fun. MCA hosted Legislative Day every year in Lansing. LPCs from around the state would gather for a briefing on current legislative issues important to counselors and head off to meet with their respective legislators. Professional development was offered through MCA several times per year. MCA employed a lobbyist through Capitol Services, Inc., and kept up to date on all relevant issues affecting LPCs in Michigan. I was an active part of the very hard-working group of people that began the process of forging a relationship with BCBS. MCA's work would later pay-off by allowing LPCs to be independent providers.

Unfortunately, this is not what MCA looks like today. Over the course of my career I have watched membership dwindle and interest in professional advocacy come to an all-time low. I myself, am guilty of letting my membership lag at times, paying little attention to what MCA is doing, and not participating in trainings and events when offered. It's very easy to get caught up in our day to day existence of taking care of clients and tell ourselves we don't have any need for a professional organization. We fall into the trap of thinking professional advocacy is for "other people". We lose sight of the big picture and instead just focus on our own little world. In reality, our very livelihoods depend on us advocating for ourselves. HB4325 is the extreme example, but issues like Medicare reimbursement, national licensure, funding for school counselors, including counselors in funding for the opioid epidemic, and many other issues are reasons we need to step up our game. People still don't know who we are and what differentiates us from other mental health professionals. This lack of identity will ultimately be our demise if we don't believe professional advocacy is worth our time and resources.

Putting counselors on the same level of name recognition as social workers and psychologists needs to be a priority for all of us. Often times, counselors do not get a seat at the table. We are overlooked in conversations about mental health treatment. The only way to change that is for each of us to recognize the importance of advocating for ourselves and our profession. Joining our professional organizations AND becoming active members is the first step. 10,000 LPC/LLPCs bring a tremendous wealth of knowledge, skills and talents to our field. Imagine what MCA could accomplish if we all joined together! I encourage you to look at the websites of other state counseling organizations and see what they are working on and how engaged their members are in promoting the counseling profession

Do you have any questions, comments, or concerns?

Please email us at

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and mental health initiatives. Ohio Counseling Association (OCA) is a great example of what can be accomplished when counselors are active and working together.

If we don't care enough about our profession to promote and advocate for it, we cannot be surprised when we are overlooked, dismissed or presumed irrelevant and unnecessary. I hope HB 4325 was a wake-up call for all of us. Now that it's behind us, please do not shrink back into your professional bubble and assume that there will be no future need for your involvement. Recognize that professional advocacy is a necessary obligation to the future of counselors in Michigan. Join MCA and become involved in creating an active, vibrant organization that represents the interests of all counselors. Maybe you could offer your time and talents to providing professional development opportunities, maybe you have the skills needed to plan and promote an annual conference, maybe you have a passion for legislative advocacy or social justice. Whatever your skillset, MCA needs YOU to invest in our professional future. Join MCA today and be a part of a bright future for Michigan LPCs.



Pictured L to R: Nakpangi Thomas, Ph.D., LPC, TITC-CT, MCA President 2018-2019; Sebi Fishta, LPC, NCC, Ph.D. (candidate); Melanie Popiolek, MA, LPC, NCC, Ph.D. (candidate), MCA President 2017-2018; Nicole Griffith, MA, LPC, NCC, MCA Secretary 2017-2018; Michael Joy, MA, LPC, MCA President 2019-2020 & MCA Treasurer 2017-2018; Veronica H Visger, MA, LPC, NCC, MCA Public Policy & Legislation Committee Chair 2019-2020 & MCA Professional Development Committee Chair 2017-2018.

Gratitude

By: Veronica H. Visger, MA, LPC, NCC

As your new Public Policy & Legislation Committee Chair I want to thank you. I am humbled and in awe of what we collectively did to get HB 4325 through the Michigan House of Representatives & Senate in the last few weeks. I thank all of you for your advocacy efforts. Our ACA Code of Ethics starts with "A.1.a. The primary responsibility of counselors is to respect the dignity and promote the welfare of clients." Together, we lived A.1.a. to its fullest extent to respect the dignity of and promote the welfare of clients in the great State of Michigan. I tip my hat to you.

I think it is important that we are mindful of history as oftentimes it repeats itself if we choose to not do something about it. We see this with our clients and personally as well both personally and professionally. HB 5776 (2018) paved the way for HB 4325 (2019). HB 5776 was botched up in the Senate last December and fortunately then not enrolled by the House with many pages of amendments. We rallied up and ensured that HB 4325 made it to the Governor's desk for signature without any major

Looking for a way to help give back to your community? Or a way to be mentored in a position of leadership? Maybe just a way to challenge yourself to achieve in something new?

Well then email us about joining one of our committees or leadership positions!

The time commitment varies based on the position desired.

Also, it looks really good on your resume!

We look forward to you joining our team of awesome professionals!

amendments. We should all take a few breaths and celebrate that. We should also be mindful that we need to be more aware of legislative happenings in our profession. Our ability to do what we do was threatened.

Section I of the ACA Code of Ethics states "Professional counselors behave in an ethical and legal manner. They are aware that client welfare and trust in the profession depend on a high level of professional conduct. They hold other counselors to the same standards and are willing to take appropriate action to ensure that standards are upheld. Counselors strive to resolve ethical dilemmas with direct and open communication among all parties involved and seek consultation with colleagues and supervisors when necessary." I challenge you to continue to carry this torch in this time of peace.

We thank MMHCA and MCA leaders past and present as well as State Rep Aaron Miller and State Rep Isaac Robinson for helping to protect our profession. We thank all of you for what you did as well. Together, we can celebrate our victory and prepare for future endeavors.

As your current MCA Public Policy & Legislation Committee Chair I can assure you that our committee is prepared to work alongside of all of you to continue to protect and celebrate the work that we do. We will be present where it matters most, locally and nationally, to protect our right to do what we do along with the right of the public to have quality access to mental healthcare.

Executive Leadership of the Michigan Counseling Association

President/Treasurer-Michael Joy

Secretary-Lashonda Hampton

Past President-Nakpangi Thomas

Technology Chair-Jamie McNally

Public Policy & Legislation Chair-Veronica Visger

Publication Chair-Shelby Fey