



October 15, 2020

Dear MCA Community Member,

In the words of Shakespeare's Richard III, "Now is the winter of our discontent made glorious summer..." for there is much for us to celebrate even in this time of COVID-19. I hope this letter greets you in a moment of peace and transition with hope for the future months. To help boost your optimism, please find the following review of our work and plans for the future.

Our October 9th and 10th conference

Our very first virtual conference was a huge success due to the high quality of our presenters and the robust talent of our volunteers. Everyone pitched in to take roles of leadership and my job as president was made easy through this enthusiastic team of caring professionals. We had many graduate students at the helm as well as practitioners, educators, and rising leaders in the field which is the perfect mix for networking, sharing, and building of new relationships.

The financial rewards of the conference were better than projected and MCA is now in a position to move forward next year with scholarships and changes that have been desired for some time. We appreciate the high volume of MCA members who registered for this conference and are still offering 21 NBCC CEs from our pre-recorded webinars for a very reasonable \$150 fee through January 10, 2021.

Please consider volunteering for the conference committee that will operate under the leadership of President-elect Sara Pula (pelect@mdcounseling.org). Through early planning, we were able to run a successful "test drive" of virtual learning this year. Imagine what we might accomplish in the future with an early start for 2021!

New Leadership Opportunities

We have a robust leadership team now in our MCA Executive Committee (EC) and Executive Board (EB) with EC Treasurer-elect and EC Secretary-elect positions that have been filled. This is a good practice that helps to prepare the next leader with knowledge and experience needed for a smooth (and hopefully stress-free) transition.

This means that we will need to encourage new folks to consider running for these two positions as well as President-elect, Member-at-large, and Executive Director roles for 2021-2022. In addition to these leadership positions, we will be looking for people who have interest in division or committee leadership that is of critical nature to the continued voice of MCA on behalf of the Maryland, DC, and Virginia region.

If you have the desire to serve in this capacity with a group of committed counselor professionals please email me at president@mdcounseling.org or past president, Ajita Robinson at ppresident@mdcounseling.org to "throw your hat in the ring"!

Vote!

As a 501(c)(3) organization, MCA does not get involved in political campaigning or support one nominee over another, yet we are deeply interested in supporting initiatives that will benefit the mental health of our larger community. We are passionate about advocacy that will empower the voiceless and the oppressed in our world and want to be a part of positive change to the poor, the disenfranchised, and the mentally ill.

To that effect, we want to encourage everyone in our nation to cast a vote for local, state and national leaders who represent change that is important to you. The American Counseling Association (ACA) provides us with information related to legislation that impacts our profession and regularly encourages us to get involved with our community at a granular level.

Tuesday, November 3rd, is Election Day in Maryland and we hope you will be able to safely engage in this important democratic process. Please know that MCA cares about you and your family at this difficult time and welcomes ideas for advocacy that comes with this investment in our political system.

Sincerely,

Carol ZA McGinnis PhD, SIP, BC-TMH, NCC, LCPC
2020-2021 MCA President
"In the time of COVID-19"