



# VASGW

The Virginia Association  
for Specialists in Group Work

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[www.vasgw.org](http://www.vasgw.org)  
[www.facebook.com/vasgw](https://www.facebook.com/vasgw)



**SUMMER 2020**

Volume 1

## President's Message

*Dear VASGW members:*

*I hope that you are all well and safe during these unprecedented times. So much has happened over the last few months it is hard to put into words. So much that I once thought would continue indefinitely, has been stopped in its tracks.*

*We were unable to hold our 2020 conference due to the COVID-19 crisis. We did create some resources that you should have received in an email blast from VCA. We are now busy planning the 2021 conference which will be on Friday, April 16 at the NOVA Annandale campus if possible and virtually if we cannot be face-to-face.*

*The VASGW board has also been working hard to redo our website and make it more interesting to view and to be able to house helpful resources. This is a work in progress, and we would welcome your ideas and suggestions.*

*I hope that you have a good summer. Remember to take time to relax and practice self-care. I find summer a good time to re-energize and get ready for the fall. If you have ideas or suggestions for the newsletter, website, or conference please do not hesitate to contact me.*

*Regards,  
Dr. Terri Mason, President*

## VASGW TURNS LEMONS INTO LEMONADE



### The Lemons Part.....

The VASGW Board was in the last moments of polishing the details on our annual Group-A-Rama Conference when COVID-19 stopped us in our tracks in the middle of March 2020. Our plan was to feature a well-known area expert on resiliency, Dr. Mary Alvord. We had a full program of break-out sessions, delicious box lunches, and refreshments ready to launch.

### Making Some Lemonade.....

Instead, we began to look at a possible virtual conference, hoping to aid in de-stressing our participants. We learned that practically all groups and associations had turned to Zoom for virtual meetings and that most felt “zoomed out.” So, we collected a page of digital resources and called it “Board Member Favorites.” This was distributed to all VCA members through email, as well as non-members who had registered for Group-A-Rama. The purpose was to keep our organization on folks’ minds and contribute a few ideas to aid with stress reduction.

### Exciting news - launching our New Website!!

Another positive outcome happened on July 17, 2020. Board Members Margarita Martinez, Terri Mason, Ellissia Price-Fagin, Mary Durgala, and Halina Banas-Jones constructed a new website. Kudos go to Margarita, as they commandeered the steps, organized the information, and submitted the final product for publishing. We are happy to report that our website, VASGW.org is live! **The Lemonade pitcher is full.**

The current Board is actively planning for a successful **Group-A-Rama** conference on **Friday, April 16, 2021** at Northern Virginia Community College, Annandale Campus, Annandale, Virginia. We are also preparing for the possibility of a Virtual conference.

**SAVE THE DATE!**

### *History Note*

As a branch of the Association of Specialists in Group Work (ASGW), VASGW has received the Outstanding Branch Award for the following years: **1995, 1999, 2004, 2006, 2008, 2010, 2012, 2014, 2016, and 2018.**

## GROUP-A-RAMA KEYNOTE



Although we were not able to hold our annual Group-A-Rama Conference during April 2020 due COVID-19, we wanted to introduce our keynote speaker, **Dr. Mary Alvord**, a psychologist and director of Alvord, Baker & Associates, LLC. She treats children, adolescents and adults with anxiety disorders, and children and teens with problems of emotional and behavioral regulation through individual and group therapy. Adjunct Associate Professor of Psychiatry, George Washington University School of Medicine and Health Sciences, Dr. Alvord supervises Psychiatry Fellows in Cognitive Behavior Therapy. Co-author of *Resilience Builder Program for Children and Adolescents* (book), *Relaxation and Self-Regulation for Children and Teens and Relaxation and Wellness* (for Adults) (audio CDs, MP3's and i-tunes), Dr. Alvord has contributed to the American Psychological Association's public education guides on resilience, stress and healthy families. Dr. Alvord was honored as the first recipient of the APA Presidential Innovative Practice Citation (2009). **She is our Keynote for 2021!!**

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## FEATURED MEMBER



**Margarita Maria Martinez, M.Ed.**, is the Academic Success Counselor/SDV Cluster Chair and instructor at Northern Virginia Community College, Annandale Campus, who earned a Masters from George Mason University. Currently, Mz. Martinez is President-Elect of AMCD, Secretary of VCA, VASGW Board member, and member of NVCA and VA-ASERVIC. Margarita is a fierce advocate who brings to our Board an understanding of concerns regarding Latinx and non-binary peoples, and the needs of food risk students at the collegiate level.

This summer, Margarita took time away from knitting, cooking new recipes, spouse, Roberto, and the family cats, Spooky and Midnight, to spearhead the development of the new VASGW website. We have been fortunate to have such an enthusiastic and knowledgeable member on our Board.

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## WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN DOING DURING QUARANTINE?

We asked our VASGW Board Members to share their experiences.

**Barbara, Treasurer:** I have been working part-time as a professional counselor, reading, visiting while social distancing, bird watching, swimming, playing the piano, watching movies, and grocery shopping at 6 AM during senior hour.

**Halina, Secretary:** I have been walking, Egoscue posture exercises, singing, playing accordion, playing Parcheesi with husband Michael, reading for two book clubs, creating new ways to make salmon and veggies; taking Qigong classes and Tai Chi; having Zoom meetings, library events; tried a new cocktail called the Gin Basil Smash; last Friday we created our new Group Works website! Not out in public yet.

Many folks put on their creative hats and did some silly things. I am one of those folks. I am a long-time accordionist. Enjoy this little spoof we called "On Lock Down," by my husband Michael Jones, lyrics, and spoons. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sLDIhgE2vuo>

Attachments area

Preview YouTube video "Grace at Home" Episode #5 - The Joneses!



 "Grace at Home" Episode #5 - The Joneses!

**Mary, Board Member:** When schools closed for the Coronavirus, we all went to online distance learning to teach our counseling lessons, conduct 504s, and meet with students and parents. During the summer, I have tried to keep a positive outlook and use this quarantine time to improve my counseling and online distance learning instruction skills. I completed the SEL (Social Emotional Learning) course with Fairfax County Public Schools Counseling Department to prepare me for the introduction of a new SEL curriculum in our schools this fall. Also, the enrollment in ISTE (International Society for Technology in Education) Summer Learning Academy with 3,500 other attendees from across the world online will prepare me to present exciting and educational online counseling lessons. Zoom has proven to be a wonderful tool to connect with my retired counselor and school friends, attend principal/staff, FEA, and Town Hall meetings as well as attend the VCA Leadership Academy, VASGW meetings and the building of the VASGW web site.

I miss the daily in-person contact with family and friends. However, phone calls, Zoom, and our cul-de-sac get togethers have helped fill the gap until we all can return in person.

**Ellen, Board Member:** I have been checking on friends and family. I call on a regular basis an elderly friend in an assisted living manor and encourage a family dealing with COVID-19. I text and call family members and we share stories and pictures about our daily lives. My sewing machine and I have been busy making masks and mailing them around the U.S. My yard has been a bird sanctuary where I watched two bird families raise young then fly away. I pray more, sit still, and observe my little piece of heaven.

**Margarita, Board Member:** During quarantine I have made a commitment to keep my social groups meeting electronically on a regular schedule. This gave us routine and helped us stay closer, process and be able to voice some of the concerns during the double pandemic in the US. I have attended lots of fun webinars, virtual knitting meets, book readings, etc. to keep me socially engaged. I also have been working on personal development projects that will nourish my soul and being during such a difficult time. While I am not happy that this all had to happen, it did force me to focus on myself and intentionally practice self-care to maintain my wellness.

**Ellissia, Newsletter Editor:** Zoom has become a new word and action in my life. I have participated on Zoom to learn how to Zoom, attended forums and workshops including "A Conversation with Angela Davis" and "Educating Women and Girls of Color"; attended VCAF, VASGW, and Church meetings and Town Halls; and, communicated with family and friends.



**Veering off into the Digital World.** Two board members suggested a small virtual conference in June, just to relieve stress. But the entire board could not commit to this, so another idea formed. Members contributed to a list of eleven links and digital resources, “Board Member Favorites”, which was distributed via email to our registrants and to VCA members.

**Newsletter Publication.** Fall and Spring newsletters were created by Editor Ellissia Price-Fagin.

**Officers for 2020-21.** The same three people agreed to continue with their offices: President Dr. Terri Mason, Secretary Halina Banas-Jones, and Treasurer Barbara Lavine. Staying on as Board Members are Mary Durgala, Ellissia Price-Fagin, Margarita Martinez, Ellen Bowditch, and Anita Bruck. We welcome volunteers. Contact Terri Mason at [tamasonvca@aol.com](mailto:tamasonvca@aol.com).

**The Happy Ending.** On July 17, 2020, five Board Members met during a three hour Zoom meeting and created a new website!

**Our Future.** Two Goals: 1) Present an actual or virtual Group-A-Rama on April 16, 2021.  
2) Boost our membership.

**Treasurer’s Report.**

Barbara Lavine, Treasurer

<b>VASGW BUDGET REPORT</b>		
<b>7/01/2019-7/24/2020</b>		
<b>ITEM</b>	<b>COST</b>	
<b>STARTING BALANCE:</b>		<b>\$11,927.35</b>
<b>INCOME:</b>		
• NOVA rental refund	\$3,869.00	
• Interest	.98	
• Membership	<u>127.50</u>	
<b>SUBTOTAL:</b>	<b>\$3,997.48</b>	<b>\$15,924.83</b>
<b>EXPENSES:</b>		
• VASGW website	\$320.51	
• New checks	154.03	
• VCA charge for credit card refunds	65.13	
• Conference Bags	186.62	
• Card stock/paper/labels	152.66	
• Homestead - VCA Conference	572.40	
• VCA Reception	148.47	
• VCA Leadership Conference	75.00	
• 2020 NOVA GAR rent	3,094.50	
• Liability insurance for GAR	95.00	
• 2021 NOVA GAR deposit	<u>823.88</u>	
<b>SUBTOTAL:</b>	<b>\$5,688.20</b>	
<b>CURRENT BALANCE:</b>		<b>\$10,236.63</b>

**BOOK REVIEW**

In this time of fear, stress, the COVID-19 pandemic and racial tensions, ASGW has a new publication, *Ten Strategies to Intentionally Use Group Work to Transform Hate, Facilitate Courageous Conversations, and Enhance Community Building* that can assist counseling professionals “to advocate, foster, and support the promotion of diversity, equity, inclusion and acceptance”. It provides real-world “examples to incorporate into the practice of group work”.



**In English**

[https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/513c96\\_fe59b76c04b040f8bb17f653b3092b10.pdf](https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/513c96_fe59b76c04b040f8bb17f653b3092b10.pdf)

**In Spanish**

[https://c3c51c6c-8c32-4f6a-9af6-0d715ac3a752.filesusr.com/ugd/513c96\\_ae4c810453df451bb01bf36639d5bf2b.pdf](https://c3c51c6c-8c32-4f6a-9af6-0d715ac3a752.filesusr.com/ugd/513c96_ae4c810453df451bb01bf36639d5bf2b.pdf)

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*Special Events*

<b>VCA Convention</b>	<b>Virtual Meeting</b>	November 12-14, 2020
	Theme: <i>“You Matter! Planting Seeds of Growth”</i>	
<b>SAVE the DATE</b>	<b>Group-A-Rama</b>	April 16, 2021





## RESOURCES

*We wish you wellness, joy, and strength to carry on the work you are doing. Thank you. As a gift of appreciation for you, we share with you our.....*

### VASGW BOARD MEMBER FAVORITES

Digital Resources Counselors Can Use

TYPE OF SERVICE OR BUSINESS	NAME AND CONTACT LINK	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
Musical meditation  Choral group Shares a daily choral piece	<a href="https://youtu.be/4JLWSdRvGwY">https://youtu.be/4JLWSdRvGwY</a>  Voices of Ascension  <a href="https://www.voicesofascension.org/voices-of-connection">https://www.voicesofascension.org/voices-of-connection</a>	YoY o Ma, playing Massenet  Manuel Oltra was one of Catalonia's most distinguished composers and teachers. His "Eco" and "Preludio" come from a set of <i>Three Songs of Love</i> on texts by Garcia Lorca.
Happy Hours	Beer -www.vitaminseabrewing.com Wine - <a href="https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/food/undeterred-by-social-distancing-wine-lovers-around-the-world-embrace-virtual-happy-hours-with-friends-and-family/2020/03/27/38deb388-6f74-11ea-a3ec-70d7479d83f0_story.html">https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/food/undeterred-by-social-distancing-wine-lovers-around-the-world-embrace-virtual-happy-hours-with-friends-and-family/2020/03/27/38deb388-6f74-11ea-a3ec-70d7479d83f0_story.html</a>	Article with resources
Mindfulness and meditation app - a website with mindfulness and movement videos for kids	<a href="https://www.headspace.com">https://www.headspace.com</a>  Let's Meditate (a free app)  <a href="https://www.gonoodle.com">https://www.gonoodle.com</a>	small monthly fee
Educational videos	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Julia Cook reads The Yucky Bug (K-2 grade)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Vimeo (2-6 grade)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Brain Pop Video</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">How to Talk to Your Kid about Coronavirus</a></li> </ul>	This author, Julia Cook, was our Keynote Speaker in 2019.
Documents that explain the virus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Coronavirus-19 Social Story</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Yucky Bug PowerPoint</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">A Story to Help Children Understand Coronavirus</a> from Music City Counselor</li> <li>• <a href="#">Coronavirus Talksheet</a> from Counselor Keri</li> <li>• <a href="#">PBS How to Talk to your Kid about Coronavirus</a></li> </ul> <a href="#">Talking to Your Child About COVID-19: A Parent Resource</a>	(These take longer to download.....be patient.)
Knitting	Guild meetings online, all are welcome, no need to be in the guild to join. <a href="https://www.ravelry.com/groups/knitting-artists-of-northern-virginia">https://www.ravelry.com/groups/knitting-artists-of-northern-virginia</a>  Also Circle of Stitches (Salem Massachusetts) is offering their Tarot and Knitting classes online: <a href="http://www.circleofstitches.com/">http://www.circleofstitches.com/</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="https://www.facebook.com/circleofstitches/">https://www.facebook.com/circleofstitches/</a></li> </ul>	



Streaming	Smithsonian Associates – example <a href="https://www.si.edu/Museums">https://www.si.edu/Museums</a>  Local libraries – look at each website – Fairfax, Alexandria, Arlington, etc.	Architecture on the National Mall <a href="#">Learn More</a>  Movies, films, documentaries
Travel	Expedia.com “5 Playlists That Take You There” In the coming weeks, your fellow travelers at Expedia want to bring the spirit of exploration to your inbox. Because even if taking a trip is not in your immediate plans, there are still ways to feel like you are miles away. Here, we have gathered playlists inspired by some of our travelers’ favorite destinations.  AAA Club – virtual tours	<a href="#">Listen in: Hawaii</a> <a href="#">Listen in: LA</a> <a href="#">Listen in: Mexico</a>  <b>Unexpected Bucket List Destinations</b>
Cooking	Arlington Library	<b>Cooking and Baking eBooks</b>
Museums	Smithsonian – virtual tours of grounds, art works; each one has special offerings	
More music & inspiration	“Imagine” by 2 physicians <a href="https://youtu.be/NEvIyarC248">https://youtu.be/NEvIyarC248</a> 1:36	

*These National and Virginia resources are meant to assist you in providing support to your clients.*

Just a note: These are resources that we have identified that may prove helpful to you.

Please understand, we **ARE NOT** recommending or endorsing any of them.

It is up to you to determine if they are appropriate and meet your clients’ needs.

SERVICE	CONTACT INFORMATION
<b>MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES 24/7 EMERGENCY NUMBERS</b> <b>In case of life-threatening emergency, call 911.</b>	
<b>National Suicide Prevention Lifeline</b>	1-800-273-TALK or 1-800-SUICIDE <a href="http://suicidepreventionlifeline.org">suicidepreventionlifeline.org</a>
<b><u>Free Drug Counseling in Virginia: 24/7</u></b> <b><u>Addiction Numbers in VA</u></b>	<a href="https://addictionresource.com/addiction-and-rehab-hotlines/virginia-numbers">https://addictionresource.com/addiction-and-rehab-hotlines/virginia-numbers</a>
<b><u>Veterans and Mental Health - VA</u></b> <b><u>Information and Resources</u></b>	<a href="http://www.maketheconnection.net/resources">www.maketheconnection.net/resources</a>
Mental Health Hotline Numbers & Referral Resources	<a href="https://www.healthyplace.com/other-info/resources/mental-health-hotline-numbers-and-referral-resources">https://www.healthyplace.com/other-info/resources/mental-health-hotline-numbers-and-referral-resources</a>
<b>GENERAL RESOURCES</b>	
<b><u>COVID-19 Updates and Resources - Virginia</u></b> <b><u>Is For Lovers</u></b>	<a href="https://www.virginia.org/coronavirus">https://www.virginia.org/coronavirus</a>
<b><u>Coronavirus Update - Ways to Support</u></b> <b><u>Local Organizations ...</u></b>	<a href="https://www.fcps.edu/news/coronavirus-update-support">https://www.fcps.edu/news/coronavirus-update-support</a>
<b><u>Virginia Food Banks   Food Banks in VA</u></b>	<a href="https://www.foodbanks.net/state/va.html">https://www.foodbanks.net/state/va.html</a> Food Bank/Pantry information may have changed or be inaccurate due to the <b>coronavirus (COVID-19)</b> . Confirm details with organizers.

## **VCA LEADERSHIP ACADEMY TRAINING - 2020 SUMMARY:**

### ***“Let’s Grow Bamboo: Growing Leaders”***

By Mary Durgala

The VCA Leadership Training began virtually on Friday, July 31, with a Welcome from VCA President, Cyrus Williams, and Executive Board Introductions. Some milestones were noted: 90<sup>th</sup> year for VCA, 5<sup>th</sup> year for the Leadership Academy Training, and 1<sup>st</sup> year for online Zoom platform. Margarita Martinez, Halina Banas-Jones, and Mary Durgala attended the training.



The **Keynote Speaker** was Edward Reed who is the CEO of Academic Management Group, LLC and serves as Executive Director on the John C. Maxwell Team to provide global leadership development. His accomplishments include 2016-17 President of the Maryland School Counselor Association and 2017 MCPS Middle School Counselor of the Year.

During his presentation, “Let’s Grow Bamboo: Growing Leaders”, he told “The Modified Story of the Chinese Bamboo Tree”, an interesting parable about our own experience with developing personal growth and encouraging others to assume leadership roles. Growing a bamboo tree is frustrating, discouraging, and unrewarding because it is slow to show any progress or growth. But like the Bamboo tree that takes five years to finally start to grow, with patience and persistence we will see results in our efforts to grow new leaders.

On Saturday, the attendees (wearing our colorful yellow shirts with a picture of a Panda and a Bamboo Tree) had their **pictures** taken by Margarita Martinez on Zoom.



**Board members Halina Banas-Jones, Margarita Martinez, and Mary Durgala**

Margarita also shared how to use **Menti.com** with three questions to answer about Divisions/Chapters, internal weather, and inspiration from Saturday’s presentation. Fun to see how the patterns developed.

Cyrus shared his **Vision Goals vs. Growth** presentation for attendees to develop their own personal growth plans and we worked on our Word for the Year Activity created by John Maxwell.

Next, was an exciting, competitive, and fun **VCA Organizational Structure Jeopardy Game!**

The **Chapters, Divisions, and Emerging Leaders** collaborated and planned during the next session. Items discussed included: call CE’s not CEU’s and information will be sent on how to be approved, submission of articles for the newsletter; upcoming events, such as, VACES’s sponsored multicultural training for school counselors, Group-A-Rama on April 16, 2021, Counselor Wellness Event, Free Virtual Mediation Event: “Ancient Wisdom for Modern Times” for counselors on August 2020; and, development of partnerships between divisions and chapters for events and activities, announcement of the new Social Media chair – Pierre Durant, and Duties of Board Members.

Manny Bartolotta VCAF President and Linda Grubba discussed VCAF updates. They highlighted the Grant opportunities. Grants are funded up to \$1000, the deadlines are Feb 1/Oct 1, and can be applied for more than once. This was followed by **Advocacy Beyond the Client: The VCA Leader** presenters requesting volunteers to be advocates.

The next session, **Why Light House Leadership?** was presented by Ed Reed. In “Leadership is influence – nothing more – nothing less” John Maxwell states that “People do not leave bad organizations – they leave bad leadership. Every light house has a story. You have a story. Trained leaders must grow to be transform leaders. Will you be a Warrior, Bystander, or a Worrier?”


The **Tic Tok Dance Challenge** was a fun activity to exercise our bodies but was short on time.

The **VCA Masterclass Leadership Stories and Strategies** was led by Dr. Gerard Lawson, ACA Former President 2015-2016, Dr. Sue Pressman ACA Current President 2019-2020, and Dr. Kent Butler ACA President Elect 2021-2022. The Q and A format allowed participants to address their concerns and the panel report on the ACA’s work on license mobility for an interstate compact. Also, Dr. Pressman mentioned that Hillary Press was a welcomed addition to the ACA Board. Of note, Dr. Lawson is a beekeeper of 80,000 bees.

The last session, **Culturally Compassionate Competent Leadership**, by LaConda Fanning echoed Edward Reed’s presentation. Dr. Fanning added important themes of developing leadership over time, “Anyone can steer the ship, but it takes a leader to chart the course”, trust is the foundation of leadership as well as competence, connection, and character, being a good example is the valuable gift a leader can give, build relationships, and a list of many character traits leaders should develop. She ended with a quote by John Maxwell – “You’re an Influencer”.

Cyrus ended the conference with a **farewell**. Margarita sent out an **Evaluation** which should be returned to the VCA office.

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V A S G W  
The Virginia Association  
for Specialists in Group Work

*Save the Date!*

**Group-a-Rama 2021**

**Friday, April 16th**  
**8:00 am to 3:30 pm**

Contact: Dr. Terri Mason  
tamason@fcps.edu

## **VIRGINIA COUNSELORS ASSOCIATION FOUNDATION**

### ***What does the Foundation do for Virginia counselors?***

The VCA Foundation recognizes and supports counselors and counseling organizations in Virginia.

### ***Why should you donate to the Foundation?***

The VCA Foundation:

- Honors counselors for lifelong contributions
- Sponsors publication of the journal and convention speaker
- Provides technology support for VCA convention and websites
- Honors graduate students at accredited counselor education programs for their achievement and potential for leadership
- Supports counseling initiatives in the Commonwealth through grants
- Designates funds targeted for leadership development initiatives and support of emerging leaders

### ***Donate to the VCAF and Help Us Grow Outreach Programs***

Your 100% tax deductible donation to the VCA Foundation is an investment in the future of counseling in Virginia.

Donate online, go to: [www.vcafoundation.org](http://www.vcafoundation.org)

By Mail or with VCA membership Renewal:

VCA Foundation, PO Box 721, Monroe, VA 24574