

# Biographical Data and Platform Statements

2024 Candidates

## PRESIDENT-ELECT/PRESIDENT (1 POSITION)



### Erin Schaefer, MA, MAEd (she/hers)

When I first returned to Ohio after graduate school, I could not work as an MFT due to the state of Ohio not having a license. This was a humbling and frustrating moment, but it also made me

determined to get involved in advocacy. My solace was AAMFT, my professional home. When I had no idea how to navigate the landscape, AAMFT was there to help. My colleagues throughout the state supported and invited me to get involved. This started my journey into leadership and introduced me to so many wonderful people who share common values and a belief that *relationships matter*.

Now, 25+ years later, AAMFT is still the place where I find connection, inspiration, support, and assistance. I have met incredible people who go to the places where others are hurting, providing comfort in the most challenging times and often in the most difficult circumstances. I have had the honor of serving our association at various levels and seeing the ways in which our members impact the lives of those with whom they work. It is nothing short of amazing! We have members who blazed a trail where there was none, and we have others who are coming along to widen, lengthen, and expand that trail even more. Our strength is our common goal to reach and help the hurting. Our diversity of thought, approach, and intervention enables us to make a huge impact as an organization. I am reminded of the Fred Rogers quote, "look for the helpers." We have an association full of helpers. As President-Elect, I want to do everything I can to make sure we can continue doing great work across the US, Canada, and around the world. We are so very needed, and AAMFT is our place to achieve more *together*.

### (I) PRESENT PROFESSIONAL POSITION

- Senior Clinician, Individual, Couple, and Family Therapy (ICFT), 2023-present
- Clinical Consultant & Supervisor, Catalyst Life Services, 2023-present

### (II) MOST RELEVANT PAST PROFESSIONAL POSITIONS (WITHIN THE LAST 7 YEARS)

- Executive Director/Executive Vice President, Catalyst Life Services, 2019-2023
- Director of Operations, Catalyst Life Services, 2011-2019
- Adjunct Faculty, Ashland University, 2010-2019

### (III) AAMFT MEMBERSHIP: PAST AND PRESENT PARTICIPATION IN AAMFT, INCLUDING TOPICAL AND GEOGRAPHIC INTEREST NETWORKS

- AAMFT Foundation for the Advancement of Human Systems Trustee, 2023-present
- AAMFT Certificate of Leadership Mentor, 2023-present
- AAMFT CEO Search Committee, 2022
- AAMFT Treasurer, 2020-2022
- AAMFT Foundation Board of Trustees Secretary/Treasurer, 2020-2022
- Foundation Name Change Task Force, Chair, 2022
- AAMFT Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity Oversight Committee (DEIOC), 2023
- AAMFT Component Evaluation Committee (CEC), 2020-2022
- AAMFT Awards Committee Task Force, 2018
- AAMFT Elections Council, 2012-13, 2015-2016
- AAMFT Elections Council Chair, 2016
- AAMFT Research and Education Foundation Appeal Committee, 2015
- AAMFT Board of Directors, 2011-2013
- AAMFT Awards Committee, 2011-2013
- AAMFT Awards Committee Chair, 2013
- AAMFT Executive Committee Workgroup, Chair, 2013
- AAMFT Division Performance Task Force, 2012
- AAMFT Futures Conference, 2009
- AAMFT Abstract Reviewer
- AAMFT Clinical Fellow
- AAMFT Professional Member, since 1997
- Ohio AMFT President, 2007-2009, 2016-2018
- Ohio AMFT President-Elect, 2006-2007
- Ohio AMFT Elections Council, 2004-2005
- Member, Margins to Center Topical Interest Network, AAMFT
- Member, Couples & Intimate Relationships Topical Interest Network, AAMFT

# Biographical Data and Platform Statements

2024 Candidates

## PRESIDENT-ELECT/PRESIDENT (1 POSITION)

**(IV) PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES (Activities should be directly linked to the position and should demonstrate the skills needed for the position. Please refer to the list of competencies and skills for the position)**

Past and present activities, projects, or publications (limit 3) that are evidence of leadership skills, experience integrating information, working towards consensus, and decision-making skills.

### Team Orientation/Strategic Planning/Commitment:

- *Catalyst Life Services, 2011-present:* as Executive Director, Director of Operations, VP of Clinical Services, and now as Clinical Consultant, I have had to regularly meet with staff at all levels of the organization. I have been a part of the Executive Committee which interfaces with the agency's board of directors, who sets the direction of the agency. When we engage in strategic planning, we touch all parts of the agency (residential staff to management team) in order to identify our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. With a comprehensive agency providing a plethora of services, it is essential to understand all of the parts and the potential impacts of any decisions being made.
- *AAMFT Board of Directors (Treasurer), 2020-2022:* As a member of the Executive Committee, I was a part of the leadership focused on decision making and strategic planning for the association. Interfaced with auditors and explained financial reports to board members as part of the treasurer's role.
- *AAMFT CEO Search Committee, 2022:* Collaborating with fellow search committee members to interview potential search firms and then develop consensus to select one. Worked cooperatively to identify key attributes for the CEO and interview top candidates vetted by search firm. Evaluated and identified next CEO for AAMFT based on the outlined process.
- *NAMI Excellence in Clinical Service Award, 2023:* Awarded by NAMI, Richland County for excellence in service to the community and coordination on behalf of the severely mentally ill. This was due to ongoing commitment to collaboration with various community partners and ensuring quality services for those most vulnerable in the community.
- *Youth Crisis Response Team (Chair, 2009-2023), 2006-present:* Coordinating with volunteers throughout the county and in adjacent counties, working with local school districts, interfacing with first responders in local communities, and establishing training and protocols for responding members in crisis or disaster situations
- *Colorful Ashland, Founding Member, 2020-present:* organizing local individuals interested in supporting people of color in a predominately white community, providing programming, and increasing awareness of the importance of diversity
- *Homeless Initiative, 2021-present:* coordinating with local law enforcement and training behavioral health staff to provide outreach to houseless individuals in the community. This also includes working with county commissioners, business owners, and the local NAMI chapter to target those most vulnerable and in need.
- *Richland County Sheriff's Award, 2017:* Given by the Richland County sheriff to recognize continued collaboration in developing and coordinating quality mental health services for those in the county jail in need of services and then connected to ongoing services once discharge from the jail.
- *Electronic Records Implementation Team, 2015-2018, 2021-2022:* This involved working with IT staff to develop documentation for clinical processes as well as coordinating with representatives from the software company in order to ensure benchmarks were met throughout the process.
- *Crisis Intervention Training Advisory Committee, 2011-present:* ongoing work with first responders and local law enforcement to advocate for the humane treatment of severely mentally ill individuals within the community, including training semi-annually
- *Ashland County Family and Children First Council (2006-2011), Chair (2010-2011):* Overseeing the provision of services to ensure children thrive throughout the county at all socioeconomic levels and from all ethnic backgrounds
- *Ohio AMFT (2004-2009, 2018-2019):* throughout my tenure as board member and president, served with the focus on enhancing the lives of MFTs in the state which included advocating at the state legislature in order to amend the licensure law to allow for rules to be passed to govern MFT practice within the state.

# Biographical Data and Platform Statements

## 2024 Candidates

### PRESIDENT-ELECT/PRESIDENT (1 POSITION)

#### Presentations – Communication/Expertise:

- Co-Presenter, AAMFT Leadership Symposium: Little Old Me? Yes, and Little Old You! Overcoming Leadership Narratives to Excel and Enjoy the Rewards of Systemic Volunteer Service (2024)
- *Preparing for the Eclipse: Mental Health Awareness* (2023)
- AAMFT Leadership Symposium: The 10,000 Foot View: Leadership from a Systemic Perspective (2022)
- *Leadership Unlimited*, Diversity Awareness Day (2021)
- AAMFT Systemic Therapy Conference: Tipping The Scales: Systemic Interventions Within the Justice System (2021)
- Co-Presenter, AAMFT Leadership Symposium: Contextual Feminist Leadership (2021)
- Co-Presenter, AAMFT Annual Conference: From Darkness to Light: Managing Microaggressions in The Room (2020)
- NAMI Richland County: Managing Stress and Self-Care During the Holidays (2020)
- AAMFT Leadership Conference: One is The Loneliest Number: Surviving as the Lone MFT (2019)
- Co-Presenter, AAMFT Annual Conference: Drawing The Line: Reframing Supervision in a Gender-Charged World (2018)
- Co-Presenter, AAMFT Annual Conference: Gender-Mindful Supervisors: Ambassadors of Social Equality (2017)
- AAMFT Annual Conference: 16 & NOT Pregnant: Preventing Teen Pregnancy (2012)
- *Mansfield News Journal North-South All Star Banquet* (2019)
- Co-Presenter, *Leadership Unlimited Stigma Awareness Day*: SAMSHA Wellness Initiative for Mental Health and Substance Use Disorders, (2018)
- Co-Presenter, *Leadership Unlimited Diversity Day* (2017)
- Co-Presenter, *Mansfield City Schools Staff Opening Day* (2015)
- *Signs and Symptoms of Depression for Those Diagnosed with Cancer*, Livestrong at the YMCA group (2013-present)
- *Crisis Intervention Training for Law Enforcement* (2011-present)
- *Crisis Intervention Training for Jail and Prison Hostage Negotiators* (2015-present)

- *Trainer, Crisis Intervention with Juveniles in Detention* (2015)
- *Trainer, Suicide Prevention and QPR* (2005-present)
- *Ashland County Family and Children First Council* (2006-2011), Chair (2010-2011)

#### Publications – Communication/Expertise/Commitment:

Schaefer, E. (7 April, 2022). Intersection of Homelessness and Mental Health Makes Stability a Challenge. *Richland Source*. [https://www.richlandsource.com/solutions/unhoused/column-intersection-of-homelessness-and-mental-health-makes-stability-a-challenge/article\\_d94637a6-afa0-11ec-aa8b-9f78ccd4d61e.html](https://www.richlandsource.com/solutions/unhoused/column-intersection-of-homelessness-and-mental-health-makes-stability-a-challenge/article_d94637a6-afa0-11ec-aa8b-9f78ccd4d61e.html)

Schaefer, E. (2018). *Staying Mentally Healthy During the Holidays*. Catalyst Life Services blog, Mansfield, OH.

Hanson, S., Kaminsky, S., Oliver, M., and Schaefer, E. (2018). *Sexual Harassment From A Systemic Perspective*. AAMFT blog, Alexandria, VA.

**(V) COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION: Past and present activities demonstrating knowledge of and commitment to social justice and systemic science.**

#### Membership:

- Colorful Ashland, Founding Member, 2020-present
- NAACP, 2018-present
- AAMFT Margins to Center Topical Interest Network, 2019-present
- Youth Crisis Response Team, 2006-present
- Peace Lutheran Church, an ECLA Reconciling in Christ congregation, 2016-present

#### Presentations:

- *Leadership Unlimited*, Diversity Awareness Day (2021)
- AAMFT Systemic Therapy Conference: Tipping The Scales: Systemic Interventions Within the Justice System (2021)
- Co-Presenter, AAMFT Leadership Symposium: Contextual Feminist Leadership (2021)
- Co-Presenter, AAMFT Annual Conference: From Darkness to Light: Managing Microaggressions in The Room (2020)
- Co-Presenter, AAMFT Annual Conference: Drawing The Line: Reframing Supervision in a Gender-Charged World (2018)

# Biographical Data and Platform Statements

2024 Candidates

## PRESIDENT-ELECT/PRESIDENT (1 POSITION)

- Co-Presenter, AAMFT Annual Conference: Gender-Mindful Supervisors: Ambassadors of Social Equality (2017)
- AAMFT Annual Conference: 16 & NOT Pregnant: Preventing Teen Pregnancy (2012)
- Mansfield News Journal North-South All Star Banquet (2019)
- Co-Presenter, Leadership Unlimited Stigma Awareness Day: SAMSHA Wellness
- Initiative for Mental Health and Substance Use Disorders, (2018)
- Co-Presenter, Leadership Unlimited Diversity Day (2017)
- Co-Presenter, Mansfield City Schools Staff Opening Day (2015)
- Crisis Intervention Training for Law Enforcement (2011-present)
- Crisis Intervention Training for Jail and Prison Hostage Negotiators (2015-present)
- Trainer, Crisis Intervention with Juveniles in Detention (2015)

### **(VI) RELEVANT DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION – Optional (up to five sentences)**

You may choose to identify and/or describe parts of your background which may include the following: work setting (e.g., private practice, academia, agency, community health, government), home location (e.g., rural, urban, suburban), region (e.g., US state, international), any other relevant demographic information (e.g., age, ethnicity/race, gender, sexual orientation, religious/spiritual affiliation, ability, immigration status, languages spoken).

I am a white, heterosexual, cisgender female who has lived in suburban US communities for most of my life. I have worked in urban and rural settings, and I have spent the majority of my career working in a community behavioral health agency. Because I have many dominant culture demographics, I realize I have to work harder to recognize how that filters my worldview and where/how it shows up for me. I am grateful for the diversity of our membership as well as the variety of communities we serve, as we are needed not just in one space or in one way – we are needed to help heal relationships across the US and around the globe.