



Association for the Integration of the Whole Person

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Changing of the Guard

With the arrival of spring, AIWP also celebrates the beginning of a new era. At the end of March, 2005, AIWP President Melvin Suhd retired from active leadership and administration of AIWP. He remains an active board member. Mel's retirement has been planned for several years, and after a long, arduous search, a new leader has been selected. Effective April 1, 2005, the Board of Directors has appointed Carol Adams, Ph.D., as President of AIWP and of the University for Integrative Learning (UIL). She has also been elected as a member of the board. Dr. Adams has been an active AIWP congregation leader for many years, and served as the first president of the University of AIWP. We invite you all to join in expressing our heartfelt gratitude to Mel for his many, many years of dedicated support and service, and to welcome Carol as we begin this new era together. So, we thank you, Melvin, for establishing and nurturing this wonderful AIWP community, and welcome, Carol, as the path takes us into the future under your able leadership.

The following is an open letter from Carol to all AIWP members, UIL learners, and friends of AIWP:

Greetings,

After more than 30 years of service, our founder and long-term president, Mel Suhd, has retired! Congratulations, Mel. We are all so excited for him. He has already begun to pursue some of the things he has been wanting to do for himself and for his congregation, AIWP of Santa Monica. At last he can work on composing his beloved journal of "Fragments" of his life, and can have time to expand his new website, www.MelSuhd.org, where he is able to share his views with the world. I honor you Mel; I love you and I appreciate all that you have done for us and for the world.

Of course, everyone wants to know what this transition means for AIWP. First, let me say what will not change: *Mel's philosophy and vision for AIWP*. What will change is that we will take AIWP to a bigger audience, so that Mel's vision will become as large as he dreamed it. We have an inspired and expanded Board of Directors as well as an exciting new Board of Advisors, all of whom are empowering the AIWP vision.

The most common question people have asked me is, "What is your vision?" The answer is easy, because Mel has already created the vision in AIWP's Mission Statement, which says, "The Association for the Integration for the Whole Person was founded so that spiritual persons, prepared to serve their communities, can do so psychologically and educationally in ways that ensure the blessings of self-empowerment, leading to peace for persons of good will." I embrace that mission and am personally committed to it. And because that mission is so well established in AIWP and in myself, my only job, then, is to widen the circle . . . and to unite our community.

Mel has mentored me since 1996 and coached me when I was the first president of UAIWP. As a Ph.D. graduate of Summit University with a doctor of divinity degree from UAIWP, I deeply understand and resonate with our educational philosophy. I have been a UIL provost for many years and am dedicated to attracting even more learners to UIL and to UAIWP. I also taught for many years in the public school system in California. Education has been, and continues to be my life.

I spent almost the entire month of April in Rohnert Park learning how the office runs. I appreciate Virginia's and Cynthia's help teaching me how to operate the AIWP/UIL database and many other important tasks. Of course, please continue to address your "snail mail" correspondence to 6182 Country Club Drive, Rohnert Park, CA, 94928, your email to aiwp@aol.com, and your phone calls to our usual number at (707) 586-9484. I look forward to hearing

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Staff Box

Marsha Calhoun, Editor
Carol Adams, President, AIWP

From Mel: Time to Re-Tire

To spiritual persons about to become ordained members of AIWP and to the many hundreds who have served as loving ministers during these past thirty years:

Today is March 1, 2005. This is the month for me to Re-Tire. There was something wrong with the earlier announcement I made about my retirement plans the latter half of last year. As long as I remained able to be responsible for my own faculties—my mind, body and spirit—I couldn't imagine "retiring." I couldn't picture myself spending the rest of my life not engaged in the pursuit of my life's mission. In the year 2004, a very dear friend, Gerry Burg, left this earth. In the late 1940s, before Gerry became an executive administrator for temples in Southern California, he was a distributor for Fisk Tires. The logo for Fisk was a picture of a young boy dressed in pajamas, holding onto an oversized tire with the words printed above, "Time to Re-Tire." That play on the word "retire" fit for me. In April, I will no longer be the President of AIWP and can, along with the rest of our AIWP family, enjoy serving in the fields of mental health and the betterment of our planet. Instead of dedicating body, soul, and finances to AIWP, I can join the other ordained members who share the responsibility for supporting our church and ensuring its stable existence for many years to come.

We are blessed to have Carol Adams, a very able and dedicated person who is stepping into the role as leader of AIWP. Before Carol takes over the management, my parting "state of affairs" message is an urgent prayer.

I leave the post as an administrator reveling with thoughts of the infinite blessings our ordained members have bestowed on thousands upon thousands of parishioners. I also hand over the reins to Carol having done my best to pare our budget down to bare bones so that she is not left with indebtedness, and is left with enough funds to pay off existing obligations. Those cost-cutting measures left AIWP short of staff necessary to maintain

an efficient operation and left AIWP without enough money allocated for a minimal administrative salary. Continuing the newsletter, which has served to keep AIWP visible to a larger population, is also not funded in the new budget. The present budget is based on projected donations and income from AIWP and its university, UIL, of \$150,000 a year from approximately 500 active and responsible learners and congregational leaders. My prayer is this:

I pray that the higher consciousness within each of the leaders and friends of AIWP will accept my lifelong joy and personal satisfaction for having established, with input and support from many others, the church and its universities and for creating a unique and significant system by combining philosophies, spiritual principles, and values into an effective "(w)hole-ism."

I pray that members and friends recognize that none of the concepts or pedagogy in the system originated from my being and that my creative and significant achievement is *the way I assembled and managed the parts that became the whole.*

I pray that the AIWP community lovingly accepts and understands that I now am able to embark upon my "retirement."

I pray that members and friends will join with the Board of Directors, Carol, and me in furthering the mission and credo of AIWP and accepting with us the responsibility for its future growth.

This means that each member commits to going that "extra mile" and sending as generous a donation as he or she is able. Our future depends upon your support.

Bless you and may the God within you continue your journey toward the "good life." I look forward to continuing the journey with you, healing ourselves, our community – Our World!

- Mel Suhd

President's Message, cont.

Collins, and the Venus Rising Congregation in North Carolina during the month as well. I was struck by the fact that we have such incredible resources in our members, yet *you* do not know each other. Therefore, a high priority is to get our directory online so you can find and meet each other. We will also have a conference call on July 24 from 4:30-6:00 p.m. PST, where we will begin a series of community dialogues. The phone # is (347) 534-1700 and the pin number is 2016. We can then start planning another in-person gathering like we had last year. We are an extremely cohesive, like-minded community and we are a tremendous force for good on the planet. It will be wonderful to speak with you soon and eventually to meet you.

Another significant focus for us is marketing. As many of you know, our website is www.aiwp.org. We are working on expanding and "glitzing" it up. We have just begun the directory,

which will include your picture and a fifty-word statement about you/your congregation and how you can be contacted, including a link to your website, if you have one. We are creating a section on the website that will highlight and tell people where to purchase books authored by AIWP ministers, AIWP-sponsored university graduates, and friends of AIWP. We are also creating an "AIWP Journal" section where we can include the prolific writings of our ministers and university graduates. Additionally, one of the new members of our Board of Advisors, Jeff Berger, M.D., volunteered to oversee a project on our website that would be along the lines of an "advice" column. It would be an interactive dialog, possibly called "Stirring the Soul," where people could write in and ask questions. Ministers who want to participate could also take turns answering questions that come in. The fun is just starting!!

It is vital for us to be on the internet's

major search engines so that when people type in key words such as "ordination," "minister," or "alternative education," etc., they will start to find us!! And of course all these activities require funds. I am requesting that if you have not made your annual donation, please **DO IT NOW**. If you have not sent in your quarterly reports, **NOW IS THE PERFECT TIME**. Mel is no longer subsidizing AIWP, but we can easily be self-supporting as we each do our part. Obviously, our expansion and our continuation, for that matter, depend upon financial support from our membership. I know that you want to participate and to contribute to our growth and the sustainability of AIWP. Thank you! We have only just begun a new era of prosperity.

I welcome your calls and suggestions and I am grateful for the opportunity to be of service.

Love, Carol Adams, Ph.D.
President, AIWP/UIL

A Letter from the Board to Our Members in Service

To the Ministers of AIWP,

Greetings, most distinguished spiritual community! We invite your participation in a gathering via teleconference to update you on Mel's retirement and to discuss the exciting, positive changes that are happening at AIWP/UIL. We will be meeting on July 24 from 4:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. Pacific time over the telephone through the Eagle Conference Center. That number is (347) 534-1700 and the pin number is 2016.

As you know, Mel Suhd, AIWP's beloved founder and president, has been preparing to retire for quite some time. Effective March 31, Mel retired from his official duties as president, chairperson of the board and administrator of AIWP. He continues to maintain a position as board member, which gives him the opportunity to ensure continuity and a smooth transition for the new president, Carol Adams, Ph.D., and the newly expanded Board of Directors. This board consists of three previous members, Mel Suhd, Kate Markham, and Glenn Suhd, and three new members, Randall Alifano, Kim Chernin, and Carol Adams.

As a board, we are notable advocates of AIWP who have a deep appreciation and sense of pride toward the wonderful services members have brought to so many because of the existence of AIWP. Our passion and commitment to AIWP have made us determined that it will survive and grow so that it reaches larger and larger audiences. We are excited about the changes and infusion of additional energy and enthusiasm that will enable us to do so. As everyone knows, both Mel and Kate have worked tirelessly on behalf of the AIWP members for many years, and we are so grateful for their efforts.

As a newly expanded board, the primary areas we are focusing on are activating the current AIWP membership, attracting prospective ministers, and enrolling more learners in UIL, all of which ensure our financial solvency. Some of you might not be aware that over the past 30 years, Mel has personally subsidized AIWP. At this time, he wants you to know that he is proud of having led the many people that now form AIWP but that he has retired as head of the organization, and did not leave any financial reserves. However, Mel has a

great deal of faith in the board and in the AIWP members. He knows that because the package he has delivered is so strong, we will determinedly work together to repair the financial encumbrances he left, improve the package so that it is even more effective, and achieve financial security for generations not yet born. To attribute the present state of AIWP to his imperfections is really to honor his life, since one of his most significant contributions is, "You're perfect with your imperfections."

An article in the February 1, 2004 AIWP Newsletter addressed the need for ordained members to make their annual supporting donations and the response was

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overwhelming. Michael Day, one of our ordained members, was quoted in that article saying, "Overall, with any true organization or community, its strength and longevity are always found whenever the founder reaches a point in process where he or she can finally let go and allow the membership to affirm the future movement of the community . . . or not. Actually, it's really not until a community reaches a point like this that a community finally matures into becoming a true community."

As a board, we are confident that you share our opinion that, as AIWP members, we want to, must, and can be financially responsible for our own organization. Consequently, at our March board meeting we discussed three ideas to increase AIWP's revenues and are now asking for you to support these ideas that can raise the needed funds for our projected budget of \$150,000.

1. To raise the suggested donation for ordination to \$250.

2. To implement a request for an annual supporting donation of \$175 from each minister.

3. To improve our follow-up on the congregations who do not file Quarterly Reports. If they are receiving religious income and are not filing quarterly reports, we need to advise them that we have to withdraw authorization of the use of AIWP's EIN number. Those congregations not sending in their quarterly reports are in violation of the tax law and are putting AIWP in danger. AIWP cannot and will not support them without their participation in financial practices that are legally required and ethically sound. Furthermore, the quarterly donations are the financial lifeblood of our church and if congregations are not sending in the 1% administration fee they are not supporting the church. If any congregation has questions about its quarterly reports, please call us and we will be happy to assist.

As we implement these three ideas, we expect a substantial increase in funds available to operate AIWP and to ensure a stable future for our church.

Other strategies we will be implementing include internet marketing efforts that will allow us to reach a larger audience, letting them know of the ordination opportunity available through AIWP. We are also asking local congregations to help raise funds for Central within their own communities. We need our members to be active in supporting AIWP's continuing existence; we are all an integral part of its operation and the development of its programs.

We are presently developing a new program that combines the resources of UIL, AIWP, and UAIWP, offering the opportunity to receive training as ministers while participating in an advanced course of graduate study that leads to either a doctor of philosophy or a doctor of divinity degree. Through this program we are in a position to offer a solid and viable alternative to the more conventional state-

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approved and state-licensed paths to becoming counselors or consultants. The program is provisionally called “Advanced Study in Intuitive Listening.”

In our continuing efforts to reflect the breadth and depth of the congregational work of AIWP, we have begun to link your congregational websites to the AIWP website and are building an AIWP Directory of ordained ministers. If you have not yet given us information about yourself and/or your congregation, please email a 50-word

“blurb” and a photograph, so we can include you in the AIWP website directory. You can send that information to Cynthia at aiwp@sonic.net. Also, please peruse the AIWP website at www.aiwp.org. If you have an email address, even if you think we have it, please contact us again at aiwp@aol.com so we can be certain that we have your email information. We would love to hear from you anyway!

We appreciate your continued commitment in supporting AIWP in all ways and invite your communication and

participation with us in taking AIWP community to the next level! We also welcome congregation leaders to volunteer to help AIWP Central in your various areas of expertise.

Sincerely,

The AIWP BOARD

Mel Suhd
Kate Markham
Glenn Suhd
Kim Chernin
Randall Alifano
Carol Adams

Meet AIWP's New Board of Directors

KIM CHERNIN

I am sixty-five years old and have 150 words to write about my life. That's fewer than 3 words per year. Obviously, some principle of condensation is needed. But what should it be? The books I've written? My psychoanalytic background? My awakening to a spiritual life? The model of intuitive listening I'm developing with Randall Alifano? The thrill of being a new member of the AIWP/UIP board? Maybe I should just write down what matters most to me about my life—that I have, to some degree, been able to be of service? That in my heart of hearts I am a minister more than I am anything else? Well, okay, a Jewish minister. I am a Jewish minister who loves to write books, believes in creativity as a spiritual and healing activity, and perhaps, above all, believes that our little world of toil and trouble is held by a vast and comprehensive love.

GLENN SUHD

I have been on the board of AIWP since 1976 and found myself expanding my service to my congregation with the realization that as I embrace the essence of AIWP, I embrace and serve the whole planet and everyone on it.

My life's journeys started over 55 years ago, when I was reared in a nurturing, loving family and was encouraged to discover my own person. My spiritual awakening started to develop in high school, during the Vietnam War, and while I was in college, I formulated a personal life model.

In the past six years, I have discovered the wonders that lie beneath the oceans. As an avid scuba diver, I have documented wonders few people have seen. The issues of ecology and global sustainability serve to instill in me the value of the spiritual nature of the oceans, the planet, and the people of the world.

I have come to realize, through my extensive world travels, that there is a common core in everyone I meet and everything I see, which is the epitome of the AIWP philosophy. I am honored and excited to be on this new board.

CAROL ADAMS, PH.D.

Carol Adams, Ph.D., D.D., author of *Voices of Selves*, is the executive director of the Academy of Self-Knowledge. She is a highly skilled presenter and educator, having taught for many years in the public school system. While teaching in the public schools, she was selected to be a master teacher to supervise the student-teachers for the Cal-State University at Fullerton secondary education program.

Eventually, Dr. Adams realized that she could not make the impact she wanted to make on the students within the framework of public education and formed her own educational organization, the Academy of Self-Knowledge, where transformational education is the focus. Carol is a Master Practitioner of NLP (Neuro-Linguistic Programming) and specializes in *Transformational Meditation*™, a process she has developed that reprograms the erroneous thought patterns of the subconscious mind. It has been used successfully for the past fifteen years with countless students all over the world.

During her years of study, Carol had the opportunity to serve on the volunteer staffs of Tony Robbins, Tad James, Ph.D., and Deepak Chopra, M.D, and was certified by Don Riso/Russ Hudson to teach the Enneagram, a system of personality typing. She is also certified to administer the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, a very popular system of personality typing.

Dr. Adams has been a popular guest lecturer at Cal-State Long Beach, speaking on the topic of meditation. In 1999, she was voted Member of the Year of the Women's Council of the Long Beach Chamber of Commerce and received a certificate from California State Senator Betty Karnette in recognition of her commitment to community service and dedication to the promotion of women in business.

KATE MARKHAM

After completing several years working with re-entry students at Sonoma State University, Kate joined the staff of AIWP headquarters in 1990. Over the next few years, she served as our administrative associate, and later, as co-president. Kate retired in 2004. While she continues to serve together with Mel Suhd as provost to UIL learners, she also is spending as much time as possible in Denmark and in Texas, with her children and grandchildren. With a history of volunteer service in hospice care, animal rescue, and homeless program development and service, Kate has maintained an ongoing interest and involvement in helping to foster community-building activities. Along with outreach providing support to those in need, she has dedicated the past fourteen years to sharing and supporting the founding principles, values, and credo of the AIWP and UIL community, and looks forward to continued participation in our future growth.

(In her life away from the office, listening to opera remains Kate's other *raison d'être*!)

MEL SUHD

My wondrous life-journey along the many paths I've taken, spanning eight decades and five generations in Spirit and Joy, is nowhere near finished. Even now, with over sixty years of personal involvement and passionate dedication to my work, I continue to find myself blessed with emerging intimacies that seem to reenter my life at preordained moments. They fill my Soul with new insights, ideas, and inspiration that lead me to create new *personal pathways* assembled from the principles, values, experiences and stories that have been integrated into my being from the many intimates/mentors. My mentors have been my Messengers, as they have all so richly blessed my life. My life's resources include my heritage, which has graced my path in infinite measure. The roots began at four, when I lived with my beloved sister and parents, on the same block with my mother's parents, four sisters, and brother, including her sister Blanch's family, who to this day are a special source for my continuing development. A three-decade-long "marriage made in heaven" brought a woman and two men into this world. They remain my greatest source of pride. None of the three "cloned" themselves after me! An eleven-year life mate relationship taught me how to Love myself. She still does. And now, AIWP and UIL, the two entities I created as *tangible expressions of the integrated teachings* from the sources mentioned above, *have been given a new infusion of support and guidance* from Kim, Carol, and Randall, our new leaders joining Kate, Glenn, and me, in ways expressed in their biographies here. They are enhancing my development by teaching me how to temper the use of numbers by learning how to write from my poetic heart, the center of my Love.

RANDALL ALIFANO

What is there to be said? It is such a blessing to be called to do one's work. That is why I became a minister and why I am now on the board of AIWP. That mysterious, sometimes whisper of a guiding principle has escorted me on this journey to being a father and a counselor to others, getting a Ph.D. in clinical psychology, writing a dissertation on "Empathic Surrender," becoming a drummer, and having an appreciation for psychoanalytic thought and a deeper appreciation for a spiritual life. And now I am called to be involved in AIWP in this way. It is with pleasure that I give something back to the church that has given me so much. As I learn to listen to the quiet places, I find that I have come home as a minister. Now perhaps we can aid others in finding their homes.

Our next issue will introduce our new Board of Advisors: Aliah MaJon, Jeff Berger, Phillip Ziegler, & Tom Mitchell.

New Ordinations

We welcome the following new members in service to our flock:

L. Kae Graniel, Minister of Transformational Enlightenment
 Michael Robert Bokrosh III, Minister of Transpersonal Therapy
 James Proetz, D.C., Transformational Healer
 Robin Divine, Integrative Counselor Minister of Light
 Eugene D. Holden, Minister of Spiritual Transformation
 Maurice Abarr, Transformational Meditation™ Facilitator
 Ananda Edmonds, Minister of Transformational Mind Body Healing
 Joy Stanton, Inner Fitness Facilitator
 Linda Richardson, Conscious Integrity Practitioner
 Cat Pedersen, Spiritual Educator
 Margie Adam, Community Facilitator
 Rafael Aisner, Minister of Spirit/Body/Mind Awareness
 Judith A. Merritt, Ph.D., Shamanic Pastoral Counselor, Teacher and Minister
 Shanell Vaughn, Integrative Shamanic Counselor

Patricia Ann Garahan, Minister of Co-Creational Healing
 Sandra Fischer, Psychospiritual Counselor
 Althea Langevin, Minister of Transformational Healing
 Christopher Key Chapple, Ph.D., Spiritual Director
 Stella Sythe, Advocate for Hope and Freedom
 Christopher Murphy, Beauti-Fuel Pusher
 Peter J. French, Carlisle Education Minister
 Paulette Katz, Minister of Spirituality-Reverend
 Debra Babarsky, Spiritual Minister/Counselor
 Carolyn Shaffer, Minister and Transformational Counselor
 Martha Monetti, Spiritual Facilitator
 Nataliya Bolsheva, Minister of Mind Spirit Body Healing
 Rande Wegman, Minister of BodyMind Healing
 Harvey Schwartz, Psychospiritual Development Consultant
 Monica Aube, God Ordained Celestial Crown
 Colleen Schauer, Spiritual Counselor/Minister
 Patricia Tompa, Transpersonal Counselor/Spiritual Minister
 Jehanah Wedgwood, Minister of Shamanic Poetry
 Katherine Zimmerman, Minister of Holistic Healing
 Larissa Chernin, Spiritual Teacher
 Catherine Balcom, Spiritual Counselor and Healer
 Sahara Fred, Pastoral Counselor

AIWP's Educational Programs— University for Integrative Learning

What Is the University for Integrative Learning?

From its beginning, AIWP has fostered innovative educational programs that promote its philosophy and values. The University for Integrative Learning (UIL) is the latest generation of a pioneering effort in alternative higher education that began in 1968, so we consider UIL to be 36 years old even though its name is new. UIL interfaces with AIWP, a religious organization, and follows its philosophy and values while maintaining a completely nonsectarian perspective.

The University for Integrative Learning is devoted to personal wholeness and the educational freedom that comes from honoring each individual's uniqueness within the context of lifelong learning. If you are excited by the prospect of a degree program that upholds these ideals, then UIL may be the right choice for you.

"Where learning is sacred and experience counts."

UIL Mission Statement

The University for Integrative Learning serves a spiritual learning community in ways consistent with humanistic educational philosophy and psychology. UIL places individuals at the center of their own learning processes in relation to all aspects of life.

Guiding Principles and Values

- Every individual is a unique and complete being: spiritual, mental, emotional, and physical.
- Freedom of individual expression is an inherent intellectual and spiritual birthright.
- Learning is a lifelong process.
- Lifelong learning is both a right and a responsibility that cannot be ignored without denying life at its root.
- Active, cooperative, interdisciplinary learning is encouraged throughout life.
- Everyone deserves equal access to advanced educational degrees.
- Equality and diversity are actively fostered in regard to race, sex, class, age, ethnic background, sexual orientation, and different abilities.
- The community is honored as a valuable resource for learning.
- Relevant life experience is a valid, credit-worthy part of academic degree programs.
- Lifelong learning allows shorter enrollment periods for each degree level.
- Theory, practice, and critical understanding must be integrated to provide a holistic assessment of learning experiences.
- The relationship between learners and mentors functions best in an atmosphere of safety, trust, and respect, including power-balanced dialogues that nurture individual and

interpersonal growth.

- Academic degrees, learning, and life itself are essentially spiritual/religious experiences, in harmony with each individual's personal beliefs.
- Human diversity, pluralism, and all nonviolent belief systems are honored in accordance with the credo of UIL's parent organization, the Association for the Integration of the Whole Person (AIWP).

The Connection Between AIWP and UIL

The Association for the Integration of the Whole Person (AIWP) is recognized by the federal government as a 501(3)(c) nonprofit religious entity. The University for Integrative Learning of AIWP is a nonsectarian spiritual university that values human diversity and maintains that all learning and degrees are religious in nature.

Religious: "a cause, principle, or system of beliefs held to with ardor and faith."

Spiritual: "of religion, sacred, devotional, or ecclesiastical; not lay or temporal."

Accreditation

As a nonsectarian spiritual university, AIWP's University for Integrative Learning is exempt from regional accreditation practices. Since its inception, AIWP has supported the Constitution of the United States in its stated mission of maintaining a separation of church and state. This separation of church and state gives people the freedom to be true to their spiritual values in all aspects of life, including the pursuit of their educational goals.

Accreditation is a form of certification found only in the United States. Accrediting agencies are private corporations that assume responsibility for determining the acceptability of secondary and higher education programs. In contrast to the United States, all other nations charge the government, the public, and educational institutions with the responsibility of determining the quality and acceptability of universities and colleges.

Contact:

Administrative Offices - University for Integrative Learning
6182 Country Club Drive, Rohnert Park, CA 94928
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Recent Graduates

We proudly announce our most recent graduates, their majors, their areas of specialization, and their major studies:

- Miriam M. Phillips, Ph.D., Transpersonal Psychology, Healing Emotional Discord, *Transpersonal Psychology*;
- Bonita Borchert, Ph.D., Philosophy, Philosophy of Eastern Religions, "*Continuum*" – *The Thread of Spirituality*

Thanks for Your Generosity

We continue to be grateful to the generous donors who help support AIWP and this newsletter.

Coming Home: November 6 & 7, 2004

Late last year, seven AIWP ministers convened a gathering of outlaws, calling all AIWP ministers to come together to explore what each of us is doing in the name of ministry. When we asked those who had attended to offer their impressions, two of our members in service responded as follows. If we have not included your offering, please send it to us again—we would love to let everyone know your thoughts and feelings.

When I read the news I was more than excited, I was ecstatic. . . . Finally, I would meet the people of our AIWP family in person and this “organization” that had distinctly called to my Soul would now surely come to life! The visions began almost immediately—I kept seeing a large group of “those who served” traveling from everywhere, as well as our beloved California, to come together as new old-friends and not-yet-recognized associates. We would be pieces of the puzzle fitting together, for somehow we “remembered” our respective roles, like those who continue the past and further evolution because we love the work and we are good at it. I saw us experiencing the wonder and joy of knowing that the time had come to take AIWP to the next level, to take responsibility for both its growth and the gifts it had to offer through us.

Actually, I marveled at how certain I seemed about what was happening—the potential and the promise of it—and especially at how clear it was to me that I would like to do all that I could to help accomplish this goal, which I felt was a “mission” the seeds of which had been planted long ago. Mel and Kate and the others had done a magnificent job of building the foundation and anchoring the matrix for the Divine work now at hand. So the message was resounding in my heart of hearts that the hour had arrived to introduce this fine model of where spiritual leadership was meant to go in the twenty-first century to the world. My, did I have strong and sweet and sacred feelings about what was to be—me, who was just another minister like every other ordained person associated with AIWP—and I knew that I had to be there because I heard more than what was being written and spoken about in our invitation. I had agreed at some previous time that I would show up—which is how stepping into responsibility is described where I come from—and I was ready and truly pleased and delighted to be extended the opportunity.

I am not a shy person, although I can be deliberately silent and appropriately watchful until I know my place. At least that is usually what takes place when I enter a new environment and meet new people. Yet in the case of our first official Gathering, I found myself moving as if I already knew what was required of me, after all; much had been stirred from within, including a mysterious kind of determination that I had to be included in this waited-for and all-important conclave. I had spoken to God and agreed to offer myself and my skills, and the rest was just a matter of when. I had heard what might be called whispers of destiny and the visions accompanied by emotions that were beyond the common explanations. First, I was aware of tremendous enthusiasm and joy, and then great disappointment and unhappiness when our plans were adjusted to a shorter time and probably a much smaller group than I had envisioned. In fact, it is hard to believe now that when I first heard about the changes, I decided not to go. I was going to wait for the actuality to catch up to my visions, I suppose; I only knew that I wished for more.

My mind was quickly changed after a series of events pointed clearly to the idea that the Universe still expected my presence. Then some new visions began to come that gave more insight into why I had seen the “finished” product rather than just the potential, which helped me to understand that choices had to be made and work had to be done. In other words, it would be up to us to say yes to and then proceed to pave the way for the thriving community that I had been shown, which would have rich offering to give to each other and the world—we would have to work towards this possibility and create the reality for ourselves. Of course, this has always been the way . . . the Universe opens a door and we have to decide to walk through and discover what is there for ourselves! I know that from my own life experience, as do all those who live self-mastery, and who embrace and are committed to the higher ways of being. “We are the Ones that we have been waiting for,” as the wisdom of the Hopi people says in a poem that I have read.

As I write this today, I realize that it is up to me and all the others who are being called to become responsible, to give what we can and do what we know to do, or don't yet know how to do but will do anyway. I was asked to serve as a member of the AIWP Advisory Board, and when I said that I would be delighted to do so—and I am absolutely delighted—I also knew that I was saying yes to working within a team of “builders” of the future . . . I knew that if I wanted to make the visions that I have had a reality, I would have to roll up my sleeves and listen carefully from within to receive guidance about my role. This understanding was brought home to me over and over again last November for that 1 1/2 days—the understanding that great potential existed, and that with it came great responsibility! So I step forward and accept the honor of serving from a practical place of not only fitting in and making a contribution, but also from a place of knowing that the “next level” is not a romantic notion, it is only what we will make it.

- Reverend Aliah MaJon

AIWP Coming Home was exactly that for my heart and soul. I arrived to a circle of kindred souls; outlaws or pioneers who warmly, instantly embraced all of me. The day flowed with interaction revealing unity and diversity with rich consistency of heart-felt appreciation, as if orphaned and now embraced by loving, soul family. Dinner echoed a toast to Mel and Kate “For s/he's a jolly good fellow.” A moment in time captured in my heart and mind. What a gift they have given us. How blessed we are to have AIWP. Thank you, Mel. Thank you, Kate, and all the others. I have been craving community. I found it. Even though separated by distance, the reconnection with kindred spirits seems the beginning of a life-long journey together . . . a special family indeed. I left the mansion jubilant after finding a new home inside of me . . . a spiritual place that is making me dance and sing.

- JacQuaeline



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SAVE the DATE: Second Annual Gathering November 5-6, 2005!

Good News . . . Liability Insurance Providers

Thanks to information received from ordained members Kim Chernin and Sherri Zysk, we have finally been able to identify two resources for pastoral counseling liability insurance. The two agencies listed here offer such insurance at reasonable rates (approximately \$200 - \$300 annually for pastoral counseling of 20 hours or less per week). If you are interested in such insurance, you may receive information and applications by contacting Carol Viggiano at American Professional Agency, Inc. (800) 421-6694, or call National Professional Group, (800) 253-5486. Both of these agencies have insurance specific to ordained ministers wishing to obtain individual liability insurance.

Credo

of the Association for the Integration of the Whole Person

Love of life and people is achieved through an integrated awakening of physical, mental, spiritual, and emotional processes. Life itself is a religious experience as realized in the temple of my being. I am performing a religious service when my thoughts and deeds involve an affirmation of life. My congregation is both myself and those who seek my support in striving towards an integration of the whole person. To serve others, for fee or gratuity, who seek my assistance in the pursuit of this religious experience is both my commitment and my right, free from any persecution. My service is supported by the Association for the Integration of the Whole Person in agreement with the Constitution of the United States. Membership in the Association for the Integration of the Whole Person will be denied or revoked if I interfere with or injure the rights of others, perform criminal acts, or practice medicine without a license. My service, whether for fee or gratuity, is limited to the areas for which I have been qualified.