



# Regional Newsletter

April 2019

## Reaching Out to Those Impacted by Flooding

Dear MWOHS Members,

I greet you with compassion and hope. In the last few weeks, many of us have watched the crisis unfolding in our Midwest region. While Nebraska has experienced much of the devastation, Iowa and Missouri also have been dramatically effected. Our thoughts and prayers remain with the people in our communities.

As the waters recede, people will be faced with the daunting task of putting their lives back together. I call upon members of MWOHS to reach out to your fellow citizens in need. If you are working in a human services agency providing support, please share your resources so we can disseminate them here on our website for those who are in need. You can send information to [kristin.faixwilkinson@mail.waldenu.edu](mailto:kristin.faixwilkinson@mail.waldenu.edu).

To those experiencing a disaster, there is a plethora of feelings, and they may seem contradictory, at times. The bone weariness sets in, and this makes dealing with emotions and stress so much harder. Know that it is OK to feel sad, depressed, anxious, angry, afraid and maybe even just numb. Remember to breathe and know help is out there for you. On behalf of the Board of MWOHS, we are with you in thought and spirit, and we wish you peace.

We are with you in thought and spirit, and wish you peace on this difficult journey.

Kristin, Emily, Delores, and Melissa

MWOHS Board Members

## MWOHS Member Spotlight

For each edition of our newsletter, we want to spotlight a member who is contributing to the field of human services. This month our spotlight is on Dr. Melissa Spriggs, who has become more active in MWOHS over the last year by becoming the treasurer for our region.

Melissa Spriggs has worked in the human services field for over 20 years in the areas of disabilities services, substance abuse, juvenile corrections, mental health, and several educational settings. Melissa has also been adjunct faculty at George Washington University, Trinity Washington University, McKendree University, and Lindenwood University. She holds a bachelor's degree in psychology from Truman State University, a master's degree in counseling from Western Illinois University, and a doctorate in counseling from George Washington University.

Melissa is currently the director of the MA in Human Services program at Webster University in St. Louis, MO. The program began in the Fall of 2015 and is now offered both as a blended program to local students and also fully online. Melissa enjoys educating, mentoring, and advising her students as they progress and grow through the

program and in their careers. Her current research interests are compassion fatigue, and identity and career development of human services workers. Melissa will be presenting at the upcoming SOHS regional conference in April and would love to connect with any other MWOHS members who attend. Connect with her via email: [melissaspriggs55@webster.edu](mailto:melissaspriggs55@webster.edu).

Do you know someone you'd like to be showcased in an upcoming MWOHS Member Spotlight? You are welcome to nominate someone or yourself – it is a good way to promote someone to the regional group. Please contact Emily Fenster at [emily.fenster@vcu.edu](mailto:emily.fenster@vcu.edu) with suggestions; in your email, please include the individual's name and email so she can follow up with them.

## **Wanted: MWOHS Podcast Series Contributions**

Make sure to check out our previous podcasts, which are accessible at MWOHS website. We are now at the point where we would like to use our podcasts to showcase a wide range of things you all are doing in your communities and the issues you are discussing. We want more voices to be included in the podcast series. This is a great way to promote your efforts and ideas to MWOHS, and more broadly, to NOHS.

We are open to all sorts of ideas, as long as it relates to the field of human services. Proposals from students, faculty, members of community groups, and/or allied professionals are all welcome. Your proposals can focus on a wide range of things, such as: issues that relate to the field, innovative approaches you're using to address issues in the community, new things you're trying out in human services courses, practice-related interventions, etc.

The ideal length of time for these podcasts is 10-20 minutes.

If interested, submit your idea by April 30<sup>th</sup> to Kristin Faix Wilkinson at [kristin.faixwilkinson@mail.waldenu.edu](mailto:kristin.faixwilkinson@mail.waldenu.edu). In your email, include details on the following: who will be “conducting” the podcast (i.e., who will be speaking), a title, a purpose, and a short summary. Once approved, you will receive general advice/guidance on the podcast creation process. The goal is to have the first one posted on our website by the end of May.

## **Leadership Opportunity: Become a Board Member**

The terms for the current board members will be ending in October. You have a chance to help direct the region by serving as the next President, Vice President, Secretary, or Treasurer. With all the work we've been doing over the last few years, it really is a great time to get involved!

Please contact Kristin Faix Wilkinson at [kristin.faixwilkinson@mail.waldenu.edu](mailto:kristin.faixwilkinson@mail.waldenu.edu) or Emily Fenster at [emily.fenster@vcu.edu](mailto:emily.fenster@vcu.edu) if you have any questions. We are happy to share more specific details on what we've been doing over the last few years, what level of time commitment is involved, and opportunities for the future.

## **Leadership Opportunity: Future Web Conferences**

When we tested out the web conference approach over the last few years, participants noted they liked the flexibility and low cost for involvement. Therefore, with our improved knowledge of the process and technical requirements, we would like to attempt it again. If you are interested in assisting – be it organizing and/or presenting, we encourage you to send your contact information to us; this way, you can be part of the planning process.

Please contact Kristin Faix Wilkinson at [kristin.faixwilkinson@mail.waldenu.edu](mailto:kristin.faixwilkinson@mail.waldenu.edu) if you have any questions.

## **Wanted: Examples of What You're Doing in Your Communities**

Beyond everything else noted in this newsletter, we'd like to learn more about you and what you're doing in your communities. Are you testing out any new interventions or programs in your communities? If you're part of an

academic program, how do you find ways to connect with your community organizations? How are you addressing the more present issues in your communities?

Please contact Kristin Faix Wilkinson at [kristin.faixwilkinson@mail.waldenu.edu](mailto:kristin.faixwilkinson@mail.waldenu.edu) or Emily Fenster at [emily.fenster@vcsu.edu](mailto:emily.fenster@vcsu.edu) if you have any questions.

### **Wanted: Website & Facebook Suggestions**

We're continuing to make changes to improve our online presence; over the last year, we have been working on both our regional website and Facebook page. We encourage you to bookmark and like our website and Facebook page – and be sure to share them with others who may be interested in connecting with us.

Website: [www.nationalhumanservices.org/mwohs](http://www.nationalhumanservices.org/mwohs)

Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/Midwest-Region-of-Human-Services-MWOHS-1927109977316544/>

Do you have any ideas for our website or Facebook page? Is there something you'd like to see on them? Do you know of any other good links and resources we should be sharing on our sites? Please contact Kristin Faix Wilkinson at [kristin.faixwilkinson@mail.waldenu.edu](mailto:kristin.faixwilkinson@mail.waldenu.edu) if you have any ideas or want to contribute.

### **Wanted: Newsletter Contributions**

Are you looking for low-pressure opportunities to “beef up” your resume and/or share news with the region? Please consider contributing to our newsletter.

- Do you want to write an article on a Human Services topic?
- Do you have something interesting you want to share with others in MWOHS?
- Is your organization or program doing something you want to highlight?
- Is there something happening in your state that you'd like to share with the entire region?
- Do you want to nominate someone for a future MWOHS Member Spotlight?

Please contact Emily Fenster at [emily.fenster@vcsu.edu](mailto:emily.fenster@vcsu.edu) if you would like to contribute or have questions.

### **General Information & MWOHS Board Members**

Website: [www.nationalhumanservices.org/mwohs](http://www.nationalhumanservices.org/mwohs)

Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/Midwest-Region-of-Human-Services-MWOHS-1927109977316544/>

Board Members:

President: Kristin Faix Wilkinson, Walden University  
Vice President: Delores Langston, Baker College of Flint  
Secretary: Emily Fenster, Valley City State University  
Treasurer: Melissa Spriggs, Webster University

Newsletter Editor:

Emily Fenster