

Empowering relationships...



DECEMBER 2021

# The Redwood Empire Therapist

## DECEMBER ONLINE MEETING



## Cultural Competency: Working with First Responders with Joel Fay, PsyD

Friday, Dec. 3rd, 2021  
10:00 am - 12:30 pm

Zoom Webinar  
2 CEUs

This two-hour presentation will address the unique challenges facing first responders and how you can help the community access culturally competent mental health care. Having served as a police officer for over 30 years (retired in 2011,) Dr. Fay nevertheless obtained his Doctorate in Psychology from the American School of Professional Psychology in 1999 and is now in private practice working with emergency responders from numerous organizations. His specialty areas include psychological treatment for emergency responders, peer support, critical incident stress response, PTSD and police response to persons with mental illness. Dr. Fay teaches a variety of topics for numerous agencies throughout California.

**January 7, 2022 -- 10:00-12:00 Zoom**

**Al-Anon Family Groups  
Bob Dalzell, LMFT & Panel**

**February 4, 2022 -10:00-11:30 Zoom**  
**Using the Body to Regulate Emotion: Perspectives  
from Dialectical Behavioral Therapy**  
**Susette Bray, LMFT**

Register for all these and other offerings you will find inside this newsletter and also on our website at [www.recamft.org](http://www.recamft.org)

RECAMFT CEU PROVIDER IMIS 57173

Dr. Faye will help us understand the current mental health challenges facing First Responders and teach us how to explain PTSD to First Responders in a way that fits within the worldview of their culture. We will be able to explain the concept of moral injuries and articulate the barriers to accessing help in First Responder communities.

Dr. Fay has authored/co-authored a number of articles and co-authored, "Counseling Cops, What Clinicians Need to Know" published by Guilford. He is a member of the International Association of Chiefs of Police and is on their Psychological Services Committee. Dr. Fay is board certified in Police and Public Safety Psychology. He is a past President of the Forensic

Mental Health Association of California and the First Responder Support Network. Dr. Fay is the current clinical director for the First Responder Support Network. Dr. Fay is a frequent instructor on forensic mental health and trauma reaction/treatment issues and a guest speaker at numerous conferences throughout the country.

Dr. Fay has received numerous awards for his work including the 2007 Humanitarian Award, presented by the California Psychological Association and the 2012 award for Outstanding Contributions to the Practice of Police & Public Safety Psychology presented by the American Psychological Association. *Joel's website: [www.JoelFay.com](http://www.JoelFay.com)*



**Please Note: Zoom Webinar – Register at [recamft.org](http://recamft.org). Once you have RSVP'd you will receive a link to register for the webinar. You must complete this second step to gain access to the event link.**



## **BIG News for RECAMFT from the CAMFT Nominating Committee!**

### **2021 Acting President's Message Laura Strom**

It was a thrill for me to see the announcement that our 2020 Chapter President, the very talented Tara D'Orazio, is running for the state CAMFT Board of Directors as President Elect! I was further delighted learning that Victoria Rohrer, our Secretary, is running for CAMFT Director at Large. How wonderful it is for all of us to share this honor with Tara and Vicky!

Tara D'Orazio is an innovative and visionary leader. Tara is well respected and liked in our chapter, especially after she successfully brought RECAMFT through our 2020 pandemic year with so many creative ideas to keep the chapter running as we coped with the stress of coronavirus, transformation of our business models, and wildfire threat. As the leader of our RECAMFT Board, Tara was calm, level-headed, and always listening to all points of view. She constantly kept our safety in mind. Tara created a host of events to keep us connected last year – town halls, crafting/book groups, along with an exciting series of presenters. This year to prepare our members for fire season she created a series of trauma-informed yoga events, and support groups for members coping with wildfire stress, all on the Zoom platform.

When 2020 brought us the horror of George Floyd's death, Tara responded by creating RECAMFT's first ever Diversity Committee (now called the Racial and Social Justice Committee) which resulted in our Board adopting a Racial and Social Justice Pledge, and a Strategic Plan in support of creating a community of anti-racists. This is a prime example of Tara's farsighted vision for our profession. She is laser focused on issues of diversity,

equity, and inclusion both for our members and organization, and in how we serve our communities and clientele.

Tara transformed our accounting methods to be touchless with multiple back-up systems. She oversaw the transformation of our speakers to Zoom webinars, and parlayed us into offering Zoom CEs for our members. She set up the first program for our chapter in which we can watch videos of presentations for CE credit. She obtained the help and training we needed to step into the cyber world. She restructured our website to include therapist identifiers, such as BIPOC, LGBTQ+, preferred pronouns, etc. Through it all, she maintains a respectful attitude of humility, soft-spoken thoughtfulness, and a clever wit that is both fun and delights me.

Prior to her role as our President, she served as our Membership Chair and a Director at Large. She organized several summer picnics for new members, and now has a program in place to send special care packets to warmly greet new folks. She helped organize a wonderful, lively Board retreat this year (held at Hogwarts!). Very recently, she saw her vision for the Joe and Pamela Ward Memorial RECAMFT Scholarship for pre-licensed and newly licensed members blossom into fruition. She envisioned three scholarships to honor each of the Ward's three adopted children. She makes herself available to pre-licensed members, offering her support to help create the successful vibrant, supportive community RECAMFT brags about for students, trainees

and associates. Scholarships for them are just one more creative endeavor she brought to the table.

Tara has a particular place in her heart for wildfire trauma. She was supportive of RECAMFT's efforts beginning in 2017 to create a coalition of mental health professionals from various organizations to address the stress and trauma our entire community suffered when the Tubbs wildfire took out over 5000 homes in the Santa Rosa area. Starting with RECAMFT, and a professional fund raiser, Tara was part of a Board vision that eventually raised over \$1 million dollars to help the community recover from the fires, trained over 500 mental health professionals in Skills for Psychological Recovery, paid clinicians to treat fire victims, and produced clinical research in collaboration with Stanford and the Palo Alto VA to help other communities who are faced with large-scale disasters in the future. This effort was truly visionary on a very large scale, a source of pride for all of us. Tara contributed to its successful roll-out, and has developed a deep understanding of the intricacies of disaster mental health as it impacts large communities. Her further training as a trauma therapist has served our county well. It was Tara who found our December speaker specializing in cultural competence with first responders.

I am so happy to see RECAMFT members continuing to contribute towards the vision and direction of the CAMFT Board of Directors. Both Vicky and Tara will be fabulous additions to the CAMFT Board – assuming we get them elected. **That job belongs to all of us.** Please ask your colleagues to vote for Tara D’Orazio as President Elect of CAMFT, and let them know Victoria Rohrer is ours, too. Let’s start spreading the word to all our colleagues statewide to endorse Tara D’Orazio for CAMFT’s next President Elect!

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It is such a gratifying feeling to be part of an organization and a Board of Directors who can make a big difference. I am so proud to report that Tara’s vision of a pre-licensed / newly licensed scholarship program honoring the legacy of the Ward’s and their dedication to children through adopting three of their own, has been brought to life! Please be sure to visit RECAMFT’s new scholarship page to find out how you can help honor the memory of Joe and Pam Ward, our Admins over the last decade, and help future clinicians through your tax-deductible donation. The new Joe and Pamela Ward Memorial RECAMFT Scholarship page is located under the “About Us” tab on our website at

<https://recamft.org/Scholarship>. I look forward to letting you know how our fundraising event is going in next month’s President’s Message. I know our generous members will make this dream a reality with your donations, and thank you in advance for **rocking** it!

I want to again thank Lisa Wenninger who is an angel in disguise for her amazing work filling in for Joe Ward after his death. She is a dream to work with, and so knowledgeable, especially about technology. Lisa, Tara and I are managing to keep RECAMFT running, although some things are a little slower. Not Lisa, though. She got the video of our November speaker done in less than 24 hours! Be sure to check it out here: <https://www.recamft.org/webinar-videos>.

With long, slow deep breaths,



Laura Strom, PsyD, LMFT  
RECAMFT’s 2021 Acting President,  
President Elect  
RECAMFT’s 2022 President

### JOIN RECAMFTS LISTSERV

*It's easy. Just send your email request to  
join the RECAMFT listserv to:  
[therapy@recamft.org](mailto:therapy@recamft.org)*

*Once your RECAMFT membership is  
confirmed, address emails to the group  
to [recamft@groups.io](mailto:recamft@groups.io)*

### RECAMFT’s Resiliency Program

Pre-Licensed Collaborative (all 10am-12pm):  
12/18/2021 <https://www.recamft.org/event-4303202>

Crafting Groups (all 11:30am-12:30pm)  
12/10/2021 <https://www.recamft.org/event-4478197> Crafting  
Groups (all 11:30am-12:30pm)

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**President Elect** Laura Strom 707- 889-9168

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**CFO:** Acting CFO: Kira Kayler 415-854-9408

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**Director-at-Large:** Jean Hayes 415-897-1648

**Director-at-Large:** Gina Culver 707-331-7130

### COMMITTEE CHAIRS AND MEMBERS

**CEU Chair:** Joanne Consiglieri

**Community Outreach:** Debra Melmon

**Conference Co-Chairs & D.A.L.:** Kristin Mills 707-527-6168  
Barbara Young 707-318-3839

**Crisis Response & D.A.L.:** Vacant

**Racial & Social Justice Committee Co-Chairs:**

Katharina Kienboeck 707-347-6546,

Linda Block 310-871-8795

**Ethics:** L. Reyna Seminara 523-9192

**Hospitality Chair:** Vacant

**Membership:** Tara D'Orazio 707-992-5008

**Newsletter Editor:** Gail Van Buuren 707-494-4198

**Pre-licensed Chair:** Ally Shamseldin

[allyshamseldin@hotmail.com](mailto:allyshamseldin@hotmail.com)

**Programs:** Gina Culver, Chair 707-331-7130

Michael Krikorian 707- 579-0838

**Therapy Group Inserts:** Renee Owen 415-453-8117

**Website and Technology:** Laura Strom 707-889-9168

### STAFF

**Video Production & Administrative Consultant:**

Lisa Wenninger [recamft.org](http://recamft.org)

## *In Case You Missed It* *Michael Krikorian*

Today we heard an interesting and very informative lecture on "Trauma and the Neuroendocrine Cascade" from local neuropsychologist, Rick Olcese, Ph.D. Dr. Olcese explained how the body, and the brain in particular, responds similarly to trauma as it does to a concussion injury. When distress or trauma occurs, we have a neuroendocrine cascade that is regulated within the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal axis (HPA). Signals of danger coming from the amygdala or the frontal lobe can

trigger the HPA axis to release both excitatory hormones (dopamine, acetylcholine and norepinephrine) as well as relaxation hormones like serotonin and GABA. One of the first things that happen as these neurochemicals flood the body is inflammation which is the body's way of protecting the damaged area so healing and repair can take place. The inflammation can be physical such as swelling, or emotional which shows up as anxiety and depression.

The HPA axis has feedback loops so it can adjust the balance of activation and relaxation chemicals as the danger subsides or new interpretations of what has occurred get sent by the frontal lobe. A problem occurs when the alarm system in the HPA axis gets stuck in a "loop" and inflammation chemicals continue to get released and we stay triggered without resolution or relaxation. Dr. Olcese explained how we then shift from being "present" (open to all stimuli in our awareness) to "vigilant" (feeling not safe and being so sensitive to threat that we are searching for it even if it is not there).

Dr. Olcese told of how he goes about treatment of trauma. He addresses the inflammation process by nutrition and, if necessary, medication. For nutrition, Dr. Olcese looks to help the patient eat the foods that provide the body with the ingredients it needs to manufacture the needed neurotransmitters like dopamine, acetylcholine, serotonin and GABA (Dr. Olcese's PowerPoint slides are available online through RECAMFT that give details on his recommended foods and supplements). He cautions that during this healing period caffeine, nicotine, alcohol and sugar work against healing as they "replace" the needed neurotransmitters and are not effective for healing.

Dr. Olcese addresses the cognitive and executive functioning problems of trauma by having the client practice mindful meditation which teaches patients how to be less reactive to emotions and to reboot the brain's arousal rhythms. Meditation has also been shown to produce positive changes in the structure of the brain as does exercise, another activity he recommends. Dr. Olcese uses CBT to help the patient examine and change distortions in thinking. He works with patients to improve their sleep and learn to pace themselves throughout the day with activity/rest periods so they learn to not overstress the brain and body.

Finally, Dr. Olcese makes the point that emotions only last a few seconds in the neurochemistry of the brain. They can last a lot longer than that when our mind gives

certain meaning and judgement to them which is what can happen with trauma. He believes that by following the steps he has outlined, you can heal trauma and restore faith in yourself as the healing agent and the source of security.

Thank you, Dr. Olcese, for this very informative training. Dr. Olcese practices in Santa Rosa and can be reached at [drricko@yahoo.com](mailto:drricko@yahoo.com).

*Michael Krikorian, MFT, has been practicing for over 40 years in Santa Rosa seeing individual adults and couples. [www.krikorianmft.com](http://www.krikorianmft.com)*

## **RECAMFT's New Scholarships are a Great Way to Memorialize the Wards, and Benefit Our Profession**

RECAMFT's Board of Directors created a new scholarship program to honor the legacy of Joe and Pam Ward who were both our Administrative Consultants over the last decade, and contributed so much to our chapter's growth. A donation to the Joe and Pamela Ward Memorial RECAMFT Scholarship will benefit pre-licensed and newly licensed members. The Board voted to match 50% of the first member funding drive to set up 3 years of scholarships.

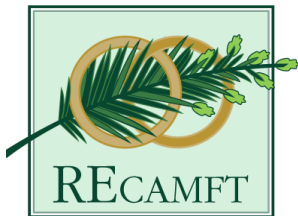
Members are encouraged to make a fully tax-deductible donation to honor the work of the Wards and provide monies for up-and-coming new clinicians in our profession. The program has allotted 100% of the money to benefit recipients. The first funding drive is for a total of \$10,500 which will fund the first three years of scholarships at \$3500 annually.

Each year two (2) pre-licensed and one (1) newly licensed member can enter to win a \$1000 scholarship to help them in their goal to become a licensed clinician. The scholarships include a year of RECAMFT membership, too. An additional five grants of \$100 are available to pre-licensed members to help defray the cost of CAMFT membership (with proof of payment to CAMFT). There is a lifetime maximum of two scholarships, and preference will be given to historically resilient and underrepresented groups (BIPOC, living with disabilities, LGBTQ+, elders, etc.). The new RECAMFT Scholarship Committee will review the applications to choose the winners.

We will accept applications from January 1 to April 30<sup>th</sup> annually. Winners will be chosen in May, and approved at the June Board meeting. Funds will be distributed in July. Winners will be acknowledged at the September speaker meeting, and a newsletter article will inform the members who won.

To find out more, including how to apply for a scholarship or donate to this doubly worthy cause, please visit <https://recamft.org/Scholarship> located under the "About Us" tab.

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**DECEMBER ISSUE**

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### **NEWSLETTER DISCLAIMERS**

The opinions and points of view in the articles contained herein do not necessarily reflect that of the Board of Directors of RECAMFT or of CAMFT. Authors' contact information is included. Submitted articles may be edited and are published at our discretion depending on space and relevance to our readers' professional interests.

### **RECAMFT HONORS PAST PRESIDENTS**

Laura Strom, Acting President	2021
Tara D;Orazio	2020
Doreen Van Leeuwen	2019
Erica Thomas	2018
Reyna Seminara	2017
Bob Dalzell	2016
Kris Spangler	2015
Laura Strom	2014
Lani Lee	2013
Hal Forman	2012
Elaine Sohler Gayler	2011
Cynthia Halliday	2010
Susan Hartz	2009
Kate Maxwell	2008
Gail Van Buuren	2007
Diana Poulson	2005-2006
Joan Logan	2004
Judith Goleman	2003
Ange Stephens	2002
Christopher Doyle	2001
F. Michael Montgomery	2000
Julie Green	1999
Jan Lowry-Cole	1998
Rhaea Maurel	1997
Paula Hall	1996
Kitty Chelton	1994-1995
Don Scully & Randi Farkas	1993-1994
Hari Meyers	1992-1993
Grace Harris	1991-1992
Richard Alongi	1990-1991
Diana Young	1989
Andrew Leeds	1988
Carleita Schwartz	1987
Christine Bucholz	1986
Thomas Hedlund	1982-1985
Rick Mawson	1980-1982