

THE
ACKERMAN
INSTITUTE
FOR THE
FAMILY

**2019
ANNUAL
REPORT**

ACKERMAN FAMILY

ackerman
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family

INTRODUCTION

It is an honor to share our 2019 Annual Report – a reflection on what we have learned, accomplished, and aspire to as a community. As leaders in professional training of family therapists for 60 years, Ackerman Institute for the Family remains an innovator in the branch of psychotherapy in which families create new interactions, patterns, and creative ways of being together. Never has our work been more relevant than today.

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ABOUT ACKERMAN



Above: Ackerman class of 2019 with faculty and staff.

Letter from President & CEO and Board Chair

Dear Friends,

As we write to share the 2019 Annual Report we are enveloped by the COVID-19 pandemic coupled with the inequity and racism plaguing all of us. As an Institute founded to train family therapists, our ethics demand that we care about all people, all families, and act towards social justice. Looking back at the year behind us helps us to appreciate where we have been and gain focus for our community for the future.

In this report, we highlight the steadfast commitment of the Ackerman faculty and staff to relational work in challenging times and the life-changing impact of Ackerman alumni in communities across the country. In a world where families are experiencing the trauma of separation and isolation, where homelessness and hopelessness destroy connections, and where teen suicide risk and substance misuse paralyze relationships, Ackerman Institute sees interconnection and interdependence as the way forward. Since 1960, we have pushed the boundaries to foster meaningful and just relationship. We are steadfast in those commitments today and are building our capacities for a future that ensures that all families flourish.

Sixty years ago, when Nathan Ackerman opened the doors of Ackerman Institute for the Family, he trained family therapists to identify systems in family life because he saw the potential to liberate. This was his life's work. Today, our faculty and therapist-trainees thrive within these tangled webs of identities and relationships, encouraging each other to step in, step back, and step up in supporting families and communities to face challenges and create unprecedented, sustained, and transformative change.

Our unwavering commitment to jettisoning racism in all its forms and to making the world a more just and equitable place is not something we do alone. It is our therapist-trainees, partners, and supporters, who make all things possible. We are each responsible to take action, especially those of

us who sit with White privilege. We simply cannot be silent. We are especially proud of the culminating work highlighted in this report:

- Ackerman Institute's Social Work & Diversity Program, its founders Sippio Small, Laurie Kaplan and Ruth Mohr and the 148 alumni of the program.
- Creation of the Vice President of Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion position and hiring of Kiran Shahreen Kaur Arora, PhD as the leader charting these paths.
- Inclusion reflected in our work, including more than 25 years of partnership with Fundación Aiglé in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

When more is asked of us, we have the opportunity to be better, stronger, and more resilient. Our capable team has embraced innovative technology and new ways of working in order to deliver all training online and therapy services using teletherapy methods. This moment has given us the opportunity to be the best institution we can be and to engage the Ackerman alumni to join in heeding this call. Our remarkable community is a regular source of support, serving as therapist volunteers, sounding boards, mentors, champions, ambassadors, and advisers.

This is an amazing community, whom we are grateful to serve. As we search out new, radical ways to operate in 2020, we invite you to join us in meeting the challenge.

With hope & courage,



Martha Fling
President & CEO



Ira Sallen
Chair, Board of
Directors

About Ackerman

As leaders for nearly 60 years in the training of therapists and the delivery of family therapy, the Ackerman Institute for the Family provides mental health care for families from all socio-economic backgrounds. Founder Nathan Ackerman published, taught, and showed films demonstrating this new method of seeing patients and their families together. He pioneered not only a new type of therapy, but also the tradition of the audiovisual documentation of clinical work that became a cornerstone of family therapy training. Ackerman-trained therapists use innovative approaches to complex and contemporary challenges facing families of every form and history. Ackerman Institute is committed to placing the goals of diversity, equity, and inclusion at the center of everything we do. We wholeheartedly believe that it is strong alliances that create change and drive success for our families and our communities.

Our Mission

The Ackerman Institute's mission is to provide: (1) Innovative couple and family therapy services through its on-site clinic (licensed by the State of New York Office of Mental Health), (2) State-of-the-art training programs for mental health and other professionals on-site, in community settings and internationally, and (3) Cutting-edge innovations that focus on the development of new treatment models and training techniques.

We innovate and disseminate our methods of practice to a large network of organizations, practitioners, and families. We are committed to applying social justice in clinical settings and training therapists in socially just clinical practices. Our projects address conditions that interfere with quality family life and relationships and provide therapists with small professional learning communities where they continue to grow and advance their practice.

Our vision is to develop in all families the relational skills and strengths needed to prosper and flourish.

In 2019, The Ackerman Institute for the Family:

7,377

Delivered 7,377 family therapy sessions.

25

Celebrated over 25 years of partnership with Fundación Aiglé

12

Launched 12 family therapists from post-graduate training into their careers and into the Ackerman alumni community.

27

Honored the Social Work and Diversity Program and our 27 years of partnership with the Silberman School of Social Work at Hunter College, the NYU Silver School of Social Work, and the Columbia School of Social Work.

6,000

Reached more than 6,000 therapists with professional development workshops and short courses.

30

Supported over 30 clinical projects since 1960.

FEATURES

Social Work & Diversity Program Receives the Ackerman Legacy Honor

In 2019, the Ackerman Institute's Social Work and Diversity Program received the Ackerman Legacy Honor. We are grateful for our 27-year partnerships with the Silberman School of Social Work at Hunter College, the NYU Silver School of Social Work and the Columbia School of Social Work. Co-Director, Laurie Kaplan shares a history of the program and impact, in her own words.

Above: Kiran Arora presents Laurie Kaplan with the Ackerman Legacy Honor.



Above: Ackerman's Social Work and Diversity Program founders, Sippio Small, Laurie Kaplan, and Ruth Mohr.

The History of the Social Work and Diversity Program at the Ackerman Institute for the Family

By Laurie Kaplan, Co-Director

In 1992, there were only two students and two faculty members of color at the Ackerman Institute. Nationally, only 4% of couple and family therapists were of color. Families of color and white families were being treated almost solely by white professionals. Our field's theoretical base was strongly influenced by its dominant White membership and lacked the knowledge, lived experience and expertise of professionals of color. This underrepresentation impeded the development of a community of multiracial professionals tackling the problems that families face and did little to reduce racial bias in our society.

To address this, Sippio Small proposed to colleagues Laurie Kaplan and Ruth Mohr that we create a training program for students of color that would significantly begin to diversify

Ackerman's student population. We researched recruitment strategies for students of color in social work and discovered that essential ingredients for success were: early recruitment, mentorships and financial and emotional support. Mr. Small emphasized the importance of recruiting students of color while they were still in graduate school and also suggested that we enlist the help of Arthur Maslow, a former faculty member and current board member who agreed to provide initial start up funds. It cannot be emphasized enough the importance of that support. The Maslow family's ongoing steadfast commitment to this program has been integral to its survival.

In 1992, the Social Work and Diversity Program was born. Columbia, NYU and the Hunter Schools of Social Work agreed to partner with us and send us two



Above: Social Work & Diversity Program Class of 2019

second year graduate students from each school per calendar year. The program was designed to begin as a one-year internship in the second year of a master's level graduate school of social work program. Upon graduation from the universities, students would be invited to continue at Ackerman for an additional 4 years of postgraduate training and would be provided with financial assistance to do so.

As a multi-racial teaching team (African-American, White Jewish and White Mennonite) we committed ourselves to explore our different lived experiences with regard to race, class, power, privilege and other identities. This was not always easy- and learning how to articulate

our struggles with one another helped prepare us for the struggles of our students. It was challenging to be a group of students of color in a predominately white institution. In addition, although all students were of color, there would be many racial, cultural, sexual orientation, gender and class differences among them. These differences would require exploration and provide opportunities to examine their relationships, which would also begin to expand their dialogue and influence their work with families.

Another goal of the program was to create the opportunity to become a community of professionals of color. Each 6 student cohort spends 14-21 hours a week with one another, giving up their week-ends to see

families as co-therapy teams, sharing their histories and the multiple identities they carry and developing a deeply shared intimacy with one another. Bi-annual alumni events enable students to stay in touch, network with one another and enjoy and sustain their connection.

The Social Work and Diversity Program has been a vehicle to recruit and retain students of color, enabling a family therapy institution to reliably count on a slow but steady diversification of its student population and its faculty. A unifying premise that Small, Mohr and Kaplan shared was that we believed that a change in organizational structure would set the stage for a paradigm shift in our institution's commitment to promote racial equity and justice. Simply put, increasing the numbers of professionals of color at the Institute would create the opportunity for new organizational structures and paradigms to evolve, and most importantly, to survive. These seeds bore fruit. As numbers of students increased, so did faculty of color. Over time, mentoring groups for students and faculty of color developed and these groups proved essential to the continuing development of a community of professionals

of color and ongoing institutional change.

Twenty-seven years later, we have trained 148 students. Graduates of the program are working locally and nationally in community agencies, hospitals and academic institutions. Nine graduates have become faculty members at the Institute and have made and continue to make a significant impact in how we think, how we teach and how we work with families.

Kaplan and Small are deeply indebted to the late Ruth Mohr, who provided wise mentorship to them both, reminding them, during difficult times, that they were united in their commitment to social justice and to continue to mine their differences to deepen cross-racial understanding. It has been nineteen years since her death, and her unwavering faith in humanity's potential reminds all of us, even in the most difficult times, to soldier on.

A Tribute to Sippio Small, Co-Director

Sippio Small was a man of passion and conviction, and he believed deeply in creating change for social workers of color and for society at large. Sippio began his affiliation with the Ackerman Institute in 1989, and was a pillar of the social work community.

Sippio was a visionary teacher and thinker. In 1992, he co-founded Ackerman's Social Work and Diversity Program, which led to powerful new approaches in the therapy room. Through his work with this groundbreaking program, Sippio mentored students of color and endeavored to increase racial equity and justice in the field of social work. In 2019, Sippio and the Social Work and Diversity Program were recognized with the Ackerman Legacy Honor.

Sippio was a supervisor in Ackerman's Live Clinical and Externship Programs, and was

a member of several Ackerman clinical research projects including the AIDS/HIV Project, Making Families Safe for Children, and Substance Abuse and Community Training. His gifted work with these projects touched the lives of many, and has become a cornerstone for future generations of researchers and thinkers at Ackerman.

Sippio was a graduate of the Hunter College School of Social Work, and was a licensed clinical social worker with over three decades of experience working with children, adolescents, adults, and the elderly across countless communities. He was a champion of social justice and a powerful force in the lives of many.

Sippio's leadership will be missed. We believe that his legacy will live on through the trainees he empowered and the communities he touched.



Above: Sippio Small, Co-Director of the Social Work & Diversity Program



Mission-Critical Work of Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion

Click the image above to open the video in your internet browser.

Kiran Arora, PhD, leads Ackerman Institute's approach to diversity, equity, and inclusion throughout the organization. Kiran is a trained and licensed family therapist and an organizational consultant. In this video, listen to Kiran describe Ackerman Institute's goals for meeting the needs of all families, of all backgrounds. She lifts up our collective desires to be a place where differences are welcomed and where different perspectives are respected and heard.

Over 25 Years of Partnership with Fundación Aiglé

For over 25 years Ackerman Institute for the Family and Fundación Aiglé have engaged in a partnership rooted in a love for systemic thinking and family therapy. The Fundación Aiglé partnership has entailed trainings delivered in New York and in Buenos Aires, Argentina, with students coming from Argentina, Chile, Guatemala, Mexico, Paraguay, and Uruguay. This dynamic partnership, informed by knowledge and gifts mutually exchanged, spawned additional partnerships in Chile, China, Hong Kong, Israel, Japan, and Mexico.

In 2019, Ackerman was honored to host a group of therapists from Fundación Aiglé and the Chilean Family Therapy Institute who immersed themselves in a week of faculty presentations. The week began with an Introduction to the Ackerman Relational Approach by Lisa Lavelle, LCSW and workshops

which included: Promoting Resilience in Families: Parenting & Children with Special Needs by Judy Grossman, DrPH, OTR, FAOTA; A Socially Just Framework when Working with Latinx Immigrant Youth & Families by Genoveva Garcia, LCSW; Secrets in Family Therapy by Evan Imber-Black, PhD, LMFT; Family Therapy with Children by Catherine Lewis, LCSW; Working with Reactivity in Couples and Families: A Buddhist Psychological Approach to Strong Emotions, by David Kezur, LCSW; Couples and Intimacy by Michele Scheinkman, LCSW; Family Therapy with Adolescents by Michael Davidowitz, PhD; Exploring the Person of the Therapist: How and Why It Matters by Dorimar Morales, LCSW & Cheryl Ching, LCSW, MRFP; The Money Factor and Couples Therapy: How to Enhance a Relational Hypothesis by Judith Stern Peck, LCSW; Children and Relational Trauma by Marcia Scheinberg, LCSW; A



Above: Students from Fundación Aiglé on-site at Ackerman Institute for a week of training.

Multidimensional Approach to Supporting Gender Expansive Youth and Families by Jean Malpas, LMFT; Context Matters: Working with Families Across Time and Space by Melba Sullivan, PhD; and Creating Compassionate Understanding: Family Therapy with Young Adults with a Serious Mental Illness by Mary Kim Brewster, PhD & Lois Braverman, LCSW. Trainees spent time in evening gatherings where they observed family therapy sessions with Ackerman externs and supervisors and attended the Friday workshop with mental health professionals coming from the New York metropolitan area.

Trainings with Fundación Aiglé students have taken place every year of the partnership except for two when the Argentine economy was destabilized and travel restrictions were imposed. In addition to hosting trainings in New York City, Ackerman faculty have traveled to Buenos Aires to present at an annual/biannual conference of up to 150 participants hosted by Fundación Aiglé. In 2019, Ackerman Faculty member, Suzanne Iasenza, PhD, presented Transforming Sexual Narratives: Guiding Couples from Sexual Disconnection to Sexual Discovery.

Over the years, Ackerman has advanced in developing and refining a therapeutic knowledge-base, shared across cultures, and in practicing curiosity and inclusion. From early in the partnership, Fundación Aiglé was integrating different theoretical approaches at a time when Ackerman's commitment to a systemic approach was the dominant methodology. We have transitioned, in our many years of collaborating, to integrating other theoretical approaches. Additionally, the partnership has influenced the Ackerman approach in teaching about cultural and multiculturalism.

Our partnership aided two critical shifts in teaching methods employed by Ackerman faculty. The first was a shift away from traditional relationships between teachers and trainees. Presentations at Fundación Aiglé typically include a "day of integration" where a case presentation and family interview are followed by an integration discussion facilitated by a member of the Ackerman faculty. Through this work we learned that a prescriptive formula for training does not translate. Therefore, every presenting problem needs to be explored through a cultural lens - therapists must understand

the multiple contextual factors contributing to the presenting problems. We learned to come to consultations "not knowing" about the family in front of us and learning about what matters to the family by asking questions. Additionally, in the early years of the collaboration we were working with ideas informed by the feminist revision in the field of family therapy and found we were challenged by societal and family norms that continued to be more organized by patriarchal and hierarchical norms. This experience challenged our notion of ourselves as collaborative and resulted in a closer, and lasting, examination of how to work collaboratively across differences.

The Fundación Aiglé partnership is part of Ackerman Institute's Community and International Training program which provides training in family therapy theory and practice for partners locally, nationally, and internationally. The scope of our partnerships have ranged from a nine-year collaboration that replicated Ackerman's core training program with Yang Methodist Memorial Social Service Agency in Hong Kong to a five-year program undertaken in collaboration with The Association of Counselors in Japan through which Ackerman faculty trained

Japanese faculty in family therapy. The expansive exchange of ideas around how to provide family therapy training has positioned Ackerman Institute for the Family as a leader, nationally and internationally, in the training of family therapists. Our work in the national and international professional community of family therapists is integral to our mission as a family therapy training institute.

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Above: Board member Nicole Poteat presents Ashley De La Rosa with the Ackerman Diversity & Inclusion Award.

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 David Beatty

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 Mark Bernal
 Nicole Bode
 Martin and Jill Butler
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 Ave Carrillo
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 David and Elise Cherny
 Michael Cherny
 Morris Cohen
 Nicholas Colas and Misty Clark
 Theresa Cosmas
 Carrie Davis
 Michael D. Dawson
 Anna De Voogt
 Maria Del Pilar Grazioso
 Paula S. Dias
 Allison Drieves
 Lisa and John Duggan
 Debbie Farrell
 Ferguson Enterprises
 Velma and Obed Fernandez
 Maria Fotsch
 Evan Gelber
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 Sibyl Jacobson

Lindsay Jones
 Kimberly Kahn and Satadru Pramanik
 Monica Karlson
 Patty Kim
 Jonathan Kindron
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 Mahalia Watson
 Carol and Kenneth D. Weiser
 Allyson and David Weston
 Jane and Robert Wyker
 Chunhong Zhang and Fei Huang
 Remy Zimmerman
 Andrew Zoltan

2019 FINANCIALS



Assets

CURRENT ASSETS

Cash and cash equivalents	\$2,040,586
Investments, at fair value	\$11,571,832
Accounts receivable, net	\$480,748
Contributions receivable	\$207,100
Prepaid expenses and other assets	\$182,303
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	\$14,482,569
Contributions receivable, net of current portion	\$16,000
Property and equipment, at cost, net of accumulated depreciation	\$9,669,255
Deferred compensation	\$109,445
TOTAL ASSETS	\$24,277,269

Liabilities and Net Assets

CURRENT LIABILITIES

Accounts payable and accrued expenses	\$129,412
Accrued salaries and payroll taxes	\$54,389
Deferred tuition and fees revenue	\$ 83,455
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	\$267,256
Deferred compensation	\$ 109,445
TOTAL LIABILITIES	\$ 376,701

NET ASSETS

Without donor restrictions

Operating	\$1,215,987
Board-designated fund	\$7,239,706
SUB-TOTAL	\$8,455,693
Net investment in property and equipment	\$ 9,669,255
TOTAL WITHOUT DONOR RESTRICTIONS	\$18,124,948

With donor restrictions

	\$5,775,620
TOTAL NET ASSETS	\$23,900,568
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	\$24,277,269

Statement of Activities

REVENUE AND SUPPORT

Grants and contributions	\$1,025,032
Special events, net of direct expenses of \$298,029 in 2019	\$746,457
Patient services	\$678,579
Tuition and fees	\$1,089,741
Rental	\$113,013
Investment return, net	\$527,461
Miscellaneous	\$7,200
TOTAL REVENUE AND SUPPORT	\$4,187,483

EXPENSES

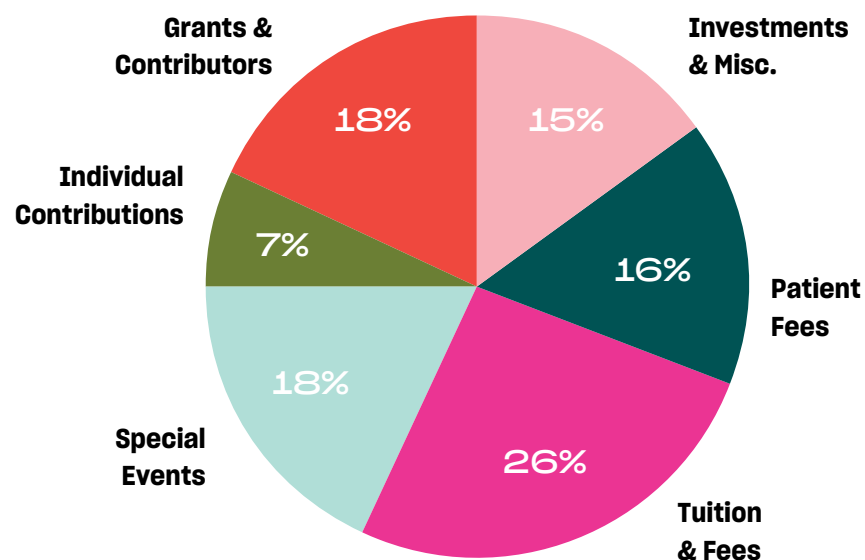
Program Services

Clinical services	\$1,034,596
Education and workshops	\$3,149,747
TOTAL PROGRAM SERVICES	\$4,184,343

Supporting Activities

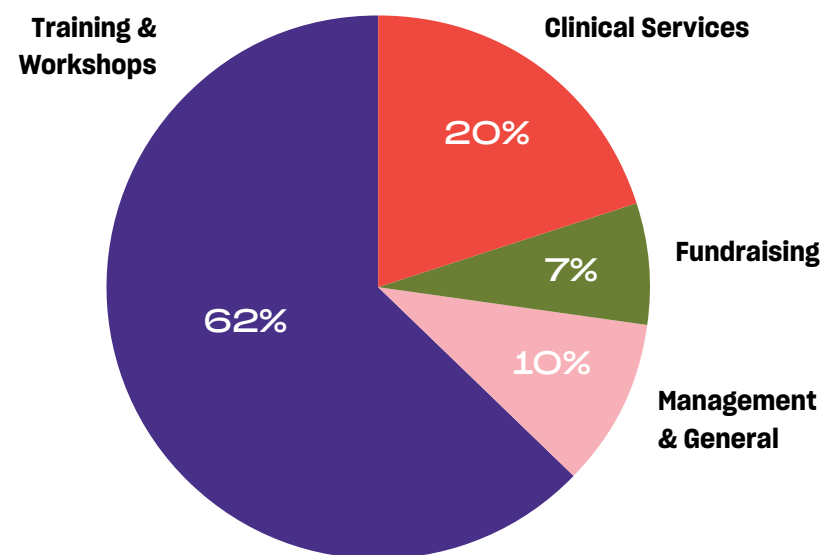
Management and general	\$530,258
Fundraising	\$380,441
TOTAL SUPPORTING ACTIVITIES	\$910,699
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$5,095,042
(Decrease) from operating activities before unrealized gain on investments	-\$907,559
Unrealized gain on investments	\$433,044
(Decrease) in net assets	-\$474,515
NET ASSETS, BEGINNING OF YEAR	\$24,375,083
NET ASSETS, END OF YEAR	\$23,900,568

Source of Funding



Investments & Misc.	\$647,674
Patient Fees	\$678,579
Tuition & fees	\$1,089,741
Special Events	\$746,457
Individual Contributions	\$278,040
Grants and Contributions	\$746,992

Allocation of Expenses



Fundraising	\$380,441
Management & General	\$530,258
Training & Workshops	\$3,149,747
Clinical Services	\$1,034,596

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