

CONTACT & GENERAL INFORMATION

Name Cathryn Leff

Relevant degree(s) M.A. Counseling Psychology

Occupation Director of Family Services for the Soboba Band of Luiseno Indians

Number of years as a CAMFT Member 29

EDUCATION & LICENSE INFORMATION

List all licenses which you hold and the date each license was issued. (Note: You are considered to be licensed if you hold an active, inactive, delinquent or retired license.)

License: Marriage & Family Therapist

Date Issued: 10/31/1996

License:

Date Issued:

License:

Date Issued:

From what school did you graduate that qualified you for each license?

Pepperdine University

DISCLOSURE OF ADVERSE ACTION

Are you a party to any litigation, or are you or have you been involved in any other legal proceeding that may adversely affect the Association or the profession, should you be elected to serve on the Board?

Yes No

If yes, please explain on a separate page.

Has any licensing board, regulatory body, or ethics/peer review committee of a professional association ever taken any disciplinary action against you or a license/registration/certification held by you?

Yes No

If yes and action was taken by a licensing board or regulatory body or an ethics/peer review committee of a professional association OTHER THAN CAMFT, please attach a detailed explanation.

If yes and the matter involves an action taken by the CAMFT Ethics Committee, please indicate below and provide your consent, below, acknowledging that your application will be forwarded to the CAMFT Ethics Committee to provide a recommendation regarding your application. In providing its recommendation, the Ethics Committee would not divulge information regarding the nature of your case.

___ I consent to my application being forwarded to the CAMFT Ethics Committee to provide a recommendation.

BOARD POSITION

Position for which you wish to run:

- President-Elect
- Secretary
- Clinical Board Director-at-Large (Elected by Clinical Membership)
- Pre-Licensed Board Director-at-Large (Elected by Pre-Licensed Membership)

BACKGROUND & EXPERIENCE

Describe your past and current activities within CAMFT or CAMFT Chapter.

CAMFT Board Secretary, 2016 - Present; CAMFT Board Director-at-Large, 2015-2016; Founder and Past-President of Southwest Riverside County CAMFT, 2009-2010; Membership Chair of SWRC-CAMFT, 2011; Clinical Editorial Counsel for CAMFT Magazine, 2013-2015.

Complete answers attached.

Describe any community activities you have or are involved in, including the offices held.

Communications Director and Board Member of Bluefins Swim Team; Cub Scout Den Leader; PTA Board Member at Deerfield Elementary in Irvine; Room Mother at Deerfield Elementary; Little League Team Mom; Sunday School Teacher at South Coast Unitarian Universalist Church in Costa Mesa; and Co-Editor of Pepperdine University's Psych Happenings newspaper.

List the special interest(s) in your clinical practice or internship.

Teens who engage in self-injury; Anger management for teens and adults; Young children with behavioral problems; and Couples counseling.

Describe your education, training and/or experience which has qualified you for MFT licensure:

My career began at UCLA when I participated in Dr. Ivar O. Lovaas' Autism Project, working with young children in what is now known as Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA). From there I worked in two group homes with severely emotionally disturbed adolescents. Returning to UCLA in 1987, I worked as a Psychometrist for the Career Counseling Center at UCLA Extension.

While enrolled in my Practicum at Pepperdine University, I volunteered as a therapist for the Southern California Counseling Center in West Los Angeles. Additionally, I began working for Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services.

What are the reasons you would like to serve as a member of the Board of Directors of CAMFT?

After developing the Southwest Riverside County Chapter, I became more interested in CAMFT happenings. The bylaws controversy, and my current studies in mental health policy and practice, led me to want to contribute more of my time to CAMFT, and to participate in a greater capacity. I personally wanted a Board that is more connected to its members, and will advocate for LMFT's in a way that will garner more respect from other mental health disciplines, and the insurance industry. Since I have now served on the Board for over a year, I have found that I enjoy it very much, and that my voice is appreciated. I would like to continue to serve in the role as Board Secretary.

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What strengths do you have in your background and/or experience that are relevant to your candidacy?

Having worked as a LMFT for 20 years in various capacities, my breadth of experience offers insight into how LMFTs work in the state. My experience includes: Working as a Psychometrist for UCLA's Career Counseling Center; a Therapist for adolescent group homes; a Social Worker for Children and Family Services in Los Angeles, Orange, and Riverside Counties; a Children's Mental Health Clinician for San Diego County; a Psychiatric Liaison for the Emergency Department at Tri-City Medical Center; a Patient Liaison for the Emergency Department at Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center; a Director of Family Services for an Indian Tribe; and an owner and operator of

What aspect of being a Board member will help you meet your personal goals?

Currently, I am working on my Ph.D in Psychology with an emphasis on Mental Health Policy and Practice. Due to my frustration with the present mental health policy in the United States, I find myself wanting to be educated in regards to how policy is formed and implemented, how mental health boards operate, and how advocacy can create opportunities for change.

What CAMFT programs/activities interest you and why?

The following additional CAMFT committees are of interest to me: The Crisis Response Education and Resource Committee, and the Political Action Committee.

I currently serve on the Bylaws Committee, and was appointed after joining the Board in June. This is an area of interest to me as I am currently study mental health policy and practice towards a PhD in Psychology.

My interest in the Crisis Response Education and Resource Committee comes from

What new programs/activities would you like to see CAMFT embark upon? What do you think would make CAMFT more effective?

I think CAMFT has an adequate number of programs and activities, but I would like to see more efforts directed towards the current programs and activities so they can be better and more effective.

What aspects of the office you seek are most and least attractive to you?

The most attractive aspect of being Board Secretary is working and collaborating with my colleagues. I also have enjoyed my role with the Executive Committee and working towards goals that benefit all members. Building relationships not only strengthens our work, but strengthens our profession as well. Additionally, advocating for LMFTs on both the state and federal level is rewarding.

The least attractive aspect is rearranging my schedule to accommodate CAMFT activities. It can also be difficult to keep up with the note taking during Board meetings.

What is your five year vision for CAMFT?

My five-year vision of CAMFT involves seeing a stronger more transparent association with more members actively involved with CAMFT advocacy for our profession. Additionally, I would like to see the CAMFT Connect events expand and grow, engage more members, and have follow-up sessions to assess progress, and what still needs to be done.

In terms of increasing advocacy, the American Psychological Association has an interactive advocacy program that trains its members through 5 modules to develop the skills to become effective public policy advocates at the federal, state, and local levels.

What is your one year vision for CAMFT?

My one-year vision for CAMFT is to continue to strengthen relationships after a turbulent few years on the Board, and move forward to continue our progress with LMFT's gaining more respect and recognition at the state and federal level.

Additionally, I would like to see progress on insurance reform, and discussions on how the association could advocate more in reforming mental health policies in the state.

Further, I would like CAMFT to develop an outreach campaign to Native Americans. California has more Native Americans than any other state, with 109 federally recognized tribes and 78 entities currently petitioning for recognition. Many of these

CATHRYN LEFF

Application for 2017-2018 Board of Directors

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While enrolled in my Practicum at Pepperdine University, I volunteered as a therapist for the Southern California Counseling Center in West Los Angeles. Additionally, I began working for Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services as a Family Reunification Social Worker. I spent the next 20 years working for Orange and Riverside counties as an Emergency Response Social Worker, and a Court Officer for the Juvenile Court. During this time, I also taught in the Bachelor of Science in Human Services Program at the University of Phoenix.

Following my work with social services, I supervised interns at a drug/alcohol treatment center in Murrieta, and as a Children's Mental Health Clinician for San Diego County. Additionally, I spent three years conducting psychiatric evaluations for Tri-City Medical Center's Emergency Department in Oceanside, and worked as a Patient Liaison/Analyst for UCLA's Emergency Department in Westwood. Currently, I work as Director of Family Services for the Soboba Tribe of Luiseno Indians.

Additionally, I keep a small private practice as Licensed Marriage Family Therapist. I have had trainings through S.A.F.E. Alternatives for teens who engage in self-injurious behaviors, compulsive gambling, Suicide, Assessing and Treating People Living with HIV/AIDS, Aging and Long-Term Care, Chemical Dependency, Child Abuse, Brief Therapy under Managed Care, Disability Training; Marital Therapy Training by John Gottman, Ph.D, Anger Management, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Working with the Military and their Families, the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) and many other additional trainings.

I am also a Clinical Member of the American Association of Marriage and Family Therapists (AAMFT), and an Associate Member of the American Psychological Association (APA).

I am currently working on my Ph.D in Psychology with a concentration in Mental Health Policy and Practice at Northcentral University.

What are the reasons you would like to serve as a member of the Board of Directors of CAMFT?

After developing the Southwest Riverside County Chapter, I became more interested in CAMFT happenings. The bylaws controversy, and my current studies in mental health policy and practice, led me to want to contribute more of my time to CAMFT, and to participate in a greater capacity. I personally wanted a Board that is more connected to its members, and will advocate for LMFT's in a way that will garner more respect from other mental health disciplines, and the insurance industry. Since I have now served on the Board for over a year, I have found that I enjoy it very much, and that my voice is appreciated. I would like to continue to serve in the role as Board Secretary.

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Additionally, I am working on my PhD in Psychology with an emphasis on Mental Health Policy and Practice. It is important to understand policy, and how we have arrived at our place in the state today. This is necessary before we can instigate changes with various stakeholders involved in mental health care.

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I currently serve on the Bylaws Committee, and was appointed after joining the Board in June. This is an area of interest to me as I am currently study mental health policy and practice towards a PhD in Psychology.

My interest in the Crisis Response Education and Resource Committee comes from studying International Psychology with a concentration in Trauma Response. Helping those in need after a disaster is a responsibility LMFTs and the association should bear.

The Political Action Committee interests me due to my current studies of mental health policy and practice. I have always been politically active, and would like to continue in this endeavor advocating for LMFTs.

What aspects of the office you seek are most and least attractive to you?

The most attractive aspect of being Board Secretary is working and collaborating with my colleagues. I also have enjoyed my role with the Executive Committee and working towards goals that benefit all members. Building relationships not only strengthens our work, but strengthens our profession as well. Additionally, advocating for LMFTs on both the state and federal level is rewarding.

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In terms of increasing advocacy, the American Psychological Association has an interactive advocacy program that trains its members through 5 modules to develop the skills to become effective public policy advocates at the federal, state, and local levels. These modules are online and provide continuing education units. I think CAMFT would benefit by offering a similar program to our members.

I would also like to see the insurance industry reformed in terms of gaining more respect for LMFTs. Better and faster reimbursement, along with insurance websites that are easier to navigate for providers. When a claim is submitted and the insurance company has questions, I would rather have a telephone call from an insurance representative, than a denial that takes another 30-45 days to process. Currently, insurance companies are disrespectful toward mental health providers, and this needs to change. I do understand that the Insurance and Healthcare Reform Committee is working on some of these issues.

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Additionally, I would like to see progress on insurance reform, and discussions on how the association could advocate more in reforming mental health policies in the state.

Further, I would like CAMFT to develop an outreach campaign to Native Americans. California has more Native Americans than any other state, with 109 federally recognized tribes and 78 entities currently petitioning for recognition. Many of these tribes cannot accommodate all of the mental health issues on their reservations and tribal lands. They are in desperate need of our services, but there is a big disconnect between tribes and LMFTs in the state. This needs to change.