



E-NEWS FOR WOMEN  
OF PSYCHIATRY

Newsletter of  
the Association of  
Women Psychiatrists

AWP June 2022



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### President's Message

Greetings! I enjoyed seeing those who could make it in-person or virtually to the AWP Annual Awards Ceremony and Membership Meeting in May. We had a terrific panel of awardees who you will find featured in this newsletter. In the broader meeting, we had a stimulating discussion about addressing mistreatment. We extend immense gratitude to all who are following up on these matters and contributing to making change within the profession!

We hope to see/hear from many of you at these upcoming AWP activities:

**AWP VIRTUAL NETWORKING SESSIONS** Please join us for this inaugural monthly AWP zoom session for networking and mentorship: Thursday, June 30th at 8 pm ET/7 pm CT/5 pm PT.

**AWP LOGO COMPETITION** Calling all artists! We are looking to modernize our logo to be more representative and inclusive of our diverse membership. Put on your creative hats—or spread the word to artists in your network—and look out for an announcement on the listserve about a logo pitch opportunity and competition this summer! AWP will be offering a \$500 prize to the winning artist.

**FALL/WINTER VIRTUAL MEETING 2022** AWP is putting together a program for the first AWP virtual conference, focused on topics pertinent to women psychiatrists. Stay tuned for more details on the listserve, and please reach out if you are interested in serving on the program/planning committee [womenpsych@aol.com](mailto:womenpsych@aol.com)!

*Christina Tara Khan, MD, PhD*  
AWP President

## Jeanne Spurlock, MD Social Justice Award



*Our beloved AWP Immediate Past President Dr. Warachal Faison passed away on March 19, 2022 at her home in Jersey City, New Jersey. We will miss her generous spirit, beautiful smile, and strong leadership. She served as AWP President from 2019-2021. Her colleagues will miss her friendship and collaboration; and those who came after her regarded her as a role model to aspire to. She would send thoughtful and uplifting messages to us via the AWP Listserv, which we will miss dearly, including the last one she sent below.*

**Sent: February 3, 1:30 pm EST 2022**

*Dear AWP Sisters,*

*Happy National Women Physicians Day! I celebrate all of you and our allies! Please see the email below. As this is also Black History Month, I also celebrate Rebecca Crumpler, MD Dr. Crumpler was the first Black woman in the US to earn an MD She became a doctor in 1864 and published a book of medical advice for women and children in 1883.*

*Best regards,*

*Warachal Eileen Faison, MD*

Warachal was born to the late Walter Sr. and Sadie Easter Faison on September 8, 1967, in Warsaw, North Carolina. She was extremely intelligent and academically gifted, graduating as valedictorian from James Kenan High School in 1985. She attended North Carolina Central University on a full scholarship and graduated summa cum laude in 1989. While at NCCU, she made lifelong friends as a resident in Rush Honors Dormitory, playing the flute as a member of the famed Sound Machine under the direction of Dr. Jerry Head, and as a proud member of the Alpha Lambda chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. A lifelong learner, Warachal was scheduled to graduate in May 2022 with her MBA from Steven's Institute of Technology, Hoboken, New Jersey, and will be awarded her degree posthumously.

Warachal obtained a full scholarship to University of North Carolina (UNC) School of Medicine where she obtained her medical degree and completed her psychiatry residency, including chief residency. She further trained as a clinical geriatric psychiatry fellow at Duke University School of Medicine and an American Psychiatric Association (APA) public psychiatry fellow.

Dr. Faison served as a geriatric psychiatrist and Medical Director, Women's and Men's Health at Pfizer. Prior to joining Pfizer in 2008, Dr. Faison was the Clinical Director, Alzheimer's Research & Clinical Programs at the Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC) where she was employed for 12 years. An investigator on numerous Alzheimer's disease research trials, her major areas of interests (*continued...*)

included minority recruitment into clinical trials, risks and protective factors in the development of Alzheimer's disease, as well as mood disorders. Dr. Faison has been recognized for her work as a health care provider, researcher, and community advocate in health disparities, minority recruitment into Alzheimer's disease clinical trials, women's health issues, and mental health. A recipient of numerous honors and awards, Dr. Faison has been featured in the national media, including CNN, BET, and The Washington Post. She also has been recognized as a National Alzheimer's Champion by the National Alzheimer's Association as she has furthered research for prevention and cure, made strides in care and support, and raised awareness of Alzheimer's disease. From 2012–2013, Dr. Faison participated in the Global Health Fellows Program where she had the opportunity to use her medical and professional expertise in China for three months to bring awareness about the growing epidemic of diabetes.

Dr. Faison's expertise and continued service to medicine has led to "a seat at the table" on numerous boards to include the American Association of Community Psychiatrists and Association of Women's Psychiatrists; American Psychiatric Association (APA) Council on Aging; American Association for Geriatric Psychiatry; Geriatric Mental Health Foundation; American Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry; Alzheimer's Foundation of America; Association of Women Psychiatrists; American Association of Community Psychiatrists; YWCA of Greater Charleston; and the DSM-V Workgroup on Neurocognitive Disorders and Lifespan Study Group.

As if there was any time left in her busy schedule, Warachal could be found "going all in" with community volunteer causes and projects that fueled her passions. As a trained classical pianist and flutist, *(continued...)*



### **To the Association of Women Psychiatrists,**

Thank you so much for honoring our beloved Warachal, we know she is smiling from ear to ear over this recognition. Throughout Warachal's entire educational and professional careers, Warachal always had a passion for service. From joining her sorority, Delta Sigma Theta, Inc., her love and drive for Alzheimer's research, her advocacy and recruitment of minority health professionals, to the plethora of organizations and committees she was a part of, that were continuously creating change in their communities. Being a part of the Association of Women Psychiatrists, serving on the Executive Committee as President, was such an honor for Warachal, and an accolade she'd never let you forget. She was proud of the work being done and was excited for what the future looked like, not only for this organization, but for mental health care overall.

Warachal was a phenomenal woman, who has left her stamp on this earth. We hope the legacy that Warachal has left, motivates you all, both as individuals and as an organization, to continue to push boundaries and challenge the norm. Again, we thank you each so much for the love and support shown to Warachal over the years. The Association of Women's Psychiatrist will forever have a special place in our hearts and our unwavering support.

With Love and Gratitude,  
The Faison Family  
Walter, Desdemona, Keia, and Iyana.

Warachal was a strong advocate for the arts. She could be found working tirelessly in the community combining her passions for youth and the arts. She was an advisory board member of Opening Act which worked to give youth access to theatre programming. An avid stamp collector of all things related to the African diaspora, Warachal served as the social media officer and most recently the president of the Ebony Society of Philatelic Events and Reflections (ESPER), an African American Stamp Club, where she advocated for the inclusion of youth and women in philately. Recently, she was recognized in the 2022 edition of Most Influential Philatelists by Linn's Stamp News. Whether it was advocating for parents of children with autism through SPARK or inspiring the next generation of scientists as a member of the Morehead Planetarium or NCCU College of Arts, Social Science and Humanities boards, she found it an honor to serve. Although she was the recipient of numerous accolades and awards, Warachal was most proud of being honored by her alma mater as the 2015 recipient of the UNC Black Alumni Reunion Harvey E. Beech Outstanding Alumni Award for Overall Achievement.

We will miss our friend and colleague Dr. Warachal Faison greatly.

Full obituary can be found here:

<https://www.garrisfuneralhome.net/obituary/Warachal-Faison>

## Marian I. Butterfield, MD Award



**Jessica Isom, MD, M.Ph.,** is a board-certified Yale-trained community psychiatrist and clinical instructor in the Yale Department of Psychiatry where she is a faculty lead in the Yale Psychiatry Social Justice and Health Equity Curriculum. Dr. Isom is also a nationally recognized racial equity and antiracism consultant through her company, Vision for Equity LLC with projects serving the needs of universities, medical schools, non-profits, psychoanalytic institutes, and Fortune 500 companies. She served as a member of the American Psychiatric Association Assembly representing first Resident-Fellow Members and then Early Career Psychiatrists, where her contributions centered on illuminating the need for health equity in organized psychiatry. She had also been elected to the Councilor

Position for the Massachusetts Psychiatric Society where her focus on social justice and health equity provided an opportunity to improve the care provided to marginalized populations in the state. She primarily works in Boston as an attending psychiatrist at Codman Square Health Center where she is leading an antiracism in opioid use disorder grant initiative. She received her MD from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where she also received her M.Ph. with a focus on public health leadership.

## Alexandra Symonds, MD Fellows



**Dr. Mariella Suleiman** graduated from medical school in Jordan and is currently a PGY-2 resident at Maimonides Medical Center in Brooklyn. She is passionate about Women's Mental Health and is involved with various organizations including Postpartum Support International (PSI) and The Reproductive Psychiatry Trainee Interest Group (RPT). She is also a recipient of the Diversity Leadership Fellowship by the APA and wishes to pursue a Women's Mental Health fellowship post-residency.

**Dr. Amanda Koire** is a PGY-2 Research Track Psychiatry resident at Brigham and Women's Hospital/Harvard Medical School in Boston, MA. She holds a B.S. in Molecular Biology from Pomona College and an MD and Ph.D in Quantitative and Computational Biosciences from Baylor College of Medicine. She co-founded the National Reproductive Psychiatry Trainee Interest Group ([www.repropsychtrainees.com](http://www.repropsychtrainees.com)) and is an APA/APAF Leadership Fellow. Her research at BWH studies the psychological responses of pregnant women to the COVID pandemic, and her ongoing work with Texas Children's Hospital to study optimal timing of peripartum depression screening and the effect of delays in reproductive psychiatric care on mental health in peripartum women has been published in Archives of Women's Mental Health and was selected as a winner of the 2022 APA Medical Student/Resident Poster Competition. After residency, she plans to complete a women's mental health fellowship and practice as a reproductive psychiatrist.



## Martin Symonds, MD Man of Good Conscience Award

**Dr. John Ruark** is an adult psychiatrist specializing in thanatology, medical ethics, and trauma. He began his educational journey in the hard sciences at Caltech before finding a more fitting vocation where he would thrive. He attended Stanford University School of Medicine for medical school and psychiatry residency then embarked on a mainly clinical career, as he found the intense and intimate relationship of psychotherapy to be endlessly fascinating, especially around the universal existential challenge of death and dying. Dr. Ruark worked as psychiatric consultant for Stanford's Hematology and Bone Marrow Transplant units for a decade, as well as Vice-Chair of the Medical Ethics Committee. He published the first nationally recognized model for initiating and withdrawing life support, which at the time drew a spate of notoriety from the religious right.



It was at this point in his career that Dr. Ruark shifted interests towards mentoring young psychiatrists and began supervising Stanford residents, over 80% of whom were women, for the next 25 years. He had in parallel unwittingly developed a specialty in treating women with complex PTSD and spent 16 hours per week treating these patients, many of whom arrived diagnosed with borderline personality disorder, for 20 years. When he realized he had aged out of the energy required to treat such challenging patients, he referred his trauma practice to trainees whom he trusted to carry on this important and difficult work. Dr. Ruark is now in semi-retirement on Bainbridge Island near Seattle, where he has continued his supervisory work with mainly women supervisees and founded with his wife a non-profit called Companionate Companions. In their 6 years of existence, they have trained over 20 volunteers to provide grief and end-of-life support for 100+ local residents, over 90% of whom are women.



## Leah J. Dickstein, MD, M.S. Medical Student Award

**Gabriela Gomez** is a third-year medical student at Johns Hopkins School of Medicine. After receiving a B.S. in Neuroscience and a minor in Visual Arts from Duke University, she conducted Alzheimer's disease biomarker research at the National Institute on Aging. Having discerned a vocation in medicine, she completed a post-baccalaureate premedical certificate at Johns Hopkins. Her research characterizing the clinical, neuroimaging, and proteomic profiles of dual decline in cognition and mobility is ongoing. Her *Commit to Sit* initiative, installing portable chairs and promoting education on the benefits of sitting to enhance

patient-provider communication, is currently being implemented within the Johns Hopkins Emergency Departments. In collaboration with her nursing colleagues, she enjoys hosting interprofessional Death Cafe's to normalize end-of-life conversations; stay tuned for their panel series, *Aging Across Specialties*, over the coming year. Before completing medical school, she will continue her work in older adult health and neuroepidemiology while pursuing a Master of Public Health at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health.

# Association of Women Psychiatrists

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