

MIAMI-DADE UNIT NEWS



MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR:

"Our Relationship with the Unknown"

As the title suggests, the author D. Whyte encourages his audience to make a friend with the unknown: *"If you can't make a friend with the unknown, then life will always appear as a kind of enemy or something that is constantly at your throat."* He looks to the gift of the imagination as a critical ally in meeting and befriending the obscure and mysterious dimensions of our life. He explains that the imagination cannot be understood as merely a cognitive process in and of itself to help gain access to ideas and solutions.

Because he is a poet as well, Whyte suggests embracing the imagination as a respected companion and guide, sort of one that helps us negotiate the challenging terrain of the unknown. Equating the unknown with those times and experiences when we find ourselves suddenly without bearings and unable to find our way, he states that the unknown typically enters wherever we make ourselves at home. At every corner and twist in the road, the unknown arrives through the people, places, communities, and events that provide the shape and structure of our lives; in other words, the unknown is not something that is *"out there"* waiting for us, but is instead a potential visitor who arrives in the most familiar of places.

Whyte suggest that only as high as we reach can we grow, only as far as we seek can we go; only as deep as we look can we see, only as much as we dream can we be. He suggests four stimulating questions to ask ourselves in understanding our relationship with the unknown, questions that start from the outside in order to gain access to the inside: 1. What are the courageous conversations we are not having with our the unknown future? 2. What are the courageous conversations we are not having with the community of which we are a part of? 3. What are the courageous conversations we are not having in our profession? 4. What are the

courageous conversations we are not having with ourselves, in our own heart and mind, with our partner, our children and our loved ones? I am recognizing that there are many courageous conversations that I may not have had yet with myself; I think I will begin asking myself these questions soon. How about you?

Wow, what a year we are looking forward to in 2012. Thanks so much to each of you who have decided to stay with us in a new capacity. Speaking of continuity with the Unit, I am thankful to Gail Brown who is staying on as Workshop and Speaker Presentation Coordinator, and to Susan Mankita who will continue to coordinate our 2012 Gala Event as well. Additional thanks goes to Martha Vallejo, who will coordinate activities on our Membership Committee and a special thanks to David Saltman, Paul Hunt, and Adela Beckerman whose continual assistance is invaluable to our success. Thank you for your time, energy, and ideas for making our Unit operate smoothly!

In the meantime, on behalf of the Miami-Dade Unit, we extend our very best wishes for happy and safe holidays to you and your families! We look forward to a fulfilling year for our Unit and our profession as well. See you in January!

Respectfully,

Michael J. Alicea, MS, MSW
Miami-Dade Unit Chair

