

# LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

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Welcome to Volume 17, Issue No. 1, of *Reflections: Narratives of Professional Helping*. Our journal has two types of issues: a "general issue" that features manuscripts on multiple topics that are peer-reviewed by our board, and a "special issue," which has a specific theme, and is reviewed by a guest editor or editors. The theme of this particular issue is "*The Heart of Justice: Social Work Innovations in Africa*." It is truly a special issue in many ways.

First, the remarkable team of Dr. James (Jim) J. Kelly, Ph.D., and Dr. Theresa J. Kaijage, Ph.D. guest-edited this issue. Dr. Kelly is the president of Menlo College in Atherton, California, and president of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW), representing 150,000 social workers across the United States. Those twin roles capture the scope of Dr. Kelly's broad professional reach. He is recognized worldwide as an expert in new program development, as well as educating social workers on several continents, a pioneer in developing distance education, and gerontology.

Dr. Kaijage is the founder and guiding force of WAMATA, a nongovernmental organization that provides social and economic support to individuals and families across Tanzania affected by HIV/AIDS. WAMATA is an acronym for the Swahili phrase "Walio Katika Mapambano Na AIDS Tanzania," which means, "those in the struggle against AIDS in Tanzania." Dr. Kaijage is known as a Tanzanian "Mama Teresa" because of her inspirational efforts in international social work and her pioneering work in AIDS activism. She has been known to say that, because she was loved, she sees "loving back" as a duty.

In addition, Dr. Kelly has a special relationship with the CSULB School of Social Work and *Reflections*. Seventeen years ago, as the Director of what was then a

Department of Social Work, he supported the vision of CSULB colleagues Dr. Paul Abels and Sonia Leib Abels to create *Reflections*. The focus was to describe and explain a broad array of social trends, results, conflicts, complicating actions, achievements, and how and why events took place—all from the perspective and in the voice of individual writers. Almost two decades later, Dr. Kelly connected with Dr. Kaijage to create this special issue. They knew that *Reflections* would be the best venue to share the stories of the authors published in this issue. The following introduction to this issue provides a powerful validation for that assessment.

Consider the special cover art for this issue. HAKI means "social justice" in Swahili. Our cover illustrator, Robin Richesson, Professor of Art at CSULB, explains that the pattern is abstracted from the flags of the countries in Africa that are specifically discussed in this issue.

Special thanks to Dr. Kelly and Dr. Kaijage and all their authors, and to the entire *Reflections* team that helped produce this issue.

A special request to our readers: Please look at the "Call for Papers" on page 103 in this issue. We are seeking guest editors and manuscripts for issues related to working with military troops and their families, bullying and violence in schools, social group work, kinship care, field education, social justice in other countries, and, of course, any other proposed topic that would be compelling and for which our *Reflections* venue would be an ideal fit.

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