

STRENGTH IN NUMBERS

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Ever heard the old saying, there is strength in numbers? In many ways this is an accurate statement. It is certainly so when it comes to mobilizing, protecting and advancing a cause.

So what's the cause?

We are! "Professional counselors and counseling students in the state of Michigan"

This article is written with the purpose of self-assessment. So here's the assessing question: What is your role in mobilizing, protecting and, or advancing Michigan's professional counselors?

Mobilize – to bring people together for action

Protect – to defend or guard against attack

Advance – purposefully moving forward, to make progress

What best describes your current role?

- Is your role one of active participation where you stay abreast of changes occurring at the state and national levels by following the current and proposed laws that can potentially impact how and with whom we do business? Perhaps you are currently a member of the Michigan Mental Health Counselors Association (MMHCA), you actively review the website for the latest happenings, and support events sponsored by the association.
- Is it one where your participation is more along the awareness level? You are aware of the need for mobilizing (making sure that a large portion of the over 9,000 counselors are ready to act at the hint of potential harm to our chosen field of practice). Certainly then you understand and are aware of the need to protect, to defend against attack on our license and all that it affords us. You may also have an awareness of the need for professional counselors in the State of Michigan to engage in progressive movement, to adjust and change with time – ensuring our relevance. Does this bullet point describe your level of participation?
- Is your role better described as one where you don't know how to participate and therefore you don't? Perhaps you are a counseling student and believe active participation in Michigan's only counseling association is limited to those who already hold a license, that there is no role or avenue for student engagement in this professional organization.
- Perhaps you are fully aware of the need to mobilize, protect and advance professional counselors in Michigan. If it were possible you would be an active participant, but your obligations prohibit involvement. Simply, there

aren't enough hours in a day for you to attend meetings, participate on a committee or even add another workshop to your agenda.

For those who are actively participating, let me provoke you to take a second look. Can you do more? For the awareness group, it is simply not enough to be aware. The often-heralded indictment of Psychoanalytic and Adlerian therapies is that insight and awareness are not enough. As awareness is not enough for behavioral change, it is also not enough for our level of engagement towards the industry's betterment. Finally, as a counseling student, early participation with the professional group offers opportunities for gaining a better understanding of your role as a professional, the potential avenues for your passions and your simply get to meet some really great people who share your desire to help improve mental health. Finally, when the desire to participate is there, but time doesn't permit, donating is a way for you to engage. Your donations will help with the ever rising costs inherent in mobilizing, protecting and advancing.

How to Actively Participate:

- (1) Join the Michigan Mental Health Counselors Association (as a professional or student) all are needed and welcomed
- (2) Invite your fellow counselors and/or counseling students to join along with you
- (3) Commit to participating in the first available workshop or networking breakfast that fits your schedule
- (4) Serve on a committee
- (5) Submit ideas and concerns by sending comments to MMHCA by sending a message to info@mmhca.org found at the bottom of each page of the new MMHCA website
- (6) Make a donation
- (7) For MMHCA members only, request to be added to the list of available counselors in Michigan

There is no time like the present to make necessary changes, ensuring that you are doing all you can towards mobilizing, protecting and advancing.

History supports the statement there is strength in numbers. Simply stated, "We are better together!"