

# Biographical Data and Platform Statements

2023 Candidates

## BOARD MEMBER (2 POSITIONS)



### Ronald Asiimwe, MSc

I feel incredibly honored to be nominated for a position on AAMFT's Board of Directors. Our Board has been excellent at setting strategic goals to steer our profession forward. If elected, I will do everything I can to build on our Board's legacy

by bringing in new and fresh diverse perspectives. I have dedicated my time to serving our profession in various capacities e.g., as a speaker at AAMFT's conferences, supervising students in my MFT program, JMFT reviewer, and as part of the leadership team for the Couples and Intimate Relationships TIN. While being in these positions has enabled me to serve our profession, a place on the Board is another step forward in AAMFT governance. Our field and world have experienced several sociopolitical and health challenges, from Covid-19 to mass shootings and racial injustices. These challenges have further punctuated the dire need for more culturally and contextually attuned systemic leaders to influence change clinically and policy-wise. The years ahead are exciting for MFTs worldwide, and my priorities include the following: 1) increase our influence and reputation in international settings. Indeed, we are the youngest and most underrepresented mental health professionals internationally. Yet, we have many outstanding MFTs doing ground-breaking research to help communities in global settings. Our unique training as systemic practitioners brings unique perspectives that policymakers worldwide can leverage to shape mental health policies and service delivery in their respective countries. Second, DEI values are essential to me as an international family therapist. If elected to AAMFT's Board, I will continue to uphold these values to supplement our recent progress in this area. Mainly, I will represent and encourage BIPOCs to become MFTs and be involved in leadership. As our field continues to expand, representing historically underrepresented groups in crucial leadership positions is critical for cross-cultural knowledge exchange.

### (I) PRESENT PROFESSIONAL POSITION

- PhD. Candidate, Couple and Family Therapy Program, Michigan State University
- Graduate Research Assistant, Department of Human Development and Family Studies, Michigan State University (2018- present)

### (II) MOST RECENT PAST PROFESSIONAL POSITIONS (WITHIN THE LAST 10 YEARS)

- Graduate Research/Teaching Assistant, Michigan State University (2018- present)
- Graduate Research Assistant/Program Facilitator, School of Public Health, University of Maryland. Project assisted: "Giving Relationships A Chance to Excel (GRACE). (Summer 2021)
- Member, the Uganda Counseling Association (2022- todate)
- Coordinator, the Graduate School Leadership Institute, Michigan State University (2020-2021)
- Graduate Therapist, CFT Clinic, Michigan state university (2018-2020)
- AAMFT Approved Supervisor in training, Couple and Family Therapy Clinic, Michigan State University (2021-2022)
- Therapist intern, MFT clinic, Oklahoma Baptist University, Shawnee, OK (2016-2018)
- Therapist intern, Bison Family Therapy Institute Shawnee, Oklahoma (2017-2018)
- Therapist intern, Center for Christian Counseling, Shawnee, OK (2017-2018)
- Elementary School Teacher, Legacy Academy, Iringa, Tanzania (2014-2015)
- Associate Training Secretary, FOCUS Uganda (2013-2014)

### (III) AAMFT MEMBERSHIP: PAST AND PRESENT PARTICIPATION IN AAMFT, INCLUDING TOPICAL AND GEOGRAPHIC INTEREST NETWORKS

- **Student member, AAMFT (2016- to date)**
  - o **Licensed MFT-Limited License #: 4151000133 (State of Michigan)**
  - o Certificate in Leadership Program Fellow (2020-2021)
  - o Presenter, AAMFT conferences in 2019, 2020, 2021, and 2022
  - o National Student Ethics Competition, 2021 Third place team award, Michigan State University
  - o Volunteer, AAMFT conference in Atlanta, Georgia (2017).
  - o Member andv, Oklahoma Association of Marriage, and Family Therapy (OKAMFT)
- **Student 1- Member, National Council on Family Relations (NCFR). January 2022- To date**
- **Student member, Intervention Research in Systemic Family Therapy TIN. (2021- Present)**

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## BOARD MEMBER (2 POSITIONS)

- **Family Process Institute**
  - o 2022 Dissertation Grant Award recipient
  - o 2023 New Writer's Fellowship recipient
- **Webinar Guest Speaker**, Wisconsin Association for Marriage and Family Therapy on "Couple Therapy in Uganda; Training and Implementation of EFT in Uganda"
- **Panel speaker**, International Conference on Cultural lens in Therapy by Raha Foundation. March 5<sup>th</sup>, 2022
- **Leadership team member**, Couples & Intimate Relationships-TIN (2019-2020)
- **Apprentice Reviewer**, the Journal of Marital and Family Therapy (JMFT; 2018-2020)

### **(IV) PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES (Activities should be directly linked to the position and should demonstrate the skills needed for the position):**

**Board:** Past and present activities, projects, or publications (limit 3) as evidence of leadership skills, experience integrating information, working towards consensus, and decision-making skills.

#### **Select PUBLICATIONS – limit to 3**

- Asiimwe, R., Lesch, E., Karume, M. W., & Blow, A. J., (2021). Expanding our international reach: Trends in the development of systemic family therapy training and implementation in Africa. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*.
- Asiimwe, R., Dwanyen, L., Subramanian, S. M., Kasujja, R., & Blow, A. J. (2022). Therapist training and cultural adaptation procedures: A systematic review of culturally adapted evidence-based parenting programs in Africa. *Family Process Journal*
- Yzaguirre, M. M., PettyJohn, M. E., Tseng, C.F., Asiimwe, R., Fang, M. & Blow, A. J. (2022). Marriage and family therapy masters' students' diversity course experiences. *Journal of Feminist Family*

#### **Select International MFT Initiatives:**

- **Leader/Founder**, The Couple and Family Therapy Initiative Uganda. In collaboration with the Uganda Counseling Association and an international network of MFTs, project Uganda will introduce and culturally adapt EFT in Uganda.

### **(V) COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY AND EQUITY: Past and present activities demonstrating knowledge of and commitment to social justice and systemic science.**

My positionality as a Black Male of African descent inspires my commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion in the MFT profession. I believe in the words of Martin Luther King captured in the statement, "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere." We live in a very polarizing sociocultural and political world and so holding a social justice lens and applying it in the various areas of my scholarship keeps me grounded and focused on what is important. My commitment to DEI work has inspired me to be involved in several activities, including the few selected below.

- Promoting Social Justice in the Training, Research, and the Practice of Family Therapy in Africa (*on-going manuscript*)
- Decolonizing research methods: A holistic framework for conducting cross-cultural systemic research (*on-going manuscript*)
- Marriage and family therapy masters' students' diversity course experiences (*published manuscript in the Journal of Feminist Family Therapy*)
- Attachment theory and emotionally focused couples therapy (EFT) in African contexts (*presentation at International Cultural Lense in Therapy*).