

# UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Twin Cities Campus

**Family Social Science**  
College of Education  
and Human Development

290 McNeal Hall  
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St. Paul, MN 55108-6140

Dear NCFR Conference Attendee:

Welcome to the 2022 NCFR annual conference. We are happy and proud to be able to be your host sponsor and hope that you enjoy your time in Minneapolis and St. Paul – known collectively as the Twin Cities.

The theme of this year's conference, "Light and Shadow: Shifting Perspectives and Families," is particularly resonant. In the past three years we have all seen our perspectives shift as we faced multiple collective (as well as potentially individual) traumas—COVID, George Floyd, January 6, and others too numerous to list. This conference gives us all the opportunity to share, reflect, recognize, honor, and understand the impact that it has had on each of us, on individuals and families, on our institutions, and collectively on our work. We are grateful to be in a community of researchers, scholars, and practitioners that grapple with the challenges of the world as we know it and make a difference in that world.

Change can be challenging, uncomfortable, and scary. Change can also lead to significant growth, new ways of thinking and being, and a new sense of purpose. As we continue to navigate complex internal and external changes, the Department of Family Social Science has been focusing on five key principles and practices:

- **Our humanity and the humanity those with whom we work must be at the center of everything we do.** We must continue to build trust, extend grace and compassion to ourselves and others, and approach our work with humility and curiosity.
- **Our work must be anchored in our overall mission and core values:** *collaboration, excellence, diversity, inclusiveness, innovation, and social relevance.*
- No one person can do this alone; **navigating change is a collaborative process.** Reach out, connect, collaborate.
- **Communication is essential.** We must work to build coherence and understanding not only among ourselves, but also among all of our internal and external stakeholders.
- **How we navigate change (the process) is as important as the outcome (the end) toward which we aspire.**

Light and shadow take on special meanings in this part of the country as the days shorten and we wind our way towards the winter solstice. We collectively feel a sense of urgency as the daylight recedes while the lengthening nights also fuel deep reflection. What more can we, should we, be doing to support individuals, families, and communities? This conference will surely fuel our imaginations, steer our energy to new interdisciplinary pathways, and leave us all with fresh hope for a future that works for all.

Have a wonderful time at NCFR and in the Twin Cities!

All my best,  
Stacey Horn  
Head and Professor  
Family Social Science  
University of MN