

## Welcome!

### ***A letter from our former Chair, Antonio Galvan***

May of 2011 marked three years since I took an active role in the leadership of the Mid-South Region; the first year as Chair-elect, and the last two as Chair. I remember my first regional conference, in Tahlequah, Oklahoma, and I remember the surprise in most of the attendees who couldn't stop wondering, "what in the world are these guys from Mexico doing here?" But in that same conference I understood that the region was in big need of, and actively looking for, a change of guard. Great people like Sanford Tollette, Joel Cryer, and Pam Collins had been around for a long time already, and they very clearly expressed that either someone new came aboard, or the region would start shaking. That's how at a meeting in Dallas, after Binky Martin-Tollette's suggestion, I was voted chair-elect to replace Joel Cryer. That same year

the idea of officially including Mexico into AEE's region regained strength, and the expanded map was revealed at the International Conference in Vancouver, WA. And great things have happened since. I met a lot of great people and learned a lot about the organization. We held three great regional conferences in Louisiana, Tennessee, and north Texas, in partnership with TERA. We also held the first ever AEE Conference in Mexico, and had over 20 countries represented. All this is aligned with the organizational goals of strengthening the financial structure, reaching out internationally, and growing to benefit more educators and practitioners in a variety of settings. So, just as I understood three years ago that changes are necessary to bring new energy and ideas to the table, I believe

that to keep our region vibrant and growing we must continue this tendency. As much as I have loved this role, it is now time for someone new to step in and continue what has been done. The task is challenging, but it is also a very rewarding one. I am grateful that Christine Lynn Norton has agreed to be the new Chair of the Mid-South Region, and I know that we have the talent to make this one of the strongest regions in AEE. Thank you all for your support, help, and encouragement. And last, but not least, a big thanks to Joel Cryer, for being a great human being, an excellent professional, an admirable servant, and the best of friends. You will not be forgotten Joel!

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## In loving memory of Joel Cryer

By Christine Lynn Norton

**Joel Cryer passed away at approximately 10 p.m. on January 23, 2011. In honor of his life and death, I would like to share the nomination letter I wrote on his behalf for the AEE Servant Leadership Award which he was awarded in 2010. Rest in peace, Joel, and enjoy your next adventure.**

In my mind, the AEE Servant Leader Award is given to an individual who selflessly promotes experiential education for the betterment of humanity. Joel Cryer epitomizes this kind of person. His life-long dedication to serving others, combined with his knowledge and professional experience in experiential and adventure education are important contributions that serve as a role-model for other AEE members.

During his long career, Joel conducted an adventure-based program for adolescents and their families in a community mental health setting for four years, and coordinated a wilderness/adventure-based program in a school district for five years. He instructed with Outward Bound and six other adventure-based programs. He has built and provided training for ropes courses regionally, nationally, and internationally.

Joel also served five years as a Para-Rescue Technician performing rescue and medical missions with the U.S. Air Force in Southeast Asia, and was a member of the NASA/Apollo Recovery Team. During the past 30 years, Joel has demonstrated a life-long spirit of adventure, having trekked, boated, and climbed in North and South America, Europe, Australia, and Asia.

Joel received a B.A. in History with high honors from the University of Texas, and was a member of AEE since 1976. His experiences with

AEE evolved from basic membership to conference attendance to working on a wide range of initiatives. Joel represented and served on nine AEE committees, attended 31 AEE International Conferences, served on 14 AEE-Mid South Conference Committees and attended 14 AEE-Mid South Conferences! This is evidence of his leadership and commitment to AEE's survival and mission. Joel also served on AEE's Task Force on Accreditation and Standards Committee in 1992. In 1993, Joel was one of six senior practitioners selected by AEE to start the new International University of Experiential Education at Moscow State University in Russia. Joel has also been an active reviewer for the Schools and Colleges Professional Group of AEE's Publications Committee. He belongs to the Schools & Colleges, Therapeutic Adventure, and Experience-Based Training & Development Professional Groups of AEE, providing servant-leadership, guidance, and experience wherever he goes.

Joel was co-convenor of the successful 1994 AEE International Conference, which had over 1,200 participants, and was instrumental in facilitating the formative stages of the new Mid-South Region, from which the regional council evolved. Joel was the Mid-South Region chair for nine years, and has been on the Mid-south Council for 14 years in various roles, helping establish the Peer Review process for the Mid-South. As a member of the Mid-South Regional Council, I can attest to the fact that Joel is a mentor, a support and someone who nurtures new leaders in AEE. Joel has also been a reviewer for the AEE Program Accreditation Service, and has represented AEE in Russia, Finland, and the Czech Republic. He has given numerous presentations at AEE-sponsored conferences, and has served on the AEE Council of Regional Representatives for four years.

Not only has Joel's servant leadership in



**Joel Cryer**, beloved friend and inspiring leader.

AEE touched the United States, Joel has facilitated experiential educators traveling to Russia as part of an Association of Experiential Education outreach program. From seeing the impact experiential education had on Russian education, he decided to continue these interactions and made linkages with several schools and the program has gone on since 1994 in an evolving fashion. Since 2000, Joel's company, Adventure Mas! has made it possible for over one hundred Americans to travel and provide experiential and English training to teachers and school age Russian children and promoting AEE and experiential education. His role in this project has involved designing and implementing this educational exchange.

Joel was also instrumental in getting AEE to recognize Mexico as part of the North American Mid-South Region and added to the AEE by petitioning the AEE board on this issue and laying out the states of Mexico and what AEE region they would belong to.

Joel has always actively recruited new members and welcomed them to the region (by phone call, by visits, by asking for help) and has always been an example of the values of AEE to new members. I would not be in the leadership position I am in with AEE today if it were not for Joel's consistent and enduring servant leadership.



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*By Christine Lynn Norton*

It's been a while since we've updated you on the happenings in the Mid-South Region, but the last few years have brought exciting changes. Because of the vision of Joel Cryer, our former Chair, and the leadership of our current Chair, Antonio Galvan, we have brought Mexico into our region, greatly increasing the diversity and size of the region. This development has increased AEE's international flair and increased our ability to form partnerships with other Central and South American nations. Spring 2011 will host the first-ever AEE Mexico Conference in Monterrey. As we continue to move forward in this international endeavor we hope to create new opportunities and partnerships in experiential education.

We have also continued our relationship with the Texas Experiential Resources Association (TERA), a group that was established to provide leadership as a professional organization in developing and maintaining standards and ethics for ropes courses and teambuilding programs in the state of Texas. We hosted a joint conference with TERA in April, and are looking forward to the ongoing learning and professional development that will occur as a result of this partnership!

We are also in the process of highlighting signature organizations in our region that have been part of the rich history and foundation of experiential education such as Pfeifer Camp, Heifer International, the Salesmanship Club, Cal Farley Boys and Girls Ranch, etc., in hopes of increasing membership, honoring the accomplishments of these agencies and creating a professional network to enhance community and professional development opportunities in our region.

As we reflect on all of the progress we've made, we must recognize that it is largely due to the vision and leadership of Joel Cryer. It is with great sadness that we grieve his death, yet we celebrate his legacy and press on to work for positive change and growth in the Mid-South Region.



*Photo: Mache Treviño*



## Social Radar

*By Mache Treviño*

The education budget has been in the conversation for months, and even years. A vast majority of schools have cut back programs: sports, cultural, academic... and are tightening services, like meal plans and even scholarships.

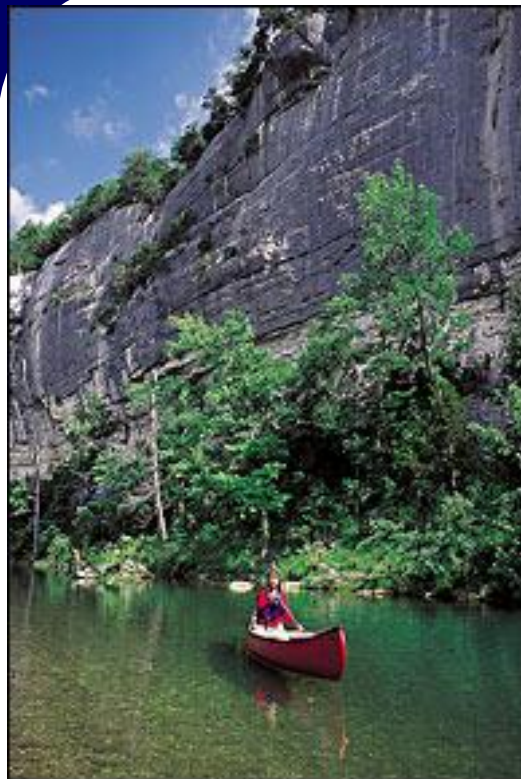
The impact for students, teachers, families, the education system and the whole society, has been largely analyzed. Though conclusive results will be evident as the years unfold, professionals working with students from different levels can already notice signs of the effect these measures have on different population groups.

In your experience, what have been the impacts? How has this affected your work? What are the effects on your students and/or groups?

AEE's vision is to contribute to making a more just and compassionate world by transforming education.

Therefore, every issue, through **Social Radar**, we will foster discussion towards social issues that attain to our region.

Be part of the **Radar!**  
Express your thoughts, feelings and ideas, on [AEE Mid-South Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/AEE-Mid-South).



*Buffalo National River, Arkansas  
Photo: Christine Lynn Norton*

## The Amazing Biodiversity of the Mid-South Region

*By Christine Lynn Norton*

Did you know that the Mid-South Region is rich in biodiversity?

Just take a look at some of the amazing wild places that are a part of our region. Whether you are paddling down the Buffalo National River in Arkansas, hiking the more than 350 miles of trails of Kisatchie National Forest in Louisiana or the Chisos Mountains of Big Bend National Park in Texas, or exploring the vast expanse of Copper Canyon in Mexico, the Mid-South Region has much to offer.

As we work to promote experiential education in a variety of settings, we realize we must also work tirelessly to conserve and protect our natural resources. For this reason, each Mid-South newsletter will highlight one of the many amazing natural areas in our region.

## University of Monterrey and the 2011 AEE Mexico Conference



*Photo: UdeM*

*By Mache Treviño*

We would like to thank the University of Monterrey for hosting the 2011 AEE Mexico Conference. The University of Monterrey has a facility which is unique among Mexican universities, the "[Lánzate!](#)" [Center for Leadership and Challenge](#). This is a large living laboratory, with ropes courses including rappel and rock climbing, which allows for the development of abilities by confronting physically and emotionally challenging situations which require new behaviors, accurate decisions, and the ability for team work, communication, planning and execution. Besides this, they offer programmed activities and camping excursions in both national and international venues. The University allowed us to use this amazing facility, and we got to experience these amazing challenges right below the breathtaking Sierra Madre Oriental Mountains! Gracias a la Universidad de Monterrey!

## Tool Box

Ideas, games and activities

# The Craft Exchange

*By Unidos somos iguales*



*Photo: Mache Treviño*

**Uses:** Icebreaker, Name Game (great for people from different regions/ countries)

**You will need:** Stickers (different colors or shapes), or for a more spotty experience, bright-colored makeup pencils (for this last option, please add baby wipers to the material list).

**Instructions:** Have the group make a circle. Give everyone a bunch of stickers or a makeup pencil. Ask them to think any traditional item—food, craft, or even place—that is distinctive of their home or region. They will exchange their traditional item away to each person in the group, by sticking stickers on their clothes (or drawing the item on any body part they want), and at the same time introducing themselves [add here sharing expectations or any other goal that fits your needs]. The challenge is: to fill themselves with as much crafts they can! Give the group time to mingle around and share... and have fun! Reflections around diversity issues can have an active and talkative kick-start with this game.

## News from Boulder!

*By Paul Limoges, AEE CEO*



**Times of Change:** I want to take this opportunity to thank the AEE Mid-South regional council for their dedication, hard work and focus during 2011. As a volunteer group, many individuals have stepped up in trying to compensate for the loss of a great leader in Joel Cryer. It is in the spirit of building something meaningful and leaving a legacy that individuals in the Mid South region are raising to the occasion and making their part. For that, I tip my hat to this group of people. As an organization, we are wanting to grow and double the impact of our mission in increasing the exposure of AEE and experiential education via two great conferences happening in the Mid-South. I am extremely grateful for the success of the partnership with TERA and would like to grow this collaboration in the future. Also, I applaud the audacious project of the Mexico Conference, which was a great success in all aspects including attracting new experiential educators from Latin America. Finally, I am pleased to introduce to you our newest addition at AEE headquarters. Peter Mason is our new Director of Development and Membership and he will guide AEE in growing revenue and exposure in a global way. There will be many new opportunities for our creative minds to be active as we have set bold goals for AEE this year and I wish that all AEE constituents will want to engage in our quest of providing more services relating to experiential education worldwide.

## Upcoming events... Mark your calendar!

**39th Annual International Conference of the  
Association for Experiential Education**  
November 3 - 6, 2011 Jacksonville, Florida



Photo: Chapendra

### It's not too late to register for the International Conference!

Register NOW at [www.aee.org/conferences/intl](http://www.aee.org/conferences/intl)  
and use the code **LASTMINUTE** for a \$20  
discount to the conference!

There is also a special **TEACHERS' DAY** at the  
Conference—visit [www.aee.org/teachers2011](http://www.aee.org/teachers2011)




### SAVE THE DATE!

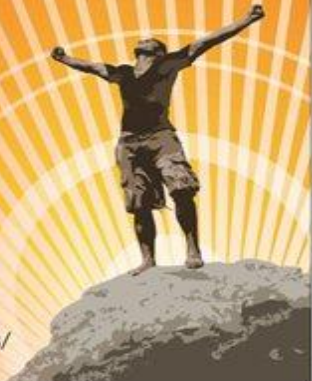
March 30-April 1, 2012

The theme for this year's Mid-South Regional Conference is "Sharing Educational Wisdom, Experiencing Renewal." We are excited to invite you to learn from some of our seasoned AEE members who have been practicing experiential education in a variety of settings for many years. Join us for a time of personal and professional renewal.

Association for Experiential Education Mid-South Regional Conference



Sharing Educational Wisdom.  
Experiencing Renewal  
March 31-April 1, 2012  
Pfeifer Camp, Little Rock, Arkansas  
For more information:  
<http://mid-south.aee.org/conferences/>



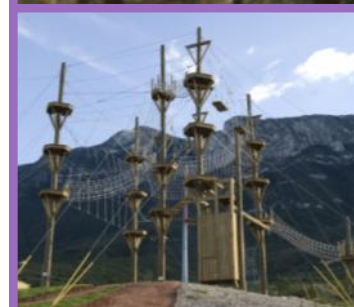
## AEE Program Update!



Many of you remember Adventure Más under the leadership of Joel Cryer. We are happy to welcome Adventure Mas back as an AEE Organizational Member under the leadership of Director and Master Builder Michael Barker, vice president of the Professional Ropes Course Association (PRCA) and a recognized authority in the field of risk management and fall protection. Adventure Más is committed to providing its clients with products and services that, whenever possible, exceed both their expectations and industry standards. For more information on Adventure Más, contact Kathryn Brown at 512-785-3448 or go to the Adventure Más website: [www.adventuremas.com](http://www.adventuremas.com)

Adventure Más, a division of Corporate Challenge, Inc., is a full-service company that builds adventure-based challenge courses and offers training in many aspects of operating them.

With over 35 years of experience in the industry, Adventure Más is recognized worldwide as one of the leading sources for the design and construction of aerial adventure parks, zipline courses, military reaction/obstacle courses, and climbing and bouldering walls. Adventure Más has been a leader in meticulously crafted ropes challenge courses and experiential-based programs. We offer a complete array of services: facilitator certification and training, inspections and repairs, risk-management and fall protection assessments; state-of-the-art equipment; adventure-based programs from caving to rock climbing; and corporate management development and team building strategies.



## Be a MESSENGER!

Collaborate with the Mid-South Messenger!

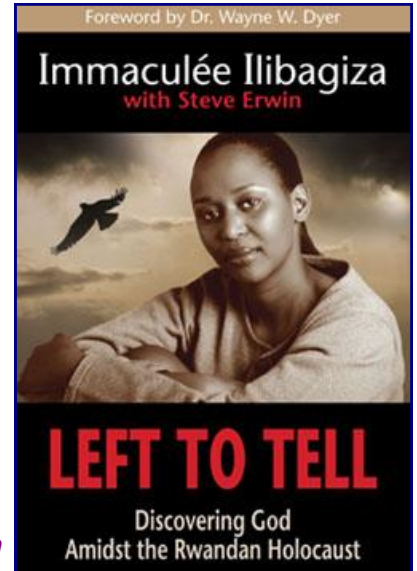
Submit your articles, games, events and updates to [christine\\_lynn\\_norton@hotmail.com](mailto:christine_lynn_norton@hotmail.com)

# Recommended!

**Book: *Left to Tell***

Immaculée shares her miraculous story of how she survived during the Rwanda genocide in 1994 when she and seven other women huddled silently together in the cramped bathroom of a local pastor's house for 91 days! In this captivating and inspiring book, Immaculée shows us how to embrace the power of prayer, forge a profound and lasting relationship with God, and discover the importance of forgiveness and the meaning of truly unconditional love and understanding—through our darkest hours.

Proceeds from book sales will be donated directly to the [Left to Tell Charitable Fund](#).



PRNewsPhoto/ Hay House

**Book: *Innovative Interventions in Child and Adolescent Mental Health***

*Edited by Christine Lynn Norton*

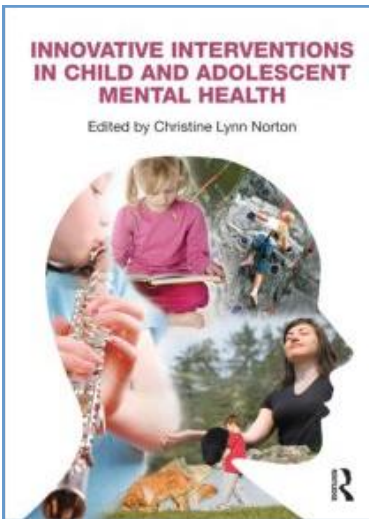


Photo: Routledge

*Innovative Interventions in Child and Adolescent Mental Health*, edited by AEE Mid-South Council Chair **Christine Lynn Norton**, is a unique composite of the literature on various innovative interventions for children and adolescents, and provides a developmental and neurobiological rationale for utilizing innovative interventions with this population. Based on the latest research, this book emphasizes that children and adolescents need more than just talk therapy. These innovative interventions can be applied in a variety of practice settings including schools, juvenile justice, community-based counseling centers, and residential treatment. This book bridges the gap between theory and practice, and provides a historical, theoretical, and research-based rationale, as well as a helpful case study, for each type of intervention being discussed.



**The Association for Experiential Education (AEE) is a nonprofit, professional membership association dedicated to experiential education and the students, educators and practitioners who utilize its philosophy.**

**The Mid-South Region encompasses the vibrant states of Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Oklahoma, Texas, and most of Mexico.**



**This is us!**

**The Mid-South Region and friends, welcome you to this incredible experience!  
Thanks for sharing!**