

## Editorial: Marking the Appreciative *Education* Revolution

Bryan D. Hursh, Forum Section Editor

The Appreciative Education movement has blossomed from the initial seeds planted over 20 years ago through an article published by Bloom and Martin (2002) entitled “Incorporating Appreciative Inquiry into Academic Advising.” Rooted in Appreciative Inquiry (Cooperrider & Srivastva, 1987), Appreciative Advising (Bloom et al., 2008), and the Appreciative Mindset (Bloom et al., 2008, 2014), Appreciative Education is defined as “a framework for delivering high-quality education on both an individual and organizational level. It provides an intentional and positive approach to bettering educational enterprises by focusing on the strengths and potential of individuals and organizations to accomplish co-created goals” (Bloom et al., 2013, p. 5). Effectively, it is a relationship-building framework aimed to guide interactions between members at educational institutions and help them thrive.

A movement that began with an initial focus on the student-advisor relationship as outlined by Bloom et al. (2008) in their hallmark book entitled *The Appreciative Advising Revolution*, has since grown and continues to be applied within myriad areas of colleges and universities (see <https://www.fau.edu/oea/resources>). Under the Appreciative Education umbrella, exist several theory-to-practice frameworks: *Appreciative Advising* (Bloom et al., 2008), designed to facilitate generative interactions with students; *Appreciative College Instruction* (Bloom et al., 2011), aimed to optimize interactions between faculty and students to deepen engaged learning in the classroom; and *Appreciative Administration* (Bloom & McClellan, 2016; Elsberry, 2022), which focuses on interactions with and engagement of employees. The aim of the Appreciative Education movement is to transform the ways in which members of educational institutions interact with one another to cultivate a culture of learning and working in which people are *appreciated*, that is, seen in their wholeness and are valued, and their strengths are celebrated and leveraged to help them fully thrive in their respective roles. The Appreciative Advising revolution that commenced in 2008 has now, dare I boldly declare, become the Appreciative **Education** revolution. (Note: The word “revolution” is defined in the Oxford Dictionary as “a dramatic and wide-reaching change in the way something works or is organized or in people’s ideas about it.”). The full potential of the Appreciative Education theory-to-practice framework is limitless.

The year 2022 marked two exciting milestones in the history of the Appreciative Education revolution – the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Appreciative Advising and the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the online *Journal of Appreciative Education*. These milestones marked an ideal time to create and offer a graduate level course on Appreciative Education. For years, Jenny Bloom, a full professor and founder of the Office of Appreciative Education (OAE) in the Department of Educational Leadership & Research Methodology (ELRM) at Florida Atlantic University, and Amanda Propst Cuevas, Graduate Associate Faculty in the ELRM Department and OAE Director, had envisioned offering a graduate level course on Appreciative Education for our Higher Education Leadership (HEL) graduate students. Of all people, they understand that the work that we do *with* our students can cultivate the skills, knowledge, and acumen needed to spark the next wave of Appreciative Education leaders.

Their vision came to fruition through the offering of EDH 6931 Appreciative Education during the Fall 2022 semester and set the stage for this special Forum issue of the *Journal of Appreciative Education*. Co-taught by Jenny Bloom and Amanda Propst Cuevas

and myself, Bryan Hursh, as the Graduate Teaching Assistant and a doctoral student in the HEL Program, the class explored how the Appreciative Education framework is being implemented within higher education institutions across the globe. The class was comprised of a combination of PhD (four) and MEd (12) students. Each week, we invited guest lecturers who utilize Appreciative Education to share with students the unique ways they are leveraging the framework. More specifically, we organized the course content to introduce students to Appreciative Education and its three related frameworks: (a) Appreciative Advising, (b) Appreciative College Instruction, and (c) Appreciative Administration. Throughout the semester, students completed a multitude of assignments, including weekly reflections on course readings; interviewing an Appreciative Educator who utilizes the framework in their work environment; and a Choose your Own Adventure assignment, which required students to write and submit a publication on a course-related topic to either the *Journal of Appreciative Education* or another instructor-approved journal.

For the Choose your Own Adventure assignment, students were required to choose the type of submission they would like to pursue. Students chose from a variety of options: (a) write a journal article, poem, graphic novel, or children's book; (b) create an annotated bibliography; or (c) record either a video for social media or a TED Talk video. The process for this assignment consisted of students submitting a proposal to the instructional team, creating a detailed outline of their submission, and submitting a rough draft on their chosen topic. From there, each member of the instructional team was assigned to specific functional areas to provide feedback to the authors on how to strengthen their work as follows:

- Jenny: Journal article submissions
- Amanda: Children's book and poem submissions
- Bryan: Multimedia submissions and media reviews

After reviewing initial submissions and providing feedback, the instructional team and students went back and forth between providing feedback and making revisions until final drafts were approved for submission for publication. As a final assignment, students wrote a brief reflection paper and gave a short presentation to the class about their project.

All students successfully submitted their project for publication: 15 opted to submit their projects to the *Journal of Appreciative Education* and one submitted their children's book to a publishing company. This special Forum issue of the *Journal of Appreciative Education* highlights these 15 submissions, which include 10 journal articles, one video for social media, one media review, one poem, and two children's books.

The first three articles focus on how the Appreciative Advising framework can be applied in work with specific student populations. Specifically, Erica Weissman focuses on applying the Appreciative Advising framework to assist student veterans. Cortney Stein writes about how the leadership team of the Razor's Edge Shark Teach program at Nova Southeastern University has employed Appreciative Advising to build a sense of community within their cohort of first-year students. And, Ryan Abel synthesizes how Appreciative Advising can be utilized in athletic departments nationwide to create a warm and welcoming environment for prospective student-athletes during recruitment visits.

The next two articles capture authors' reflections on their own personal growth through the application of these Appreciative frameworks. Carlie Conrad shares how her involvement as a facilitator assistant in the 2022 Appreciative Advising Institute made her a better graduate student and Blake Sanderson outlines the top five lessons from Appreciative Education that have made him a better businessperson and human being.

Moving from personal growth to professional growth, Mónica Martínez El Sheikh writes about using humor as a Disarm phase strategy to build relationships quickly with students while Francine Coker outlines seven top habits of Appreciative Advisers by incorporating Clear's (2018) four laws of behavior. Similarly, Vivian Choy draws parallels between the Appreciative Mindset and some of Brené Brown's (2018, 2020, 2021) research, and Hope Maginley illuminates the synergy between Eva Tuck's (2009) work on Desire-Based Research and Appreciative Education. In the final article, Farley Leiriao presents the Appreciative Budgeting Model (ABM) that he developed for fiscal administrators to employ at educational institutions.

Rather than submit articles, some authors instead opted to submit creative works. Karsyn Mangel prepared a social media video entitled "How to Prepare for Your College Advising Appointment" and Lua Missaghi authored a media review of the *AI Commons* website. Reflecting on her interpretation of the Appreciative Education framework in her own life's journey, Garcia Snow penned a poem entitled "The Light at the End of the Tunnel." Finally, the last two submissions are illustrated children's books. D'Amour Edwards weaves in the Appreciative Education framework in her book entitled *Mama's Dream Bakery* about a young son who encourages his mother to pursue her dream after losing her job, and Christine Deneus highlights the Dream phase in *It's Okay to Dream Big*, inspired by her own journey as a teacher.

Indeed, the work that we do *with* our students can spark the next generation of Appreciative Educators who are ready to revolutionize the ways in which we learn and work. These submissions highlight the creativity and innovation and celebrate the strengths and uniqueness of each of our students enrolled in our EDH 6931 Appreciative Education graduate course during the Fall 2022 semester, and are evidence of how greatness can be unleashed through the application of the Appreciative Education Frameworks. These practitioner-scholars give us great confidence for what awaits the future of higher education; for they have marked the Appreciative *Education* revolution, and we anticipate with great hope what awaits us the next 20 years as they engage and lead our educational institutions—*Appreciatively!*

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