

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

South African Psychoanalytical Association Wins The Sigourney Award-2020 For Work Enhancing Access To Psychoanalysis Across All Economic and Demographic Boundaries in South Africa

SAPA's work dramatically increased the reach of psychoanalytic thought and psychoanalysis for people with histories of apartheid, racism, and trauma in South Africa, and earns prestigious prize along with award-winning work from Mexico and the United States.

Seattle, WA — January 13, 2020 – The Sigourney Award-2020 annually rewards innovative work that advanced the field of psychoanalysis and psychoanalytic thought. A distinguished, independent panel of judges evaluated a record-breaking number of applications vying for The Sigourney Award's international recognition and substantial cash prize. Today, William A. Myerson, Ph.D., MBA, and co-trustee of [The Sigourney Trust](#), announces four 2020 Award recipients, including the work of the South African Psychoanalytical Association (SAPA) of Cape Town and Johannesburg, South Africa.

“SAPA has made a significant impact on psychoanalytic perspectives in South Africa through its emphasis on race, racism, class, gender, and inequality,” says Dr. Myerson.

SAPA is a nonprofit organization that has dramatically increased the reach of psychoanalytic thought and psychoanalysis for people with histories of apartheid, racism, and trauma in South Africa. SAPA successfully established the first psychoanalytic society accredited by the International Psychoanalytical Association on the African continent and helped deconstruct racist barriers within psychoanalysis and psychoanalytical training. Through clinical, applied, and community work, SAPA has enhanced access to psychoanalysis across all economic and demographic boundaries for South Africa's people.

SAPA was established as a Study Group of the IPA's in 2009 and achieved Provisional Society status in 2017. Through clinical, applied, and community work, SAPA has enhanced access to psychoanalysis across all economic and demographic boundaries for South Africa's people. Forging against long-held views that “psychoanalysis is a ‘Eurocentric’ theory, based in cultural and social conditions that bear very little resemblance to [African's] own,” SAPA has begun to change this attitude towards psychotherapy and reduced barriers to cost that also limited access to treatment.

Following apartheid in 1948, South Africans who wanted to train as psychoanalysts had to study abroad an opportunity only accessible to those who had the socio-economic status and means necessary. A result was that trainees often remained abroad. Overcoming significant systemic racial and economic obstacles, SAPA graduated its first “homegrown” psychoanalysts in 2016. Currently the organization has 23 analysts (15% black), 25 candidates (33% black), an unprecedented achievement of analyst diversity in Africa and around the world.

“Being one of The Sigourney Award-2020 winners is a huge boost to our society, both financially and in terms of the important recognition of our work of enhancing diversity and inclusivity in the increased reach of psychoanalytic thought, education, training and treatment in Africa. We thank the jury for the honor bestowed on us,” says Elda Storck, SAPA president, accepting the Award on behalf of the organization.

The winning work of 2020 adds to a long list of innovative contributions advancing psychoanalysis and psychoanalytic thought that, since 1990, have been honored with The Sigourney Award. This year, three additional prizes were awarded to recognize work by **Patricia Gherovici, Ph.D.**, a psychoanalyst and Associate Faculty for the Psychoanalytic Studies Minor at the University of Pennsylvania, and co-founder and director of the Philadelphia Lacan Group; **Anton Oscar Kris, M.D.**, Professor of Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School, a psychoanalyst, a Training and Supervising Analyst at the Boston Psychoanalytic Society, and past Executive Director of the Freud Archives; and **Heli Rafael Morales Ascencio, Ph.D.**, founder of the Social Foundation of Psychoanalysis in Mexico City, Mexico and also a founding member of two other psychoanalysis movements that include The Lacanian Analytical Network and the Psychoanalytic Letter Sculpture.

“We commend the contributions being made by SAPA as well as the others who have made 2020 a remarkable year to honor Mary Sigourney’s vision and mission for this independent award, and we congratulate the judges panel on their selections,” says Barbara Sherland, J.D., co-trustee, The Sigourney Trust.

The Sigourney Award-2021 applications will be accepted online beginning March 2021. The Sigourney Award evaluates work completed within the recent 10 years, and applicants whose work does not win are welcome to enter again. The Sigourney Award includes a substantial cash prize and award. Visit www.sigourneyaward.org for information and stay updated via social platforms for The Sigourney Award on [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#) @SigourneyAward.

About The Sigourney Award

The Sigourney Trust, an independent nonprofit organization established by Mary Sigourney in 1989, bestows annually The Sigourney Award as international recognition and reward for outstanding work that advanced psychoanalysis and psychoanalytic thought. Ms. Sigourney was a psychotherapist, publisher, and community activist who had a passionate interest in psychoanalysis and understood its ability to benefit and extend human conversation across various disciplines. To date, 133 Award Recipients from 22 countries represent her global vision. The Sigourney Award recipients’ ground-breaking work has significantly contributed to human affairs on topics ranging from clinical psychoanalysis, neuroscience, feminism, and political oppression.

Media Contact: Kelly Wisecarver, Wisecarver Public Relations

Phone: 773-218-7285 or Email: kelly@wisecarverpr.com