

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Adler University Community,

This past Monday, the Adlerian community lost a consequential scholar and teacher with the passing of Eva Dreikurs Ferguson, Ph.D., at age 96. Dr. Ferguson's longstanding relationship with Adler University shaped the intellectual foundations that continue to inform our scholarship, pedagogy, and engagement with communities.

Dr. Ferguson devoted her career to the rigorous study and advancement of Individual Psychology. Building on the work of Alfred Adler and her father, Rudolf Dreikurs, a co-founder of Adler University, she helped sustain a psychology attentive to social context, ethical responsibility, and the belief that human behavior is purposeful and oriented toward belonging. Her scholarship affirmed Adlerian psychology not as a static theory, but as a living framework capable of responding to contemporary social, educational, and clinical challenges.

Trained in Individual Psychology within the Dreikurs-Adler lineage, Dr. Ferguson understood scholarship as both preservation and interpretation. She brought intellectual discipline to the task of safeguarding foundational principles while also insisting on their relevance to modern systems of education, mental health, and leadership. That balance between fidelity and evolution mirrors the way Adler University continues to engage Adlerian thought in research, teaching, and practice.

As a scholar and educator, Dr. Ferguson played a critical role in translating Adlerian principles across generations and geographies. Throughout her academic career and her leadership of the International Committee of Adlerian Summer Schools and Institutes (ICASSI), she created spaces for in-depth inquiry, dialogue, and professional development. That work reinforced the Adlerian commitment to learning as a collaborative, relational endeavor, rooted in mutual respect and shared responsibility.

Dr. Ferguson's published work continues to shape research and practice in psychology and education. Through texts including *Motivation: A Biosocial and Cognitive Integration of Motivation and Emotion*, *Adlerian Theory: An Introduction*, and *Discipline Without Tears*, she articulated the relevance of Adlerian ideas to learning environments, counseling practice, and organizational life. Her writing emphasized the importance of encouragement, democratic engagement, and social interest as foundational to human development and collective well-being. Earning her Ph.D. from Northwestern University, Dr. Ferguson was a Fellow of the American Psychological Association, and a life member of the American Association for Psychological Science, the Psychonomic Society, and Sigma Xi.

Dr. Ferguson remained actively engaged in the Adlerian community throughout her life, including her participation in ICASSI 2025 this summer. At her home in Edwardsville, Illinois, she hosted a group of ICASSI participants from Bulgaria, China, Germany, Canada, and other parts around the world, and spoke to them about her father's ideas and how blessed she felt to share the importance of Individual Psychology with others. Her presence reflected a sustained commitment to mentorship and to the careful transmission of ideas across generations. That commitment offers a clear charge to Adler University, which carries both the privilege and responsibility of this legacy.

Today, we educate scholars and practitioners working across mental health, education, leadership, and community-based systems of care. The values that animate this work, attention to context, respect for human dignity, and collaboration in service of the common good, are inseparable from the Adlerian tradition Dr. Ferguson helped preserve and advance. We honor her not only in remembrance but in the ongoing pursuit of rigorous inquiry, ethical practice, and community-rooted impact that define the University's work now and into the future.

Adler University benefited directly from Dr. Ferguson's engagement and guidance over many years. Her relationship with the University extended beyond historical connection to active participation in conversations that shaped how Adler's ideas are interpreted, taught, and applied today. As an institution educating scholars and practitioners across mental health, education, leadership, and community-based systems of care, Adler carries forward values rooted in attention to context, respect for human dignity, and collaboration in service of the common good. In the months ahead, the University will honor Dr. Ferguson's life and legacy in ways that reflect both the depth of her contributions and the responsibility entrusted to those who continue this work.

Sincerely,



Lisa Coleman, Ph.D.
President
Adler University



OFFICE OF
THE PRESIDENT

BCC: All employees