

Nomination for the Founders' Early Career Professional Award

Nominee: Betül K. Cansever, Ph.D., MedFT, AMFT

It is my honor to nominate Dr. Betül K. Cansever for the Founders' Early Career Professional Award. Like the fifteen founders whose interdisciplinary vision shaped this field, Dr. Cansever embodies collaborative practice, a commitment to sustainable integrated models, cross-disciplinary partnership, a deep emphasis on family, and a spirit of innovation. Having completed her doctorate in Medical Family Therapy at East Carolina University and now serving as an Assistant Professor at California State University, Chico, she is early in her career yet already an established contributor to the CFHA community and the science of integrated care.

Collaborative practice and the biopsychosocial model

Dr. Cansever's clinical training is grounded in the biopsychosocial-spiritual model at the heart of collaborative care. She served as a Behavioral Health Specialist Fellow in inpatient rehabilitation at ECU Health Medical Center and as a Behavioral Health Specialist Intern at Greene County Health Care, a federally qualified integrated primary care setting, where she worked shoulder-to-shoulder with physicians, nurses, and care teams to deliver whole-person care. As an Associate Marriage and Family Therapist (AMFT) in California and a certified Somatic Experiencing Practitioner, she brings a relational, systemic, and trauma-informed lens to every setting she enters, whether clinical, educational, or administrative. In her current faculty role, she carries this forward by teaching graduate-level courses in a Marriage and Family Therapy master's program, preparing the next generation to think in integrated, collaborative terms.

A vision for sustainable, integrated models of care

Dr. Cansever's program of research directly strengthens the evidence base that integrated care needs to endure. Her work centers on adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), protective factors, and resilience in primary care, examining not only how to screen for adversity but how to build and sustain protective, resilience-oriented workflows in real health systems. In 2025 alone, she published a systematic review of ACEs screening in adult primary care in the *Journal of Child and Adolescent Trauma* and a scoping review of protective factors grounded in a socio-ecological resilience model in *Adversity and Resilience Science*. This is the kind of scholarship that helps clinics move from one-time pilots to durable, evidence-based practice, exactly the sustainability the founders envisioned.

Strong interdisciplinary collaboration

Across her publications, presentations, and clinical roles, Dr. Cansever consistently works across professional boundaries. Her co-authors and collaborators span family therapy, medicine, psychology, and public health, and her clinical work has embedded her within medical teams in rehabilitation and primary care. She has presented to medical providers, senior medical students at the Brody School of Medicine, and interdisciplinary academic audiences. She also serves the broader scholarly community as an ad hoc reviewer for the *Journal of Child and Adolescent Trauma*, *Social Science and Medicine*, the *International Journal of Systemic Therapy*, and the *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, helping uphold rigor across disciplines.

An emphasis on family

True to the collaborative family healthcare tradition, family is at the center of Dr. Cansever's work. Her doctoral training in Medical Family Therapy, her book chapter on patient education and family involvement in the management of patients with multimorbidity, and her contribution to a chapter on medical family teletherapy to promote health equity all reflect a consistent commitment to caring for patients in the context of their families and communities. This family-oriented perspective is precisely why she chose to serve within CFHA's Families and Health Special Interest Group.

Innovation and service to CFHA

Dr. Cansever has been an active member of the CFHA community since 2023, presenting original research at the annual conference every year since, in Phoenix (2023), San Antonio (2024), and Raleigh (2025). At the 2025 conference, she received the Excellence in Research and Evaluation Poster Award for her work integrating protective experiences into ACEs screening through an adult PACEs Plan intervention in inpatient rehabilitation, an innovative approach that reframes screening from a deficit-focused task into an opportunity to build resilience. Beyond her scholarship, she gave her time to the association directly, serving as an elected Early Career Professional leader in the Families and Health Special Interest Group from 2024 to 2025. Her service extends into her community as well, through her volunteer work with the Resilient North Carolina Collaborative Coalition and, earlier in her career, award-recognized volunteer therapy projects supporting healthcare workers and vulnerable populations.

Promise for the future

Dr. Cansever's trajectory reflects exactly the promise this award was created to recognize. She is new to the field of collaborative care, having recently completed her professional training, yet she has already built a substantive record of peer-reviewed scholarship, sustained conference contributions, association leadership, and a national poster award, all while transitioning into a faculty role where she will train future integrated care professionals. Her international background, bilingual scholarship, and breadth of clinical training add a global, systemic perspective that enriches the CFHA community. She approaches the field with humility, rigor, and genuine care for patients and families, and she is committed to advancing sustainable, family-centered integrated care throughout her career.

For her collaborative spirit, her forward-looking scholarship, her interdisciplinary partnerships, her steadfast emphasis on family, and her innovative contributions to the field and to CFHA, Dr. Betül K. Cansever is an outstanding candidate for the Founders' Early Career Professional Award.