





Morning Institutes

9:00 am- 12:00 pm

Title: The Triangle Strategy: Social Emotional Learning Through Financial Literacy

Content Area: School Counseling

Day: Wednesday, February 18

Time: 9:00 AM

Location: Palisades F

Presenter(s): Anthony Dodson, M.A., •
Network+ Certification – July 23, 2019 •
Vice President of Funding – Recession
Proof Earners (Houston Chapter) •
Member – Next Level Elite Speakers
Academy

Program Description: This presentation explores how emotional intelligence and financial literacy can be combined to support behavioral change, personal clarity, and long-term resilience in counseling environments. Attendees will learn practical coaching frameworks—such as the Triangle Strategy and BTB Mary Framework—that help youth and adults build decision-making skills, reduce anxiety, and set meaningful goals. Through interactive exercises and real-world scenarios, the session offers tools that counselors can immediately use to empower clients and enhance SEL outcomes across educational, clinical, and community-based settings.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Analyze emotional and financial stressors affecting youth decision-making and behavioral outcomes.
- Demonstrate application of the Triangle Strategy framework to improve clarity, resilience, and goal-setting in counseling sessions.
- Create personalized SEL-infused action plans to empower clients with financial literacy and emotional wellness tools.

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Human Growth and Development (lifespan, end of life issues, developmental crisis, disabilities, factors affecting behavior), Career Development and Counseling (theories, principles, techniques, processes, resources, planning, transitions, trends), Wellness and Prevention (complimentary alternative medicine, community based wellness, conflict resolution, sex education, nutrition, anger management)

Title: Strategic and Solution-Oriented Approaches to Working with Depression

Content Area: Clinical Mental Health Counseling

Day: Wednesday, February 18

Time: 9:00 AM

Location: Palisades G

Presenter(s): Paul J. Leslie, Ed.D., LPC
No

Program Description: The World Health Organization has stated that Depression is a leading cause for disability and a global burden of disease

which affects all ages and incomes. This presentation will provide clinicians with brief, creative, and effective tools to help clients who suffer with Major Depressive Disorder and Persistent Depressive Disorder. Attendees will learn unique and, at times, paradoxical applications to assist their clients in escaping the debilitating effects of depressive disorders.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Evaluate depression cases from a strategic perspective.
- Identify five methods to alter problematic patterns.
- Implement solution-oriented interviewing skills

Meets NBCC Content Area(s):
Counseling Theory (theories, diagnosis, wellness, crisis, trauma, mindfulness, distance counseling)

Title: Creative Supervision Strategies to Promote Counselor Wellness

Content Area: Supervision

Day: Wednesday, February 18

Time: 9:00 AM

Location: Palisades H

Presenter(s): Robert Burdine, M.Ed., LPC

Program Description: This interactive and experiential workshop introduces innovative supervision strategies designed to promote supervisee wellness and self-care—essential elements of ethical, effective, sustainable counseling practice. The session emphasizes the

supervisor's ethical role in cultivating wellness in supervisees, encouraging lasting self-care practices, and proactively addressing burnout. Participants will engage in creative, hands-on activities that enhance holistic wellness, self-compassion, case conceptualization, and other key supervisory competencies. These experiential methods offer fresh, accessible ways to actively support supervisee wellness, prevent counselor burnout, and ensure culturally responsive supervision. Attendees will leave with practical strategies to integrate wellness into supervision in meaningful, sustainable ways—promoting long-term well-being for both supervisees and those they serve.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Describe the importance of wellness, self-care, and self-compassion for counselors, including the ethical responsibility of supervisors and the role they play in promoting wellness and preventing burnout and impairment.
- Apply creative supervision strategies that can be used to support wellness, self-care, and other aspects of supervisee development within the supervisory relationship.
- Demonstrate three expressive supervision

techniques that promote wellness, case conceptualization, professional growth, and ethical counseling practice.

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Counseling Theory (theories, diagnosis, wellness, crisis, trauma, mindfulness, distance counseling), Professional Identity and Practice Issues (ethics, licensure, professional organizations, advocacy, private practice, supervision, consulting, self-assessment), Wellness and Prevention (complimentary alternative medicine, community based wellness, conflict resolution, sex education, nutrition, anger management)



Afternoon

Institutes 12:00 pm-4:00 pm

Title: Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT): Building Psychological Flexibility in Clinical Practice

Content Area: Clinical Mental Health Counseling

Day: Wednesday, February 18

Time: 12:00 PM

Location: Palisades F

Presenter(s): David Schary, Ph.D., LPC-A

Program Description: Many people engage in experiential avoidance, attempting to suppress or escape unpleasant internal experiences. While understandable, it can lead to harmful behavioral patterns like isolation, withdrawal from meaningful activities, and substance use. Over time, this can contribute to the onset or worsening of psychological disorders like anxiety and depression.

Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) is an evidence-based form of psychotherapy that helps individuals respond more effectively to difficult thoughts, feelings, or sensations by cultivating psychological flexibility – the ability to stay present and choose values-based activities, even in the face of discomfort.

This workshop will introduce ACT's core therapeutic processes through interactive exercises, case examples, and guided reflection activities. Participants will practice specific techniques for helping clients develop psychological flexibility, including mindfulness-based interventions, values clarification exercises, and behavioral activation strategies designed to reduce experiential avoidance and cognitive fusion.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Identify and assess experiential avoidance and cognitive fusion patterns in client presentations and explain how these processes contribute to psychological distress and behavioral problems.
- Demonstrate at least three ACT-based interventions (such as mindfulness exercises, values clarification techniques, or defusion strategies) that can be immediately implemented in counseling practice to increase client

- psychological flexibility.
- Develop ACT-informed case conceptualizations that identify how experiential avoidance maintains client problems and formulate treatment plans emphasizing psychological flexibility over symptom reduction.

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Counseling Theory (theories, diagnosis, wellness, crisis, trauma, mindfulness, distance counseling)

Title: Mental Health in the Classroom

Content Area: School Counseling

Day: Wednesday, February 18

Time: 12:00 PM

Location: Palisades H

Presenter(s): Christie Rogers-Larke, Ed.D., LPCS

Corettia McElrath Roberts

Program Description: This workshop equips educators and school staff with practical knowledge and strategies to recognize, respond to, and support students experiencing mental health challenges. Participants will explore common childhood and adolescent mental health concerns, such as anxiety, depression, trauma, and behavioral disorders, and examine their impact on learning, social interaction, and classroom dynamics. The session emphasizes evidence-based interventions, trauma-informed practices, and proactive strategies to create a safe and supportive learning environment.

Attendees will also learn how to collaborate effectively with counselors, parents, and support staff, while maintaining professional boundaries and promoting student well-being.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- By the end of the workshop, participants will be able to identify at least five common mental health challenges in children and adolescents and describe their potential impact on classroom behavior and learning
- Within the session, participants will practice implementing at least two evidence-based, trauma-informed strategies for supporting students' mental health in classroom scenarios
- Within the session, participants will practice implementing at least two evidence-based, trauma-informed strategies for supporting students' mental health in classroom scenarios

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Human Growth and Development (lifespan, end of life issues, developmental crisis, disabilities, factors affecting behavior), Social and Cultural Foundations (multicultural competencies, societal subgroups, changes and trends, social justice issues, acculturation), Research and Program Evaluation (critical findings and

clinical implications, development of measurable counseling interventions, design and methods, evaluation of findings)

Title: NCE Refresher: A Targeted Review for Licensure Success

Content Area: Graduate Students

Day: Wednesday, February 18

Time: 12:00 PM

Location: Palisades I

Presenter(s): Aubrey Sejuitt, Ph.D., LISW-CP/S, LPC-A, LCAS, AADC

Program Description: This interactive workshop is designed as a refresher for counseling students and recent graduates preparing for the National Counselor Examination (NCE). Recognizing the high-stakes nature of the exam and the volume of content, this session will provide an accelerated review of the eight core CACREP competencies for licensure success.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Recall the main concepts from each of the eight CACREP Common Core Areas (Professional Orientation, Diversity, Growth & Development, Career, Helping Relationships,

Group Work, Assessment, and Research) that form the basis of the NCE content.

- Analyze NCE-style questions related to Social and Cultural Diversity and Group Counseling and Group Work to select the most ethically and clinically appropriate response.
- Synthesize the knowledge from Career Development, Human Growth and Development, and Counseling and Helping Relationships to formulate a comprehensive, multi-domain case conceptualization plan.

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Human Growth and Development (lifespan, end of life issues, developmental crisis, disabilities, factors affecting behavior), Social and Cultural Foundations (multicultural competencies, societal subgroups, changes and trends, social justice issues, acculturation), Professional Identity and Practice Issues (ethics, licensure, professional organizations, advocacy, private practice, supervision, consulting, self-assessment)



Evening Learning Institute 5:00 pm – 7:00 pm

Title: Nonsuicidal Self-Injury: Ethics and Legal Considerations for Counselors with ACA President elect Dr. Victoria Kress

Content Area:

Day: Wednesday, February 18

Time: 5:00 pm

Location: Palisades E

Presenter(s): Victoria Kress Ph.D., LPCC-S, NCC, CCMHC

Program Description: Nonsuicidal self-injury is a challenging issue that counselors frequently encounter, yet often feel unprepared to address. This session will provide practical strategies and essential knowledge for effectively supporting clients who self-injure, with a focus on risk assessment, ethical decision-making, and legal considerations. Attendees will leave with greater confidence and competence in navigating this sensitive area of practice.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Learn about self-injury and its functions and associated risks
- Learn about legal and ethical issues associated with counseling clients/students who self-injure
- Learn risk assessment considerations to facilitate ethical counseling practice

Meets NBCC Content Area(s):

Thursday Session 1

Title: Clinical and Persuasive Communication: Supporting Clients with Suicidal Ideation and Complex Trauma

Content Area: Clinical Mental Health Counseling

Day: Thursday, February 19

Time: 8:00 AM

Location: Palisades D

Presenter(s): Karen Robinson, M.S., LCSW

Program Description: In this training, Karen Robinson, MSW, ACSW, LCSW, CCTP-II, shares practical strategies for navigating conversations with trauma survivors experiencing suicidal ideation. Drawing from 27 years of clinical practice, she teaches how to blend compassionate presence with firm communication skills that de-escalate

crises, build trust, and foster safety.

Attendees will learn effective language, boundary-setting techniques, and holistic approaches rooted in trauma-informed care—leaving with actionable tools to improve outcomes for their most vulnerable clients.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Demonstrate trauma-informed communication strategies that foster safety, reduce client distress, and build therapeutic trust when addressing suicidal ideation.
- Apply persuasive communication techniques to

effectively support clients with complex trauma who express suicidal thoughts.

- Evaluate the impact of clinical language choices on client safety, trust, and therapeutic outcomes.

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Counseling Theory (theories, diagnosis, wellness, crisis, trauma, mindfulness, distance counseling)

Title: Building Professional Resilience: Helping Others Should Not Have to Hurt Us!

Content Area: School Counseling

Day: Thursday, February 19

Time: 8:00 AM

Location: Palisades E

Presenter(s): Cheryl Fuller, M.Ed., School Admin K-12, School Counselor K-12, Elementary Teacher PreK-6

Program Description: Our profession is suffering from compassion fatigue and burnout because of our service to students and families. In this session we will examine where stress comes from and how it impacts our lives. We will understand stress as an internal experience rather than from external sources. We will then begin to practice research-based strategies that have been proven to reduce stress, specifically with people who work in service industries, taking care of others. Everyone experiences stress but understanding how our stress is different because of our dedication to others allows us to learn how to manage that stress in a way that will lead to our own physical, emotional, spiritual and professional well-being. Building a professional resilience allows us to keep doing this important work

without suffering from burnout or compassion fatigue.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Identify the short and long-term effects of managing extra stresses that come from working in a service industry.
- Recognize stress as an internal experience rather than related to external circumstances, allowing us to make changes for our own well-being.
- Practice and use strategies that will neurologically reduce stress in their body reducing burnout and compassion fatigue.

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Counseling Theory (theories, diagnosis, wellness, crisis, trauma, mindfulness, distance counseling), Human Growth and Development (lifespan, end of life issues, developmental crisis, disabilities, factors affecting behavior), Wellness and Prevention (complimentary alternative medicine, community based wellness, conflict resolution, sex education, nutrition, anger management)

Title: Brief Trauma Treatment: Solution-Focused Hypnotic Regression

Content Area: Clinical Mental Health Counseling

Day: Thursday, February 19

Time: 8:00 AM

Location: Palisades F

Presenter(s): Fredric, D.Min., LPC, LPCS

Program Description: There is a strong neurological and genetic link between susceptibility to clinical posttraumatic responses and high hypnotizability. Hypnotic regression offers a very brief, effective, evidence-based process to significantly alter intrusive, avoidance, mood, reactivity, and depersonalization and derealization symptoms which cause significant distress or functional impairment. Instead of retraumatizing your client by having them repeat the destructive narratives and details of the past, this structured procedure centers on the reframing the destructive emotions in a practical and beautiful way that you can use with your clients.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Participants will be able to describe the neurological and genetic relationship between clinical posttraumatic responses and high hypnotizability.
- Participants will be able to use the model presented as a brief therapy treatment for posttraumatic symptoms.
- Participants will be able to identify several diagnoses where this process can be effectively used with clients.

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Counseling Theory (theories, diagnosis, wellness, crisis, trauma, mindfulness, distance counseling), Wellness and Prevention (complimentary alternative medicine, community based wellness, conflict resolution, sex education, nutrition, anger management)

Title: Hip Hop Therapy 101

Content Area: Clinical Mental Health Counseling

Day: Thursday, February 19

Time: 8:00 AM

Location: Palisades G

Presenter(s): Lanita Jefferson, Ph.D., LPSC, LPC and Lorin Jett

Program Description: This presentation introduces Hip-Hop Therapy as a theoretical orientation that integrates the principles of hip-hop culture into mental health counseling. Grounded in expressive therapy, social justice, and cultural responsiveness, hip-hop therapy offers clinicians an innovative framework for engaging clients—particularly youth and individuals from marginalized communities—through authentic and creative expression. The session will outline the core constructs of hip-hop therapy, explore its theoretical foundations, and demonstrate how it aligns with multicultural counseling competencies.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- better understand how to use hip-hop as a bridge to healing, empowerment, and culturally affirming care

- have insight into how rap, lyricism, and other elements of hip-hop can enhance therapeutic rapport, foster emotional processing, and promote identity development.
- have basic knowledge on expressive therapeutic techniques

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Counseling Theory (theories, diagnosis, wellness, crisis, trauma, mindfulness, distance counseling), Social and Cultural Foundations (multicultural competencies, societal subgroups, changes and trends, social justice issues, acculturation), Wellness and Prevention (complimentary alternative medicine, community based wellness, conflict resolution, sex education, nutrition, anger management)

Title: Debunking Misconceptions while Empowering and Validating the Client

Content Area: Clinical Mental Health Counseling

Day: Thursday, February 19

Time: 8:00 AM

Location: Palisades H

Presenter(s): Nicole Arcuri Sanders, Ph.D., ACS, LPC-S, LCMHC-S, BC-TMH, NCC, SAC

Chelsey Simmons

Program Description: The session will support clinicians with the ability to debunk client perceptions with the intention to validate their experience and feelings while empowering them towards change. Clinical practice implications related to clients' familial, peer, and cultural experience will be examined for the purpose of cognitive restructuring. Strategies will be offered to support

client willingness to be open to understanding and combating faulty thinking embedded in their life due to being conditioned as “okay/ normal” (i.e., trauma; live the generational cycle).

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Analyze client familial, peer, and cultural experience to aid client validation and empowerment.
- Apply multicultural counseling competencies to support cognitive restructuring for clients.
- Identify strategies to support client willingness to be open to understanding and combating faulty thinking embedded in their life due to being conditioned as “okay/ normal” (i.e., trauma; live the generational cycle).

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Counseling Theory (theories, diagnosis, wellness, crisis, trauma, mindfulness, distance counseling), Human Growth and Development (lifespan, end of life issues, developmental crisis, disabilities, factors affecting behavior), Social and Cultural Foundations (multicultural competencies, societal subgroups, changes and trends, social justice issues, acculturation)

Title: Medicaid & Behavioral Health 101

Content Area: Clinical Mental Health Counseling

Day: Thursday, February 19

Time: 8:00 AM

Location: Palisades I

Presenter(s): Shatisha Wilson,
Doctorate of Executive Leadership in
Healthcare Administration, LPC, RPT-S,
ACS, IECMH-E

Program Description: This session introduces the essentials of South Carolina Medicaid and behavioral health coverage. Participants will learn what Medicaid actually pays for, the difference between billable and non-billable services, and the importance of medical necessity. The role of managed care organizations and utilization reviewers will be explained with examples from South Carolina's major Medicaid plans, including Healthy Connections, Absolute Total Care, Healthy Blue, First Choice, Molina, and Humana Healthy Horizons. The session concludes with a practical exercise analyzing a service note to decide if it meets billing requirements.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Define and interpret Medicaid's standard of medical necessity and apply this definition when formulating treatment plans and clinical justifications.
- Integrate knowledge of South Carolina Medicaid plans (Healthy Connections, Absolute Total Care, Healthy Blue, First Choice, Molina, Humana Healthy Horizons) into clinical decision-making and

demonstrate strategies for advocating for client care within these systems.

- Differentiate between billable and non-billable clinical activities and demonstrate accurate documentation practices that align with Medicaid requirements. Evaluate sample clinical documentation for compliance and determine whether it meets criteria for Medicaid reimbursement.

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Human Growth and Development (lifespan, end of life issues, developmental crisis, disabilities, factors affecting behavior), Assessment (diagnosis, ethical practices, psychopharmacological medications, information relevant to medication side effects, how to make appropriate medication referrals), Professional Identity and Practice Issues (ethics, licensure, professional organizations, advocacy, private practice, supervision, consulting, self-assessment)

Title: Integrating Clinical Reasoning into Mental Health Diagnosis

Content Area: Counselor Education

Day: Thursday, February 19

Time: 8:00 AM

Location: West Ballroom on Mezzanine level of the Hotel

Presenter(s): Ashley Waddington,
Ph.D., LPCS, LPC

Program Description: While clinical reasoning has long been established in nursing and medical disciplines to guide diagnostic precision, its integration into

mental health counseling remains underdeveloped. This presentation introduces a conceptual framework to incorporate diagnostic decision-making into the mental health diagnostic process, with a focus on three critical constructs: counselor self-efficacy, implicit and explicit biases, and uncertainty tolerance. Through an interdisciplinary lens, this presentation advocates for reform in counselor education and supervision to better prepare new professionals for the complex diagnostic demands of practice. Implementation strategies, including curriculum updates and experiential learning opportunities, are outlined.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Learn a clinical reasoning process to put into practice
- Discuss practical applications of the clinical reasoning model
- Implement the conceptualized model into practice

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Counseling Theory (theories, diagnosis, wellness, crisis, trauma, mindfulness, distance counseling), Assessment (diagnosis, ethical practices, psychopharmacological medications, information relevant to medication side effects, how to make appropriate medication referrals), Research and Program Evaluation (critical findings and clinical implications, development of measurable counseling interventions, design and methods, evaluation of findings)

Thursday Session 2

Title: Perinatal Mental Health

Content Area: Clinical Mental Health Counseling

Day: Thursday, February 19

Time: 9:05 AM

Location: Palisades D

Presenter(s): Amy Martin, M.A., LPC, LAC, PMH-C

Program Description: Educate about mental health within the perinatal period (pregnancy/postpartum), symptoms to identify common diagnosis, treatment support/interventions for perinatal mental health needs. Cover state resources for support for specific populations.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Identify symptoms of perinatal mental health disorders including: perinatal depression, perinatal anxiety, perinatal OCD, perinatal bipolar disorder, perinatal psychosis.
- Identify risk factors and supportive factors for perinatal mental health disorders.
- Demonstrate understanding of basics of wellness for perinatal clients.

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Human Growth and Development (lifespan, end of life issues, developmental crisis, disabilities, factors affecting behavior), Social and Cultural Foundations (multicultural competencies, societal subgroups, changes and trends, social justice issues, acculturation), Assessment (diagnosis, ethical practices, psychopharmacological medications, information relevant to medication side effects, how to make appropriate medication referrals)

Title: The Effectiveness of Schema Therapy on Shame in Victims of Intimate Partner Violence

Content Area: Clinical Mental Health Counseling

Day: Thursday, February 19

Time: 9:05 AM

Location: Palisades E

Presenter(s): Annette Skeen, Ph.D., LPC, LPC-S

Program Description: The presentation will present the findings of a research study that measured the effectiveness of Schema Therapy in reducing shame in victims of intimate partner violence. The results of the study suggest that schema therapy may be useful in addressing shame within this vulnerable population. Tenets of Schema therapy, interventions used, and clinical implications will also be discussed.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Discuss the findings and implications of a study measuring the effectiveness of schema therapy in reducing shame in victims of intimate partner violence.
- Select and apply elements and interventions of schema therapy in practice.
- Identify the role of shame in mental health of IPV victims and identify clients that

may benefit from schema therapy.

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Counseling Theory (theories, diagnosis, wellness, crisis, trauma, mindfulness, distance counseling), Social and Cultural Foundations (multicultural competencies, societal subgroups, changes and trends, social justice issues, acculturation), Research and Program Evaluation (critical findings and clinical implications, development of measurable counseling interventions, design and methods, evaluation of findings)

Title: In the Valley of the Shadow- A clinical approach to Christian grief

Content Area: Clinical Mental Health Counseling

Day: Thursday, February 19

Time: 9:05 AM

Location: Palisades F

Presenter(s): Amy Kulbok, M.A., LPC

Program Description: This presentation provides the framework for a clinical deep dive into some of the following aspects of Christian grief: understanding suffering, shock, world view, the importance of relationship investment, getting out of God's way, forgiveness, regret, the jobs of grievers and caregivers, and prioritizing simplicity.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Identify unique perspectives, challenges, and strengths specific to Christian suffering and grief
- Analyze components of the grief process through a Christian clinical lens.

- Utilize treatment strategies for various levels and presentations of Christian suffering and grief.

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Counseling Theory (theories, diagnosis, wellness, crisis, trauma, mindfulness, distance counseling), Social and Cultural Foundations (multicultural competencies, societal subgroups, changes and trends, social justice issues, acculturation)

Title: Understanding Partners' Mental Health Experiences in Couples Utilizing In-Vitro Fertilization

Content Area: Clinical Mental Health Counseling

Day: Thursday, February 19

Time: 9:05 AM

Location: Palisades G

Presenter(s): Ashley Waddington, Ph.D., LPCS, LPC

Lanita Jefferson, Jessie Guest, Carrie Hunt, Palmer Garrison

Program Description: This presentation will review the results of a qualitative study from the point of view of the partner's mental health experiences while undergoing In-Vitro fertilization. The psychological impact and consequences of infertility affects a wide range of concerns from the individual, exclusion from society, divorce or separation in couples, and mental distress. Although minimal studies have focused on the child bearers' point of view with infertility, this study was intended to create a deeper understanding of the partner's side to infertility and how counselors may assist with this special population. Results of the study will be discussed as well as a

call to action in working with individuals and couples going through infertility.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Examine themes of the partner's perspective while utilizing IVF
- Understand mental and psychological toll of partner's perspective in IVF
- Promote mental and psychological well-being of partners to support their partner's child-rearing practices better

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Human Growth and Development (lifespan, end of life issues, developmental crisis, disabilities, factors affecting behavior), Research and Program Evaluation (critical findings and clinical implications, development of measurable counseling interventions, design and methods, evaluation of findings), Wellness and Prevention (complimentary alternative medicine, community based wellness, conflict resolution, sex education, nutrition, anger management)

Title: Reel-World Skills: Innovative Pedagogy Using Popular Culture to Teach Clinical Competencies

Content Area: Counselor Education

Day: Thursday, February 19

Time: 9:05 AM

Location: Palisades H

Presenter(s): Aubrey Sejuitt, Ph.D., LISW-CP/S, LPC-A, LCAS, AADC

Margaret Radziszewska-Petros Melda Gain

Melda Gain is a dedicated and accomplished professional currently

pursuing her MSW at Winthrop University. She brings extensive practical experience as a self-motivated medical documentation and administration professional, applying in-depth knowledge of clinical processes and connected care methodology to support patient, physician, and sponsor communication. Melda holds a B.A. in Organizational Management and Communication and a B.S. in Human Services both from Wingate University, providing her with a comprehensive foundation for her advanced studies in social work.

Program Description: How can educators and supervisors transition their teaching methods to make clinical skills relatable and engaging for students? This presentation offers an innovative, practical, and ethical pedagogical model for counselor and social work educators. Dr. Sejuitt will demonstrate specific, ready-to-use techniques for integrating various forms of popular culture, including contemporary music videos, classic television characters, movie clips, and viral social media moments, directly into the curriculum. Participants will leave with a roadmap for ethically incorporating these dynamic tools to boost student engagement and strengthen clinical application skills.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Develop a plan for integrating a chosen piece of popular culture into a lesson designed to teach a specific assessment or intervention skill.

- Evaluate and select popular culture examples based on ethical criteria and potential for facilitating critical classroom discussion on cultural diversity, bias, and social justice.
- Demonstrate a facilitation technique for using media analysis to enhance student learning and bridge the gap between abstract clinical theory and real-world application.

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Counseling Theory (theories, diagnosis, wellness, crisis, trauma, mindfulness, distance counseling), Social and Cultural Foundations (multicultural competencies, societal subgroups, changes and trends, social justice issues, acculturation), Assessment (diagnosis, ethical practices, psychopharmacological medications, information relevant to medication side effects, how to make appropriate medication referrals)

Title: Choices and Chances: The Power of Making Positive Decisions

Content Area: School Counseling

Day: Thursday, February 19

Time: 9:05 AM

Location: Palisades I

Presenter(s): Dr. G. Cleve Pilot

Program Description: In today's fast-paced, social media-driven world, many children and young adults struggle to make informed and effective decisions because they were never taught how to do so. This presentation will explore the decision-making process and explain why it is important in everyday life.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Gain a clear understanding of the decision-making process, including how to identify problems, gather relevant information, and evaluate alternatives effectively.
- Recognize to differentiate between simple and complex decisions, enabling them to better guide young adults in making appropriate choices in various situations.
- Acquire practical strategies to help young adults develop confidence in their decision-making abilities, fostering independence and critical thinking skills that will benefit them in school and beyond.

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Assessment (diagnosis, ethical practices, psychopharmacological medications, information relevant to medication side effects, how to make appropriate medication referrals), Research and Program Evaluation (critical findings and clinical implications, development of measurable counseling interventions, design and methods, evaluation of findings), Wellness and Prevention (complimentary alternative medicine, community based wellness, conflict resolution, sex education, nutrition, anger management)

**Title: Traffick Proof SC:
Classroom-Based Prevention of
Human Trafficking**

Content Area: School Counseling

Day: Thursday, February 19

Time: 9:05 AM

Location: West Ballroom on Mezzanine level in Hotel

Presenter(s): Blake Easter, M.Ed.,

Program Description: Attendees will be able to explain the legal definition of human trafficking, identify potential red flags they may see in students, create a plan for responding to potential human trafficking concerns, and describe the role of classroom-based prevention education in helping students who may be affected by this crime.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- explain the legal definition of human trafficking
- identify potential red flags they may see in students and proper responses
- describe the role of classroom-based prevention education in helping students who may be affected by this crime

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Assessment (diagnosis, ethical practices, psychopharmacological medications, information relevant to medication side effects, how to make appropriate medication referrals), Research and Program Evaluation (critical findings and clinical implications, development of measurable counseling interventions, design and methods, evaluation of findings), Wellness

and Prevention (complimentary alternative medicine, community based wellness, conflict resolution, sex education, nutrition, anger management)

Thursday Session 3

**Title: Stronger Together:
Cross-Provider Collaboration for
Youth Well-Being**

Content Area: School Counseling

Day: Thursday, February 19

Time: 10:10 AM

Location: Palisades D

Presenter(s): Chelsey Simmons, Ph.D.,
LPES

Nicole Arcuri-Sanders

Program Description: Students often navigate between multiple support systems, school-based services and outside mental health providers, yet collaboration between these entities can be difficult due to scheduling, services provided, and understanding of resources. This session will provide an in-depth comparison of common school-based mental health interventions, including counseling models, behavioral supports, and tiered systems of support, alongside those typically offered in private or community settings. Participants will engage in a comparative analysis of these approaches to better understand their respective strengths and limitations to better serve their clients from their role. Case examples of how and when to collaborate for youth welfare will be examined. Participants will learn at least two concrete strategies to improve coordination between school professionals and outside clinicians, such as establishing collaborative care protocols and creating structured

communication channels that respect privacy while promoting shared goals. This session aims to strengthen the bridge between systems, ensuring students receive consistent, effective, and holistic care across environments.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Compare and contrast school-based interventions offered to students.
- Identify at least two strategies for fostering collaboration between school professionals and community and/or private mental health clinicians.
- Apply cross-provider collaborative efforts to enhance youth welfare.

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Counseling Theory (theories, diagnosis, wellness, crisis, trauma, mindfulness, distance counseling), Human Growth and Development (lifespan, end of life issues, developmental crisis, disabilities, factors affecting behavior), Professional Identity and Practice Issues (ethics, licensure, professional organizations, advocacy, private practice, supervision, consulting, self-assessment)

**Title: The Integrated Therapist's
Guide to Documentation: Ethics,
Clarity, and Care**

Content Area: Clinical Mental Health Counseling

Day: Thursday, February 19

Time: 10:10 AM

Location: Palisades E

Presenter(s): Christie Rogers-Larke, Ed.D., LPCS

Program Description: his workshop explores the role of the Integrated Therapist who draws from multiple evidence-based modalities—including EMDR, play therapy, and somatic experiencing—to provide holistic and client-centered care. Participants will examine how integration allows therapists to tailor interventions to individual needs, supporting clients across developmental stages and clinical concerns. Emphasis will also be placed on the often-overlooked skill of documentation, highlighting how accurate, ethical, and clinically meaningful records not only meet professional and legal standards but also reflect the depth of integrative therapeutic work. Through case examples and practice exercises, attendees will learn how to effectively capture the therapeutic process in their documentation while honoring the unique contributions of each modality.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- By the end of the workshop, participants will be able to identify at least three ways to integrate different modalities, including EMDR, play therapy, and somatic experiencing into treatment plans for diverse client presentations
- Within the session, participants will practice documentation

of at least two interventions from the integrated approach (EMDR, play therapy, or somatic experiencing) in a manner that reflects clinical reasoning, ethical standards, and client progress.

- By the conclusion of the workshop, participants will be able to create a brief written treatment plan and effective clinical service notes

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Assessment (diagnosis, ethical practices, psychopharmacological medications, information relevant to medication side effects, how to make appropriate medication referrals), Research and Program Evaluation (critical findings and clinical implications, development of measurable counseling interventions, design and methods, evaluation of findings), Professional Identity and Practice Issues (ethics, licensure, professional organizations, advocacy, private practice, supervision, consulting, self-assessment)

Title: The Root Causes of Food Addiction Beyond Physical Cravings

Content Area: Substance Abuse/Addictions

Day: Thursday, February 19

Time: 10:10 AM

Location: Palisades F

Presenter(s): David Amponsah, Doctorate in Internal Medicine and a Doctorate in Divinity, M.D., Board-Certified Clinical Hypnotherapist

Program Description: This presentation explores the emotional, psychological, and energetic drivers of food addiction that go far beyond physical cravings. Dr. David Amponsah

will share how unresolved trauma, subconscious beliefs, and emotional imbalances can lead to compulsive eating behaviors. Attendees will learn practical, integrative strategies — blending evidence-informed counseling techniques with holistic mind-body tools — to help clients break free from destructive food patterns, improve emotional regulation, and support sustainable wellness.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Identify emotional, psychological, and energetic factors that contribute to food addiction beyond physical cravings.
- Apply integrative counseling and holistic strategies to help clients overcome emotional eating and sugar addiction.
- Develop individualized client plans that address subconscious beliefs and emotional triggers contributing to disordered eating behaviors.

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Counseling Theory (theories, diagnosis, wellness, crisis, trauma, mindfulness, distance counseling), Human Growth and Development (lifespan, end of life issues, developmental crisis, disabilities, factors affecting behavior), Wellness and Prevention (complimentary alternative medicine, community based wellness, conflict resolution, sex education, nutrition, anger management)

Title: When Grief Walks Into the Classroom: Responding to Death in the School Community

Content Area: Clinical Mental Health Counseling

Day: Thursday, February 19

Time: 10:10 AM

Location: Palisades G

Presenter(s): Jasmine Cohen, DSW, LMSW and Dr. Jacqueline Geathers

Program Description: Grief is an inevitable part of life—and when it enters the school setting, school counselors are often among the first to respond. Whether coping with the death of a student, staff member, or a student's loved one, school counselors play a critical role in guiding students, families, and school staff through the emotional aftermath.

This session will explore practical, trauma-informed strategies school counselors can use to support grieving students across all grade levels. Drawing on current research about grief and loss in children and adolescents—as well as real-world experiences from school counseling practice—attendees will gain tools to foster emotional safety, build resilience, and create a compassionate school culture that honors grief while promoting healing.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Apply practical, trauma-informed strategies to support grieving students individually and in group settings.
- Identify developmental differences in how children and

adolescents experience and express grief.

- Develop a school-based grief response plan that includes collaboration with staff, families, and community resources.

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Counseling Theory (theories, diagnosis, wellness, crisis, trauma, mindfulness, distance counseling), Human Growth and Development (lifespan, end of life issues, developmental crisis, disabilities, factors affecting behavior), Wellness and Prevention (complimentary alternative medicine, community based wellness, conflict resolution, sex education, nutrition, anger management)

Title: Screens, Scrolls, and Spirals: Counseling the Anxious Digital Generation

Content Area: Counselor Education

Day: Thursday, February 19

Time: 10:10 AM

Location: Palisades H

Presenter(s): Cheryl McGee, Ed.D., LPC

Program Description: Today's students and clients live in a digital landscape flooded with information, stimulation, and unfiltered emotional content, and it's fueling a silent epidemic of anxiety. From viral TikTok "diagnoses" to trauma trends on social media, school and professional counselors are on the front lines of an entirely new mental health environment.

This engaging and interactive session will explore the deep connection between anxiety and digital culture, unpacking how constant connectivity, performative wellness, and comparison culture affect the nervous system and therapeutic outcomes. Attendees will learn how to

decode youth behavior in online spaces, use culturally relevant tools to build rapport, and address anxiety in ways that feel authentic to this generation. We'll explore evidence-based strategies that work both in the counseling office and the classroom—and even leverage the power of tech without letting it take over.

Through real-world case examples, demos of social media trends, and practical tools, this session will empower counselors to meet clients and students where they are; without judgment, burnout, or technophobia.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Identify current trends in social media and technology that influence anxiety and self-concept in children, adolescents, and young adults.
- Examine the unique clinical and educational challenges of anxiety in the digital age, including overexposure, identity confusion, and social comparison
- Apply creative, research-informed interventions to reduce anxiety and build emotional regulation skills using both traditional and tech-integrated strategies.

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Human Growth and Development (lifespan, end of life issues, developmental crisis, disabilities, factors affecting behavior), Social and Cultural Foundations (multicultural competencies, societal subgroups, changes and trends, social justice issues, acculturation), Career Development and Counseling (theories, principles, techniques, processes, resources, planning, transitions, trends)

Title: Carrying the Weight: Therapist Guilt, Burnout, and the Ethics of Self-Care

Content Area: Ethics

Day: Thursday, February 19

Time: 10:10 AM

Location: West Ballroom on the Mezzanine level in the Hotel

Presenter(s): Michelle Clay, Ph.D., LPC/S, LAC

Program Description: Therapists often put clients first and neglect their own needs, leading to guilt, overwork, and burnout. But continuing to practice while depleted is not only unsustainable — it's an ethical concern. This workshop shines a light on guilt's hidden role and equips counselors with practical strategies to set boundaries, embrace self-care, and align wellness with ethical, competent practice.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Recognize how therapist guilt contributes to burnout and professional impairment.
- Evaluate strategies for setting boundaries and prioritizing self-care as an ethical responsibility.
- Analyze the ethical implications of counselor overwork using the ACA Code of Ethics and apply practical methods to sustain competence.

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Counseling Theory (theories, diagnosis, wellness, crisis, trauma, mindfulness, distance counseling), Professional Identity and Practice Issues (ethics, licensure, professional organizations, advocacy, private practice, supervision, consulting, self-assessment), Wellness and Prevention (complimentary alternative medicine, community based wellness, conflict resolution, sex education, nutrition, anger management)

Awards Presentation and Luncheon 11:20 am-12:50 pm

Counselor Advocacy: Past Lessons, Present Impact, Future Possibilities

Location: Palisades ABC

Session Description: The counseling profession has evolved into a dynamic and impactful profession through the dedication and advocacy of counselors. As we look toward the future, it is essential to understand the historical foundations of the field while actively engaging with the forces shaping its continued growth. This session will explore emerging trends influencing the counseling profession, emphasizing the critical role counselors play in steering its trajectory. Participants will gain insights into current legislative developments and pressing ethical and legal considerations, equipping them to navigate challenges and contribute meaningfully to the profession's ongoing evolution.

Program Objectives

Participants will be able to:

- ■ Identify key historical milestones that have shaped the counseling profession and examine how they inform current practice and future directions.
- ■ Analyze emerging trends and legislative developments impacting the field of counseling, including implications for licensure, advocacy, and professional identity.
- ■ Evaluate ethical and legal considerations relevant to contemporary counseling practice, and apply this understanding to enhance decision-making and professional responsibility.

Presenter: Dr. Victoria E. Kress (she/her) is the elected 75th president of the American Counseling Association (ACA), taking office July 2026. She has been a counselor for 3 decades and a counselor educator for over 2 decades. She is the director of the clinical mental health and addictions counseling programs at Youngstown State University. She served two terms on Ohio's counselor licensing board and was instrumental in updating Ohio's counselor practice act. She has been the recipient of over 50 professional and community service awards, most of which for her advocacy, leadership, scholarship, community service, and mentorship initiatives. She has also received awards for her work with people who have intellectual disabilities, for empowering girls in her community, for her sexual assault prevention efforts, and for her child abuse advocacy work. She is a past president of Chi Sigma Iota International, the Association for Humanistic Counseling, the Ohio Counseling Association, and the North Central Association for Counselor Education and Supervision; she is a past ACA Midwest Region Chair; she is a past member of the American Counseling Association's governing council; and she has chaired or served on 100+ counseling committees. She has published over 130 refereed articles and book chapters, and she has co-authored 8 books on counseling youth and adults. She has been recognized as one of the top producers/publishers in counseling journals over the past two decades. Over the past decade she has volunteered and worked in Malawi, Zambia, Rwanda, and Tanzania, promoting mental health awareness and training, and the professionalization of counseling in East Africa.

Thursday Session 4

Title: Navigating the Intersection of Race, Anxiety, and Politics: Strengthening Cultural Competence in Working with African American Clients

Content Area: Clinical Mental Health Counseling

Day: Thursday, February 19

Time: 1:00 PM

Location: Palisades D

Presenter(s): Erin Tolbert, M.A., LPC-S, LPC

Program Description: This presentation will explore the importance of cultural competence when working with African American clients, with a

specific focus on how the current political climate contributes to heightened anxiety within this community

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- **Understand Cultural Context:** Participants will be able to articulate the historical and socio-political factors that shape the cultural identity and experiences of African American clients, enhancing their understanding of cultural competence in counseling.
- **Recognize Impact of Political Climate:** Participants will be able to identify and discuss the ways in which the current political climate contributes to heightened anxiety and mental health challenges within the African American community, fostering awareness of external stressors.
- **Develop Culturally Responsive Practices:** Participants will be able to implement at least three culturally responsive strategies in their practice to effectively support African American clients, ensuring that

care is sensitive to their unique experiences and perspectives related to anxiety.

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Counseling Theory (theories, diagnosis, wellness, crisis, trauma, mindfulness, distance counseling), Social and Cultural Foundations (multicultural competencies, societal subgroups, changes and trends, social justice issues, acculturation), Research and Program Evaluation (critical findings and clinical implications, development of measurable counseling interventions, design and methods, evaluation of findings)

Title: Trauma-Informed BLS Techniques for Student Success

Content Area: School Counseling

Day: Thursday, February 19

Time: 1:00 PM

Location: Palisades E

Presenter(s): Erin Vandermore, M.A., LCMHC-S, LCPC

Program Description: This presentation will explore trauma-informed techniques using Bilateral Stimulation (BLS) to help students regulate emotions and build resilience. Attendees will learn practical strategies to address trauma across Tier 1, 2, and 3 interventions, with a focus on integrating these tools into comprehensive school counseling programs. The session will provide hands-on practice and actionable takeaways to support student success.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Demonstrate three trauma-informed BLS

- techniques to support emotional regulation.
- Analyze the impact of trauma on students' academic, social, and emotional development.
- Integrate trauma-informed BLS techniques into comprehensive school counseling programs.

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Counseling Theory (theories, diagnosis, wellness, crisis, trauma, mindfulness, distance counseling), Human Growth and Development (lifespan, end of life issues, developmental crisis, disabilities, factors affecting behavior), Wellness and Prevention (complimentary alternative medicine, community based wellness, conflict resolution, sex education, nutrition, anger management)

Title: Addressing the Mental Health Needs and Well-Being of Client Caregivers

Content Area: Clinical Mental Health Counseling

Day: Thursday, February 19

Time: 1:00 PM

Location: Palisades F

Presenter(s): Glacia Ethridge, Ph.D., LPC, LCMHC, CRC, NCC

Program Description: The purpose of this presentation is to shed light on the mental health and well-being of clients who are caregivers. An overview of caregiving, challenges that caregivers encounter, and identification of strategies and resources that counselors can utilize with clients who are caregivers will be topics of discussion during this presentation.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Identify the types of caregiving, caregiver demographics, and caregiver responsibilities.
- Discuss the emotional and psychological stressors that impact caregivers' mental health and wellness.
- List strategies and resources that counselors can utilize to address the mental health needs and well-being of clients who are caregivers.

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Counseling Theory (theories, diagnosis, wellness, crisis, trauma, mindfulness, distance counseling), Human Growth and Development (lifespan, end of life issues, developmental crisis, disabilities, factors affecting behavior), Wellness and Prevention (complimentary alternative medicine, community based wellness, conflict resolution, sex education, nutrition, anger management)

Title: Impact of Devices on Student Mental Health

Content Area: Clinical Mental Health Counseling

Day: Thursday, February 19

Time: 1:00 PM

Location: Palisades G

Presenter(s): Graham McBride, Ed.S., NCC, LPC-A

Program Description: Recent legislation has intensified the discussion over the effects that device-use has on student mental health. There are lots of

opinions, but what is the research really saying? This session looks at the data, offers suggestions for how to support students, and creates time for discussion of the "on the ground" realities of working and support students and their families as they navigate healthier habits with devices.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- explain research on device use and its effects on adolescents.
- create interventions that pertain to device use that will support adolescent clients.
- identify ways that counseling professionals can advocate for healthier device use.

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Human Growth and Development (lifespan, end of life issues, developmental crisis, disabilities, factors affecting behavior), Research and Program Evaluation (critical findings and clinical implications, development of measurable counseling interventions, design and methods, evaluation of findings), Wellness and Prevention (complimentary alternative medicine, community based wellness, conflict resolution, sex education, nutrition, anger management)

Title: Resilience Among African American Adolescent Girls Navigating Fatherlessness

Content Area: Clinical Mental Health Counseling

Day: Thursday, February 19

Time: 1:00 PM

Location: Palisades IG

Presenter(s): Jessica Barnes , M.A., NCC

Program Description: Fatherlessness presents unique challenges for African American adolescent females, influencing their emotional, psychological, and social development. However, many demonstrate remarkable resilience in navigating these experiences. This qualitative research study explores the lived experiences of African American adolescent girls who have grown up without their biological fathers. It focuses on the protective factors and coping strategies that contribute to their resilience. By amplifying the voices of these young women, this research aims to inform educators, mental health professionals, and policymakers on ways to support and empower African American adolescent girls navigating fatherlessness.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Utilize strategies to approach fatherlessness from a strength based standpoint instead of deficit based.
- Recognize protective factors and assist in building those factors in black girls navigating fatherlessness
- Describe key concepts of Resilience theory and strategies on how to support resilience in black girls.

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Human Growth and Development (lifespan, end of life issues, developmental crisis, disabilities, factors affecting behavior), Wellness and Prevention (complimentary alternative medicine, community based wellness, conflict resolution, sex education, nutrition, anger management)

Title: Hidden Influences in Our Practice

Content Area: Counselor Education

Day: Thursday, February 19

Time: 1:00 PM

Location: West Ballroom on Mezzanine level in Hotel

Presenter(s): Kristen Ewing, Ed.D., Professional School Counselor

Program Description: This session will explore critical skills necessary for working with culturally and linguistically diverse students/clients. Counselors are constantly impacted by hidden influences that shape perceptions and interactions with students/clients. Participants will be able to recognize and reflect on these unseen forces in order to enhance self-awareness, strengthen ethical practice, and build more authentic, equitable connections with students/clients.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- describe underlying assumptions, implicit biases, and microaggressions.
- assess the impact privilege has on different stakeholders.
- identify hidden influences and compile ways to redress.

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Social and Cultural Foundations (multicultural competencies, societal subgroups, changes and trends, social justice issues, acculturation), Professional Identity and Practice Issues (ethics, licensure, professional organizations, advocacy, private practice, supervision, consulting, self-assessment)

Meets NBCC Content Area(s):

Thursday Session 5

Title: The Leader-Practitioner: Counselors as Ethical Leaders

Content Area: Clinical Mental Health Counseling

Day: Thursday, February 19

Time: 2:05 PM

Location: Palisades D

Presenter(s): Kerri McGuire, Ph.D., LPC, NCC

Program Description: In the ever-changing world of behavioral health, Counseling professionals understand the importance of having strong, ethical leaders to navigate the challenges that threaten access to mental health care within our communities. These threats include uncertainties about behavioral health funding, addressing needs of generations in the workplace, upholding professional ethics, maintaining inclusive programs and services, self-care and retention of mental health professionals, sustaining private practice, and much more. This session will focus on Counseling skills that serve as the building blocks of great leadership and how to develop these skills as a practitioner NOW to become the leader the Counseling field needs for the future.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Identify the connection between counseling skills and leadership.
- Understand tools for self-assessment to understand themselves as a leader.
- Identify steps they can take to prepare for leadership roles in the Mental Health Counseling field.

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Professional Identity and Practice Issues (ethics, licensure, professional organizations, advocacy, private practice, supervision, consulting, self-assessment)

Title: I'm Losing My Fat Self: Making Space for Grief, Growth, and Mental Health After Bariatric Surgery

Content Area: Clinical Mental Health Counseling

Day: Thursday, February 19

Time: 2:05 PM

Location: Palisades E

Presenter(s): Lanita Jefferson, Ph.D., LPC, LPCS

Program Description: The purpose of this presentation is to explore the often-overlooked emotional and psychological impact of bariatric surgery. While the physical transformation is widely celebrated, many individuals silently grieve the loss of their former identities, coping mechanisms, and sense of self. This session will create space for honest dialogue about the grief that can follow weight loss, the importance of integrating mental health support into post-surgical care, and how clinicians can walk alongside clients as they navigate identity shifts, body image, and emotional healing after bariatric surgery.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Describe the psychological and emotional experiences commonly encountered by individuals after bariatric surgery, including grief, identity shifts, and body image concerns.
- Recognize the importance of mental health support throughout the bariatric surgery journey, particularly in the post-operative phase.
- Apply trauma-informed and grief-sensitive strategies to support clients navigating the emotional complexities of life after weight loss surgery.

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Social and Cultural Foundations (multicultural competencies, societal subgroups, changes and trends, social justice issues, acculturation), Group Work (advanced understanding of therapeutic group development, dynamics and theories, leadership styles, stages, methods, skills), Wellness and Prevention (complimentary alternative medicine, community based wellness, conflict resolution, sex education, nutrition, anger management)

Title: Trauma-Informed School Counseling: Strategies to Support Middle School Students Impacted by ACEs

Content Area: School Counseling

Day: Thursday, February 19

Time: 2:05 PM

Location: Palisades F

Presenter(s): Marcell Brown, M.A.,
Professional School Counselor

Program Description: This session presents findings from a qualitative research study that examined how middle school counselors support students impacted by Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). These experiences—including various forms of abuse, neglect, and household dysfunction—can significantly disrupt a child’s emotional well-being, academic progress, and social development. As schools increasingly confront the realities of student trauma in society, the school counselor’s role has never been more critical.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Learning Objective 1: Participants will develop a firm knowledge base on the background and history of ACEs and their relative impacts on youth development (Background to the Problem, The ACE Study, Types of ACEs).
- Learning Objective 2: Participants will understand the role of middle school counselors in schools (Duties of a School Counselor, Role of Middle School Counselors in Schools,

The ASCA National Model as a framework to support school counseling programs and curriculums, and Strategies Used by School Counselors to Support Students Impacted by ACEs)

- Learning Objective 3: Participants will learn about trauma-informed approaches and their impact on youth exposed to ACEs (What is TIC, and how can it be used to support students impacted by ACEs, Types of Interventions Used in TIC schools, How effective is TIC in supporting students with ACEs, Punitive vs. Restorative Practices: What is the difference?, Impact of SEL programs on Student Outcomes, What is a whole-school approach, and why is this important when creating systems to support students).

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Counseling Theory (theories, diagnosis, wellness, crisis, trauma, mindfulness, distance counseling), Research and Program Evaluation (critical findings and clinical implications, development of measurable counseling interventions, design and methods, evaluation of findings)

Title: Neurodivergent-Affirming Practice: Insights from Professionals Supporting Autistic Adult Mental Health

Content Area: Counselor Education

Day: Thursday, February 19

Time: 2:05 PM

Location: Palisades G

Presenter(s): Margaret Janse van Rensburg, Ph.D., Master of Social Work, Registered Social Worker (in Ontario, Canada)

Program Description: Autistic adult mental health has increasingly been described as a crisis, yet many counselors and human service professionals feel underprepared to respond effectively. This session draws on findings from 24 in-depth interviews with professionals in Ottawa, Canada, who shared how they can effectively support Autistic adult clients in clinical and community settings. Themes include drawing from lived experience, integrating Autistic adults' perspectives, engaging in self-directed learning, advocating at systemic levels, and adopting flexible, individualized, and strengths-based approaches.

In addition to sharing these findings, this session will provide space for interactive reflection and application. Together, we will challenge myths about Autistic adult mental health, explore real-world strategies professionals use to affirm neurodivergence, and work through case examples to practice applying inclusive and autonomy-supportive responses. Attendees will leave with practical, evidence-informed strategies to strengthen counseling services for Autistic adults and their communities of care.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Describe common barriers to Autistic adult mental health across micro, mezzo, and macro levels.
- Identify neurodivergent-affirming practices used by professionals to enhance care and outcomes for Autistic adults.
- Apply principles of flexibility, inclusion, and autonomy to counseling practice with Autistic clients.

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Counseling Theory (theories, diagnosis, wellness, crisis, trauma, mindfulness, distance counseling), Social and Cultural Foundations (multicultural competencies, societal subgroups, changes and trends, social justice issues, acculturation), Professional Identity and Practice Issues (ethics, licensure, professional organizations, advocacy, private practice, supervision, consulting, self-assessment)

Title: Neuromodulation for Mental Illness: HOPE

Content Area: Clinical Mental Health Counseling

Day: Thursday, February 19

Time: 2:05 PM

Location: Palisades I

Presenter(s): MaryEllen Eller MD, Doctor of Medicine (M.D.), MD

Program Description: This session explores the urgent need for new approaches in mental health care, reframing mental illness as a complex brain-body disorder rather than a personal weakness. Dr. Eller will outline the biological, genetic, and environmental factors contributing to mental illness and present four categories

of intervention: reducing stressors, psychotherapy, medication, and lifestyle strategies.

The focus will be on neuromodulation as a breakthrough pathway beyond medications, highlighting TMS, neurofeedback, and ketamine/esketamine as evidence-based treatments offering rapid and durable relief for patients who fail to respond to antidepressants. Attendees will learn how these tools, when integrated with holistic and multidisciplinary care, are shifting psychiatry toward a future of remission, restoration, and hope.

Key Takeaways:

Mental illness is central to America's health burden and requires more than traditional medications.

Neuromodulation (TMS, neurofeedback, ketamine/esketamine) offers higher remission rates than antidepressants alone. A collaborative, whole-person approach is essential for durable recovery. The future of psychiatry lies in targeted, rapid-acting, and personalized interventions.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to describe the contributors to mental illness, distinguish traditional treatments from emerging neuromodulation options, and apply a holistic,

remission-focused approach to patient care.

- At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to evaluate the evidence supporting neuromodulation therapies such as TMS, neurofeedback, and ketamine/esketamine, and integrate these options into a multidisciplinary model of care.
- At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to apply strategies to enhance stress resilience and lifestyle interventions alongside medical and psychological treatments to optimize patient outcomes.

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Counseling Theory (theories, diagnosis, wellness, crisis, trauma, mindfulness, distance counseling), Assessment (diagnosis, ethical practices, psychopharmacological medications, information relevant to medication side effects, how to make appropriate medication referrals), Research and Program Evaluation (critical findings and clinical implications, development of measurable counseling interventions, design and methods, evaluation of findings)

Title: Vicarious Trauma and Compassion Fatigue

Content Area: Clinical Mental Health Counseling

Day: Thursday, February 19

Time: 2:05 PM

Location: WEST BALLROOM

Presenter(s): Michelle Harrison, Ph.D., LPCC-S (KY), LPCS (SC), NCC

Program Description: This essential training helps professionals understand and manage the emotional cost of their work. We will explore vicarious trauma, the "second hand" trauma that results from work-related exposure to others' traumatic experiences. You will learn to analyze the components of Compassion Fatigue, including Burnout (feelings of hopelessness and ineffectiveness) and Secondary Traumatic Stress (symptoms like fear and intrusive thoughts arising from secondary exposure). Participants will identify specific causes of vicarious trauma, such as listening to clients, reading reports, or viewing distressing images, and recognize key signs of distress. Most importantly, you will learn to assess your own professional quality of life and personal stress vulnerability to develop strategies that build resilience and ensure a sustainable, healthy career, as well as how to help your organization be proactive in applying preventative strategies for employees.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- To Analyze the Relationships Between Vicarious Trauma and Compassion Fatigue.
- To Identify Causes and Signs of Vicarious Trauma and Compassion Fatigue
- To Identify Strategies to Prevent and Address Vicarious Trauma and Compassion Fatigue

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Professional Identity and Practice Issues (ethics, licensure, professional organizations, advocacy, private practice, supervision, consulting, self-assessment), Wellness and Prevention (complimentary alternative medicine, community based wellness, conflict resolution, sex education, nutrition, anger management)

Thursday Session 6

**Title: Conference Proposal:
Integrating Race-based Traumatic
Stress into Counselor Education
Curricula**

Content Area: Counselor Education

Day: Thursday, February 19

Time: 3:10 PM

Location: Palisades D

Presenter(s): Nakisha S. Randolph, LMFT, M.A., LMFT

Program Description: Race-based Traumatic Stress (RBTS) represents a critical gap in many counselor education curricula, leaving future clinicians underprepared to address the psychological impact of racism on clients.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Articulate the theoretical foundations of race-based traumatic stress, including its distinction from PTSD and relationship to racial microaggressions, discrimination, and systemic oppression
- Identify Curriculum Integration Points:

Determine strategic placement of RBTS content across counselor education curricula, including multicultural counseling, trauma courses, assessment, and clinical practicum/internship experiences.

- Develop Intervention Competencies: Teach students evidence-based and culturally adapted interventions for RBTS, including trauma-focused approaches, racial socialization strategies, and community-based healing practices.

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Counseling Theory (theories, diagnosis, wellness, crisis, trauma, mindfulness, distance counseling), Social and Cultural Foundations (multicultural competencies, societal subgroups, changes and trends, social justice issues, acculturation), Professional Identity and Practice Issues (ethics, licensure, professional organizations, advocacy, private practice, supervision, consulting, self-assessment)

Title: Creative Interventions in Supervision

Content Area: Supervision

Day: Thursday, February 19

Time: 3:10 PM

Location: Palisades E

Presenter(s): Nicki F. Gaskins, M.Ed., LPCS

Program Description: Creative Interventions in Supervision is an untapped resource for enhancing your supervision sessions. Evidence shows

that creative interventions break down communication barriers, build rapport, and empower individuals. Supervisees achieve success by harnessing their creative healing power and challenging the part of the brain that is used less frequently, while drawing out emotional responses, insecurities and giving language to their efforts towards work life balance and burnout prevention.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Identify research-based benefits of applying Creative Interventions in Supervision.
- Understand how to apply Creative Interventions into your practice modalities, towards professional identity and working against imposter syndrome & burnout.
- Learn practical and fun interventions you can start using with Supervisees right away.

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Group Work (advanced understanding of therapeutic group development, dynamics and theories, leadership styles, stages, methods, skills), Professional Identity and Practice Issues (ethics, licensure, professional organizations, advocacy, private practice, supervision, consulting, self-assessment), Wellness and Prevention (complimentary alternative medicine, community based wellness, conflict resolution, sex education, nutrition, anger management)

Title: Unspoken Expectations: What Military-Connected Clients Assume

Clinicians Know—and Why Missteps Break Trust

Content Area: Clinical Mental Health Counseling

Day: Thursday, February 19

Time: 3:10 PM

Location: Palisades F

Presenter(s): Nicole Arcuri-Sanders, Ph.D., ACS, LPC-S, LCMHC-S, BC-TMH, NCC, SAC

Program Description: This session will explore what military-connected clients expect their clinicians to understand without being told, and how misunderstandings can quickly erode trust. Participants will learn about the key aspects of military culture that shape client expectations, common barriers these clients face in counseling, and practical strategies for building strong, trusting relationships. The presentation will provide actionable guidance for clinicians to enhance cultural competence, navigate unspoken client assumptions, and foster meaningful therapeutic engagement with military-connected clients.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Identify key aspects of military culture that influence client expectations
- Recognize common barriers military-connected clients encounter in accessing mental health services

- Implement strategies to enhance cultural competence in clinical practice and apply techniques to build and sustain trust with military-connected clients

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Counseling Theory (theories, diagnosis, wellness, crisis, trauma, mindfulness, distance counseling), Human Growth and Development (lifespan, end of life issues, developmental crisis, disabilities, factors affecting behavior), Social and Cultural Foundations (multicultural competencies, societal subgroups, changes and trends, social justice issues, acculturation)

Title: Fixing the Faulty Alarm: Understanding the Role of the Perceptive-Reactive System in Obsessive Compulsive Disorder

Content Area: Clinical Mental Health Counseling

Day: Thursday, February 19

Time: 3:10 PM

Location: Palisades G

Presenter(s): Paul J. Leslie, Ed.D., LPC
No

Program Description:

Obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) is a class of anxiety disorders which is characterized by intrusive, anxious thoughts (obsessions), repetitive actions to reduce anxiety (compulsions), or a combination of both. Traditional therapies have often centered their work primarily on the etiology of the disorder rather than on the pragmatics of how the disorder is presently being maintained. In this session, participants will learn a brief and strategic way of working with OCD that focuses on interrupting the cybernetic patterns that have preserved the pathological rigidity of the disorder.

By implementing these procedures, clinicians can assist their clients in obtaining much more flexibility in their thoughts and actions.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Recognize the role of the Perceptive-Reactive System in OCD
- Identify three phases for altering OCD patterns
- Appraise how perceptions and performance can maintain problematic processes

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Counseling Theory (theories, diagnosis, wellness, crisis, trauma, mindfulness, distance counseling)

Title: Sex and Stigma: A Cisgender Woman's Experience

Content Area: Clinical Mental Health Counseling

Day: Thursday, February 19

Time: 3:10 PM

Location: Palisades H

Presenter(s): Regin Dean, M.A., N/A

Program Description: Wellness counseling is a broad umbrella term which encompasses many underlying considerations. One major aspect of client wellness is romantic or sexual health. Despite numerous studies highlighting the health benefits of sexual activity, there remains a distinct gap in understanding the interplay between casual sexual relationships, self-esteem, and the impact these have on the overall

wellness of cisgender women. Through a thematic methodology, this study explores how varying sociosexual orientations impact the self-esteem of cisgender college aged women, and examines the conflicting social narratives at play. Findings offer new insights into best practice and advocacy efforts for clinicians allying with this population.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Understand the dynamic interplay between sociosexuality and self-esteem in cisgender women
- Conceptualize the unique ways in which stigma and societal messaging surrounding sex impacts women
- Gain new clinical perspective surrounding best wellness counseling practice and advocacy efforts in working with this population

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Social and Cultural Foundations (multicultural competencies, societal subgroups, changes and trends, social justice issues, acculturation), Wellness and Prevention (complimentary alternative medicine, community based wellness, conflict resolution, sex education, nutrition, anger management)

Title: The Art of Defining: Systems, Boundaries, and Strategy in School Counseling

Content Area: School Counseling

Day: Thursday, February 19

Time: 3:10 PM

Location: Palisades I

Presenter(s): Alaina Schrader, M.A.,
LPC, NCC, PMH-C, ADHD-CCSP

Program Description: School counselors are expected to do it all—yet rarely get to define what “it all” means. In this engaging and practical session, participants will explore the art of defining—their role, their systems, their boundaries, and their next actions. We’ll connect executive functioning, productivity psychology, and systems thinking to the real demands of school counseling practice. Learn how to manage the mental load, clarify your workflow, and use simple tools to track what matters. Whether you're navigating caseloads, school initiatives, or advocacy work, this session will help you lead with clarity, protect your energy, and take purposeful action.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Analyze the role of executive functioning, productivity psychology, and systems thinking in addressing the demands of school counseling practice.
- Create individualized strategies for managing caseloads, clarifying workflow, and defining professional boundaries.
- Demonstrate the use of practical tools to track priorities, protect energy, and take

purposeful action in school counseling settings.

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Research and Program Evaluation (critical findings and clinical implications, development of measurable counseling interventions, design and methods, evaluation of findings), Professional Identity and Practice Issues (ethics, licensure, professional organizations, advocacy, private practice, supervision, consulting, self-assessment)

Thursday Session 7

Title: What Do You Meme? Bridging Generational & Digital Gaps in Counseling

Content Area: Clinical Mental Health Counseling

Day: Thursday, February 19

Time: 4:15 PM

Location: Palisades D

Presenter(s): Sabrina Wannamaker,
Ph.D., LPCS, LPC, CSSBB

Program Description: Social media shapes how clients communicate, form identity, and relate to others, yet these influences are often overlooked in counseling. This session explores strategies for bridging generational gaps and understanding digital culture as part of client worldview. Participants will practice interpreting memes, hashtags, and online narratives as clinical data, and learn practical ways to integrate digital awareness into counseling while maintaining ethical practice.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Identify at least three ways digital

communication patterns reflect clients' mental health, identity development, and relational dynamics

- Apply culturally responsive techniques to bridge generational and digital communication gaps with diverse client population
- Evaluate the ethical implications of digital integration in counseling practice, including confidentiality, competence, and boundary management

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Social and Cultural Foundations (multicultural competencies, societal subgroups, changes and trends, social justice issues, acculturation)

Title: 5 Key Factors for Counseling African American Christians

Content Area: Clinical Mental Health Counseling

Day: Thursday, February 19

Time: 4:15 PM

Location: Palisades E

Presenter(s): Sheresa Melvin, M.A., LPC

Program Description: African American Christians are deprived of the benefit of counseling because of the stigma about counseling and the idea that it is the opposite of faith. African Americans have a long history of mistrust of the Caucasian population, and the Black Church has a history of being a great support in the African American community. Having faith and

depending on God are the essential tools African American Christians use to deal with mental health issues instead of professional counselors. This presentation will recognize the history of the Black Church, how faith is preferred over mental health counseling, and how counselors can increase their cultural competence by gaining knowledge about the African American religious experience.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Understand the history of the Black Church.
- Understand the reasons African American Christians are hesitant/resistant to counseling.
- Learn factors to how to counsel African American Christians.

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Social and Cultural Foundations (multicultural competencies, societal subgroups, changes and trends, social justice issues, acculturation)

Title: Reauthoring the Never-Good-Enough Story: Narrative Approaches to Help Young Adults Break Free from the Voice of Perfection

Content Area: Clinical Mental Health Counseling

Day: Thursday, February 19

Time: 4:15 PM

Location: Palisades F

Presenter(s): Tiffany Spisak, M.Ed., LPC

Program Description: This interactive and engaging presentation will explore the ways that narrative therapy can be implemented in the clinical counseling setting when working with young adult individuals presenting with maladaptive perfectionism. Emerging adulthood serves as a vulnerable stage of development that involves many life changes such as moving away from the family system, planning for the future, creating a new community, going to college or starting a career, and taking care of oneself on your own for the first time. During this presentation, participants will have collaborative opportunities to discuss, analyze, and practice the implementation of creative narrative therapy interventions specifically focused on challenging the perfectionist voice. The presentation aims to enhance participants' comprehensive understanding of narrative approaches as they reduce maladaptive perfectionism in young adults while challenging participants to consider diverse and culturally competent methods for adapting and using narrative approaches with participants from various lifestyle backgrounds and cultures.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Demonstrate understanding of the negative effects of perfectionistic thought patterns among the emerging adult population from a narrative conceptualization that views client stories as

unique and multilayered.

- Discuss the beneficial use of narrative therapy techniques for young adults struggling with perfectionism such as reauthoring the current plot, externalizing the voice of perfection, and considering alternative story perspectives.
- Implement narrative therapy approaches in clinical practice to reduce perfectionistic thinking patterns among the young adult population.

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Counseling Theory (theories, diagnosis, wellness, crisis, trauma, mindfulness, distance counseling), Human Growth and Development (lifespan, end of life issues, developmental crisis, disabilities, factors affecting behavior), Social and Cultural Foundations (multicultural competencies, societal subgroups, changes and trends, social justice issues, acculturation)

Title: Excelling Beyond Trauma

Content Area: School Counseling

Day: Thursday, February 19

Time: 4:15 PM

Location: Palisades G

Presenter(s): Tina Shaw, Ed.D.,
Educator License

Program Description: What do you do when you face adversities in your career? How do you get past the difficulties when life happens? This presentation will empower individuals to move forward despite workplace challenges. Keeping professionalism and a growth mindset

are important when excelling beyond trauma in any work environment. This session will provide practical strategies to help you endure a challenging work environment, how to celebrate wins, and build a positive culture of care. The hope is everyone who chooses this session will leave ready to face the future. Life challenges will come but preparation and intentional efforts can make the difference in our lives. Let's excel beyond trauma together.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Utilize 6 practical tools to help support their progress before, during, or after trauma.
- Interact with like-minded individuals to create a supportive trauma-informed community.
- Shift perspectives to move beyond trauma to success.

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Counseling Theory (theories, diagnosis, wellness, crisis, trauma, mindfulness, distance counseling)

Title: Integration of Eastern Traditions and Western Therapeutic Modalities

Content Area: Counselor Education

Day: Thursday, February 19

Time: 4:15 PM

Location: Palisades H

Presenter(s): Whitney Carter, M.Ed., M.Ed., E-RYT 200, YACEP

Program Description: Eastern philosophy, with its holistic focus, complements Western counseling by providing ancient wisdom on Yoga, Ayurveda and mindfulness enriching Western psychology's clinical and individualistic approach. The integration of these perspectives creates a more comprehensive and balanced therapeutic model that addresses a client's mind, body, and spirit.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Describe the three doshas and explain how they correlate to mental health
- Demonstrate how to perform three yogic breathing techniques to improve mental health
- Create a somatic movement session for individual and small group counseling sessions

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Counseling Theory (theories, diagnosis, wellness, crisis, trauma, mindfulness, distance counseling), Wellness and Prevention (complimentary alternative medicine, community based wellness, conflict resolution, sex education, nutrition, anger management)

Title: Social Media, Youth Mindset, and Agency: Helping Students Take Back Control of Their Digital Lives

Content Area: Clinical Mental Health Counseling

Day: Thursday, February 19

Time: 4:15 PM

Location: Palisades I

Presenter(s): Jane Kim, M.S.,
Professional Educators License with
Special Education Endorsement

Program Description: Device use is a challenge across generations, yet most children grow up without guardrails or formal education. Today's students are digital natives, with experiences shaped more by algorithms than by choice. This session explores how device use and engagement tech design, including social media and AI, are reshaping student well-being and success. While schools have largely solved the access gap, a second divide has emerged around capacity. Many students have devices but lack the skills or judgment to use them intentionally. Counselors are at the center of this work, leading efforts to guide digital habits, build staff capacity, and strengthen school climate. Learn ASCA-aligned strategies to address root causes and create healthier, more connected, and digitally aware school communities.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Identify how unrestricted device and social media use affect student focus, emotional regulation, and relationships.
- Understand the limitations of current school responses to tech use and why root-cause strategies are needed.
- Explore tools aligned to educational standards that support student mindsets and

behaviors in a digital world.

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Counseling Theory (theories, diagnosis, wellness, crisis, trauma, mindfulness, distance counseling), Social and Cultural Foundations (multicultural competencies, societal subgroups, changes and trends, social justice issues, acculturation), Wellness and Prevention (complimentary alternative medicine, community based wellness, conflict resolution, sex education, nutrition, anger management)

Title: Introduction to Juveniles with Sexual Behavioral Problems: A Guide for Counselors

Content Area: Counselor Education

Day: Thursday, February 19

Time: 4:15 PM

Location: WEST BALLROOM

Presenter(s): Ronnie McCarrell, M.A.,
LPC/LPCS/LAC

Program Description: This 50-minute session introduces counselors to the key concepts in understanding and responding to juveniles with sexual behavioral problems (JSBP). The presentation will cover how to differentiate normative from problematic behaviors, common contributing and motivating factors, and basic principles of trauma-informed, developmentally appropriate intervention. Legal and ethical considerations will also be briefly addressed.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Define and differentiate normative, problematic, and abusive sexual behaviors in youth.

- Identify key risk, motivating factors and contributing influences (e.g., trauma, environment).
- Describe the basic principles of trauma-informed and developmentally appropriate responses.

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Counseling Theory (theories, diagnosis, wellness, crisis, trauma, mindfulness, distance counseling), Human Growth and Development (lifespan, end of life issues, developmental crisis, disabilities, factors affecting behavior), Social and Cultural Foundations (multicultural competencies, societal subgroups, changes and trends, social justice issues, acculturation)

Graduate Student Poster Presentation and Reception

Location: Palisades Conference Center entrance and Patio

Title: Reaching the Resistant: How Equine Assisted Psychotherapy can Benefit Resistant and Vulnerable Populations

Presenter(s): Anna Wargo, B.A.,
Graduate Student

Program Description: Recent studies have found that there are countless benefits to incorporating equine in therapy for individuals that are resistant and vulnerable, specifically children and adolescents that have experienced traumatic events, live with anxiety and depression, or have been identified as neurodivergent. The aim of this presentation is to advocate for increased access and availability of equine assisted therapy for resistant and vulnerable populations. This presentation is intended for mental health professionals

that work with resistant and vulnerable populations of clients. I will highlight the benefits and research that support this therapeutic intervention, provide examples of what integration of this intervention can look like, and share information on how counseling professionals can become certified, or partner with an equine behavior specialist, in order to offer this form of therapeutic intervention. Equine assisted therapy is a growing field due to its clear benefits and novel approach. The goal of this presentation is to highlight its impact, educate more professionals on how to integrate it, and ultimately expand its reach for the sake of our clients and the future of counseling practices.

Title: Burnout Blues: Striking a New Chord for Counselor Wellness & Advocacy

Presenter(s): Ayanna Mitchell, B.S.,
Taylor Zimmerman

Program Description: Like a song with a powerful message, advocacy has rhythm and emotion. This will be a music-themed poster exploring the "burnout blues" counselors face and offering strategies to help them shift the tune. Using music metaphors and wellness tools, attendees will learn how to craft a more sustainable professional soundtrack.

Title: Implications for Counselors Using Child-Centered Play Therapy with Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Clients

Presenter(s): Hannah McIntyre, M.S.,
PLMHP

Palmer Gudmundson

Program Description: Hearing counselors working with d/Deaf and hard-of-hearing (DHH) clients must be aware of cultural and linguistic norms that arise in session. Further, counselors must have a base level of knowledge of Deaf culture and experiences such that they can engage with both the client and interpreter in an effective and culturally appropriate manner. Specifically, counselors trained in child-centered play therapy (CCPT) can incorporate signs (e.g., American Sign Language) from typical CCPT phrasing, become knowledgeable on common themes of play for DHH children, include assistive device toys, as well as shift discussions of deafness to an asset-based lens.

Title: Alcohol and Suicidality Across the Lifespan

Presenter(s): Lindsey Sawyer, B.A.,
Counselor-in-Training/Student

Morgan Summers

Program Description: Presentation will look at relationship between use of alcohol and suicidality across multiple age groups: adolescence, young adulthood, middle adulthood, and late adulthood. Will also cover treatment options and directions forward.

Title: The Silent Survivors: Counseling Advocacy Measures on Behalf of Spouses and Families of U.S. Veterans with PTSD

Presenter(s): Natalie Gibson, B.S.,
Graduate Student - M.Ed counseling

Hannah Boblasky Kaleb Tucker

Program Description: Families of Veterans with PTSD often encounter significant emotional, relational, and psychological challenges as a result of their loved one's experiences. Spouses,

partners, and children may face secondary trauma, heightened stress, strained relationships, and disruptions in daily life. Despite these realities, the needs of family members are frequently overlooked in Veteran-focused services. Raising awareness of these challenges is essential to fostering a more comprehensive and inclusive approach to care that addresses the well-being of the entire family system.

We recognize the need for advocacy efforts that support the mental health and well-being of these family members, including promoting family-centered care. Too often, services focus only on veterans, potentially isolating family members. A shift to a model of understanding that both family and veterans are at the center can ensure that unique needs and experiences are discussed and understood. Counseling services must be informed about military life, culture, and specialized programs directed towards teaching spouses and adult children communication and relationship skills and providing intervention to deal with violence or conflicts in veterans' families.

To practically implement the advocacy efforts mentioned above, counselors should adjust their current practices to be more aligned with family inclusive care. Implementing theoretical models, such as Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT), can allow for situationally responsive care and lead to a widespread change of care standards throughout both the Veteran Affairs (VA) and individual counselors. Outside of the individual counseling office, professional counselors should act upon their role as advocates for families of veterans, supporting organizations such as the Family Advocacy Program. Acknowledging the effects of a veteran

or active-duty soldier's experiences on their family unit allows for counselors to properly advocate and help combat lack of resources for veteran families.

Title: Attitudes Toward Mental Health in a Military Academy

Presenter(s): David Hammer, B.A.

Program Description: The belief that one should be able to handle mental health problems on one's own is the result of stigma, or negative attitudes, beliefs, and stereotypes toward mental health that can impact treatment-seeking and outcomes. Stigma significantly contributes to reductions in treatment-seeking behavior and outcomes, and can delay, prevent, and cause discontinuation of treatment. While the impacts of stigma are felt in all contexts, they are particularly relevant in military contexts, and the role of stigma in treatment seeking within the military remains significant in comparison to civilian populations.

Title: From Language Barriers to Learning Pathways: Amplifying Voices Through AI for ESL Counselors-in-Training

Presenter(s): Nicole Arcuri-Sanders, Ph.D., ACS, LPC-S, LCMHC-S, BC-TMH, NCC, SAC

Jordan Hucks Isabela Botta Rodriguez

Program Description: This graduate student poster presentation explores the use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools, such as ChatGPT and Grok, in supporting English as a Second Language (ESL) Counselors-in-Training (CITs) within graduate degree counseling programs. Through a case study and research review, this presentation examines how AI can aid language translation, enhance writing clarity, and

promote counselor professional identity development for multilingual students with case study analysis and current literature pertaining to evidence-based best practices. Ethical, legal, and practical strategies for integrating AI in counselor education while accounting for best practices to support equity, inclusivity, and academic integrity will be presented.

Title: Integrating Meditation and Grounding Techniques into Clinical Practice

Presenter(s): Jane Johnson, B.A.,
Regan Schwartz

Program Description: An overview of using meditation and grounding techniques in therapy to support emotional regulation.

Title: Worth It USA: A Psychoeducational Program Promoting Financial Confidence and Mental Wellness in Young Adults

Presenter(s): Kimberley Munteanu, M.A.

Program Description: This presentation provides an overview of Worth It USA, a ten-week psychoeducational program designed to support emotional resilience, purpose development, and financial confidence in teens and young adults. The poster outlines the program's goals, weekly thematic structure, and the counseling frameworks that inform its approach to reducing stress and increasing self-efficacy.

Title: Creative Group Supervision: Bridging Reflection, Growth, and Collaboration

Presenter(s): Taylor Baldwin, M.S., LGPC

Program Description: My graduate student poster will review creative strategies to group supervision that overall engage students in collaboration while prioritizing growth and reflection to further enhance their clinical skills. I will discuss introduction activities, as well as creative interventions such as self-care jars, interactive treatment plans and clinical therapy notes, case examples, and more. The importance of meaningful group supervision will be discussed, as well as strategies to foster a collaborative and supportive environment. Multicultural considerations and group methods will also be highlighted to ensure group supervision interventions remain inclusive to all students/supervisees.

Title: Horticultural Counseling: Improving Students' Academic Success and Career Readiness in Rural Schools

Presenter(s): Shanda Sutton, B.A.

Vanessa Badger Daynisha Greene, M.A.,
Amaiya Williams, B.A.; Antoinette C.
Hollis, Ed.D., LPC, NCC

Program Description: Horticultural counseling is a therapeutic modality centered on gardening and plant-based activities that address the physical, psychological, social, and cognitive well-being of participants. We will be sharing the results of the research into the benefits of horticultural counseling to address the social/emotional needs of students experiencing multiple risks and the impact on their wellness, self-esteem and resilience. Horticultural counseling can also be used to address the academic success and career readiness of at-risk students living in a rural community. Creating positive youth development is a major demand in our society, and

particularly in smaller areas where there is a lack of resources and communal engagement.

Title: Bridging the Gap: Advocating for Adoption Competency in Counseling Graduate Education

Presenter(s): Will Fulton, B.S., NA

Program Description: Despite clear evidence of mental health disparities among adoptees and members of the adoption kinship network, most counseling graduate programs do not offer adoption-competent education or training. Currently, the only validated program in the U.S. is Training for Adoption Competency (TAC), which remains largely absent from most curricula. This lack of preparation is not just a training gap—it is an issue of ethical and equitable care.

Title: The Postpartum Blueprint: Tools & Templates for Making Mood, Needs, and Support Visible

Presenter(s): Alaina Schrader, M.A.,
LPC, NCC, PMH-C, ADHD-CCSP,
NPT-C

Program Description: Becoming parents is one of life's biggest transitions—but few couples are emotionally prepared for the invisible load, identity shifts, and mental health challenges of postpartum life. This session introduces a counseling-informed framework for postpartum planning and perinatal support. Clinicians will explore how to provide proactive care during pregnancy, educate about perinatal mood disorders, and support individuals and couples with tools like the Postpartum Mood Check-In Chart. Participants will receive editable templates, session agendas, and strategies to help clients

navigate the fourth trimester with intention and support.

Friday Sessions

Breakfast and Business Meeting 8:00 am – 10 am

Empowering Counselors: The AI Advantage

Program Description: "Empowering Counselors: The AI Advantage"

Join us for an insightful program that explores the transformative potential of artificial intelligence in the counseling field. This session, moderated by Dr. Jennifer Jordan, and will feature a diverse panel of experts who utilize various AI applications to enhance their counseling practices.

Discover innovative tools and strategies that empower counselors to improve client interactions, streamline processes, and elevate therapeutic outcomes. Our discussion will not only highlight the advantages of AI but also encourage collaborative dialogue on its ethical implications and future possibilities in mental health care. Don't miss this opportunity to engage with thought leaders and enhance your understanding of AI's role in empowering the counseling profession.

Friday Session 8

Title: Building Resilience in Our Most Challenged Students

Content Area: School Counseling

Day: Friday, February 20

Time: 10:00 AM

Location: Palisades E

Presenter(s): Cheryl Fuller, M.Ed., School Admin K-12, School Counselor, Elementary Teacher

Program Description: Understanding the impact of trauma on our students allows us to help them build resilience to survive and thrive through their experiences. In this session we will examine how trauma shows up and learn specific strategies to respond in a manner that will build resilience. Drawing from professional knowledge obtained through certifications in trauma informed practices & social emotional learning as well as personal experiences of extreme physical, emotional and sexual child abuse & teenage homelessness, the presenter will empower counselors with strategies that help our most vulnerable students while inspiring them to continue to do this challenging work. By emphasizing the value of relationships we are able to care for all students whether we are aware of their circumstances of trauma or not. This session will leave counselors hopeful and inspired for the impact they really can have on students and their families.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Broaden their perspective of identifying trauma across many populations of children.
- List specific strategies that will build resilience in students who have experienced trauma.

- Recognize the value and influence they have to change the lives of those children in their care.

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Counseling Theory (theories, diagnosis, wellness, crisis, trauma, mindfulness, distance counseling), Human Growth and Development (lifespan, end of life issues, developmental crisis, disabilities, factors affecting behavior), Wellness and Prevention (complimentary alternative medicine, community based wellness, conflict resolution, sex education, nutrition, anger management)

Title: Relieving Physical Pain: Ethics and Practice

Content Area: Ethics

Day: Friday, February 20

Time: 10:00 AM

Location: Palisades F

Presenter(s): Fredric Mau, D.Min., LPC, LPCS

Program Description: If you are familiar with guided imagery you can help your clients eliminate the experience of physical pain. Physical pain is debilitating, often creates cooccurring depression, and generally worsens other mental health and medical problems. Since 2019 the US Department of Health and Human Services has listed hypnotherapy and relaxation training not just as standard of care processes for physical pain relief, but as best practices. While most approaches to psychotherapy can help clients manage the experience of pain, a small group of psychophysiological therapies can actually eliminate the experience of pain. It is important to understand the ethical use of and neurological basis for these evidence-based processes. This hands-on workshop will demonstrate practical

processes you can use immediately with your clients.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Participants will be able to describe the ethical use of psychophysiological pain relief with clients.
- Participants will be able to use guided imagery relaxation techniques to eliminate or mitigate client experiences of physical pain.
- Participants will be able to describe the neurological basis for relaxation-based pain relief.

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Counseling Theory (theories, diagnosis, wellness, crisis, trauma, mindfulness, distance counseling), Assessment (diagnosis, ethical practices, psychopharmacological medications, information relevant to medication side effects, how to make appropriate medication referrals), Wellness and Prevention (complimentary alternative medicine, community based wellness, conflict resolution, sex education, nutrition, anger management)

Title: From Stigma to Science: A Counseling Perspective on Psychedelic-Assisted Psychotherapy

Content Area: Clinical Mental Health Counseling

Day: Friday, February 20

Time: 10:00 AM

Location: Palisades G

Presenter(s): Jack Weaverling, B.A., Intern

Eric Hamrick Adam Mantione

Program Description: This presentation will provide counselors with an accessible overview of psychedelic-assisted psychotherapy, highlighting its history, current scientific findings, therapeutic benefits, and potential risks. We will explore how psychedelics can alter perspectives, promote healing, and catalyze meaningful behavioral change, while also addressing the challenges and cautions that accompany their use. Discussion will include both individual and group applications, as well as the counselor's role in supporting integration of these experiences. The intent is to raise awareness for South Carolina counselors, equipping them with knowledge to engage in informed, ethical, and compassionate conversations with clients curious about or involved in psychedelic therapies. Followed by a Q&A with an experienced facilitator.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Describe the historical and cultural roots of psychedelic use and summarize current research findings on their therapeutic potential.
- Identify both the potential benefits and risks of psychedelic-assisted psychotherapy, including individual and group applications.
- Discuss ways counselors can ethically and

effectively support clients who are exploring or integrating psychedelic experiences within clinical practice.

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Career Development and Counseling (theories, principles, techniques, processes, resources, planning, transitions, trends), Research and Program Evaluation (critical findings and clinical implications, development of measurable counseling interventions, design and methods, evaluation of findings), Wellness and Prevention (complimentary alternative medicine, community based wellness, conflict resolution, sex education, nutrition, anger management)

Title: Faith as a Fortress: Supporting African American Clients Through Racial Trauma

Content Area: Clinical Mental Health Counseling

Day: Friday, February 20

Time: 10:00 AM

Location: Palisades H

Presenter(s): Janelle Robinson, Ph.D., LPC-S, NCC

Program Description: This presentation explores the vital role of faith and spirituality in how African American clients cope with race-based stress and racial trauma. Drawing on cultural, historical, and clinical perspectives, the session highlights how faith practices serve as sources of resilience, meaning-making, and healing within the Black community. Clinicians will gain insights into the ways racial trauma uniquely affects African American clients and learn strategies for integrating clients' spiritual and faith-based resources into therapeutic practice. Emphasis will be placed on culturally responsive approaches that honor the client's worldview while

promoting empowerment, restoration, and psychological well-being.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Identify the role of faith and spirituality in the coping strategies African American clients use to manage race-based stress and racial trauma.
- Analyze how racial trauma uniquely impacts African American clients and the ways faith traditions and practices can serve as protective and healing factors.
- Apply culturally responsive clinical interventions that integrate clients' faith and spirituality to support resilience and recovery from race-based stress.

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Social and Cultural Foundations (multicultural competencies, societal subgroups, changes and trends, social justice issues, acculturation), Professional Identity and Practice Issues (ethics, licensure, professional organizations, advocacy, private practice, supervision, consulting, self-assessment)

**Title: Love ACTually:
Spiritually-Integrated Acceptance &
Commitment Therapy for Couples**

Content Area: Couples and Family Therapy

Day: Friday, February 20

Time: 10:00 AM

Location: Palisades I

Presenter(s): Theresa Allen, Ph.D., LPC, NCC, CAGCS, CCTP

Program Description: Christian couples often begin the journey to “Happily Ever After,” full of hopes and dreams, only to face the roadblocks of insecure attachment styles and negative schemas along the way. Without tools like communication, conflict, and negotiation skills, spouses can get stuck in destructive patterns, leading to the feeling that marriage is too hard to continue. In this workshop, licensed mental health professionals will evaluate Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) as an empirically based treatment that helps couples unhook from difficult emotions and thoughts, and learn how to choose values-based actions in the relationship. Participants will learn the six processes of psychological inflexibility, define the core tenets of ACT through a biblical lens, identify schemas that underlie conflicts in couples, and explore values-driven interventions tailored to Christian couples. ACT can help strengthen marital relationships and help clients make values-based choices instead of being hooked by emotional reactivity.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Evaluate Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) as a therapeutic approach for Christian couples and explore its application through a biblical lens to help couples navigate

emotional and cognitive struggles.

- Explain the six processes of psychological inflexibility and identify negative schemas and insecure attachment styles that underlie conflicts in relationships, learning how to make room for the uncomfortable thoughts and emotions that each partner may struggle with.
- Develop strategies for applying spiritually integrated interventions that are values-driven and tailored to willing Christian couples, enabling them to reconcile differences, strengthen relationships, and make values-based choices instead of being hooked by negative reactive cycles.

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Counseling Theory (theories, diagnosis, wellness, crisis, trauma, mindfulness, distance counseling), Human Growth and Development (lifespan, end of life issues, developmental crisis, disabilities, factors affecting behavior)

Friday Session 9

Title: Enhancing Your Comprehensive School Counseling Program

Content Area: School Counseling

Day: Friday, February 20

Time: 11:00 AM

Location: Palisades D

Presenter(s): Amy Wamsley, M.A., MA in K-12 School Counseling, BA in Early Childhood Education

Whitney Carter Whitney Carter

Program Description: Create or enhance your comprehensive school counseling program by implementing activities that will provide students with emotional, social, and academic support. You will leave with actionable takeaways for staff professional development and parent/guardian education. Create career development activities that will prepare students for post-secondary success.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- 1-Create an annual calendar for school-wide programming & individual counseling check-in sheets
- 2-Explain how to effectively host Coffee with the Counselors
-
- 3-Describe what is entailed in a Professional Development staff meeting on emotion regulation and trauma informed practices for classroom teachers.
- 4-Design and implement a Career

Café and Parade of Professions

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Counseling Theory (theories, diagnosis, wellness, crisis, trauma, mindfulness, distance counseling), Career Development and Counseling (theories, principles, techniques, processes, resources, planning, transitions, trends), Research and Program Evaluation (critical findings and clinical implications, development of measurable counseling interventions, design and methods, evaluation of findings)

Title: The Role of Forgiveness in Addressing the Crisis of Addictions

Content Area: Substance Abuse/Addictions

Day: Friday, February 20

Time: 11:00 AM

Location: Palisades E

Presenter(s): Lyndon Harris, M.Div., M. Div and Maria Lund

Program Description: In this workshop we will introduce Forgive for Recovery, an adaptation of the Stanford Forgiveness Project's evidence-based methods and practices of forgiveness, adapted as an intervention for people struggling with SUD. Preliminary research has shown these methods to be effective in supporting and sustaining long-term recovery. The AA Big Book states that the #1 reason people lose their sobriety is resentments. We will argue that the #1 way to release resentments is through forgiveness.

This is a human and economic crisis. The prevalence of American adults with substance use disorders (SUD) who are currently employed is 13.5 million (8.7% of the population). These employees miss an average of 22 days annually, which equates to twice the number of days that employees without SUDs miss. Addiction in the workplace can lead to

loss of productivity and revenue, as companies cover costs associated with healthcare, disability, and worker's compensation. Reports claim the costs of alcohol abuse in the workplace costs the US economy nearly \$250 billion a year. Of that, 62% is directly related to lost productivity.

Our intervention, Forgive for Recovery, has demonstrated significant positive gains in preliminary teaching trials to support people in long-term recovery. We will introduce the methods and research of the Forgive for Recovery approach as set forth in our workbook, Forgive for Good Recovery Workbook: Overcome Addiction, Heal Your Past, and Find Peace in Sobriety (New Harbinger Press, March 2025).

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Understand the methods and health benefits of the Stanford Forgiveness Project and the positive effect for substance misuse clients of addressing their unresolved grievances.
- Recognize the concept of Unenforceable Rules, the underlying mechanism of a grievance and its connection to self forgiveness.
- Demonstrate the practice of Positive Intention. This is a

process that seeks to determine the positive intention underlying a mistake.

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Counseling Theory (theories, diagnosis, wellness, crisis, trauma, mindfulness, distance counseling), Wellness and Prevention (complimentary alternative medicine, community based wellness, conflict resolution, sex education, nutrition, anger management)

Title: The Heart of Healing: Prioritizing the Therapeutic Relationship in Trauma-Informed Care

Content Area: Counselor Education

Day: Friday, February 20

Time: 11:00 AM

Location: Palisades F

Presenter(s): Maria Morris, M.S., LPC

Program Description: In the realm of trauma therapy the therapeutic alliance isn't just a component of treatment; it is the treatment. This session will explore how the quality of the therapeutic relationship often outweighs the specific modality used, especially for clients whose early attachments were fractured or unsafe.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Identify key components of a strong therapeutic alliance within trauma-informed care
- Apply interactive, relationship-based techniques to build trust and emotional safety with clients who

have experienced attachment disruptions.

- Practice strategies for repairing relational ruptures to strengthen resilience and continuity in the therapeutic process.

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Counseling Theory (theories, diagnosis, wellness, crisis, trauma, mindfulness, distance counseling), Career Development and Counseling (theories, principles, techniques, processes, resources, planning, transitions, trends)

Title: Complex Supervision: Intricate Cases Requiring Consultation

Content Area: Supervision

Day: Friday, February 20

Time: 11:00 AM

Location: Palisades H

Presenter(s): Nicole Arcuri Sanders, Ph.D., ACS, LPC-S, LCMHC-S, BC-TMH, NCC, SAC

Lashia Bowers

Program Description: The session will address the complexities of the supervision relationship, involving supervisors, supervisees, and clients. This dynamic can raise ethical and legal concerns in both clinical and supervisory practices. Additional stakeholders, such as client guardians, university supervisors, and employment supervisors, further increase the complexity. Open dialogue will be encouraged to analyze and resolve ethical and legal dilemmas. The session aims to help supervisors and supervisees apply ethical and legal guidance to support best practices, prioritizing the welfare of clients with consideration of supervisor and supervisee/counselor wellbeing.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Identify ethical and legal dilemmas related to clinical counseling supervision.
- Discuss supervision experiences.
- Apply state statute and ethical codes supportive of best practice clinical counseling supervision supporting supervisor, supervisee/counselor, and client welfare.

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Social and Cultural Foundations (multicultural competencies, societal subgroups, changes and trends, social justice issues, acculturation), Professional Identity and Practice Issues (ethics, licensure, professional organizations, advocacy, private practice, supervision, consulting, self-assessment), Wellness and Prevention (complimentary alternative medicine, community based wellness, conflict resolution, sex education, nutrition, anger management)

Title: ACT in Adolescent Groups: Building Connection, Empowering Change

Content Area: Clinical Mental Health Counseling

Day: Friday, February 20

Time: 11:00 AM

Location: Palisades I

Presenter(s): Robert Burdine, M.Ed., LPC

Program Description: Group therapy can be a powerful way to work with adolescents, offering connection, shared experience, and meaningful change. Yet many counselors hesitate to lead groups, unsure how to structure sessions, choose

a focus, or manage group dynamics. Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) offers a flexible, evidence-based framework that helps counselors move through these barriers with clarity, direction, and purpose.

This session provides a practical roadmap for applying ACT in adolescent group therapy. Participants will learn how to develop clear session focuses, align group activities with ACT's core processes, and adapt interventions to be engaging and appropriate for teens. Real-world examples will illustrate how to build connection, support psychological flexibility, and infuse ACT principles throughout every aspect of the group experience—from structure to facilitation to in-session interventions. Designed for clinicians who want to integrate ACT with depth and intention, this session offers actionable tools to enhance group effectiveness and engagement with adolescent clients.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Describe the core processes of Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) and explain how they promote change and engagement with adolescents.
- Develop themes and focuses for group sessions that are grounded in ACT principles and responsive to the needs of adolescents.

- Design structured adolescent group sessions that are thoroughly grounded in ACT across interventions, session structure, and facilitation approach.

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Counseling Theory (theories, diagnosis, wellness, crisis, trauma, mindfulness, distance counseling), Human Growth and Development (lifespan, end of life issues, developmental crisis, disabilities, factors affecting behavior), Group Work (advanced understanding of therapeutic group development, dynamics and theories, leadership styles, stages, methods, skills)

Friday Session 9

Title: We Say Gay: Assessing for LGBTQ+ Competence in Counselor Education and Supervision

Content Area: Supervision

Day: Friday, February 20

Time: 1:00 PM

Location: Palisades D

Presenter(s): Paul James, PhD, LPC, Ph.D., LPC (OK)

Lori Andrews, Ph.D., LMHC, NCC, ACS

Program Description: This presentation targets any counselors, supervisors, or counselor educators who may be involved in providing counseling services to LGBTQIA+ persons. The presentation will begin with an overview of the learning objectives, rationale, theory, and literature. Attendees will engage in interactive discussion around the need for counselor educators and supervisors to assess for knowledge, clinical preparedness, and attitudes towards LGBTQIA+ persons in students and supervisees. Additionally, a simultaneous need emerged for assessing

how counselor dispositions influence their ability to work with this population. The presentation will conclude with the option for attendees to self-assess their level of competence with LGBTQIA+ populations.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Participants will identify the ethical rationale for assessing multicultural competence (specifically LGBTQ+) in master's level counseling students
- Participants will examine two evidence-based assessments of LGBT clinical competence
- Participants will discuss possible applications of one assessment in counselor education and supervision.

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Assessment (diagnosis, ethical practices, psychopharmacological medications, information relevant to medication side effects, how to make appropriate medication referrals), Research and Program Evaluation (critical findings and clinical implications, development of measurable counseling interventions, design and methods, evaluation of findings), Professional Identity and Practice Issues (ethics, licensure, professional organizations, advocacy, private practice, supervision, consulting, self-assessment)

Title: Advocacy is Canceled: Boost Graduation Rates, Evaluating Foreign Transcripts

Content Area: School Counseling

Day: Friday, February 20

Time: 1:00 PM

Location: Palisades E

Presenter(s): Phoenicia Grant, M.Ed., k-12 school counseling, k-12 ESOL, prek-5th grade elementary education, leadership, 6-8 grade social studies, English, and science

Program Description: Just when you thought ADVOCACY was canceled, think again! International students deserve to earn US equivalent credit for coursework taken abroad. Districts that embrace a fair and sustainable transcript evaluation and enrollment process can minimize hardships experienced by secondary newcomers challenged with learning English while passing graduation requirements. Counselors will receive a toolkit with resources to analyze transcripts.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Examine federal and state laws, legal issues, and trends in education that apply to English Learners and consider the implications of these cases to guide their local procedures and practices.
- Articulate the importance of laws, policies, and procedures in governing best practices and the consequences of inconsistency in

practice at the school, district, regional, or state level and the negative impact it can have on graduation rates and the college admission process for English Learners

- Consider their part in addressing disparities and opportunity gaps that may exist within their EL population and identify within the context of their role, “What should I do about these- and with whom?”

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Social and Cultural Foundations (multicultural competencies, societal subgroups, changes and trends, social justice issues, acculturation), Research and Program Evaluation (critical findings and clinical implications, development of measurable counseling interventions, design and methods, evaluation of findings), Professional Identity and Practice Issues (ethics, licensure, professional organizations, advocacy, private practice, supervision, consulting, self-assessment)

Title: Preparing for Retirement as a Practice Owner or a 1099 Contractor

Content Area: Clinical Mental Health Counseling

Day: Friday, February 20

Time: 1:00 PM

Location: Palisades F

Presenter(s): Randall Avery, CFP®, CFA, B.A., CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER (CFP), Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA), Series 65 (Securities License)

Program Description: Our workshop aims to equip practice owners and 1099 contractors with the knowledge and tools to confidently plan for a financially secure retirement, addressing their distinct challenges and opportunities. We offer crucial insights into the unique retirement planning needs of the self-employed. We delve into topics like navigating income variability, leveraging specialized retirement savings plans (SEP IRAs, SIMPLE IRAs, Solo 401(k)s), maximizing contributions, planning for healthcare costs, business succession (for owners), and understanding relevant tax implications.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Identify at least three different retirement savings vehicles suitable for practice owners or 1099 contractors.
- Calculate their basic retirement income needs using our provided formula or guideline.
- Evaluate the key economic trends within the LPC or 1099 contractor landscape in their personal businesses and describe how they might influence their long-term retirement savings strategy.

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Human Growth and Development (lifespan, end of life issues, developmental crisis, disabilities, factors affecting behavior), Career Development and Counseling (theories, principles, techniques,

processes, resources, planning, transitions, trends), Professional Identity and Practice Issues (ethics, licensure, professional organizations, advocacy, private practice, supervision, consulting, self-assessment)

**Title: Faith, Family, and Filters:
Navigating the Invisible Influences in
Counseling**

Content Area: Clinical Mental Health Counseling

Day: Friday, February 20

Time: 1:00 PM

Location: Palisades G

Presenter(s): Sabrina Wannamaker, Ph.D., LPCS, LPC, CSSBB

Program Description: Clients bring invisible influences such as faith traditions, family dynamics, and digital filters that shape identity, coping mechanisms, and presenting concerns. This interactive session helps counselors recognize and therapeutically integrate these forces into clinical practice using culturally responsive strategies. Participants will examine how spirituality, family patterns, and social media impact client meaning making and identity formation while reflecting on their own personal filters. An engaging Filter Activity demonstrates how shifting clinical perspectives alters case conceptualization, intervention planning, and overall counselor effectiveness.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Analyze how faith traditions, family dynamics, and digital culture independently and interactively influence client

identity formation,
presenting concerns,
and therapeutic goals

- Apply culturally responsive assessment strategies that integrate spiritual, familial, and digital influences into case conceptualization and treatment planning
- Integrate evidence-based interventions that honor the complexity of faith, family, and digital influences while maintaining appropriate professional boundaries

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Counseling Theory (theories, diagnosis, wellness, crisis, trauma, mindfulness, distance counseling), Social and Cultural Foundations (multicultural competencies, societal subgroups, changes and trends, social justice issues, acculturation), Professional Identity and Practice Issues (ethics, licensure, professional organizations, advocacy, private practice, supervision, consulting, self-assessment)

Title: Smarter, Not Harder: Admin Hacks for Preventing Burnout

Content Area: Clinical Mental Health Counseling

Day: Friday, February 20

Time: 1:00 PM

Location: Palisades H

Presenter(s): Sara Lynn Calderon, Ed.S., LPC, RPT

Program Description: Embrace the philosophy of "work smarter, not harder." Review your current admin processes and find new ways to shift your approach to improve efficiency and reduce waste. By exploring "hacks" for

time management, technology, and focus, you can proactively prevent burnout. Consider how AI can be ethically integrated into your clinical practice. Simplify your admin tasks and save time so you can focus on what really matters to you.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Identify common administrative system challenges that contribute to burnout.
- Specify realistic shifts in clinical management systems that improve efficiency and reduce waste.
- Assess integration methods for modern technology (including AI) into clinical practice including ethical considerations, limitations, and benefits.

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Professional Identity and Practice Issues (ethics, licensure, professional organizations, advocacy, private practice, supervision, consulting, self-assessment)

Title: Growing Up Grieving

Content Area: Counselor Education

Day: Friday, February 20

Time: 1:00 PM

Location: Palisades I

Presenter(s): John Edwards, M.Div.

Program Description: Grief is a journey, not a destination. For a student, how they grieve is not based on their

numerical age, but their developmental stage. As they hit each developmental stage, a different aspect of their grief emerges. In this session we will discover how a student expresses grief at each developmental stage, and how we as adults help them along their grief journey.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to identify how students process their grief in each developmental stage.
- They will be able to assist bereaved students in developing a process for growth in their grief journey.
- They will be able to recognize the developmental needs of grieving students and prepare them for the next developmental level.

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Human Growth and Development (lifespan, end of life issues, developmental crisis, disabilities, factors affecting behavior)

Friday Session 10

Title: Let's Talk about Maternal Mental Health

Content Area: Clinical Mental Health Counseling

Day: Friday, February 20

Time: 2:00 PM

Location: Palisades D

Presenter(s): Sandra Penn, Ph.D., Ph.D., LCMHC, RPT

Program Description: Mothering is often viewed from a joyous lens where moms-to-be and mothers are expected to fully embrace the developmental tasks associated with motherhood. However, many women live rich lives before embarking on the journey of motherhood; thus, counselors are charged with understanding the diverse competing developmental events that women experience prior to and after the birthing period. In addition, once mothers have their babies, this difficult period is marked by a high mental load, where many mothers feel under supported and overwhelmed. Moreover, research on perinatal mental health disorders suggests that mothers' mental health needs are often undiagnosed or misunderstood. As such, this presentation seeks to educate counseling professionals about the sociocultural and mental health needs of mothers in the perinatal period and describes some treatment options.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Describe three developmental events that women experience during their lives
- Compare two mental health disorders that mothers could face in the perinatal period
- Describe three counseling interventions to

address perinatal
mental health needs

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Counseling Theory (theories, diagnosis, wellness, crisis, trauma, mindfulness, distance counseling), Human Growth and Development (lifespan, end of life issues, developmental crisis, disabilities, factors affecting behavior), Social and Cultural Foundations (multicultural competencies, societal subgroups, changes and trends, social justice issues, acculturation)

Title: Rooted & Resilient: Culturally Sensitive Mental Health Support for Children

Content Area: Play Therapy

Day: Friday, February 20

Time: 2:00 PM

Location: Palisades E

Presenter(s): Shatisha Wilson, LPC, RPT-S, ACS, IECMH-E, Doctorate in Executive Leadership in Healthcare Administration (Conferred in December 2025), LPC, RPT-S, ACS, IECMH-E

Program Description: A training designed for clinicians, educators, and caregivers working with children ages 4–12 from historically marginalized backgrounds. This interactive workshop explores how culture, identity, and systemic trauma shape children's emotional and behavioral health.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Identify how cultural identity, family traditions, and systemic trauma influence children's emotional and behavioral health.
- Apply at least two culturally responsive

strategies to help children express and regulate emotions in ways that honor their background.

- Demonstrate increased self-awareness by reflecting on how their own cultural lens shapes clinical decision-making and engagement with families.

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Counseling Theory (theories, diagnosis, wellness, crisis, trauma, mindfulness, distance counseling), Human Growth and Development (lifespan, end of life issues, developmental crisis, disabilities, factors affecting behavior), Social and Cultural Foundations (multicultural competencies, societal subgroups, changes and trends, social justice issues, acculturation)

Title: Personality Disorders in the Family Court Context: Clinical Manifestations, Legal Implications, and Judicial Perspectives

Content Area: Clinical Mental Health Counseling

Day: Friday, February 20

Time: 2:00 PM

Location: Palisades F

Presenter(s): Shauna Ferrese, Ph.D., LPC-S, LPC, LAC

Ally Hunt

Program Description: This presentation provides family court judges with a practical overview of how personality disorders (PDs) can present in custody, visitation, and divorce proceedings. Drawing from clinical research and case examples, the session explores the manifestations of PDs in daily life and relationships, the ways adversarial court processes may

exacerbate symptoms, and how these patterns commonly appear in courtroom behavior. Special attention is given to the impact on parenting capacity, high-conflict litigation, and judicial case management. Judges will gain strategies for recognizing clinically informed patterns without diagnosing from the bench, using interdisciplinary supports such as custody evaluators and parenting coordinators, and applying trauma-informed approaches to reduce escalation. The session emphasizes child-centered decision making and collaboration between courts and mental health professionals.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Understand how personality disorders may manifest
- Explore how family court processes can exacerbate symptoms
- Recognize how judges may see these disorders in court and Identify strategies for managing high-conflict cases

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Counseling Theory (theories, diagnosis, wellness, crisis, trauma, mindfulness, distance counseling), Human Growth and Development (lifespan, end of life issues, developmental crisis, disabilities, factors affecting behavior), Social and Cultural Foundations (multicultural competencies, societal subgroups, changes and trends, social justice issues, acculturation)

Title: Investing in the Future: Promoting the Growth and Development of Counselors-in-Training

Content Area: Supervision

Day: Friday, February 20

Time: 2:00 PM

Location: Palisades G

Presenter(s): Sherita Davis, Ph.D., LPC, LPCS, LCMHC, Skye Brookshire Precious Mcfadden, B.A. and Kayla Williamson, B.A.

Program Description: A vital part of graduate counseling programs is real-world clinical practice through practicum and internship experiences.

As a result, counseling programs rely on the expertise and supervision of licensed site supervisors to support the growth and development of master's-level counselors-in-training (CITs). The focus of this continuing education is to identify best practices for supervising counseling students during practicum and internship experiences.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Identify the supervisory needs of counselors-in-training identified through qualitative and quantitative studies.
- Apply 5 effective supervisory practices to promote the development of CITs.
- Analyze the correlation between Hogan's Four Levels of Counselor Development and the developmental needs of CITs during practicum and internship experiences.

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Professional Identity and Practice Issues (ethics, licensure, professional organizations, advocacy, private practice, supervision, consulting, self-assessment)

Title: Providing Space: Assisting Counseling Graduate Students Navigating Trauma and Grief

Content Area: Graduate Students

Day: Friday, February 20

Time: 2:00 PM

Location: Palisades H

Presenter(s): Tanesha Jones-Boyd, Ph.D., LPC-A and Wynn M. Purvis No

Program Description: Experiencing a significant loss can lead to various challenges in a person's life. Regardless of the type, the impact can create major setbacks across multiple life areas. As our population ages, sociopolitical systems shift, economic pressures on families and communities grow, and violence is consistently on the rise, the number of individuals reporting battling mental health issues increases. Counseling trainees are not immune to challenges related to grief and trauma, making it essential for counselor training programs to prepare and support graduate students dealing with loss. While clinical mental health and school counselor programs train students to work with clients, students, and families in circumstances of trauma, grief, and crisis intervention and response, specific attention must be given to helping graduate counseling students build resilience, navigating their own experiences of loss. This session will explore various forms of loss reported by graduate students while examining the potential impact of trauma and grief on their counselor identity. Additionally, presenters will provide strategies that counselor education faculty and supervisors can use to support students

within the framework of ethical and professional guidelines. Attendees will engage in and work through potential scenarios, reviewing best practices that empower graduate students.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Analyze the impact of trauma, grief, and loss on graduate counseling students' personal and professional identity.
- Demonstrate strategies that counselor educators and supervisors can implement to support students navigating grief and loss.
- Evaluate best practices for building resilience and empowering counseling trainees experiencing loss within ethical and professional guidelines.

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Counseling Theory (theories, diagnosis, wellness, crisis, trauma, mindfulness, distance counseling), Career Development and Counseling (theories, principles, techniques, processes, resources, planning, transitions, trends), Professional Identity and Practice Issues (ethics, licensure, professional organizations, advocacy, private practice, supervision, consulting, self-assessment)

Title: Mental Toughness in Counseling: Practical Strategies to Prevent Burnout and Sustain Resilience

Content Area: Counselor Education

Day: Friday, February 20

Time: 2:00 PM

Location: Palisades I

Presenter(s): Tara Robinson, Ed.D.,
LPC/LCMHC

Program Description: This presentation equips counselors with practical tools to strengthen mental toughness, manage stress, and prevent burnout. Drawing from performance psychology, counseling best practices, and the A.L.I.G.N.TM Framework (Awaken, Listen, Integrate, Ground, Navigate, Activate), participants will learn strategies to cultivate resilience, maintain alignment in their professional and personal lives, and sustain long-term effectiveness in the helping profession. The session will include interactive reflection, evidence-based practices, and real-life applications designed specifically for the unique demands of counselors.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Identify practical strategies for developing mental toughness to reduce burnout.
- Demonstrate techniques for managing stress and maintaining counselor wellness.
- Identify areas where mental toughness strategies can strengthen both counselor resilience and client interventions

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Counseling Theory (theories, diagnosis, wellness, crisis, trauma, mindfulness, distance counseling), Professional Identity and Practice Issues (ethics, licensure, professional organizations, advocacy, private practice, supervision, consulting, self-assessment), Wellness and Prevention (complimentary alternative medicine, community based wellness, conflict resolution, sex education, nutrition, anger management)

Title: Success Starts Here: Why Soft Skills Matter in Elementary School

Content Area: Counselor Education

Day: Friday, February 20

Time: 2:00 PM

Location: West Ballroom on Mezzanine level of the Hotel

Presenter(s): Dr. G. Cleve Pilot

Program Description: This session highlights the vital role soft skills play in shaping student success from the very beginning of their educational journey. Participants will explore how communication, teamwork, problem-solving, empathy, and self-control prepare children not only for academic growth but also for lifelong achievement. With practical examples and strategies, this presentation shows why teaching soft skills in elementary school builds the foundation for confident, resilient, and accountable learners.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Demonstrate the ability to explain why skills like communication, teamwork, empathy, and problem-solving are critical for student success, both

academically and in future careers.

- Demonstrate with practical, ready-to-use strategies and activities that can be integrated into daily instruction to nurture soft skills in young learners.
- Evaluate how soft skills in elementary school helps build lifelong habits, improves classroom culture, and prepares students for challenges beyond academics.

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Counseling Theory (theories, diagnosis, wellness, crisis, trauma, mindfulness, distance counseling), Professional Identity and Practice Issues (ethics, licensure, professional organizations, advocacy, private practice, supervision, consulting, self-assessment), Wellness and Prevention (complimentary alternative medicine, community based wellness, conflict resolution, sex education, nutrition, anger management)

Friday Session 11

Title: Can We Talk About Sex?

Content Area: Clinical Mental Health Counseling

Day: Friday, February 20

Time: 3:00 PM

Location: Palisades D

Presenter(s): Nicholas A. Natale, Ph.D., LPC, CST

Program Description: Sex is essential to the human experience! In this talk, Dr. Nic explores how integrating fun and engaging sex therapy principles can enrich your work, deepen client insight, and open new pathways for healing. You'll learn how to recognize and safely address sexual concerns, explore the link

between intimacy and emotional well-being, and gain tools to help clients navigate shame, desire, and relationship dynamics. Whether you specialize in trauma, couples work, or general mental health, this talk will expand your confidence in supporting clients' full human experience—including their sexual selves.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Apply foundational sex therapy principles and language to foster a more open, inclusive, and shame-free environment for clients exploring intimacy and desire.
- Describe the connection between sexual health, emotional well-being, and relational dynamics to enhance therapeutic outcomes.
- Identify common sexual concerns that arise in counseling and understand when and how to address them within their scope of practice.

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Counseling Theory (theories, diagnosis, wellness, crisis, trauma, mindfulness, distance counseling), Human Growth and Development (lifespan, end of life issues, developmental crisis, disabilities, factors affecting behavior), Social and Cultural Foundations (multicultural competencies, societal subgroups, changes and trends, social justice issues, acculturation)

Title: Beyond Resilience: Advanced Strategies for Addressing Complex Trauma in Counseling

Content Area: Clinical Mental Health Counseling

Day: Friday, February 20

Time: 3:00 PM

Location: Palisades E

Presenter(s): Holly Johnson, Ph.D., LCMHCS, NCC

Program Description: Many clients carry layers of trauma that extend far beyond the scope of basic interventions. This advanced session explores practical ways counselors can work with complex and long-standing trauma, including strategies drawn from EMDR, narrative exposure therapy, and polyvagal-informed practice. Using real-world case examples, participants will consider how to adapt these approaches within diverse cultural and spiritual contexts while also weighing ethical implications. Attendees will engage in interactive activities, reflect on barriers and adaptations, and leave with a case conceptualization tool and resources to support integration into their own counseling or supervisory settings.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Describe advanced strategies for addressing complex trauma, including EMDR, narrative exposure therapy, and polyvagal-informed techniques.

- Adapt advanced trauma interventions to diverse cultural and spiritual contexts, recognizing both strengths and limitations.
- Apply insights from structured activities to anticipate barriers, discuss adaptations, and develop practical next steps for integration into counseling or supervision

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Counseling Theory (theories, diagnosis, wellness, crisis, trauma, mindfulness, distance counseling), Social and Cultural Foundations (multicultural competencies, societal subgroups, changes and trends, social justice issues, acculturation), Wellness and Prevention (complimentary alternative medicine, community based wellness, conflict resolution, sex education, nutrition, anger management)

Title: Beyond Donuts: Transforming Family Engagement for Every Student

Content Area: School Counseling

Day: Friday, February 20

Time: 3:00 PM

Location: Palisades F

Presenter(s): Keith Schumacher, B.S., NREMT

Program Description: Too often, dads and role models are left out of the family engagement equation. Learn simple, proven strategies to break down barriers and bring them in—making schools more supportive for every student.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Examine American cultural norms and the traditional stereotypes of fathers and other role models in education. We will explore how these stereotypes take root in local schools, why they persist, and the negative impact they have on students and school culture.
- Identify and overcome obstacles – Attendees will discuss common barriers that limit family engagement for fathers and other role models. Schools currently implementing father-friendly programming will be invited to share proven strategies and success stories, while those facing challenges will have the opportunity to gain feedback and practical solutions.
- Connect practices to compliance and outcomes – Attendees will learn how father-friendly strategies have been successfully used by schools and districts to meet federal family engagement goals under ESSA, Title I, Section 1116. Real-world examples will highlight how these practices not

only support compliance but also improve attendance, behavior, achievement, and overall school climate.

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Human Growth and Development (lifespan, end of life issues, developmental crisis, disabilities, factors affecting behavior), Social and Cultural Foundations (multicultural competencies, societal subgroups, changes and trends, social justice issues, acculturation), Career Development and Counseling (theories, principles, techniques, processes, resources, planning, transitions, trends), Wellness and Prevention (complimentary alternative medicine, community based wellness, conflict resolution, sex education, nutrition, anger management)

Title: Understanding your teen with Autism and Co-occurring ADHD

Content Area: Clinical Mental Health Counseling

Day: Friday, February 20

Time: 3:00 PM

Location: Palisades G

Presenter(s): Mark Wright, M.S., LPC-A

Program Description: This presentation aims to equip mental health professionals, educators, and caregivers with a deeper understanding of the unique challenges and strengths of adolescents with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and co-occurring Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). By exploring the neurological underpinnings, behavioral manifestations, and emotional experiences common in this population, attendees will gain insight into how to foster communication, reduce conflict, and support autonomy. The presentation will also highlight evidence-based strategies for regulation, executive

functioning, and collaborative problem-solving.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Identify at least three behavioral characteristics that commonly overlap between ASD and ADHD in adolescents and describe how these may impact daily functioning.
- Apply two evidence-based strategies to support emotional regulation and executive functioning in teens with co-occurring ASD and ADHD.
- Demonstrate the ability to develop a basic communication plan tailored to enhancing connection and reducing conflict between caregivers and their neurodivergent teens.

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Human Growth and Development (lifespan, end of life issues, developmental crisis, disabilities, factors affecting behavior)

Title: I am not the Savior, but I play one in relationships

Content Area: Clinical Mental Health Counseling

Day: Friday, February 20

Time: 3:00 PM

Location: Palisades H

Presenter(s): Passion Bankhead, M.A., LPC

Program Description: In this training workshop, participants examined the role of healthy boundaries in counseling practice, with an emphasis on their ethical and clinical significance. Grounded in the ACA Code of Ethics (2014), the session highlighted how boundaries protect both clients and counselors, uphold professional integrity, and promote effective therapeutic relationships. Key standards were discussed, including A.4.b. (Personal Values), which cautions against imposing personal beliefs on clients, and A.5.d. (Potentially Beneficial Relationships), which requires counselors to carefully manage dual relationships to avoid harm. Attention was also given to Section C (Professional Responsibility), particularly C.2.g. (Impairment), emphasizing the importance of self-care and maintaining wellness to prevent compromised boundaries. Participants explored types of boundaries—emotional, physical, digital, and relational—alongside strategies for recognizing when limits are being tested and for responding with clear, assertive, and ethical communication. The workshop reinforces that setting and maintaining boundaries is not a barrier to therapeutic connection but a professional responsibility that ensures safety, respect, and clinical effectiveness.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Participants will demonstrate the ability to recognize boundary crossings and potential violations

- By the conclusion of the workshop, participants will create a written self-care plan that identifies at least three specific strategies to prevent impairment and maintain professional boundaries
- By the end of the training, participants will be able to identify at least three types of personal relationship boundaries (emotional, physical, time, communication)

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Social and Cultural Foundations (multicultural competencies, societal subgroups, changes and trends, social justice issues, acculturation)

Title: Living a Psychologically Rich Life for Clinicians and Clients

Content Area: Counselor Education

Day: Friday, February 20

Time: 3:00 PM

Location: Palisades I

Presenter(s): Robin V Reynolds, M.A., LPC; LPC-S; BC-TMH

Program Description: A fulfilling life is often framed as one of happiness or meaning but emerging research suggests a third dimension: psychological richness. A psychologically rich life is marked by variety, complexity, perspective-shifting experiences, and personal growth, even in the face of challenges.

This workshop will explore how clinicians can integrate the concept of psychological richness into their own lives and clinical work. Participants will

examine evidence-based strategies that promote curiosity, openness, and resilience, while also learning how to help clients cultivate richer experiences that foster flexibility, growth, and well-being.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Define the concept of psychological richness and differentiate it from happiness and meaning.
- Identify at least three clinical strategies to foster psychological richness in clients.
- Apply self-reflective practices to increase personal psychological richness as a clinician.

Meets NBCC Content Area(s): Counseling Theory (theories, diagnosis, wellness, crisis, trauma, mindfulness, distance counseling), Career Development and Counseling (theories, principles, techniques, processes, resources, planning, transitions, trends)